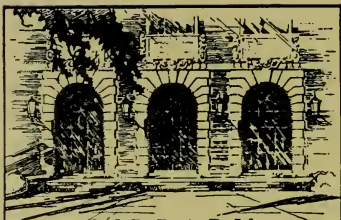


523
H69m
v.2
cop, 2





Turner Macan Esq^r



LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823

H69m

v. 2

cop. 2

MEMOIRS
OF
BRYAN PERDUE:

A NOVEL.

BY
THOMAS HOLCROFT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1805.

MEMOIRS

OF
BRYAN PERDUE

A NOVEL

BY
WILLIAM H. WATSON

C. Mercier and Co. Printers,
6, Northumberland Court.

823

H69m

v.2

cop.2

MEMOIRS
OF
BRYAN PERDUE.

CHAPTER I.

*Myself and the Reader : mutual Civility
necessary in this World : Apostrophe
to Good-humor : Recapitulation : a
Kind of Propensity to Virtue : the pre-
carious State of Youth : dangerous Geo-
graphy.*

THUS far have we travelled on, by short stages, my good reader; and I hope we are well enough pleased with each others company to continue together, and while away the hours, with our anecdotes, remarks, and memoirs,

such as may amuse us, to the end of our journey.

Should you think me a tolerable companion, I have a hope that, as we proceed, we shall find opportunities to examine many a little creek, and inlet, of the human heart. But, should the contrary be your opinion, what will be the consequence? Alas, such is human frailty, it is about a hundred to one that I shall think as meanly of your taste as you do of my talents.

Well, well; be our feelings what they may, let us show a little mutual civility. Be assured that conciliation and forbearance are quite necessary, to keep the jarring atoms of this world from being too discordant. If you have the wit, strength, and will, to love and digest potent liquors, and if I am a poor valetudinarian, who am obliged to content myself with less intoxicating draughts, suffer me to

take my sickly potions peaceably; and render thanks, to Heaven, that you have nobler powers, which came you know not how, continue you know not why, and will depart you know not when.

Oh, Good-humor! thou charm of human life, how gladly would I make thee my goddess! How have I daily vowed to worship thee! and how have my pious intentions been daily traversed, by that perverse demon Evil-habit! sometimes appearing to me under the form of Folly; but more frequently with the odious though perhaps imaginary face of foul Injustice. Forgetful, then, of thee, Good-humor, and intent only upon reform! redress! retribution! and Satan himself knows not how many other wild speculative whims, how have I stormed, raved, and vowed eternal warfare, against shadowy evils of my own creating!

Reader, if you have not done the same, you are either very wise or very foolish. Observe, cautiously, these visions of reform are not speculative whims, but divine trances, patriot virtues, the ecstasies of pure hope, when they are amalgamated with kind and gentle Good-humor.

As I remember, I left myself on the road to London; and, as the journey was short, and as nothing miraculous happened, I shall briefly state that I am now there; a boy of seventeen; turned on the wide world; and with certain good and bad propensities, such as have already, in good part, been related.

When I was last in the company of my governor, I tore myself from him with a degree of rudeness, or rather of insolence, that could only be pardonable in a boy: but he, kind and good soul, had too much know-

ledge of the human heart to suffer my behaviour to drive him from his purpose. Virtue was his end, and gentleness his means.

I had taken up my temporary residence at a fashionable hotel ; and there he presently found me.

Though I had rejected not only his intercessions, but the generous Henry's offer, yet, the impression that was left upon my mind, not so much by their kindness, probably, as by their praises, and their justice to the little virtue which they discovered in me, the impression they had made, I say, was forcible. That is, I suspect it to have been not so much my reasoning faculties as my feelings, which swayed me strongly on the side of goodness.

How often is it the fate of youth to be led, rather by necessity than by

inclination, into vice! How great is its danger, when thrown, solitary and half destitute, with strong desires, little means, and total ignorance, that is, with total inexperience, upon the world.

I am not one of those calumniators who decry mankind, and indiscriminately accuse them as an odious race. Far the reverse! The multitude have little power to do great good, or harm; but there are many, who, like guardian angels, are incessantly active for the general welfare. Some indeed are selfish, corrupt, and banefully vicious; and these, alas, I also grant, are not a few.

Well! their vices will *kill them off*; and let us hope their progeny will have more wisdom.

For my own part, at this critical period of my life, having no immediate

profession to follow, no ready means that offered themselves for my future conduct, or support, and being alike indifferent to all, alike unacquainted with men and things, my thoughts were too desultory to be capable of system, or plan. Much of the money that I had won of Maximilian Lord Froth (to *cheat* and to *win* are nearly synonymous terms in gaming) was in my pocket; and, till that should nearly disappear, I was very unlikely to feel the actual distress of my situation.

In this unsettled state of mind, I fell in with several of my father's companions; and idleness more than inclination induced me to accompany them to their places of resort. By their means, I should soon have become acquainted with the geography of vice, and made the grand tour of the

gaming-houses in London; for in such their time is generally spent; had not my intercourse with them been for a little while interrupted, by the incidents which I am about to relate.

CHAPTER II.

The Return of my Governor: my Temper of Mind: Benevolence of Heart makes the Tongue eloquent, and exerts itself to console, instruct, and assist: Symptoms of a perverse Spirit: Kindness not to be conquered: a deep metaphysical Query, and a magnificent Promise.

UNWILLING to abandon me, and eager to make any personal sacrifice, if he could but accomplish the good end he had in view, my governor returned to the charge.

Coming to the hotel, he found me alone, and, owing to what had happened, less sullen in my deportment, and somewhat more willing to listen to good advice.

“ Bryan,” said he, “ when you parted from me the other day, you were under affliction for the loss of your father: you were not master of your own feelings, my good young friend. They were in part even right, for they showed a courageous and independent spirit, which ought always to be carefully cherished. But your inexperience, Bryan, conceals the dangers and difficulties that are before you. You want a friend, and I know of no one on earth that you have, except myself. Were I now to forsake you, it would be wicked and disgraceful; and believe me, Bryan, I would not willingly be wicked.

“ I thought it my duty, and therefore have taken the liberty, to discourse with my pupil’s father, on the subject I last mentioned to you; for I knew him to be a well-meaning gentleman, and very willing to join in any good and

prudent plan. I described to him my connection with your family, told him of your honorable birth, endeavoured to do justice to the most excellent virtues of your deceased lady mother, and acknowledged how deeply I felt myself interested in your welfare, and for your proper introduction to the world.

“ He well understands that it is the duty of mankind to do good, whenever the opportunity offers, and he has therefore at length agreed to my proposal; so that, I hope, my dear Bryan, you will suffer me to supply the place of a father; and that you will become, as I have proposed, the travelling companion, and no doubt the friend, of my pupil.

“ You shall be under no obligations of a pecuniary kind, except to me, which I shall never remember as obligations; and, if you should hereafter

think it became you to consider them as such, I have no doubt you will have the power to repay them.

“I will not any further insist that you should give me your promise to refrain from a vice, which experience must have convinced you is of a pernicious nature, and ends in evil; as indeed all vices do. You have been unfortunately in the way of temptation; and, more unfortunately still, you had received instruction and encouragement from one whom the laws of nature, and the bonds of society, had taught you to revere. How venial therefore was the error into which you fell! I will not wound you by the supposition that you may so fall again.”

Guilty as I knew myself to be, I was eager to reply, and pretend to repel, with indignation, the calumnies that had been spread, concerning me,

at the school ; and to retort them on Maximilian Lord Froth, and others ; not forgetting to state the offer of friendship that had been made me by Henry, in the name of himself and his companions.

To this harangue my governor answered, with great mildness, having first listened with great patience.

“ It is not my wish, or intention, Bryan, to accuse ; or to credit calumny, either now or at any time, when I can discover its traces. There is however a maxim which I earnestly desire might be fixed in your heart : which is, that, whenever we do wrong, it is not only our duty but our dearest interest, to eagerly acknowledge the wrong we have done. By this conduct, we frequently so purify the mind that our mistakes, themselves, may contribute, more than any of the ordinary incidents of life, to the rectitude and virtue of our future conduct:

When we determine to consider deceit, as it is, the most degrading and vicious of the common habits of the mind, and bring ourselves so to detest the dishonor of deceit as to resolve never to practise it, we then set a guard upon ourselves, whom we are so fearful to offend that we would rather suffer death. This has frequently been seen: men have chosen rather to die than even to prevaricate.

“ I speak this generally, because I wish you well to understand, and remember, the first and most essential of moral virtues.

“ I have heard, my dear Bryan, of your charitable and Christian behaviour at the village; and it is impossible you should conceive the joy of heart that the recital gave me! I may truly say, it was a glorious exultation of the soul, when I found that the blessed precepts of your dear and loving lady mother had not been cast away upon

you! Oh, Bryan! come and live with me! be my youthful friend! You cannot imagine the pleasure I shall receive in being a witness of your rising virtues; and in contributing, as I hope I shall, to give you an honorable and promising establishment in the world."

The lips of benevolence could not speak in a more mild or winning tone, or express themselves with a more genial zeal! Yet, had not the manner of my governor overpowered my false feelings, which he doubtless watched and discovered, I should have interrupted his discourse, when he appeared to doubt, and most assuredly did really doubt, of the sincerity with which I had denied my frauds, at gaming. The best advice that man could bestow, though delivered with the utmost suavity and a cordiality, I was disposed to resent, as an insult.

To advise me to be sincere was to doubt my sincerity! Was that to be endured?

How does the human mind manage its own affairs on such occasions? Does it actually persuade itself that it is innocent? Or does it distract and confuse inquiry, as a thing too painful to be endured?

Oh, my masters and mistresses, here is more employment for my systematising brain!

It shall go hard if I do not make all these matters very clear, in my philosophy of the human mind; which I intend hereafter to write, and publish, in five volumes folio—no; folio is out of fashion; say therefore ten quarto—or in a pocket manual; for I have not yet clearly arranged the business, with myself, whether truth will be best understood by being dryly stated, in the manner of algebraic or mathematic de-

monstration, or if amplified, developed, and traced, through all its branches, sinuosities, secret recesses, profound holds, immeasurable depths, and—and—imagine the rest: I can think of no more. When I come to write the system here mentioned, I shall have enough to think of.

CHAPTER III.

A Morsel of Learning: a Breakfast Scene: Common Sense for once prevails: the Family to which I am introduced described: the Goodness of Human-nature: a Hint to learned young Masters and Misses: George Saville and his Father: the Propensities of Youth: a Flock of Sheep.

PRAY, Madam, are you acquainted with the word *suaviloquence*? If not, I beg to have the honor of introducing it into your charming vocabulary; where, I flatter myself, it will maintain a distinguished rank.

Suavity, suaviloquence, suaviloquent— Madam, they are your bosom friends! The charm by which, after marriage, you rivetted the chains your blooming

virginity had forged, for the dear man of your heart, your husband! The father of those cherubs that cling round his knees, when, seated of a morning, he sips the nectar of happiness from your affectionate hand!

Suaviloquent, or *sweetly eloquent*, indeed, were the lips of my governor; while charity of heart gave them utterance, and sincerity of soul force that was irresistible.

I cannot generally accuse myself of being what the good old country wives call of a dogged temper; yet, I must confess that, on the several occasions of this perilous crisis, I was greatly that way inclined. But my dogged demon sunk, discomfited and abashed, before the effulgent angel of benevolence. Briefly, I agreed to the proposal of my governor, accepted the offer he made, and removed to the house of

his friend and employer, George Saville, Senior, Esquire.

It will doubtless be supposed I have now forded a dangerous pass, and have landed on the shores of safety? Ah, how little do we mortals know of the future!

The pupil of my governor was three years older than myself, the hope of his family, the delight of his father, and, being the son of a man of fortune, was esteemed a youth of spirit. But hopes are not always well placed: fathers look through magnifying glasses, when they regard the rising virtues of their offspring, but turn the end of the telescope which diminishes, when they have the courage to take a glance at their defects. In general, those are things which they have no desire to inspect; and certainly not to magnify.

What then, say you, is this pupil a vicious youth?

To which I réply—not, Sir, what you would call a vicious youth; but one of those mixed and undecided characters, which form the bulk of mankind. He was on the sea of youth, where extraordinary abilities are required to be an able navigator; and therefore he floated along, a little too much at the mercy of the current. I must inform you, Madam, that in that sea the currents often set very strong.

All my readers, being people of remarkably acute discrimination, know that the general propensity of human nature is to goodness; for on goodness all happiness depends: and they further know that the most *chetive* creature upon earth is very desirous to be happy. Your French governess, Madam, has no doubt informed you that *chetive* signifies *insignificant*; but

being a foreign word, you know, it *appears* to us to have more force. This by the by is a mistake which a smattering in language often occasions; as I would have you, Madam, remind young gentlemen, when you hear them disputing at the tea-table about the force of words. They are sometimes in danger of being a little too profound in their scholarship.

Had not this philological remark interrupted me, I was about to observe, that, since there is a general tendency to good, my governor's pupil, now my young friend George Saville, junior, had this general tendency. The particular times and seasons during which his youthful desires and passions, with inexperience gamboling among them and leading them into blunders, were all together playing at blindman's buff, are, of course, to be excepted.

His father, a man of no illiberal mind, but rather indeed above the common standard, thought George was at an age when the rein of parental authority ought no longer to be kept tight; that experience could only teach his son a knowledge of the world; and that a certain degree of intercourse and expence were things more to be wished than avoided. When at home, and especially in his father's presence, George was not often subject to those flights and eccentricities which hurry certain youths of great folly, and others of great genius, beyond the limits of decorum.

Now, when the vagaries of youth are acted by folly, I suspect them to be entirely animal: boys, and fools in full health, can seldom be still: but, when they are the bounds, leaps, and somersets of genius, be assured their origin is mental. I grant that the ani-

nal and mental may combine; and, then, stop their course who can!

In this state of tempers and propensities, between father and son, it will easily be perceived that the power of my governor over George Saville had that kind of boundary which liberal watchfulness and advice prescribe. George was much in the company of his governor, but not chained to his leg. Youth reluctantly parts with its playfulness; and, therefore, complacent and yielding though the manners of my governor were, George found me a more amusing companion. Youth has something like an antipathy to men who before they speak or act consider till they understand their own intention: it hates consideration: volatile itself, it delights in volatility.

In your moral researches and disquisitions, those sweet flattering hours or half hours of meditation, in which you

discover how many and how surprising the discoveries are which you make, has it not often occurred to you, Sir, how great the number of those plastic beings are who never attempt to lead the flock, but willingly follow? They bound and leap, in imitation of others; when the many are frightened so are they; if they are strong, they spring the hedge, or gate, with the strong; if weak, they crouch with the weak, though thorns and briars rend their coat; and run at last into the jaws of destruction, the slaughter-house, having the example set, and thinking themselves in good company. The well-fed young wethers are those that bound, leap, and frisk the most, then stop, bleat, and look round, seeming to say we are a clever set! But where are we going? What are we about? George Saville, Sir, was one of these.

CHAPTER IV.

The Eagerness of youthful Sportsmen: the Danger of bad Acquaintance: the Manner of Gamblers: the virtuous Valour of George Saville: Gaming-houses for every Class: Reforming Societies: Opera Dancers, Fiddle Cases, and Receptacles for fashionable and vulgar Vice: Question and Answer: the Danger of opposing a Torrent: more brazen Heads than one.

HENCE it happened that young George and myself frequently took our rambles together. We were both eagerly in chace of whatever game started in view, which we supposed to be innocent. Youth is the game season: youth too has ever been acknowledged

a qualified and legal sportsman; and coveys rise upon it so continually, in every field, that it can never load and fire fast enough. It is impeded also by the hurry and flurry into which it is put.

Hence the terrible accidents of loading, priming, and precipitate discharges; of pheasants missed, and cows wounded; of hands and arms shattered, and of events still more to be feared. Bless me, sober Sir, what dangers have we both passed!

Is it a contemptible and self-sufficient pride, or is it a latent sense of danger, which occasions that shyness, observed between strangers, among the English? In my common-place book, for a history of the state of manners, I find it noted as sometimes one and sometimes the other. No moral truth however can be more incontestable than that, when youth has the least intimacy

or acquaintance among the vicious, it is in imminent danger of catching their vices, for the plague itself is neither so epidemic nor so pernicious.

It has already been often enough stated that I had such acquaintance; but I have not yet detailed the earnest and cautious manner of my late governor, and present guardian, by which name I shall hereafter call him, when he endeavoured to preserve me from them, and to persuade me never more to risk the danger of their intercourse.

Alas, it was in vain! I promised, and sincerely intended to perform; but it did not depend entirely on myself.

Those, who know gamblers, know them to be a shameless race, that will obtrude themselves on all persons, and into all places, if, by such intrusion, they suppose their traiterous designs may be promoted. When they see

no hope of that, and observe worthy men properly industrious to shun them, they then assume an insolent independence, which, while it seems to menace, is but an ugly though a transparent mask to hide fear and hatred.

In my rambles with my young companion, I was often accosted by some one or other of the gang, who had been the acquaintance or associates of my father. When questioned by him concerning them, I did not find in myself the courage of a Cato: sometimes I had recollection enough to evade a direct answer; but could not at others avoid to own, what they were sufficiently ready to intimate, my knowledge of them, and their intercourse with my family.

Curiosity is one of the stumbling-blocks of youth: George had heard of some of them, as being famous on such and such an occasion. Fashionable

young men, he said, might go any where: his father even wished him to become acquainted with the world; and, to arm ourselves against the arts of gamesters, we must watch, detect, and understand them. He was certain of himself, and feared none of them; for which reason, to look in among them, now and then, was high amusement as well as very instructive.

To what purpose would it tend, my gentle reader, were I now to lament that, with the latent wish, I was far from having the power to persuade my young companion how much greater the danger was than he imagined? It may be some small gratification to recollect that, for once, I was not the leader into temptation, but the led.

Mistake me not: I involuntarily taught him many things, and among others their places of resort: that is, such of

them as are frequented by what I supposed to be genteel company. From those of a meaner kind pride kept us both; and into the clubs, and houses, where balloting and black-balling pretend to keep so scrupulous a guard in the behalf of honor, admittance could not have been obtained, without great peril of its coming to his father's knowledge. But, though not yet a member of the clubs, there were fashionable places enough, openly held, to encourage the seduction of youth, the misery of individuals, and the ruin of families.

Have you not heard or read, in your parts, my good country gentlemen, how societies have sprung up, in the great city, for the reformation of morals and other things, which I am almost afraid to catalogue, lest I should unwittingly offend some well-meaning honest soul, and, notwithstanding my cottage retreat, be calumniated as a

blasphemer, or at least an infidel? from which Heaven preserve me!

Have you not heard of the dancings they have put down, the opera singers they have silenced, and the fiddle sticks they have demolished?

In looking through the dictionary of the fashions, or the fashionable dictionary, you may or may not have stumbled upon the words fashionable brothels, fashionable clubs, women in high keeping, and many more, which, owing to my long country residence, escape my present recollection. Did you ever read or hear that any of these were put down?

At twelve o'clock on Saturday night, opera houses, fiddle cases, butcher's stalls, and barber's shops, must shut up. On Sunday at noon, the receptacles of fashionable vice are kept open! and are free, morning, noon, and night, for vice to its very dregs on other days.

Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tythe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law; judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel!

Ahey, Mr. Cynic! Because well-disposed people cannot do all the good they wish, must they do nothing?

To this I answer—Whether you happen to be, Sir, a blind zealot, or a liberal-minded reasoner, I do not make light accusations. I and thousands have considered these things; and, knowing some of our late reformers to be among the leaders of the land, cannot but ask why they do not aim their darts against vice where it is the most dangerous, and from whence it descends with so high an authority as to dazzle and mislead the multitude?

This would be indeed to serve their God and their king ! Has their virtue so little courage in it as not to dare to lift the arm against emblazoned vice ?

But there is in this case a more essential question. Since vice in greatness must not be seen, should that envenom the sword, and make it fall where it is doubtful whether it be on vice or virtue. Diversions, that are innocent at one time, are innocent at all times. If they are in their essence wrong, they are wrong at all times, and ought to be completely suppressed. Are we again to return to the age of the sinfulness of smoking tobacco, and eating plum pudding ?

I know the danger of opposing a torrent : it sweeps, ingulphs, and destroys. Its roarings are too loud to listen to reason, compassion, or common sense. I have read that a crucifix once spoke to an emperor, and that it

never afterward could shut its mouth. Now, if my village retreat does not conceal me, it may happen that I shall never again dare to open mine: I therefore seize the present opportunity. *Time is* was the awful warning long ago given by the brazen head. Apropos: this was not the only brazen head that understood the value of TIME IS.

CHAPTER V.

The Reason why the Blind lead the Blind: Plan of Mr. Saville: pleasant but treacherous Meadows: plausible Arguments, but more loud than satisfactory: Satan and his infernal Crew: the Metamorphoses of Legion: a Wish and an Apology: the Simplicity of my Friend the Vicar.

HAD I not been interrupted in my avocation, and I fear a little vexed, by these good Christian people, who piously breed disturbances at midnight and every Sunday, whenever they can find an opportunity, I have every reason to suppose I should have told—some part of what I am now about to tell.

Ah, me! How are we led unsuspectingly along in this world! blindfold, yet imagining we have each the eyes of a lynx, and at every turn mistaking evil for good! Now, whether I led George Saville, or George Saville led me, would be difficult to determine; but, be that how it will, I say again it was but the blind leading the blind.

By a demure behaviour at home, we secured more liberty to be often abroad. The plan, that had been laid down by our elders, was that we were to cross the channel and begin the tour, which it was intended we should make, in about three months; and that would be at the beginning of May.

The first month of this time passed on, as we supposed, pleasantly enough; for nothing is so deceptive, and flowery to the eye, as the meadows that lead to the deserts of vice: they appear to

be the rich and verdant borders of paradise; in which happy region the simpletons, who wander through these treacherous meadows, hope soon to arrive.

Alas! Feverish, pestilential, sanguinary, mortal, and strewed with deformed carcasses and horrid skeletons, is the Golgotha to which they are so eagerly travelling!

During this first month it was that George had so thoroughly convinced himself, and silenced me, concerning the expedience and necessity of being acquainted with the world: in other words, of understanding the tricks and characters of gamesters, and of dabbling a little, just in a gentlemanly harmless way, himself.

“He would take care to run no risk!. Beside, I was generally with him; and being myself partly initiated, I could give him timely warning,

if I saw the beginning of any foul play. Not that this was of any consequence ; for he had himself too sharp an eye to be easily deceived !

“ Then, likewise, the knowledge of *Hoyle* was in itself a science, and one with which no gentleman ought to be unacquainted. Readiness of calculation not only gave acuteness but presence of mind ; and it was disgraceful, when a bet was proposed, which demanded a knowledge of numbers, not to be able to calculate the chances, and know whether it was a fair or an unfair proposal. What, suffer a set of illiterate fellows, as professional gamblers universally were, to have more science than himself, and sneer at his ignorance, which he could see, by their winks and nods to each other, was a common practice ! No, no.”

So spoke the oracle, George Saville, junior. He who has a strong inclina-

tion to act speak or have a thing, though perhaps the day before he had thought it highly dangerous, or even culpable, seldom fails to find arguments that perfectly convince him he had been mistaken. These arguments may not perhaps be very strong, but they are so loud that they silence opposition. The intellect, being first confused by the warfare of desires, has not that clear discrimination which is necessary, before it is able calmly to attend to the simple unimpassioned voice of truth.

Lucifer; Belzebub, Belial, Satan, and the rest of them, are noted of old as cunning scoundrels, ready to take every advantage. They have been most appropriately indeed called Legion; and is it not a lamentable case that boys and old women should have to encounter with Legion? We know it ever was, and ever will be, that the

weakest must go to the wall. How could it be expected that, transforming themselves as these demons daily did and do into cards, dice, billiard tables, circles of EO, guineas, and bank bills, they should not so bewilder the senses as to make conquest easy? We surely may humbly hope to be forgiven, short-sighted and simple mortals as we are; but, is there any one of us who does not sometimes, secretly, although most impiously, wish that this host of devils had never been created! Ah! Ignorant as we are, how little do we understand the intricate ways of arriving at good by evil!

These are among the things which, as my honest friend, the vicar of our parish, told his maiden aunts and myself from the pulpit, a few Sundays ago, we were in duty bound to believe, but not to say that we could comprehend; for, he bowed the head

and humbly owned, he considered them as incomprehensible! "Adore thy God and love thy neighbour," said my good Christian vicar: "visit him when he is sick, feed him when he is hungry, and clothe him when he is naked! These are the holy commands thou hast received. Solomon truly saith, *The way of man is froward and strange: but, as for the pure, his work is right.* Wisely also hath the apostle commanded to *avoid foolish questions, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain.*"

CHAPTER VI.

A tragical Story briefly told.

WHEN I reminded you, Madam, that Legion is a cunning scoundrel, ready to take every advantage, I had an end in view; but, led away as I continually am to chase every wild goose that starts in view, I forgot my purpose. It was to relate another and a most heavy misfortune that befell me; and not me alone, for, on every occasion, the loss of a good man is a public loss.

When the sudden death of any character, supposed to be in good health, is related in a book like this, I well know how apt we are to cry Pish! Pshaw! Unnatural! And yet every

day, among people we either know or hear of, these sudden deaths customarily happen.

Perhaps, some such event is now recently in your recollection? at least, it is in mine. It is not above two months since I met a man, whom I have often had occasion to employ, apparently in the very fulness of health; and two days ago, wanting to employ him again, to my great surprise, I was informed he had been dead full six weeks!

No trifling, friend! we know not whose turn may be next!

You remember, I presume, Madam, that I at first told you my governor was a priest? Had I added the epithet Catholic, I should have explicitly told you all I meant; but I happened to be in one of my absent fits.

There are feelings which I have not the power to convey, and affections

which words can ill describe : these feelings and these affections are mine, whenever I recollect what I am now about to relate. Oh that I could paint the man as he was ! the mildness of his speech, the integrity of his heart, the benevolence of his actions, and the purity of his views ! Why must such virtue depart, and be no more seen ! I loved thee much, thoughtless though I was, and lamented thee long, sweet saint ! Pardon, Madam, this short apostrophe to my dear governor and guardian : to him I can never repay the debt I owe ! Alas, I must tell my tale !

Being a Catholic, he considered rigid abstinence to be an indubitable Christian virtue. On this head I have nothing to remark, except that my guardian never neglected that in practice which he held to be good in principle. Physically, therefore, his habit of body was at all times low. In his opinion,

it being then Lent, he was required to treat himself with all the rigor of that holy season: it was severe, by some accident he caught a violent cold, this produced an inflammatory fever, and his constitution had not strength to resist the attack. How do I grieve that truth obliges me to write the words—*He died!*

PEACE BE WITH HIS SOUL!

CHAPTER VII.

A Summons and Feelings of Self-sufficiency: Advice and Warning: right Actions not always rightly understood: neither Man nor Boy: my own Feelings, and those of my Companion: Hints which I did not like: Advice to the Ladies, and the Goodness of it proved epigrammatically.

PRAY require no further explanations of me, Madam: it is not possible for me to add another word to the last chapter.

Three days after his interment, at which I can honestly say I was a sincere mourner, Mr. Saville, senior, desired to speak with me in his study.

I knew not his intention : it might be to discard me ; but that excited no great alarm. I had the confidence of youth ; and of youth that had not yet felt want, and had no little dependence upon those surprising faculties of mine which I considered as not having yet been fairly called into action. Even the death of my guardian, while it truly afflicted me, seemed to afford a dark shadow of consolation : I hoped it would relieve me from restraint.

Being alone with Mr. Saville, he began by first assuring me that his intentions toward me were friendly.

After this introduction, he informed me that he had at first been greatly averse to receive me, as the companion of his son ; but, as I appeared to act properly, he condemned himself for having, perhaps, been too much prejudiced, by what he had heard. His

son spoke well of me, he saw nothing ill, and thus far he was entirely satisfied.

My late guardian was a most worthy man, and his arguments in my behalf had their just influence. He was now gone, and different arrangements must be made: but, committed as I had been by accident to his (Mr. Saville's) care; he thought it would be wrong to abandon me, while my present behaviour continued.

It became him however to inform me, that, my guardian being departed and I no longer under restraint, he should think himself strictly bound to observe my conduct. It was now become a personal duty. If that conduct was good, it should always have his approbation: if the contrary, the care of his son's morals would admit of no temporizing, and my intercourse with the family must cease.

In the mean time, he gave me a ten pound note, promised an equal sum at the end of every two months, engaged to supply all my reasonable wants, and further informed me, that, when he chose a governor for his son, it should be with a view that the same person might be my instructor, in classical learning. Neither, he said, should the accomplishments of the gentleman be neglected: but, added he in conclusion, “all this, Mr. Perdue, will depend upon yourself; that is, upon your behaviour.”

This rational discourse was delivered with a gravity, and sententious solemnity, that did not exactly accord with my notions of what was due from one gentleman to another: for when I agreed to come into the house of Mr. Saville I rather, as I supposed, yielded to entreaty than received a favor.

In the course of life, we are scarcely

any of us so tenacious of our manhood, and of our gentility, if we happen to have any, as while we are boys; or, at least, during that silly perilous period when we are neither boy nor man.

But, habit is every thing. Mr. Saville was not my school-fellow; nor had he been my governor; and I had not the courage to give him either a saucy or a sullen answer. In thought, I was saucy and sullen enough: but I said little, while the conversation which I have here abbreviated continued, except "yes, Sir; no, Sir;" and half-muttering a maudlin kind of "thank you, Sir," in return for his promises and his bank bill.

Wiser people than I was do not always know what they want, nor when they are well treated.

Neither did my feelings entirely sympathize with those of the son:

young George was but a kind of half and half friend: he had more than once let me feel that he was the head gentleman; and, after the death of my guardian, he gave me two or three broad hints that I was a dependent on his family.

These I repelled, and, with such a consciousness of independence, that, he appeared to be rather checked, and in doubt.

His doubts did but lead him to reflect, and ask himself—in what my independence could consist? To which question there could be no other answer but this—*my skill in gaming*.

Such a solution of the inquiry *might* have led him to hold me in contempt; but it did not: he had far too great a degree of complacency for the character of a gamester, which kind of complacency was daily increasing upon

him, for him to consider it with contempt.

It was but natural that a propensity like this should turn to my advantage: he had an aptitude to learn, a desire that I should instruct him, and, therefore, for favors so weighty as I could confer, he readily and willingly enough condescended to consider me as, *almost*, his equal and friend.

Ah, Madam, receive the good that is given you, and the ill, when it comes, each with a calm and steady hand. Accept them both with a smile. Consider, how like an angel then you look! How like a deity then you act! If you know any one who treats you as *almost* an equal and friend, regard this almost but as one of the many human frailties, which, having them, we know them not, acting them, we feel them not, and, consequently, being charged with them, we own them not.

Yet, anxious as we are to rid ourselves of the memory of whatever is derogatory, to beings so high and mighty as ourselves, there is an indefinite and latent sense of past events hanging about us, which, in our own despite, the most trifling simultaneous incident will revive. I love to convince my opponents and to make them smile at a single stroke! It is masterly; and, therefore, Present! Fire! I will prove the truth of what I have said by an epigram.

When Trott in coach his foot first set,
He blush'd and back a step reclin'd;
For Trott himself could not forget
How many years he rode behind.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Employment of myself, my Friend, and many more Idlers: the Wisdom of our Forefathers: little Restraints: the Nature of Billiards, and of Beginners in Sin: the Vanity of Youth, and its Gifts: young Heirs the common Prey of the Gaming-table: the Rent-roll of England: Temptation and virtuous Self-satisfaction.

WELL, here we are, again; I and my young friend George; and the day has lately seldom passed in which we have not loitered a part of it at billiard-tables, usually at play with each other, or in the back rooms, where, snugly and out of sight, the keen ones, the deep ones, and the knowing ones,

and all that host of instructors, from whom young George was to obtain a knowledge of the world, were accustomed to congregate, and idle away the unimportant part of the four and twenty hours at hazard, pass-dice, picquet, back-gammon, put, all-fours, and other ingenious modes, highly to be venerated, as having been the discoveries of our great forefathers, and handed down to us from generation to generation, among many other things no less excellent, of which they have left us the happy inheritors.

Who will dare to dispute the goodness of what our great and infallible forefathers did, the rules they followed, and the institutions that they made! Not I, truly! I were in danger else of being branded as *a new philosopher!*

It was not without a meaning that I just now mentioned the *unimportant part of the four and twenty hours*; for,

among gamblers, day-light and noon-day are the idle and tedious half of existence. Midnight for them! It is then high change! Or, at least, it is then that business begins most industriously to be transacted.

From these scenes of tumultuous speculation, George and I, if we meant to continue in good fame at home, were necessarily cut off: otherwise, the regions of knowledge, for George, would have been immeasurably increased. Notwithstanding obstacles so great, his progress was by no means slow.

Billiards, however, was our favorite game; and, were but betting out of the question, it would certainly be a very amusing and elegant exercise: but, while the devil of cupidity continues to have power over men, it requires little oracular skill to predict it is an exercise, or game, that will ever

remain a most seductive and dangerous evil.

In the beginning, we only played for half crowns, just to give spirit to our performance; but that was like playing for nothing. On this scale of betting we continued nearly a fortnight; except that we soon made it a rule, that, he who got the first hazard should lay the odds. As we were both tolerably good players when we began, daily practice presently made us play so well that we became vain of our abilities; and, then, each would dare the other with crowns, half guineas, guineas, nay, and we were now and then desperate enough to lay the long odds. While the devil charms youth warms; till he gets hot, and feverish, at last.

Not satisfied with pilfering each other in what we supposed to be a small way, the vanity of George could

not be kept quiet ; it led him to try his skill with some of *the best of them*. Youth has such elasticity of motion, such high spirits, such self-confidence, and in fact so many of the requisites which give power at the game of billiards, that its success is frequently surprising to itself, and much more surprising to others, who, knowing the principles of the game, also know how much of that success was accidental. The youthful player seldom fails to protest, and by some strange process of forgetfulness to believe, that every stroke was intentional, and every consequence foreseen. Thus it is that he imagines himself equal to the cool, judicious, and experienced, player ; and thus it is that the cool, judicious, and experienced, player makes the youth his dupe.

Those, who have a knowledge of the habitual arts of gamblers, never

fail to remark the assiduity with which their cunning exerts itself to cultivate the acquaintance, flatter the vanity, and steal into the confidence, of young men of fortune, when they first come upon the town. It is chiefly on them that the whole gang depend for subsistence: by the losses and frequent ruin of thoughtless youth gamblers are enabled most of them to make a genteel appearance; nay, many of them, to gain estates.

How strange is the gauntlet which the whole rent-roll of England, with few exceptions, has run, since the time when William bestowed it upon his Norman robbers!

George being considered by these fellows as a well-feathered pigeon, whom they were certain some of them to pluck, and I being his constant associate and a person whom they regarded in some sort as one of them-

selves, it was in the course of things that they should make advances to me; which they did, first by broad hints, and afterward by openly proposing to share their gains with me.

I do confess that, at the present moment, it is a pleasant recollection to me to know that, at this comparatively virtuous interval, I treated the wicked proposition with scorn. I kept my thoughts however to myself, and gave them an evasive answer; but no sooner were George and I alone than I told him what had passed, and warned him against the plots which these sons of Belial were hatching.

He heard me without surprise, and, what was worse, not only lowered my gentlemanly notions of my own self-consequence, but checked the virtuous feelings of my heart; for he answered it was no wonder that they should make such proposals to me, since I was known

to be the son of a most unprincipled gambler, nay, the very head of them all. I considered this as an insolent and ungrateful return for the fidelity of my friendship, and the importance of the intelligence I had communicated.

CHAPTER IX.

Human Affections rise and fall: a Balance of Accounts: Tricks of Gamesters, and Ambition of George: Contentions begun: a Match made: the Art of Betting: Words that mean nothing: the Assembling of Gamblers: the Management of Majorities.

FROM this time, my regard for George began to diminish, as well as my respect for his pocket. Though not so far depraved as to join in a conspiracy against him, a desire to win his money myself imperceptibly stole upon me.

In my first zeal, I had shown him many of the tricks which I knew, and therefore had no wish, consequently

made no attempt, to put them in practice; especially since the unfortunate accident, of the die slipping out of my sleeve, with Maximilian Lord Froth. But I was the best player at billiards, and knew my own superiority; which, luckily, as I then esteemed it, he would never acknowledge.

The balance of loss or gain between us, though in my favor, had not hitherto indeed been very considerable; but that was because I had played on terms of generosity, and, when a winner, had frequently given him opportunities to retrieve all that he had lost, by too often doubling the stakes.

Finding that George could not, or would not, attend their midnight revels, and perceiving how much he was addicted to billiards, cherishing also that vanity which induced him to increase his bets, if he either won a few games or lost a few, the gamblers

exerted their usual arts, by suffering him alternately to win and lose, and by filling, or rather confusing his brain with tales of the gains of this great gentleman player, and of that; and of the severe losses that they had suffered, from *giving points* to gentlemen players, who *took them in*.

To *take in* a gambler was the very point of ambition to which the genius of George soared: they saw it, and sneered equally at the malignity and the folly of the youth.

Since my change of feeling toward George, our contest for superiority had often become more serious: we had increased our bets, and thus were my winnings increased.

It was about the middle of April, when, one evening, he was in high play; and I, either out of temper, not in perfect health, or from some other unknown cause, was the reverse: so that, having played for deeper stakes

than was our custom, he recovered, in three hours time, not only all that he had lost to me, but, something more. His triumph was unbounded. He would play me for any sum I pleased; and gave a hint that he was sorry I had not so much money at command as himself.

My vanity, being no doubt equal to his own, was roused: I answered I would play him, the next evening, for the sum, great or small, that he should dare to name; for, if I could not cover his bet myself, I could find those that would.

The gamblers, who were present, did not let this escape them: several of them immediately offered to back me for a hundred guineas a game; and others, on the contrary side, were no less eager and vociferous in their *professions* to back George.

This is one of the most commonplace and stale of their tricks: those

who bawled out "I'll back Mr. Saville for five hundred!" "I'll back him for fifty!" "I'll back him for a thousand!" and so on, addressed themselves to their fellows. The real intention of them all was to back me, they being convinced that I was the best player.

Several of these sham bets were made, provided we would meet the next evening, and play.

George, inflated by his success, eagerly made a match with me. We were to play one and twenty games for five hundred guineas, he that gained eleven of the one and twenty to be the winner, with five guineas a game by; and the odds to be laid, or taken, at pleasure.

Pretended bets among themselves were made, by the gamblers, to the amount of several thousand pounds; and, with all the formality of men of business, entered into their pocket-

books, with the names of the parties: every tittle of which was perfectly understood by the whole tribe to mean nothing.

The season of youth is not that of silent sulkiness: when our vapouring defiances of each other were ended, George and I conversed together, and were apparently as friendly as usual; nor do I indeed suppose that the state of warfare, which was latently skulking in our hearts, was known to either of us.

Whenever a match for any considerable sum is made, the good news circulates through the whole gambling gang, who all carefully assemble; that being essential to their interests, not only for the sake of making bets, but for giving decisions, on any disputed point of the game: all such questions being carried by a majority.

Questions carried by *a majority*—ay,

but of petty insignificant *social rogues!*
Pshaw! What are they? How many
and how pernicious——

In the name of common sense and
prudence, what am I about! This
cursed word *majority* has so bewildered
my brain that—— National debt!
Sinking fund! Five and twenty mil-
lions a year standing taxes! Loans to
carry on wars! Loans to grant sub-
sidies! Loans to——

For Heaven's sake, Mr. Perdue, blot
your paper! spoil your pen! burn your
manuscript! cut your finger! cut your
throat!—

No: I'll end the chapter.

CHAPTER X.

More frightened than hurt: the Field of Battle: Mr. Saville, Senior: the Beginning of a Contest: the Change of Fortune, and the Glory of Victory: Bets proposed and answered: a Spectre: and a sudden Flight.

How could I be so foolishly led astray, and then frightened, as I was, in the middle of so interesting a tale! It is strange that I should so frequently forget I live in the country! But, that, now I think of it, is the very reason: it is we poor country people, and we alone, that are frightened by majorities, loans, taxes, and such-like trifles. To us they are bugbears! midnight ghosts! horrid spectres! You people

of the town are better instructed, and can demonstrate them to be non-entities.

Well, but George Saville, junior, and his young antagonist?

Why the evening is come, Sir; they are in the field of battle, which is no other than a billiard room, in Saint James's-street; and they play a single game, before the grand match begins, just to steady their hands, and bring themselves in train.

It is long since any mention has been made of Mr. George Saville, senior, though he was, on this occasion, neither asleep nor gone a journey.

I noticed to you, my dear Madam, just above, how the news of gambling matches circulates. Now, it sometimes happens that it circulates wider than is intended; and so did it happen on the occasion in question, for it reached the ear of the cautious old

gentleman I have named ; but not till an hour after the time of beginning. What he thought, where he went, and how he acted, are things presently to be told.

I must return to myself and friend —Poh! I mean my enemy—with whom I am now disputing the palm of victory, at a billiard-table, as I said, in Saint James's-street.

I began unsuccessfully: I lost the three first games. Suspicion seized on the minds of the rogues, who hoped to profit by me; they hung the under lip, looked black, growled, gave me broad hints of a conspiracy, between me and George, and, by their unjust suspicions, excited my indignation.

Fortune, however, soon changed sides; I won the three next games, and all was again alive. The dumb could now speak: done and done, in the pretence of making new bets, to

stimulate poor George, were re-echoed among the confederates. Every art was brought in play that could excite his passions: some were for him; some against; rascals that pretended to be strangers to each other pulled out their bank-notes and put down their stakes. In this confusion, George himself accepted large bets, though the advantage still continued on my side.

As the bets of George increased, his hand became feverish, his spirits were fluttered, his recollection was lost: the easiest hazards were missed, the most palpable mistakes committed, and he did not win another game; so that only fourteen, of the one and twenty, had been played when I had won the rubber. The gamblers flocked round me, and told me, in a whisper, I was *a game chicken*.

The loss of George amounted to full

a thousand pounds, and he insisted that I should play another rubber of three games with him for a hundred.

Flushed as I was with victory, and conscious of my own superiority, I yet ~~was~~ sincerely loath that he should lose **more** money, and earnestly begged him to desist. But my compassion was his contempt. "If I had any honor, I must give him his revenge: it was what he had never refused me."

Unable to resist an appeal to my honor, we began our new rubber, and I won the first game. At the close of it, those who made by-bets with him reminded him, as is customary, of the account current. "You owe me five and twenty guineas," said one: "You owe me fifteen," said another: "You owe me fifty," exclaimed a third. "Yes; yes; yes: I'll bet you the same again:" this was the answer to them, all round.

I had led, George had followed, and I was going to make my second stroke in the game, when a spectre suddenly rose to my view! The eye of Mr. George Saville, Senior, was fixed upon mine!

He had been in the room some time, without having been seen by either of us; so intent were we on our pursuits. The acknowledged debts, and the fresh betting, had all been heard by him: his desire to learn the true state of affairs had given him patience, even while he was suffering such torments as a father only can comprehend.

Never perhaps did frightened wretch look more ghastly than I did, when I first caught sight of him: my mouth was open, my arm unable to move, the *queue* dropped from my hand, and I stood some time fixed, before I had

the power to slink away. I then put on my coat and hurried out of the room, to which he made not the least opposition.

CHAPTER XI.

Habit our Guide : a fearful Knock at the Door : Meditations in Bed : Doubts and Fears for the Future : the Saville Family, and the Propensities of Lady Jane : high Fashion and sober Sense ill paired : late Hours.

WITH little thought, or rather with the mechanical habit of going home, I returned; but, having entered the door of Mr. Saville's house, I felt an aversion to be seen, desired the footman to bring me a candle, and immediately retired to my chamber.

Here I remained in a kind of stupor for about half an hour, when I heard the knock of Mr. Saville at the door. This electrified me, and, starting from

my reverie, I undressed myself in a moment, and jumped into bed; having previously heard Mr. Saville demand if I were at home.

I was fearful of being sent for down stairs, and should have been glad of the power instantly to fly away, or to fall asleep; but, in my then state of mind, sleep was as impossible as flight. During the first hour, I lay in momentary expectation of being summoned before Mr. Saville; but time slipped away, while I remained watchful and alarmed, till at length I heard him and George retire to bed.

I had now full leisure for reflection, and the uncertainty of my mind was extremely painful. I sometimes repented that I had returned to the house; at others questioned whether I should not leave it, early in the morning; and then again asked myself what great crime I had committed?

On this occasion, no one could accuse me of foul play; for, generally speaking, skill only decides the game of billiards, and by my superior skill I had conquered.

Neither had I in the least contributed, that is according to my own interpretation of my conduct, to initiate George in gaming; or to excite him to make rash bets. He was the aggressor: he gave the challenge. I was braved, and in a certain sense treated by him as his inferior, therefore I had but taken a just revenge.

Still, however, to be catechized by his father was what I dreaded! He had admitted me reluctantly into his family, had warned me to beware of misbehaviour, and, not knowing the whole truth, was willing enough to condemn me unheard. Hence I concluded, he would certainly command me to leave his house.

Since leave it I supposed I must, what course of life should I pursue? I had less inclination to associate with the gamblers now than I had even when I left the school. My disgust of their manners and morals was not so great as it ought to have been; yet, I was by no means reconciled to many of their proceedings, but rather shocked at them.

But what was I to do? I had no profession, no friends, no support; and, on the other hand, I had many superfluous wants, and had not been bred in the habits of industry.

By reflections like these, which bred something like a foresight and fear of want, and a still more immediately painful foresight and fear of the conduct of Mr. Saville, I was kept restless and tossing all the fore part of the night.

I know not how it has happened that

I have neglected, thus far, to give any further account of Mr. Saville's family than of that part of it which has hitherto immediately concerned myself; but the remaining incidents, of this remarkable night, make it necessary that I should now give a more detailed description.

It was many years since Mr. Saville had buried his first wife, the mother of George, and it was many years, that is to say fifteen, since he had married a second, by whom he had a daughter nearly fourteen years old, and living at home with him. Of this young lady I shall presently have occasion to speak.

The second Mrs. Saville was a woman of high fashion; unfortunately for her husband, whose propensities were all of a sober and saturnine cast. When they were married, she was little more than seventeen; but she was the daughter of an earl, had been bred and accustomed to all the riot and folly of

fashion, as far as her years would permit, and her expectation, when married, was that marriage was to free her from all further restraint, and give a full indulgence to the enjoyment of fashionable pursuits and pleasures, which, by her then young and giddy brain, were supposed to be endless.

So ill was this couple paired, and so little did their tempers and desires correspond, that the plan of going abroad was projected by Mr. Saville, and agreed to by Lady Jane, his wife, purposely to give them an opportunity of having a pretence to live separate. Her wishes and projects were those of fashionable dissipation, which to him were most odious; therefore, to avoid violent measures, he suffered her to act as she pleased, and consoled himself with pursuing that course which best suited his own inclinations.

Unless my reader be a person of

fashion, he would perhaps have supposed that, when Mr. Saville retired to rest, Lady Jane did the same: but in this he will be greatly mistaken. Lady Jane was at a rout. When her visit was over, Lady Jane sat down to the faro table. Lady Jane did many things, which, as they do not relate to my memoirs, I shall not notice.

CHAPTER XII.

The Return of Lady Jane: Maid and Mistress both weary: Offices of Insurrection, and Calculations concerning Danger: comparatively few bad Accidents: a still more terrible Knocking at the Door, and threatening Events: Miss Saville and the Box of Title Deeds.

It was three o'clock in the morning when Lady Jane came home. I had dropt into an uneasy slumber; from which I started, at hearing the footman thunder at the door. As weary of pleasure as ladies of fashion are accustomed to be, after having been all night in full chace of it and continually on a false scent, Lady Jane, after suffering her maid to undress her, had flounced discontentedly into bed.

Made even more weary than Lady Jane herself, by nightly watching, the girl who was about her person, as Lady Jane phrased it, being at length released for that night, or rather for that morning, retired to her bed, at half past three, with a full resolution not to rise before noon.

Have you ever reasoned, good Sir, concerning offices of insurance? Did you ever make an estimate of the number of candles, fires, and other combustibles which are nightly in use in the city of London? Has it never occurred to you that there certainly must exist a vast quantity of caution, in order for so many thousands of people to inhabit one place, and yet to have so few of the dreadful accidents at which the mind shudders, whenever it recollects them?

How much, if you have considered this subject, must your alarms have been increased, when you have heard

the coaches of the fashionable world rolling through the streets at all hours of the night, and have remembered the number of coachmen, stable boys, footmen, ladies' maids, and menials, who, still more than their lords and ladies masters and mistresses, are overpowered with watching and fatigue, and anxiously desirous of sweetly sinking into sleep!

Has it not, I say, appeared to you almost miraculous that, in this multitudinous city, under these and innumerable other dangerous circumstances, so small a number of destructive accidents happen?

But they happen now and then. The house of Mr. Saville was old, full of dry timber, and with wainscotted apartments. Sir, between the hours of four and five, I was once more and effectually awakened; not by the knocking of Lady Jane's footmen, but by the

night-watch, the twirling of rattles, the beating of staves against the door, and the dreadful cry of Fire! fire! fire!

How this fire happened I neither know, nor is it to the purpose to inquire: it was supposed to be occasioned by the sleepiness of Lady Jane's woman, for it certainly began in her apartment. The progress it made was rapid indeed: the firemen, when it was quelled, said they had seldom seen it equalled; but the circumstances, after the alarm was given, had nearly proved tragical indeed.

It raged so fiercely in the apartment of the maid, where it began, that she could no otherwise escape than by flinging herself out of the window. Fortunately, there was a balcony to the house, which projected from the first floor; and into that she fell, and escaped with life.

The Savilles, father and son, as well as Lady Jane, all slept on the second floor: the sudden fright had brought them all together, below, when the screams of the daughter of Lady Jane were heard, with the utmost violence, above; and were echoed by those of her distracted mother.

I was by the side of them: the elder Mr. Saville was far from alert, and young George called aloud, to the footmen, to run and save their young lady; at the same time offering any reward. Not one of them would stir: it appeared to be certain death, so violent was the fire in that part of the house.

Whether I had greater courage than George, or was impelled by other emotions, is beyond my knowledge, though I suspect that both concurred, I rushed up stairs, notwithstanding the suffocating

smoke, burst open the door, caught the almost lifeless Miss Saville in my arms, and brought her safe below.

This service was no sooner performed than Mr. Saville, Senior, broke into exclamations. "My box! Where is my box? My box with bonds, title-deeds! I am ruined! It is in the closet up two pair of stairs; can nobody get my box?"

The danger appeared no less than before, and not a creature moved. Prompted alike by my first success, my anxious desire to do another good action, and no doubt a hope that I should that way effectually silence Mr. Saville, I with no less alacrity, following the directions he gave, ran to the closet and, once more happy in my efforts, brought him his box also in safety.

The firemen were not yet arrived;

otherwise, perhaps, I had been deprived of these glorious achievements. As it was, I had the happiness to be the hero of the night.

CHAPTER XIII.

Freaks of Fortune: Thanks and Gratitude: what pleased me best: the Charms of Henrietta: youthful Hearts are kind: Impediments to Love: an affecting Apostrophe, and oblique Re-proof: Lady Jane's Cause of Jealousy: Evils that may and Evils that may not be avoided: poetical Advice.

How strange are the vagaries of this good lady, Fortune! Do you not perceive, Madam, how she daily gives distress to one person, and, by the very same event, joy to another? The trick she played Mr. Saville had nearly ruined his fortune, and deprived him of a most lovely daughter; while, at the same time, it placed me on the

pinnacle of glory! I grant that it was a pinnacle erected on a sandy foundation; but so is every monument constructed by this capricious lady. Be patient, therefore; I shall presently be obliged to descend.

Instead now of fearing the eye of Mr. Saville, I was regarded by him as his savior! His first acknowledgments to me were of the most lively kind; that they should afterward gradually die away, as they did, is but one of the daily operations of the human mind. We frequently talk of for ever; but nobody, I suppose, will deny that we frequently talk nonsense.

With respect to the thanks and the raptures of Lady Jane, nothing could equal them, for a week; and a week is a long while, when we remember that she was a woman of fashion.

Young George, too, was lavish of praise; but, having so severe a me-

mento on his mind, it is not wonderful that his ecstasies were entirely contained within the bounds of common sense. Not to mention that my glory was very similar to his disgrace.

A place of residence for the family was necessary, and a house ready furnished was soon found, so that the inconvenience was little. Neither was the loss by fire great, if any; for Mr. Saville, Senior, was too attentive a calculator to neglect insurance. I do not pretend to say that a man, who becomes his own insurance broker, does not on an average deprive general insurers of great gain. Nor, perhaps, was Mr. Saville unacquainted with this; but he happened on this subject to prefer safety to speculation.

Of all my grateful admirers, however, the admiration and the gratitude that lay nearest to my heart, from which it was never afterward

severed, was that of Miss Henrietta Saville; for it was as sincere as it was ardent, expressive, and sweet to my soul!

I was exactly of that age when the affections are wholly unadulterated. With the purest of thoughts, from my first being a part of the family, I had always regarded Henrietta: her form promised to be that of an angel; her manners were so complacent, and gentle, that they stole upon every heart; and her intelligence greatly indeed exceeded her years. She almost seemed to have engrossed the refined and spiritual intellect of the family.

I had always beheld her with respect, she had constantly treated me kindly, and certain ideas and emotions, which had previously taken birth, were immeasurably increased by the accident of the fire. We were both young, and were not considered as any thing

more than playfellows ; beside, we were not equals : but young people, of such an age, often do not think themselves quite so inexperienced and unimportant as their superiors imagine

One thing was greatly unfavorable to hope, and that was the inequality of fortune between us, which would not suffer us to cherish silly ideas, such as those that the passion of love are generally founded upon. No, would not suffer ! Alas ! I sighed and said so, often and often. Oh ! But it was such a delight to think of Henrietta ! Of having borne her in my arms ! Saved her from the raging flames ! When no creature on earth had the courage to face death ! I had braved it for her sake ! Yes, Yes ! It was for her sake ! But it was foolish to recollect it ! She could never be mine ! Did she ever remember that fearful night ? Did she ever think of me ? I could never forget ! No, never !

Such were my reveries, when this subject entered my mind. You, my experienced Sir, very well know how much *never forget* means.

Henrietta was remarkable for a delicate discrimination, young as she was, and an ardent desire not only to be virtuous but to promote virtue. Her praise of the action I had performed was conveyed with an exquisite sensibility! Having spoken, she sighed and added: "Ah, Mr. Bryan, how charming a thing it is to be good! Surely nobody would ever be otherwise, if they did but recollect themselves! and it is a thousand pities that people, who are so ready to do good themselves, should ever be so forgetful as to do any thing of which they must afterward repent! Don't you think it is, Mr. Bryan?"

What could I answer? How could I dissent from so sweet an appeal?

And yet it had a taste—a something not quite palatable—it savored a little of reproach.

Being on this subject, I must further notice that she took occasion, some days after, when our contest at billiards had no doubt come to her knowledge, gently to chide her brother, George, in my hearing, concerning his inclination for play; from which, with surprising earnestness and the tears in her eyes, she begged of him to desist. She forbore to address herself directly to me; but I was conscious her design was that the impression, if she could make any, should be double: nor is it easy to conceive the ardor and persuasion, yet the mildness, with which she spoke.

I can assure you, Madam, that many a mother might have received lessons of improvement from this young daughter! But Lady Jane, on

the contrary, being excessively fond of admiration, and willing to engross it all to herself, began already to be jealous of her own child.

Lady Jane deemed she had not yet had half her fill of pleasure ; and, being but a young woman, could not endure to recollect she was so old a mother. To see Henrietta well grown, daily improving in graceful demeanor, and beginning to assume the beautiful symmetry of which her form was susceptible, and which visitors could none of them forbear to notice, was far from that source of gratification, to Lady Jane, which those who bestowed their praises on Henrietta supposed. She certainly could not but take some delight in such a daughter ; but it was a continual cause of mortification to find that, while she almost desired to pass for a girl herself, the presence of this daughter not only betrayed her age, but, occasioned people to suppose

it even greater than it was ; while she felt herself positive, from the intelligence which her glass, her maid, her milliner, hair-dresser, mantua-maker, and every person and thing about her gave, that no creature would guess her at more than one and twenty. Nay, there were days on which she did not look above eighteen ! And to be—put out of countenance by such *a great girl* ! It was vexatious ! abominable !

There are evils, Madam, real or imaginary, that are every day growing worse and worse ; and this was one of them. You yourself, charming as you now are, must hereafter go to bed every night and rise every morning with grey hairs, rheum in your eyes, and toothless gums, if you have the happiness of long life, and are not exempt from its usual concomitants. It is rather the medium, through which things are viewed, than the things

themselves, that we think bright or cloudy. I have, in my portfolio, a short poem, which, though it can never apply to your conduct, sweet-tempered lady as you are, may be quite apropos, in its moral, to some of your friends. Here therefore it is, very much at their service, and much good may it do them! Pray, Madam, be kind enough to point it out to them.

TO DELIA.

Blame not thy glass, and blame not me,
Shouldst thou see what thou wouldst not see:
Think not the sated eye hath spied
One blemish grateful love should hide:
Nor urge, with much too captious tongue,
I thought thee once more fair and young.

'Tis not thy freckles, they were fair;
I'd think them beauty spots, and swear
Thy teeth were of an iv'ry white!
Thine eyes were liquid blue and bright!
Thy shape were slender, nay suppose
Thy cheek surpass'd the blooming rose!

Fancy should sweetly thee endow
With auburn locks, to grace thy brow !
With passion most devout, I'd swear
Those auburn locks were native there !
December snows should ne'er prevail
On me to think thy lip were pale !

No, not a spot should eye reveal,
Hadst thou the wit but to conceal,
What's worse than ugliness of face,
What Beauty's self can't turn to grace,
What makes thee wrinkled, lean, and old,
That hideous hateful thing—a Scold.

CHAPTER XIV.

Fashionable Love: Doubts of Prudence, and convenient Advice: the Doubts, Caution, and Conduct, of Mr. Saville: Propensities to be good: the Versatility of Human Affairs, and the Illusion of Life.

OF the manner in which the mind grows warm and cold, of its changes, and of the heat with which it will pursue an object, to-day, and will be weary of the chace, to-morrow, I shall not now stay to inquire: my present purpose is but to remind the reader of the fact. How did the Earl of Allspice, a man of *bon ton*, adore his youthful bride, for the first ten days, or a fortnight! Yet they had not been married

a year before the following epigram written on them was in circulation :

' Your lady, my Lord, for thus fame loudly
sings,

' Has beauty, and virtue, and other choice
things.'

" Indeed!" cried his lordship: " Egad, may
be so!"

" I only can answer, 'Tis more than I know."

Since these revolutions of mind are common to men, the conduct of Mr. Saville toward me is easily accounted for. About three weeks after the fire, he thus addressed me :

" I have had great doubts in my mind, Mr. Bryan, concerning the best manner in which I could serve you. I know it was the intention of your deceased friend to have completed your classical education, have entered you at the university, and have bred you an ecclesiastic.

" After his decease, though I did

not fully explain my thoughts, I had some such intentions myself; but I foresaw the possibility of obstacles, and you have too truly verified the thing of which I was in fear. Of that, however, I will say no more; for I acknowledge that, on the night of that painful gambling evening, you rendered the family great service, very great indeed; yes, on that very night when, I own, it was my intention never to have had any further intercourse with you.

“On mature reflection, I do not now think the office of a clergyman so properly adapted to your education as I could wish: I have therefore spoken to a friend, who is a capital merchant in the city, and who has agreed to take you into his counting-house on my recommendation; where there will be a much greater probability that you should rise in the world than if you were to become a curate, or could

even obtain some trifling church preferment.

“I am well persuaded there can and will be no objection, on your part, to this arrangement: therefore, as my friend dines with me to-day, if you please, I will introduce you to him, when further arrangements may be made; and afterward, I should hope, your own good conduct will be your future security. Having procured you a new friend, I would willingly persuade myself that you will know his value.”

Young as I was, I could perfectly understand, from this harangue, that the adventure of the billiard-table was far from forgotten. At that time, I construed it as a trait of injustice, denoting a narrow mind, and an unforgiving disposition: but, had I been the head of a family the owner of great landed property, and the father of a

son, in whom all my hopes centered, and to whose son and son's son I was earnestly desirous my estates should devolve, it is almost certain that I should have had other feelings, and a different view of the subject.

Not that I mean to describe the elder Mr. Saville, or the younger, as a man or men of ardent and highly generous feelings: especially the son, who had quite a sufficient mixture of the selfish, in his composition, to guard him against any extravagant acts of generosity.

His father, however, had acted liberally toward me; and had proved at least that he could propose to himself to do good: but what degree of perseverance he might have had, and how far he could have bestowed money upon an orphan, instead of expending it on some tempting new purchase, or any other of the desires which wordly

men, and all men, delight to gratify, are questions that were not brought to the test, and therefore must remain undecided.

At my present time of life, I cannot disapprove the determination, which it seems he then made, of not suffering me to be the travelling companion of George. Perhaps the father rightly enough conjectured that the son had a sufficient propensity for the gaming-table, without the aid of a tempter.

With respect to the plan of educating me to be a country curate, or even as Mr. Saville said of obtaining some trifling church preferment, I unfortunately looked on it with contempt. I little understood in what the happiness of life consists; that sweet content is the greatest of riches; and that the pleasures of idleness, or of fashion, are but delusive demons, that incessantly torment those by whom they are pur-

sued. I knew not how beneficial, to the people among whom he may live, and how useful even in seclusion, having leisure and talents, a country curate may become. Oh that I had then understood the character and the worth of my dear friend, the vicar of our parish!

In any case, I was introduced, or rather recommended, as a dependent, who was to perform the duty of a clerk to his friend, Mr. Hazard. I had willingly given my consent; for I had a sincere desire rather to devote myself to honest industry than to be ranked as the companion of the vicious, and be obliged to practise arts, which, as my understanding opened, I began sincerely to despise.

Let me however observe, it is to youth a dreadful trial to have the means of vice in their power; for their passions are in the utmost danger, or rather

in the greatest certainty, of rendering temptation irresistible. At present, I can sit and reason on such situations very calmly ; but, when the blood runs high, only let the desire be strong and the reason quickly becomes confused ; if not wholly excluded from all further participation, in the direction of the actions, either of mind or body.

The corollary of this, my good Sir, is, that, though my inclinations were at certain sober times of the day good, my youthful passions were thoroughly untamed, and, when seasons, circumstances, and temptation made their dreadful attacks, I was still in terrible danger. Briefly, I may hereafter either fight or run, conquer or be conquered, wear the noble wreath of virtue or feel my brow encircled and stung by the serpents of vice, as the various turns of fate may direct.

The turns of fate ! Ah ! From them

what age is free! I cannot mention them but I involuntarily begin to moralize. Poor mortals! Where are we? What are we doing? Whither going? When shall we die? Why do we live? How is it all to end? Observe me, I speak but of mundane matters; in which I cannot but, sometimes, sigh to think we are so short-sighted!

Again, I say,—Poor mortals! How are we liable to be chronicled! Nay read! *Died in his stall, in Olive-court, Southwark, RUFUS LANE, a cobbler. He was first an officer in the army, then sold out, and kept a grocer's shop, which he quitted for a commission in the Spanish army, but left the service for killing a brother officer in a duel: he was five years valet to a single gentleman in England: on his master's death he kept a chandler's shop, in which he failed, when necessity obliged him to turn cobbler*.*

* Annual Register, 1774, p. 154.

Illusion is the life of man !

It passes in a trance !

And each fond hope, and each new plan,

Which he with sage precaution has conceiv'd,

Is but a new romance,

That, being ended, seems too wild to be believ'd!

Thus can the Panoramic art

Deceive the distant eye :

But cities, hills, and seas depart,

Rocks, walls, and castles, all to shadows fade,

If we approach too nigh,

And view the simple means by which we were
betray'd.

CHAPTER XV.

Physiognomy a general Science: Mr. Hazard described: Traits of Character: Utility of Merchants: Benefits of Speculation: numberless and surprising Projects.

WHETHER he will or will not allow it, every man is a physiognomist, and either likes or dislikes a face the first time it is seen: yet, so imperfect are his judgments, that I have never yet known a person who did not correct several of his mistakes, concerning these first impressions, after having become but a little acquainted with the stranger, witnessed his behaviour, and heard him converse.

Unless in characters of great insipidity, the best description of behaviour

must be charming indeed, if it do but approach the reality; but conversations may be tolerably well remembered, and will afford no bad resemblances of the originals from whom the sketches are made.

Mr. Hazard was a man about forty, of a square form, muscular, and corpulent, but active. His voice was loud, his speech fluent, and one of his frequent gesticulations was a lusty thump on the table. His face was broad and red, his lips large, his eyebrows black, his nose short, and his cheeks destined, if he lived long, to hang in folds and deep wrinkles, such as forerun or belong to the wane of life. His forehead was not high; but there was a prominence, in the center of it, which some physiognomists affirm is a certain sign of effrontery: in any case, I believe; it denotes enterprise, and is allied to one of the greatest gifts of man,

true courage; but then, say your nice observers, if it swell too much, so as but to be a line too large, it degenerates, and alike partakes of rashness and impudence.

I must leave these important matters in doubt, for the present, not having yet completed my course of physiognomical experiments. At present, I do but give the opinions of other people, and not my own profound remarks; which, when I have made them——astonishing!

Addressing himself to me, Mr. Hazard said—

“Upon my word, young gentleman, you are very lucky to have such a friend and protector as Mr. Saville! As I said, when the thing was first proposed to me, I have not the least occasion for any person in my counting-house: but any thing so much as mentioned to me by my very good friend here, Mr.

Saville, why it comes with a recommendation that is not to be refused. I hope you understand *that*, Mr. Perdue, and properly know how much you are indebted to the recommendation of such a friend.

“ When I was your age, ay, ay! I should have been happy enough, could I have found any such protector, and have been brought at once, at the very first step, into such a house as mine! I am the builder of my own fortune! Do you know, Lady Jane (suppose him turning himself to face her ladyship) do you know, Lady Jane, that I have consignments from the four quarters of the world! We merchants are more necessary, to the fashions and luxuries of life, than perhaps your ladyship would suppose. Why this dessert service, it is the best French china; it is of the Séve manufacture; the painting is grand! beautiful! very fine! quite masterly! a

very elegant service it is; and, would you believe, now, that you are indebted to me for it? I was the importer! I'll wager a trifle that your ladyship bought it, about two years ago, at Christie's."

'Then you would lose, Mr. Hazard,' rejoined her ladyship; 'for I bought it, since we were burned out, of my own china-man.'

"Oh! ay, true! Like enough! I see the routine! he had it of Christie."

'Do merchants like you then supply auctioneers?'

"Not immediately; our concerns are much too vast! but at second hand. Our foreign consignments, I assure your ladyship, are immense! from all countries, and of all kinds! You have been well educated, Mr. Perdue, and are no doubt entirely at home in the foreign languages? They are quite essential to trade, especially the Spanish and Italian."

I answered that I thoroughly understood French, but had little knowledge beside, except of the classics: however, I had sometimes looked into dialogues in grammars, nay had pondered over Metastasio, and Don Quixote, and had been surprised to find I understood so much of them. From the similarity which I found they had to the Latin, I supposed I could acquire them easily.

“ Ay, ay; so as to write mercantile letters: no great learning I believe is necessary: you may be of use in that department. The concerns of our house, Mr. Saville, as you know, will find employment for every body. I need not tell you how great they are.

“ Your ladyship, perhaps, is not so well acquainted with the nature of trade? Why a single speculation will sometimes make a man's fortune! A merchant ought to know the price of every article, in every market! This very

morning, I gave bills to the amount of fifty thousand pounds for—no! it must not be known for what! Your ladyship would think it a trifling article, but it must be had; in daily use; people want it continually, and I have bought up all that was in the market. A man might make a scarcity of matches, by buying up all the brimstone. Pray, Mr. Saville, what is the value of land at present?”

‘Land sells very low: a friend of mine bought an estate last week at six and twenty years purchase.’

“If I could hear of an advantageous offer, no matter how large, the land well timbered, rents that would bear to be doubled, common land on the manor, that might be enclosed—There are great hits of that kind. I knew an estate that was bought, and the purchase money, every farthing of it, repaid, within five years, by the timber. Has

the good news at Lloyd's reached you, Mr. Saville? The Jamaica fleet is arrived, and I have sugars of my own and consignments to an immense amount. Do you know, my Lady, I had an audience in Downing-street! Mum! The minister is to make his loan next week! The church of Saint Clement, in the narrow part of the Strand, I am told, must come down: if so, the building materials will be a good speculation. Apropos of pulling down: I should like to undertake the rebuilding of London-bridge, on a plan of my own. By the by, I wonder that nobody has yet thought of contracting with the Dutch fishing smacks, for all the fish that are brought to Billingsgate! The contractor in five years might buy and sell the Duke of Bedford."

CHAPTER XVI.

Arrangements, and Change of Abode, useful Studies: Family Plans: the Education of Henrietta: delightful Visits, which are seldom permitted.

I CANNOT remember the number of projects, with which the brain of Mr. Hazard teemed; and by every one of which, according to his account, fortunes were suddenly to be raised. The brewery was a sure card: the distillery was a great monopoly, but he had a scheme by which the monopolizers might easily be circumvented. Part of his plans were to erect a chain of water-mills on the banks of the Thames; build an arsenal, and contract for the whole navy of England; establish an office of general in-

surance; cultivate all the waste lands, beginning with Ascott-heath; drain the fens of Lincolnshire; set up a manufactory for straw shoes; pay off the national debt; in short, scarcely any thing to him appeared impossible. He had a busy brain, and overflowed with animal spirits.

I have had occasion to speak much of gamblers, but it cannot escape the acute reader that commerce itself, in the hands of men like Mr. Hazard, is gambling by wholesale.

Respecting myself, however, an arrangement immediately took place, and I removed into Throgmorton-street.

Hitherto, I have said but little concerning my mental acquisitions; and it is with pleasure I have to relate, that, I took considerable delight in their pursuit. My memory was strong, I had an aptitude to learn, and study

was rather a recreation than a labor. It must not however be forgotten that dissipation was frequently indulged, and study as entirely neglected. I could acquire miscellaneous knowledge with facility, but it was superficial: however, it enabled me to prate, and to persuade those, who knew little and therefore believed much, that my stock of learning was uncommon.

I mention this at present, not because my knowledge at this period of my life had great apparent influence on my actions, but, as a fact which is necessary to be stated. I must nevertheless observe, that, it is scarcely possible for a youth to be much conversant with books without deriving great benefit from them, especially in his moral propensities. The dear friends that I had lost, my sweet and loving

lady mother and my honored guardian, had early tinctured my mind with the love of reading.

In conformity to the discourse of Mr. Hazard, at the table of Mr. Saville, my business in his counting-house was in the department of the foreign correspondence; and I applied myself with such diligence, to the study of the Spanish and Italian, that, with the aid of masters, I was perfectly able, in a few months, to transact mercantile business: that is, to interpret and answer foreign letters, and understand the rate of exchange. Book-keeping, in time, also became familiar to me; and I knew the use of the Waste, the Day-book, and the Ledger.

Notwithstanding my book-keeping abilities, I can now give no further account of the state of my finances, at this period, than that it was fluctuating, like my wishes, and my means of supply.

My share in the loss of my friend George had been duly paid, and thus was my purse for a time replenished.

In pursuit of their plan, the family of the Savilles separated: the father and son began their travels, and Lady Jane, according to agreement, remained in London with Henrietta.

The feelings of Lady Jane, respecting her daughter, necessarily influenced her actions. For some time, Henrietta remained under her care; or rather under the care of a governess; and of one who, happily, possessed principles and understanding: two rare gifts, reward them who can: they are seldom indeed within the purchase of parents! But, as the beauty and accomplishments of Henrietta increased, so did the tormenting jealousy of Lady Jane.

There was at this time a well bred woman, who, not having a better pro-

vision, undertook to educate young ladies with all the finish of behaviour, and accomplishments, proper for the first circles of fashion. So highly was she esteemed that it was thought fortunate to find a vacancy for a pupil in her house.

The name of this lady was Vaughan, and under her care Henrietta was put; greatly to the satisfaction of that lady, who immediately perceived what an acquisition such a pupil would be to her establishment.

In despite of obstacles and inequalities of fortune, of which I could not be insensible, I still had a desire to be remembered by Henrietta, and long continued my visits, both while she was under the care of her governess, and when removed to the house of Mrs. Vaughan: but, in each case, she was subject to the eye of persons too prudent to suffer any thing but open visits, and

general conversation; nor were these admitted, except rarely.

The claims I had, as the youth who had saved the life of Henrietta, so far pleaded for me that I was acknowledged as her friend; and this was a blessing, which every coming month told me had been cheaply purchased, though at the risk of life: for, oh, how increasingly lovely did every coming month make her appear! Not a single form of body, not a feature of the face, not a look, smile, or word, that could have been changed, except for something infinitely inferior! so at least my young judgment and warm affection decided: nor, on this subject, were they often in an error. As far as mortal can be, Henrietta was indeed divine!

CHAPTER XVII.

A Kind of Promise, with a Proviso: Reasons for being cautious: a Word concerning my former School-fellows: the Views and Pursuits of Henry Fairman.

THE confinement of a counting-house was not, at first, in any manner suited to my taste: however, I had entered it, confessedly, with the privilege of not being considered as a menial clerk, who was to drudge all day and every day alike; but on the liberal plan of a person who had expectations: though what those expectations were no man could tell.

The fact is, I was considered as under the patronage of Mr. Saville, who had the justice so far to remember I had

once served him, as to stipulate with Mr. Hazard that, after a certain term of years, if I behaved faithfully, and rendered him that service of which ability joined to fidelity is capable, I should have a small share in the partnership, and my name on the firm.

It was not thought advisable immediately to inform me of this, but rather to hint that something desirable might happen to be done for me, if my conduct should be consistent and proper. Had I been told more, I might have taken airs upon myself that would have offended others, and been to my own injury. Thus they reasoned, and it might be difficult to prove that their reasoning was not just. Pride, youth, and great ardor, are combustibles that demand precaution.

How it happened that Mr. Saville had so much interest with Mr. Hazard I knew not, at the time: but that is a

secret with which the reader will hereafter be made acquainted.

And now, before I relate what afterward befel me, while time is rolling on and I am acquiring mercantile knowledge, let me just mention a few particulars of my old school-fellows.

Three of them, Patrick M'Neale, Alexander Gordon, and Maximilian Lord Froth, had been removed to Oxford; there to increase that kind of knowledge for which each had the greatest propensity. Knowledge of all kinds is to be acquired at Oxford; for it is impossible to assemble youth, in a multitude, and so to seclude them, during the effervescence of the passions, they having money, as that temptation shall not be too frequently before their eyes! To this city I shall not follow them; and, if ever I should happen to fall in company with them again, the reader shall be told.

Henry Fairman, who was three years older than myself, had entered a student of the Middle Temple. His parents intended him for the law; and, obedient as he was to their wishes in every thing, he followed their advice.

The praise belonging to this is quite as much due to his parents as to himself. It argues great foresight, and even wisdom, in a father, when a son, having himself lively faculties and a powerful mind, follows the track to which his father points.

Though Henry and I were not intimate friends, for our pursuits were different, we yet were acquainted, and had wishes for each other that might truly be called friendly. In his youth, he was always more recluse than myself; a severe student, with excellent moral habits, such as are seldom the

lot of youth: he was therefore my superior.

However, while I continued to behave well, I loved him: he was never hateful to me, but when I was hateful to myself. Order and dissipation, good sense and folly, virtue and vice, are always odious to each other.

Eager in the pursuit of his object, and convinced, as well by his own observation as the arguments of his father and uncle, of the real dignity and worth of an honest advocate, especially admiring those judges who preserve their sacred character free from taint, and administer justice with the unshaken desire that it may be faithfully distributed, Henry applied himself assiduously to his profession. He not only studied the best authorities, and the most intricate cases, but entered himself as a pupil in an office of the highest repute.

Previous to his appearing at the bar, every means were pursued by which he might best understand the very difficult task, which he found he had undertaken. Shackled, as he soon perceived himself to be, by the forms of law, he never neglected its philosophy: he was intent upon its pure spirit, of which he determined not to lose sight, how much soever he should find it at variance with the dead letter.

What guardian angels are men like these, to the society in which they live! nay to the world itself, for their example acts as a charm, and ameliorates what it cannot entirely purify!

Suppose him a young and unknown councillor at law; see him struggling to obtain the rank he so highly deserves; for so must every man struggle, no matter what his abilities; imagine him contending with and conquering the

obstinacy of youth. I must leave him, for the present, and return to my own affairs. The reader will please to remember that I and Henry Fairman continue to be acquainted.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Caution as necessary to the Old as to the Young: Kindness the most effectual Reformer: a Picture of my own Situation: Description of a Genius: another Match at Billiards: the Manners and Demeanor of my Antagonist.

THE end I have in writing these memoirs is, not only to warn youth of the dangers of the world, and wean them from its vices, but especially to induce the mature of age, under whose guardianship youth are placed, to think seriously of the manner in which young people ought to be treated; to consider what have been the education, events, and continual as well as accidental circumstances, under which they

have been placed, the conduct by which evil habits have been acquired, and the possible means by which they may be reformed.

Is that most desirable end, reform, to be obtained by severity? To the tender plant, rigor is always dangerous, and sometimes fatal. It stifles hope, kills self-respect, and excites to acts of desperation. What heart, when passion hurries youth and inexperience to the brink of headlong ruin, does not feel compassion?

The more the heart has humanity, and the mind understanding, the greater will that compassion be. Ought it to be disguised? Ought it not to be expressed, entirely, as it is felt? When the heart pities and the mind foresees, ought not that pity and that foresight to flow purely from the lips? Would not their persuasion be more

effectual than threats, prisons, or punishment?

Passion and punishment uniformly inspire that resistance which is called obstinacy, and which, by hardening itself, becomes deaf to or incapable of instruction.

Fear also confuses, till right and wrong are no longer distinguishable. When, on the contrary, advice is given with heartfelt friendship, that soothes, encourages, and forbodes good, it never fails to produce some part of the effect which heartfelt friendship intended.

I have lost my dear and loving lady mother, I have lost my sainted governor, and here I am, turned adrift on a tempestuous sea, without any friendly pilot.

I am arrived at the period, spring-tide, and full career of the dangerous passions, increased by dangerous propensities.

I am unaccustomed to self-denial, or to the want of money that may be idly squandered. If my eye sends a wish to my heart, my hand is instinctively in my pocket. I feel that I have these defects, and that feeling sometimes afflicts me deeply: while at others all such sensations are dead in me, and I eagerly and unguardedly pursue that which happens to be the object of desire.

I have no understanding of the economy of time, nor am I sufficiently under the guidance of those who have. The foreign correspondence of the house is my department, and I have one day much to do, another little. My efforts are desultory. I am obliged to give a part of my time to mercantile business: another part is devoted to study, when I am happy enough to feel the sacred thirst of knowledge: but more than a due proportion is idled

away ; or, which is worse, given to bad company, and bad pursuits.

I am lured away, many a time when I little intend it, by this idler, with whom I am acquainted, and by that : I cannot refrain from the billiard-table : new resolves are daily made, and daily broken : my excellence at the game of billiards is my misfortune ; for, while it flatters my vanity, it supplies my pocket. Every new temptation promises sweets unknown before, and each return of repentance is increasingly bitter.

Such was the state of my feelings and pursuits, at the time of which I speak : that is, during my residence in the house of Mr. Hazard. Here I acquired the appellation of *a genius* : by which is vulgarly understood, a person who can, when he pleases, perform extraordinary things ; and who, though subject to numberless irregularities and

follies, claims the right, in consequence of his abilities, of having them all passed over in silence.

Oh, that I had the power to impress, on the heart of every human being, the ruin and misery that arise, from the indulgence of the passion of gaming!

One evening, a youth, something older than myself, came into the billiard room, which I frequented, and asked me to play. We were wholly unknown to each other. I had been losing, and answered I would not play for less than a guinea; he, without the least hesitation, replied, it should be for one, or for five, as I pleased. Few players could excel me, unless I gave odds: however, I was cautious enough, finding the youth so bold, to play at first only for a guinea.

He was a fine player, and at the end of the first hour had won two or three games. He then challenged me to play

for larger sums, and, being piqued, I readily complied.

We played, for several hours, with various success; till, at length, I was so far the conqueror that I had won twenty guineas. He thought it extraordinary, lost his temper, and offered to play double or quits.

To describe the various petty incidents, of such a scene, would be tedious and disgusting: the end of it was that I won two hundred and fifty pounds, which was all his money, beside his watch, and every thing that was valuable in his possession; and he left the room in an anguish of mind, which it was impossible for him to disguise.

He was nearly my equal in play, and therefore the match had continued so late that I was ashamed to return home, and I slept at a coffee-house. As I have said, I was *a genius*, and my irregularities excited no surprise. I was

beside just then in high favour ; for I had finished the settling of a foreign account, which no person in the house but myself could well comprehend.

I ought to have mentioned that the youth, with whom I played, was genteel in person, elegant of manners, and in every respect had the demeanor of a gentleman ; except at the moments when what he deemed to be very ill success, at play, occasioned him to lose his temper and recollection.

There is perhaps nothing that will more effectually try the good breeding, and temper of a man, than the vicissitudes of gaming.

When I became cool, and reflected on the behaviour of the young gentleman, the sigh he heaved a little before quitting the room, the wildness of his eye when all his money was lost, the despair with which he requested I would stake fifteen guineas against his

gold watch and seals, and the concentrated agony after his loss with which he exclaimed—"It's done! It's over! It's past recall!"—then hurried out of the room, I felt considerably uneasy. I wished it had been any other sort of a person, whose money I had won. But, as he said, the thing was past recall. He was a stranger; I knew not where to find him: though I was sorry to think of his distress!

CHAPTER XIX.

A periodical Visit to Henrietta: Affliction of Mrs. Vaughan: her Son the Cause of that Affliction: Incidents by which I am surprised and overwhelmed: a Desire to take Flight.

It happened, about five days after this adventure, that the period, which caution and propriety had prescribed, arrived for my customary visit to Henrietta. I sat conversing with her and her friend, when Mrs. Vaughan, the lady under whose care they both were placed, entered.

Notwithstanding her habitual equanimity and ease of behaviour, affliction was visible in her countenance: it was to fulfil a duty that she came, and sat with us: her conversation was not

pleasant and unembarrassed as usual : she said but little, spoke in a tone of concealed grief, and now and then a sigh escaped her ; though many deep ones were suppressed.

Henrietta had too much sensibility for this to pass unperceived, though the same cause restrained and forbade her to notice what she saw and felt. Shortly after, the friend of Henrietta left the room, and I ventured to say to Mrs. Vaughan—" I fear, Madam, you are not well."

She burst into a flood of tears and replied—" No, Sir, I am not well, indeed ; nor ever shall be again : my disease is incurable !"

With the most tender affection, Henrietta entreated her to say if it were any way possible to give her relief, or consolation. I joined in the request, and Mrs. Vaughan at length replied—" Of relief I see not any hope ;

but, Mr. Perdue; for your sake, I will relate what it is that now distracts my mind. Pray pardon me, when I say it is for your sake; but I have heard your friends frequently lament that you indulged yourself in that which daily proves itself to be one of the worst of vices; I mean gaming. I hope you no longer give yourself this indulgence; but, if you do, the story which I have to tell ought to be a serious warning to you."

I was in the presence of Henrietta, before a matron too whose proper conduct and excellence in life made irregularity shrink from her, abashed. Till that moment, I had never felt such trepidation! I dreaded what was to come, my conscience flushed in my face, and I almost feared that it was me, myself, of whom she was about to speak. I was not far from the truth.

"Do not blame me, I am a mother,"

said Mrs. Vaughan, bursting into a fresh flood of tears, "and my son is ruined!"

"Good God!" exclaimed I, "ruined? Which way, Madam?"

"By gaming. The loss of money is not so great but that it might be supported; but he has lost himself, lost his character, betrayed his trust, and that he may for ever conceal himself and his disgrace from the world, if possible, he has entered on board a man of war. I had educated him with a truly maternal care: with every good principle of morality, I had endeavoured to give him every accomplishment of a man: he was the admiration of all who knew him! What is he now? Lost! Lost to himself, lost to me, lost to society! You, Mr. Perdue, are entrusted with concerns that are not your own: so was he. His character is never more to be retrieved, and I

tell this to you, and you alone, Mr. Perdue, in the affliction and dread of my heart, lest you should, some time or other, plunge into, or suffer yourself to be hurried away by, the same pernicious vortex !”

I listened in terror, and then said—
“ What was the sum that he lost, Madam ?”

“ Two hundred and fifty pounds !”

I became pale as death ! My whole frame shook ! I could not keep myself still : I was in the awful presence of Henrietta !

“ Was not the money his own, Madam ?”

“ No : it would then only have occasioned distress ; now it has brought irretrievable ruin !”

“ To whom did it belong ?”

“ To Mr. Fairman, who is an army agent. My son was the principal clerk in his office ; the money was de-

signed to pay up the arrears of an officer, who is aged, sick, and in distress. Every way the transaction wears the appearance of baseness! I am sure my son is not base, though inveigled by the wicked arts of a gambler to his destruction!”

“ No, Madam—” I was about to deny a charge, as if intentionally made against myself. Every thing conspired no less against me than against the youth I had ruined. Mr. Fairman was the uncle of my young friend, Henry; and, to complete my confusion, I had the watch in my pocket, that I had won, the seals of which were remarkable; one of them especially, it was a seal ring, an antique, and had been given to her son by Mrs. Vaughan.

These seals had caught her eye, she requested Henrietta to retire, and then addressing me in a serious tone, said—

“ Pardon me, Mr. Perdue, but, if I

am not exceedingly mistaken, you have my son's watch in your pocket! Pray permit me to look?"

The sensations of the culprit, receiving sentence, scarcely could be more painful than those I felt! Every way confounded, I stood silent for a moment, then gave the watch hastily into her hand, and exclaimed—"For Heaven's sake, Madam, do not tell Henrietta! I am not so much to blame as I may appear: I will find your son, and save him, if it be possible!"

So saying, I hurried to get out of the house, eager to perform what I had promised, though not yet well conceiving the means.

CHAPTER XX.

An affecting Letter: the Emotions of a Mother: an ardent Request mutually made: young Vaughan on board the Tender: Surprise and Inquiry: sympathetic Feelings and Fears.

As I was going, Mrs. Vaughan caught my arm, and exclaimed—"Stay! I hear the knock of the postman, at the door; perhaps he brings a letter from my son!"

She rightly conjectured: the moment the superscription caught her eye, she saw it was his hand, broke it open, and read the following contents:

"Dear and honored Mother,

"As you are already acquainted with the whole crime of your son—do not

forget that I am your son, and that I once innocently smiled in your face!—My brain is distracted!—Yes, you know my crime, but not the bitterness of my repentance. When I recollected all that I had done, when I became fully aware that I had branded myself, for ever, a faithless dishonest wretch, when I beheld the agonies which you, my dear kind affectionate mother, must suffer, I seized an instrument of destruction, and was instantly about to plunge it to my heart. But it was these my mother's agonies that withheld the arm, thus wickedly raised to strike. I saw them! The sudden thought of what your horror would be, to behold me—! I cannot proceed. If you repay Mr. Fairman, I yet may do something to prove myself your son. Pray be patient! I will retrieve my honor, or honorably die. You shall yet see me a man. Send me, ah, send me your forgiveness! Do not disown me

for your son ! Oh write the word mother ! if you *can* add affectionate, do ! Say only—‘ Be good again, and I forgive !’ Suffer me to hope ! The present torments of my mind are perhaps all that I can endure.”

“Forgive him !” exclaimed the mother : “Oh, yes, from my soul ! He is perhaps dearer to my heart than ever. We can all of us do wrong, but we cannot all of us seriously enough and quickly enough repent.”

Then, recollecting the last line of the letter, she cried in the anguish of fear—“Fly to him, Mr. Perdue ! Assure him of my forgiveness and love ! Tell him it is greater than ever ! Save him from despair. I know not what part you have had in this transaction, nor will I lose a moment to inquire. Fly ! Here, at the bottom of his letter, you see where you may find him : he may expect an answer from me immediate-

ly, as soon as it can be brought by a porter. Fly, and give him consolation!"

Urged by every motive to obey, I once more repeated—"Oh, do not say a word to Henrietta!" and was instantly gone.

No hackney coach could have equalled the speed with which I traversed the streets: I was presently on board the tender. No one, there, knew more of young Vaughan, than that he had entered to serve his majesty, as a volunteer; though the roughest sailor present, seeing the dejection that sat on his countenance, the amenity of his behaviour, and the air that distinguished him so much above every one else, sympathized in his sufferings, even more than in their own, though most of them were pressed men.

His surprise was great at the sight of me. His first words were—"What is

your business, Sir, with me? You, I recollect, are the young gentleman to whom I lost my money. My mind at the time, I know, was disturbed; yet I surely can well remember that I paid all my debts."

"Yes, Sir," I replied; "but I have not paid all mine. I come from your mother."

"My mother, Sir? Do you know my mother? What of her? Is my mother ill? Has my vicious conduct——"

"No, no, Sir. Your mother is perfectly well! She loves you affectionately! She sends me to afford you every consolation! No mother on earth can have greater love for a son!"

The struggles of passion almost distorted his face, his eyes were swimming in tears, he hid them, turned his back, and said not a word. At that moment, it was impossible for him to speak.

When he had a little recovered himself, he thus continued—"The payment of Mr. Fairman is, I know, greatly inconvenient to my mother; but that would be a trifle, had I not shown myself unworthy ever again to be trusted! There is the sting! My mother is the only kind creature in the whole world that can forgive me. I have lost my character for ever!"

"And what have I?" said I. You are innocent, indeed, compared to me! A part of the money I won of you I have dissipated; but it shall be repaid, and the rest instantly restored."

"No, Sir," replied he, "to that I shall never consent. I do not know you; but I was informed, at the billiard room, that you were a gentleman, and you won my money fairly. Had I brought you to the same distress, perhaps, I might not have had your manly generosity, and compassion. I must suffer

the consequences of this act of vice ! It was occasioned, not by the desire of winning, but, by the cursed vanity of supposing myself a player not to be equalled : except by billiard markers, gamblers, and people with whom I never associate.”

“ Would that I could say the same !” I replied, and sighed as I spoke.

“ Pardon my curiosity, Sir ; but pray inform me how you came to know my mother ? Has she really sent you ? Do not, from any motives of false compassion, deceive me !”

I told him my name, repeated that of Henrietta, and the exclamation burst from his lips—“ Are you the happy youth, of whom she speaks with so much ardor ? Was it you who saved her from the flames ? I am satisfied to have been conquered by you.”

CHAPTER XXI.

A Touch of ridiculous Jealousy: a Letter from a Mother to a Son, which Sons and Mothers ought to read: a Thing forgotten, and a Thing performed: an Offer refused, and an Impulse of Impatience.

How much, or how little, was meant by this ejaculation I did not know; nor had I the courage to inquire, but I felt that it made me uneasy. I had not the most distant hope that Henrietta could ever be mine, yet I seemed to have encountered a rival; though I knew not which way it was possible, whatever the wishes of young Vaughan might be, for him to overcome impediments which were as great to him as to me.

After sitting some time, and making such inquiries as I thought necessary to guide me in my future intentions, on which I was eagerly bent, I was about to take my leave, when a porter arrived, who brought a letter from Mrs. Vaughan to her son. He opened it, saw my name, requested me to stay while he read, and when he had ended put it into my hand.

It is a letter which youth cannot read without benefit. I am therefore glad to give it a place in these memoirs.

“Dear Frederic, son of my heart! How could you doubt the love and forgiveness of a mother! In the sacred name of your Creator, as you love me, as you love yourself, and, above all, as you respect futurity, do not give way to despair! Your error is but the error of youth, and entirely of the kind that has been much too common, to

men of great talents and high virtues. Oh, scorn to yield to despair! Have pity on your mother! Remember the pangs I have suffered for you, the daily tender cares I bestowed on your infancy, the sweet hopes that then and to this hour I have always cherished, and do not further forget yourself, nor imagine it possible I can ever forget you! No, my son, despair is unworthy of you: courage, at this moment, is the only means to save you! Courage, that shall teach you to despise your fault, yet respect yourself. Courage, which shall embolden you to return to your master. Yes, tell him the truth, and the whole truth! Relate all you have done, and all you have suffered! Lay bare your heart to him, and, should he reject you, return to a mother's arms! But he is too good a man: he will discover how truly sensible you are of your error, and will delight to save you from

the ruin, which you thought inevitable. Only, let this be a warning to you; and, though it has indeed been a severe trial, your future prudence will thus be cheaply purchased. What has happened between you and Mr. Perdue I cannot say, but, if he would also take warning, the happiness would indeed be double! Perhaps the sight even of this hasty letter might bring good thoughts to his mind: let him see it, for I am well convinced there is virtue in his heart. Now is the time, my Frederic! Act with fortitude, on this occasion, my dear boy, and you will perhaps have escaped the greatest danger of your whole life. Oh! continue to be the son of my heart, and of my exalted hopes, and be certain that I shall everlastingly remain your affectionate mother,

“AUGUSTA VAUGHAN.

“Return me a single line! Say only that

you are well, and have taken courage! Have pity on the terrors of a mother! your letter has— No, I will not give way to such horrid alarms!—Only write!”

I returned the letter to Frederic, but I perceived that, in the anxiety of her haste, or rather in the confusion of her fears, Mrs. Vaughan had forgotten that her son, having entered himself, could not leave the tender, till means were taken by which he might be liberated. Fortunately, I had a sum sufficient in my pocket, and, quitting Frederic to make inquiries, I found the officer on board, who had the power to transact such business. It did not indeed happen to be difficult, Frederic being a landman.

He willingly consented to receive his freedom by my means, for he hoped, he said, to repay me the money in a short time. My purpose was very different, but I said little.

We were no sooner on shore than I requested him to return to his mother, promised to be with him in an hour, and hastened home, myself, in pursuit of the plan I had formed. Of part of the money I had won of him I was in possession, and I applied to a friend, who lent me fifty pounds, on my note, with which I made up the sum.

Having it complete, I hastened once more to the house of Mrs. Vaughan, where I found Frederic. I called him aside; to tell him my purpose; which was that he should receive the money back, that it might be immediately repaid to his master.

False notions of honor occasioned him to refuse, and in so positive a manner that my impatient ardor immediately suggested a different mode. Instead of arguing the point any longer, I hurried away to the counting-house of his master, to whom, as Mrs.

Vaughan had informed me, the whole transaction was known. Candor and truth were ever her guides: she had too much understanding, as well as goodness, to act with duplicity.

CHAPTER XXII.

Feelings and gambling Transactions described: a String of Questions not willingly answered: the Receiver as bad as the Thief: the sacred Nature of Trust and Servitude: the multifarious Affairs of the Metropolis, and how transacted: a Disappointment and a Departure.

I FOUND Mr. Fairman at his office, requested to speak to him, and being admitted, related my business.

I began with describing the maternal feelings of Mrs. Vaughan, and the penitence of Frederic. During this, I repeated the contents of the two letters, confessed my share in the gambling business, declared my grief and

shame, and concluded with saying that I was now come to repay the money, and humbly to petition Mr. Fairman would consent to hear, from Frederic himself, how truly penitent he was for the fault he had committed.

Instead of acting with the haste that my impetuosity expected, Mr. Fairman paused, considered, appeared to survey me, and at last asked—

“Do you come, Sir, on the part of Frederic Vaughan, to pay this money?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“At his desire; sent and deputed by him?”

I hesitated. “Not, directly.”

“Does he know that you are come?”

“I—did not mention where I was going; but I have just left him, with Mrs. Vaughan.”

“I wish to understand, Sir, whether this money comes from him, or you?”

“I told you, Sir, I am very sorry I

ever received it, and I am now come with a desire to give it to its right owner."

"The money I confided to Frederic Vaughan was for an officer, in distress: owing to this breach of trust, the effects of the officer were seized, and he was put in prison."

"Is he there now, Sir?"

"No; but that is not to the point. I have heard much of you, Mr. Perdue, from my nephew. He is a good young man, and apt to believe good of others. This is not the first of your gambling adventures. Excuse me, if I am too free; I fear you are a dangerous acquaintance."

"I was not acquainted with Mr. Vaughan, Sir."

"But you now are. You live clerk with Mr. Hazard?"

"I am in the house, Sir."

"Not a partner?"

“No, Sir.”

“Then you are a servant. Have you considered the consequence of a breach of trust, Mr. Perdue?”

“Sir! I have not committed one.”

“You are surprised, and so am I.”

“At what, Sir?”

“Your want of reflection. Are you not aware that the receiver is as bad as—? I would neither shock nor offend, but, I am obliged to repeat, you are a dangerous acquaintance, Mr. Perdue, and I think it a duty to give my nephew this warning. He loves the virtue which you discover, occasionally, and so do I, more it may be than you suppose; yet I am led to doubt whether it does not make you the more dangerous: for, were you a confirmed vicious character, you would be excluded the society of the virtuous, whom you would have no opportunity to seduce.”

“Sir—pardon me—I did not expect——”

“A stranger to treat you with such freedom?”

“You, Sir, are the uncle of Mr. Henry Fairman, whom I esteem very highly.”

“He is highly deserving of esteem. My duty requires me to proceed. Have you considered the numerous ties of man to man, which necessarily must be observed, or the world would first become a universal scene of confusion, plunder, and assassination, and at last a desert?”

“I am young, Sir.”

“Then, being young, suffer me to call to your memory facts, that deserve your serious attention. You desire to be at all times in perfect safety: you wish to sleep, eat, walk the streets, and perform every function of life, transact

every affair, of business or of pleasure, in this said perfect safety—do you not?”

“Certainly, that, Sir, is the desire of every man.”

“In this vast, multitudinous, mercantile city, where such a prodigious exchange of money and effects is daily taking place, and so many hundred thousand pounds are transmitted from hand to hand by persons intrusted, by public officers, merchants’ and bankers’ clerks, nay by poor and common porters, it being not possible for the owners themselves to do all this, what safety, what general sense of repose can there be, for this heterogeneous swarming multitude, but that one thing, on which we all depend, you, I, our friends, our wives, our children, what but honesty? Sir, the discovery of a dishonest man is a public misfortune;

for the tendency of his actions is a tendency to anarchy and destruction.”

“ This is very true, Sir.”

“ But not to the purpose, you think. With respect to the money you offer to pay, I am not authorized to receive it: you and I have had no dealings together, I have given you no value, and you, a thoughtless young man, are not aware of the responsibility of such transactions.”

“ I am sorry, Sir, for my mistake.”

“ And I shall be sorry, if what I have said should be productive of no good, but rather excite anger in you than serious reflection.”

Here our conversation ended, and I endeavoured to look unabashed, hold myself erect, and appear a person of no less consequence than himself: but, Dignity refused her aid; I was conscious of not being one of her sincere

friends ; I therefore summoned Assurance, and even she came reluctantly, sneaking as it were at my heels, and half hiding. However, a formal bow, and your servant, Sir, finished the interview.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Difference of Sensations described: a Hope vainly conceived: a Conjuror consulted, and a Prophecy that was not to be forgotten: a vain Search, and a constant Resource: Billiard-tables the Rendezvous of Gamblers: the Way at once to get rich, or poor.

How different were my feelings when I entered the house and when I returned! I went, imagining I was in the actual performance of the heroic character, and that I should gain no little fame: I came away with the tormenting knowledge, that my part had been that of dangerous dishonesty: I was not subject to dejection of spirits; but I was dejected.

I walked back, slowly and ruminating, again to find Frederic Vaughan; but he had gone out, and I surmised it was to avoid me.

The lesson I had received, and the awe in which I stood of Mrs. Vaughan, kept me silent on the subject of money; but I loitered till I was ashamed, for I felt that I was troublesome, in the hope again to see Henrietta. My heart was in want of consolation, and she was a consoling angel.

I loitered in vain, and took my leave when I could stay no longer: the angel did not appear.

As I was sauntering home, a bill distributor put his paper in my hand, which contained nothing less than a printed invitation to all people, especially those suffering from love, from loss, or that were in danger, those who suspected disloyal wives, mistresses, husbands, dishonest servants, or in fact

all, who wished to penetrate the mysteries of futurity and things unknown, to visit the *Sieur * * **, who understood all languages, had penetrated into every occult science, and could solve questions the most abstruse, difficult, and concealed.

I was not weak enough to believe in fortunetellers, or modern prophets or prophecies of any kind; still, the dissatisfaction of my mind, the kind of uncertainty in which youth long floats on such pretended mysteries, and perhaps the great desire I had to hear any thing, that could divert and change my thoughts, induced me to repair and listen to this public impostor.

There was nothing, as I suppose, very different from the customary practice in his mode of exhibition. These people all walk in trammels, with little variety; except that which the appearance of the parties suggests. They do

but exercise a trade that they have been taught. When by their spies they are informed of any particulars, concerning those who consult them, by the repetition of which they can astonish their hearers, such particulars are mysteriously insinuated, and give them a fatal reputation for supernatural knowledge: of all other things, they speak in such general and various terms as to mean any thing, every thing, or nothing.

I came so suddenly upon the conjurer that he was obliged to speak entirely in this general style. I only mention my having gone to him because, in order I suppose to make an impression, and induce me to think I had not thrown away my money, he concluded with telling me there was a dangerous influence in my ruling star, of which I must be carefully aware, for it threatened even my life; but that, if I could

escape this influence safely, I should then be a very fortunate person.

There is scarcely a man, of an adventurous spirit, of whom this very prophecy might not be safely made; yet it dwelt upon my mind, and to a certain degree affected me, during some years; and this is my reason for having related an incident in other respects so trifling.

From the conjurer, I wandered to a coffee-house, in the precincts of the Temple, which was frequented by Henry Fairman, and other young students. I knew not myself whether I was, or was not, inclined to relate to him what had passed, between me and his uncle; though I certainly felt some fear that Henry would be induced to drop my acquaintance, for I knew how much he was beloved by, and how highly he revered, this uncle.

Henry was not at the coffee-house, nor could I meet with him, and I would have gone home, but I had not the power: business was over, I felt not the least disposition to read, or study, and I could think of no resource but that which never failed, the billiard-table. I mention this, not because any thing unusual happened *there* that night, but, that you, my good reader, may be well aware of my propensities and habits; and that you may also be informed of what resulted from my going thither. Have you never been led into mischief from the mere idleness of not having any thing better to do? If you have not, you have all your life been in an uncommon hurry, or are the wisest person of my acquaintance.

In this metropolis, famous as it is for supplying the wants, real or imaginary, of every description of people, there are many houses, where billiard-

tables are kept, in which billiards are by no means the principal business of the firm: hazard, EO, and cards, are the staple commodities; though they are kept as much as possible from public view; and, at those billiard-tables where these diversions are not permitted, the gamblers are generally found late in the evening, as at a place of rendezvous, at which they meet and pair off to their midnight revels.

I had the two hundred and fifty pounds in my pocket, and was in that precise temper of mind when men are prompted rather to mischief than to good.

Till this night, I had long resolutely abstained from cards and dice: I was now out of temper with myself and the whole world, and the very sagacious plan suggested itself to me that I would either that night make my fortune, or lose the money in my pocket.

It needs little prescience to foresee which of those events happened. I went to the hazard-table, gambled with gamblers, made high stakes, considering my funds, and came away, in a very short time, without a shilling in my pocket.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The contrasted Thoughts of Vice and Virtue: Causes for Discontent: Henry Fairman not to be found: an amiable Way of teaching People to keep their Distance: Henrietta, or my greatest Cause of Regret; causeless Complaint a general Folly.

FINDING my fortune was not to be made that night, and being for want of money obliged to return home, I had full time for reflection.

The thoughts, which commanded my attention, had in them all the contrast of vice and virtue. The discontent of my mind tinted every object black. "Why talk of goodness to me," said I? "Men will not suffer me to be good:

they who pretend to be good themselves reject me: nay, they insult my feelings, are unjust to my intentions, and could not treat me worse, however I might act. Why should I any longer continue to drudge in a counting-house? unworthy too as such drudgery is, alike of my talents and of my birth and expectations! No man durst insult my father, who was the companion of people of the highest rank; and, though his end was unfortunate, it was his own fault; it was because he indulged in every excess. I might assume the same privileges, and have similar enjoyments, without committing the same mistakes. I should then be above those who, at present, have treated me so improperly. I should then command circumstances, which, as I am, I find, are invincible. The fortune and the rank of Henrietta——”

Rank and Henrietta immediately

presented a different train of reasoning: my dear and loving lady mother, my departed governor, Henry, Henrietta, all combining, warning, conjuring me to be good.

The letter too, which Mrs. Vaughan desired might be shown to me, her behaviour, which, however amiable and kind, had always been marked by reserve and suspicion, the conversation of Henry's uncle, nay the conduct of Mr. Saville, each rose in succession, till, at last, overcome by contending doubts and desires, I sunk to forgetfulness and sleep.

In the morning, after another though a less severe contest between right thoughts and wrong, good sense so far prevailed with me as to induce me to return to my desk. The conquest was the more to the honor of good sense, because I was by no means satisfied with the character, conduct, or state of affairs, of Mr. Hazard: but

of these I shall presently have to speak more at length.

I now frequented the coffee-house, and other places of resort, where I expected to find Henry Fairman; wishing to understand whether his uncle had in reality warned him against my company, and whether Henry had obeyed his uncle's injunctions. As I no longer met with him at the usual times and places where he was to be found, I suspected that Henry kept himself absent purposely to avoid me; and the thought was far from grateful to my mind.

When I acted with so much generosity, as I supposed, toward Frederic Vaughan, I, not only followed good feelings, but, more than once recollected the good people, whom I hoped I should gratify, by such conduct, one of whom was Henry.

Mrs. Vaughan and Henrietta I was

likewise ambitious to please, and surprise; yet appearances, I thought, were almost as strange as if I had acted in the very opposite manner. Thinking myself entitled so to do, I endeavoured to make myself intimate with Mrs. Vaughan, and family; but she was always engaged! Her treatment of me was more kind than ever; but her kindness ended so briefly, she could stay so short a time, and never gave any intimation when she should be more at leisure, that I could not but suppose she wished me to come no more.

When I made inquiries after her son, Frederic, I was informed by her that he had returned to his master, to whom he had expressed so full and indubitable a sense of the very wrong action he had committed, that he was again restored to his former employment: but under certain restrictions,

which, as she forbore to mention them, and was always in so great a hurry, it was long before I knew their precise nature.

But the affliction that lay nearest to my heart was that, when I now expected to visit Henrietta often, or at least as usual, I was told she was not to be seen!

I could not rationally form any hopes of obtaining the hand of Henrietta, yet this seclusion, this as it were desertion of me, almost drove me frantic! Those, who opposed and frustrated my headlong desires, did but act with that precaution which the safety of themselves, and of those they most loved, demanded; yet I thought myself abandoned, and oppressed, by all mankind. I knew not the violence they did to their own feelings, while they acted thus toward me. Finding, as I did, that my imaginary wants, wishes, and pas-

sions, were counteracted, I could listen only to the suggestions of anger, and reason on nothing but the injustice of men!

Ah, my thrice sagacious and very profound reader, how perfectly are you aware that the general complaints of mankind, by which they so eternally torment themselves and others, originate from exactly similar causes.

CHAPTER XXV.

Intention with which these Memoirs are written: Treatment of Malefactors: Modes of making them useful: Herculean Labors: the Subject resumed: the Character of Mr. Hazard, a finished Sketch.

I WOULD, however, carefully avoid having it understood, by any one of my great multitude of readers, who are all people of compassionate hearts, that I, the writer of these memoirs, am the friend of severity; or that I would encourage rigorous proceedings toward, or should approve words, looks, and actions, that repel, the unhappy creature, who has done amiss.

On the contrary, the precise intention

with which I have written this book is to recommend kind and lenient conduct, toward those who offend in early life; and mercy even to the most obdurate.

By mercy, I do not mean I would advise that the malefactors, whose habits are perverse, and who are become hardened in vice, should be suffered at large, and in open day, uncorrected, and without restraint, to assault the peace of society. The doctrine I would enforce is that it is the duty of men not to take away life, which cannot be restored, and thus indolently to rid themselves of a supposed evil; but, determinedly to inquire how life, even in the most depraved, may still be made a thing of utility?

The ways are so numerous, the wants of men are so many, those wants are some of them supplied by such dangerous labours, there are experiments, of so essential a nature, in which the

risk not the certainty of danger is incurred; briefly, there are such innumerable modes, in which the worst of men might be beneficially yet safely employed, that it appears almost miraculous to think they have never entered into the contemplation of the legislators of the earth!

Believe me, Sirs, when I have well digested and written my system on the consequences of punishment, I shall astonish you all!

The grand plan, for the reform of this abuse, must be the work of some individual; as indeed all grand plans are, each, first the work of an individual. And who, my noble Sir, can you conceive to be so fit for it as I am, except yourself?

Pshaw! I am ashamed to trifle on a subject like this! Your life, mine, the life of every man is at stake! There are heads enough to conceive and per-

fect the plan, but where is the heart? Who can and will first bestow his time, industry, and wealth, and can afterward find that fund of virtuous unabating zeal, which is necessary to accomplish the gigantic monument of benevolence; especially while the noble philanthropist should find himself counteracted by timidity, selfishness, and well-meaning bigotry? An active, a restless, a formidable host! whose wiles and ravings are equally terrific.

He, who shall perform this labor, will indeed be a Hercules! Oh that I could see him! Oh that he lived in my day!

I must turn from this sublime prospect to the view of a man, who, stimulated by vanity, by pitiful ostentation, that had no great and determined purpose, was in the daily habit of forming plans which, as he supposed, were unequalled in grandeur.

What poor mortals are we! How confined, how contemptible, are our designs! How narrow, how selfish, how odious, are most of our motives: while ends of such moment, ends visible as noon day, by which not self alone but every human being that the spacious earth contains would receive benefit, force themselves upon us, and plead to be accomplished! Ah! Why am I writing these memoirs?

I have begun, and on I must go! No man harangued more vehemently against monopolies than Mr. Hazard; yet no man would incur risk like himself, in order to obtain a monopoly.

Hear him declaim, and there was not on earth a more liberal benefactor than himself, to those with whom he dealt, or those who were in his employment. Be present when he made bargains, or when he paid wages, and you would wonder to hear the cunning

huckster, and grieve with astonishment to witness the grinding tyrant.

Every artifice, no matter how pitiful and degrading, was willingly and daily resorted to by him, in order to obtain knowledge concerning, and inspect the concerns of, traders, merchants, or bankers, if he thought it would furnish any the least hints by which he might profit. People, who knew him, used to caution their servants not to suffer him to peer into a warehouse, back shop, or book; yet it often happened that he could not be repelled, but by force.

Stimulated by the eternal spirit of scheming, and the thirst of accumulating, he had gradually subdued all sense of rectitude, every touch of shame, and every feeling of compassion, for those whom he oppressed; and they indeed were many.

Pompous and fluent in speech, and princely in professions; spirited when

he feared to be outbid, and too sanguine to think failure possible; ridiculously vain; for ever vaunting of his own miraculous talents, and despising the abilities of other men, yet incessantly racking his brain to render them subservient to his projects; commanding all his dependents to travel the road that he prescribed; dictating, flattering, bullying, soothing, affronting, apologizing, and taking every possible means his faculties could suggest, to accomplish his wild and selfish purposes; Mr. Hazard, by turns, served, circumvented, and quarrelled with, and was the bosom friend, and the bitter enemy of, every man, rich and poor, wise and foolish, with whom he had any transactions.

The spirit of adventure, however, which he possessed, being excellent in its nature, and only dangerous in its ex-

cess, was frequently beneficial to trade. His bad qualities themselves, except his tyranny, had most of them a right origin: when he appeared upon the Exchange, purchases were more readily made, and timidity lost half her fears.

To acquire the character of the open and liberal supporter of commerce was his ambition, and, for that purpose, he frequently acceded to conditions that every one allowed to be liberal, except those who censured them as extravagant and ruinous.

As a man highly useful to the commercial world, his faults were tolerated, and his follies forgiven. Being in his service, I have frequently been obliged, and I confess amused, to hear the high character given of him, on one day, and the opprobrium with which he has been loaded the next, by the very same person. But it was the necessary result

of his incongruities: at some times they were whimsical, but at others unpardonable. It would have been well if they had not been so rash and dangerous as they frequently were.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Connections accounted for : a delicate and dangerous Situation : probable Fears : fictitious Accounts : direct Dealing : a natural Cause of Chagrin : other tormenting Reflections : the greatest Wonder of the World.

I HAVE before hinted that there were motives for the intimacy which subsisted between Mr. Hazard, and Mr. Saville, Senior. The latter gentleman, who had so much caution in behalf of his son, and was so justly afraid of his gambling propensities, did not, in his own person, scruple to enter deeply into the schemes of Mr. Hazard.

I necessarily became acquainted with their money transactions, as well

from my knowledge of the accounts of the house as of a partial confidence, which Mr. Saville thought it prudent to repose in me. Great gains had been made, and great losses sustained; and these losses and gains, by their very magnitude, gave a mutual and additional impulse to adventure.

From my connection with these gentlemen, and the moral obligations which I appeared to have toward them, my situation was truly critical. Of this I had a painful but a confused feeling. I was not precisely acquainted with my duties: my situation was of a kind that demanded the clearest understanding, and most determined principles, by which to direct my actions, and these my youth and education denied.

Whether it were policy or delusion, Mr. Hazard caused large sums to be entered in his ledger as due from this

concern, and from that ; but many of which sums proved to be merely imaginary : all that he could say was—“ They would have been realized, but the plan failed.” Great balances appeared on the books, yet the house was often hard run.

In this fluctuating state I found it, as soon as I understood its concerns ; and so it still continued. More than once, I thought bankruptcy inevitable ; and more than once resources were procured, by the indefatigable activity and artful expedients of Mr. Hazard.

I did not at first know that Mr. Saville had been induced, by the exaggerated hopes and accounts of Hazard, to advance heavy sums for a considerable time. Desirous of sharing the profits of the house, but not of incurring the responsibility, the transactions of Mr. Saville had all been entered under the name of Clarke. When

he sent bills, or money drafts, they were enclosed in letters, personally addressed to Mr. Hazard.

Briefly, I was not only a youth of unsettled principles myself, but was the agent of men whose principles were so far from perfect, that, they were of a kind alike dangerous to themselves and to commerce. I was the vacillating agent between persons, who could not communicate steadiness, for they stood not themselves on the firm and open basis of rectitude. Few worldly men know (and is it wonderful that I knew not?) the safety and delight of those who keep the simple direct path of plain dealing, and never swerve to the right or to the left.

From this state of things consequences arose, which in their due place I shall have occasion to narrate. At present, I must take a retrospect of previous circumstances.

My chagrin at being denied my customary visits to Henrietta, that is, at being answered, when I repeated them, that she could not then be seen, was bitter and sometimes indignant. Pride and shame equally contributed their endeavors to smother my feelings, when Mrs. Vaughan was present: but she too well understood the human heart to be greatly deceived. I almost daily seized my pen, and determined to write, both to Mrs. Vaughan and to Henrietta, and as constantly was deterred, I scarcely knew by what: but it was a latent sense of the absurdity of my half-formed wishes, and a consciousness how much my conduct would authorize reproof.

After the anxiety I had felt in behalf of Frederic Vaughan, I expected to be honored with his friendship, at least with his intimacy; but he also appeared to avoid me. My pride came to my aid,

and his conduct troubled me but little. I imputed it partly to his master, and with reason; for I afterward found it was one of the conditions, when he was received again into the house, that he should not associate with me.

All these persons I accused of wilful injustice, for want of duly reflecting on the danger of having intercourse with me, and on the blame that would have attached to them, had they in the least been negligent of what was evidently their duty.

I thought nearly in the same spirit of Henry Fairman. I recollected, indeed, that he was under no personal obligations to me; but I had in a manner deserved his esteem, and he had shown it; yet, without any sufficient motive, he likewise appeared to shun being acquainted with me.

His uncle had openly declared that he should warn his nephew against

me ; but that I thought no justification of Henry's conduct. Friendship begins in admiration, is continued by kindness, and strengthened by intercourse and native excellence ; which sensations and qualities, I flattered myself, were mutual between me and Henry. I used my utmost endeavors to spurn at the supposition of my being a dangerous acquaintance ; or at any other supposition which I thought derogatory.

While thus yielding to accusation, to which pretended friends are much too apt to yield, I little knew what at this time was passing, between Henry and his own thoughts ; or the trials to which, virtuous as he was, his virtue was exposed.

Ah, my good reader, which of us can escape temptation ? Who, among us, can always resist it ? Who is insensible of the strength of the demon ? Happy he, who, when seized by the

fiend and obliged to wrestle, can at all times escape a fall ! Do you know such a person ? Pray, point him out. Of all the wonders of the world, he is the greatest !

CHAPTER XXVII.

A just Cause of Compassion : relative Virtue and Vice : reading Propensities : Curiosity awakened : Doubts that demand to be satisfied : a Dialogue that tells something, but not enough.

Is it not a case truly deserving of compassion, when a man's best qualities shall lead him, as they frequently do, into actions for which he is afterward obliged bitterly to repent ?

As society is constructed, there are many actions which can scarcely, in their nature, be called either good or bad ; but which become either one or the other in a great degree, by the relations of things, the opinions of the world, and the consequences to the actors.

Still more: there are actions, that, in themselves, are highly virtuous, which, by the said relation of things, become highly vicious; and *vice versa*. This is a lamentable truth.

The heart of Henry was compassionate: his desire to relieve the afflicted might be said to be his constant companion, to walk with him wherever he went, and to guide his eye, his heart, and his arm.

There are few people, who love reading, who do not occasionally stop at a book stall, or peer into windows where books are placed. In a passage not far from Temple-bar, passing one of these, my eye was caught by the title-page of a book, which I was inclined to purchase. The house was old, appearances denoted the owner far from wealthy, and, when I went into the shop to demand the price of the book, I re-

ceived my answer from a middle-aged woman.

The shop door communicated with the passage into the house, and, while I was paying the woman, a youth hastily passed, who seemed to shun examination, but who, from his form and dress, I immediately thought to be Henry Fairman.

At the time I mention, it was about six months after our intercourse had ceased.

My curiosity was immediately roused; I looked after the person who passed, but he was out of sight in an instant!

“Pray, Madam, do you know the gentleman who ran up stairs?”

The woman hesitated. “He is a gentleman that comes here sometimes.”

“What is his name?”

“ I *asks* no questions.”

“ Who does he come to ?”

“ The lodgers, to be sure.”

“ What lodgers ?”

“ Why, Sir, I—— It’s no affair of mine.”

“ I have a reason for inquiring.”

“ May be so, Sir : I *knows* nothing of that. We have but these here lodgers in the house, and they have both our floors. They, though they *was* poor enough one while, they’re very good lodgers now, and *pays* their rent, and I *doesn’t* choose to be *askt* questions, and to tattle, because they might leave my house, and I mightn’t find such good lodgers again in a hurry.”

“ Is the gentleman called Mr. Fairman ?”

The woman stammered, and at last said, “ I must mind my business, Sir.”

. This did but heighten my curiosity, and I began to look about the shop for

books, in order that, by a greater purchase, I might induce her to be more communicative. Fortunately for my purpose, there were two or three sets of books, which suited my taste, and for which, after asking the price, I immediately paid; giving the woman to understand that I loved books, and might become a good customer.

The hint was not lost upon her, and, being cunning enough to perceive my drift, she herself recommenced the dialogue.

“And so you *thinks* as how you *knows* our young gentleman, Sir?”

“Nay, did not I tell you his name?”

She grinned. “Why, Sir, that’s neither here nor there. Let his name be what it will, he’s a very good gentleman, and a very merciful gentleman, and *needn’t never* be ashamed of his actions: but there are wheels within wheels; and people *doesn’t* always like

to be known, though they may be ever so good."

"Does he come here often?"

"Oh, yes yes, he comes often enough o' conscience, if that be all."

"Who are your lodgers?"

"Two ladies."

"Of what age?"

"A gentlewoman and her daughter."

"Have they lodged with you long?"

"Oh yes! and I *hopes* as how they won't go in a hurry, which is the reason, Sir, that I must mind my business; because, though you are a very civil gentleman, you *knows* very well what I *means*, and that people mustn't blab about things that *doesn't* concern them, which I *scorns* to do, as you very well perceive, Sir; for I wouldn't say a word in what might be thought the disparagement of such good gentlefolks, and especially of such a good gentleman; and so, Sir, if you *happens* to be one of

his acquaintance, you will never let a word slip from your tongue that I should be the woman to blab so much as a single syllable ! because that might do me great harm, and we're but poor people, and my husband is only a book-binder, and we *has* three children to provide for."

"But you will suffer me to come and look among your books sometimes?"

"Oh yes, Sir, and welcome; and we shall be very proud of so good a customer."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Busy Thoughts: Conjectures, that were almost unavoidable, yet are not deserving of Praise: Reasons for loitering: wished-for Intelligence: a Rencontre: Vexation: a Design dropped, and a Letter by which it is revived.

FULL of what I had heard, my mind teeming with conjectures and busy in resolving them, I left the shop, after having been further informed that the visits of Henry, above stairs, were generally long. Could Henry keep a mistress! I know not whether my heart did not triumph in the thought! It was my apology at full length! That was a vice of which no man could accuse me, and a proof that all men had their

failings, an accusation against those who had been so rigid in their examination of my conduct, and a balm to the wounds that self-love had received!

Yet, a mother and daughter! Would a mother be consenting to such a scene? Oh, they had been poor: to what will not poverty consent? Henry came clandestinely: the woman was afraid to declare what she knew: his visits were frequent, and long: they could only have one interpretation.

Of this, however, I wished to have some certain proof: it would be grateful to me, since it might plead for any extravagance into which I should happen in time to come to be led. There is no instructor on earth more readily obeyed than bad example!

At other moments, I had sufficient virtue to feel indignation against myself, for so readily suspecting, and concluding in disfavour of, the noble-mind-

ed Henry. I knew not enough of my own heart, or of the hearts of others, to reason worthily; but I was conscious I ought not so lightly to have accused, and condemned.

Yet a secret there certainly was, and his conduct was as certainly clandestine! What could that secret be? What could that conduct mean?

I took care not to lose sight of the good woman, who was so desirous to keep, though so incapable of keeping, her own counsel, relative to an affair with which, by accident, she was become acquainted. By ordering a few books, and paying for them immediately, I found opportunities to loiter in her shop, that I might personally meet and oblige Henry to speak to me: for I now conjectured that his absence from the coffee-house, and from his former haunts, might not ori-

ginate in a desire to avoid me, but to be with his mistress.

It was not long before the opportunity of which I was in search offered itself: going one day to the bookseller's shop, I learned that Henry had been there a long time, and that it was probable he would soon depart.

I had not sauntered above half an hour before I heard a door open, a tender female voice say "Good by! remember to-morrow!" and Henry begin to descend. I carefully timed my action, so as to come full upon him, and to exclaim, with an affected dishonest surprise—"Bless me, Henry! you here! What can make you a visitor in a house like this?"

Henry's look expressed painful alarm, and astonishment!

"Visitor, Sir!" he replied: "what do you mean?"

“Yes, a visitor! I have been in the shop almost this half hour, rummaging among old books, and you have not passed me before.”

“Sir! Have not passed you! Am I watched? Your questions and your conduct, Sir, are——”

He would have added impertinent, or insolent, or some such harsh word; but his good sense and kindness bridled his tongue, and, with a look of confused but indignant reproof, he burst from me and hurried off.

Half vexed, half ashamed, and half angry at the ill success of my scheme, I again began my conjectures. Henry evidently felt great pain, therefore something was at the bottom. He considered my being there, as it really was, an intent to watch his conduct and discover its motives. At this he was angry! Would he have been so had his pursuits been innocent? His

whole conduct certainly implied something clandestine, and my desire to know what it could be was increased.

Under these impressions, I left the shop: the anger of Henry however gave me no inclination to watch for and encounter him in the same manner. While I was endeavouring to discover what course I might best pursue, and was unable to form any satisfactory plan, I was relieved from my troubles by the receipt of the following.

“ SIR,

“ Though I had no intention to reveal my present situation for some time to any person, yet, having met with you, greatly I own to my surprise, I wish for some further conversation with you, and should be glad to see you at my chambers, in Essex-court. I shall stay at home, purposely, all the afternoon, unless I hear from you. I

should hope your sense of honor has prevented you from mentioning any discovery you may have made; but, if not, I trust, at least, a sense of honor will now induce you candidly to inform me of the truth. I am under some anxiety of mind, and request you will not fail either to come or to write a line, from which I may learn when I can have the pleasure to meet you.

“HENRY FAIRMAN.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

*The Appointment kept : a Dialogue begun :
the Consequences of indulging Desire :
Duties stated : worldly Opinion not the
Test of Virtue : Love may be conquered :
the Anguish of a virtuous Mind.*

THE desires of Henry and myself happily coincided. What his motives might be I could not divine, but I was at least as willing to receive as he was to communicate intelligence. At the appointed time I hastened to his chambers. Common-place questions and salutations being ended, after a few minutes, he began :

“ I do not know, Mr. Perdue, by what accident you discovered my being in the house where you met me. To surmise might but lead me into an

error, and make me unjust: I will therefore leave you to speak, or be silent, on that subject, as you please."

I made no immediate reply, and he continued:

"It is the sense which I have of what is due, not to myself; I merit little, but, to those dear relations and connections in life, whose happiness must be disturbed, nay in danger of being destroyed, by my conduct. I request, or rather I demand, of you to speak explicitly, and to tell me whether you know any thing more than having seen me at that house?"

"I do; though not much. I have heard that you frequently go there, and have been led to guess at the reason."

"What have you heard of the persons, whom I visit?"

"That they are two ladies, a mother and daughter; that they were poor; that you are a kind young gentleman;

and that they are now very good lodgers."

"Oh!—What better could I expect?"

Seeing the extreme pain of Henry's mind, I then began to lament my impertinent curiosity. "Do not alarm yourself on my account; I have never mentioned, nor ever will, the little I know; and I am sorry that my folly should——"

"Your folly! No, the folly is mine. To talk of repentance is weak! Men, who indulge their vicious propensities because they can repent of them, are equally foolish and wicked."

"Your fault, I dare warrant, is not very great."

"It is what can never be repaired."

"As I guess, you have devoted your time to some charming young lady? Since you repent of this, your passion will no doubt find a cure."

“Never, I hope! Why do I say hope? I am certain, never!”

“Pray be not offended at the freedom of my question: has she been seduced by you?”

“Seduced! Do you suppose me a fiend! Yet, why do I vaunt? What is there of which frail man is not capable? Seduced! No! I think I never could be wicked enough for that.”

“Then what is your crime? Why do you so bitterly accuse yourself?”

“I have forfeited the affection of all that were dearest to me on earth, one excepted. All their fond hopes, all their cares, all the plans they had formed for my future happiness, are vanished! subverted by the intemperance of my fatal desires! by passions, which, I weakly flattered myself, I held under a virtuous and due restraint! Confident fool that I was!”

“But what have you done?”

“ Married.”

“ Is that so great a crime ?”

“ To give an intelligible answer to your question, I must first induce you to think like myself, and that might be difficult. Of all the affairs, of all the moral duties of life, marriage is the most serious. It is that in which the advice of parents, and friends, who by experience have acquired the power and the title to give advice, is most necessary. It is an act, above all others, that ought to be open, solemn, and sacred: especially between young people. I have long been morally certain that no doctrine is more pernicious than the one which is commonly maintained, namely, that the passion of love is a passion not to be resisted. Such assertions are made only by those who want excuses, for having yielded to their desires. That these desires are strong I have too fatally experienced !

But that they are unconquerable, even in my wildest moments, I never maintained."

This was touching me on a tender point. I had long been convinced, that is, supposed myself to be convinced, that love is unconquerable. "You are of a different opinion from all the world."

"The world has formed its moral opinions too much from its practice. The world is absurd and unjust, for it is contradictory: it ridicules, condemns, neglects, despises, and bestows praise, on the very same action. I am indifferent to the world, but not to the feelings of those afflicted friends to whom I have hitherto been so dear. Such feelings ought to be sacred! outrage committed upon them is a crime without an excuse. What will my parents, what will my uncle say, when they are told I am married? Henry married,

and we not consulted ! Not one of our opinions asked ! No ! it is a calumny ! we will not believe Henry capable of the unkindness of such an act ! His heart is good ! We know him better. This will be the language of those who, while they cherished me with even more than parental fondness, led me through the paths of virtue, not by constraint, but, by sweet and gentle appeals to my heart and understanding. This unworthy action of mine will seem to proclaim them tyrants. I know they will forgive me, but they will break their hearts. Can I again esteem myself ! Can I endure their tears ! No ! never more must I hope to act with that manly self-respect, which none but the virtuous feel."

"You see these things in too serious a light."

"How can that be ? Having been guilty of one false step, what has been

my conduct since? Hateful! Detestable! I have wanted the courage to acknowledge my crime, and have ever since lived in a most despicable state of hypocrisy! I have accepted their good offices, received their kindness, and met their smiles as if I were worthy of them! I! I do this! I, who have everlastingly a conscious sense of my own baseness! I fear to plant a dagger in their hearts, and have not power to strike the blow!"

CHAPTER XXX.

*Inquiries made, and a Narrative begun :
Cowardice the Cause of Ill : a parental
Proposal, and filial Fears : mutual Aid
the Duty of Man : the Powers of Wit
and Beauty : ardent Wishes and dis-
tracting Fears.*

FINDING this to be the tenor of Henry's discourse, from which no arguments of mine could divert him, I turned the subject, by making inquiries concerning the manner in which he became acquainted with the lady, whom he had espoused; and he gave me the following account :

“ You must not imagine, because I have accused myself, that I include her whom, as a husband, I passionately love, and highly esteem ! I do not repent of

my marriage, but of my cowardice! of the clandestine and immoral manner in which I conducted an action, so momentous in its consequences! and of the fondness that could inspire me with such base fears, as to make me silent to those whom it ought to be the first duty of my life to consult!

“The bare possibility, that my parents might have refused their consent, was the cause of this silence. The apprehension that they had other views for me, and that they would advise me to marry a young lady, rich, intelligent, of a good family, and highly respected by us all, but whom I own I could never think of with complacency, as a wife, sealed my lips. Had I spoken, and had they given me this advice, I feared to afflict them by refusal; and I persuaded myself that, should I tell them of my attachment, this advice would be given. Instead of a manly and direct conduct,

instead of bringing the case directly before them, and appealing to their hearts and understandings, either to justify my choice or to convince me that it was erroneous, I was tormented by these alarms, and basely sheltered myself in that which delusion told me was my only safety.

“ The misery that I seemed to foresee is now come upon me ! It is a fortnight since I saw my father ! with whom I parted in an agony that I know afflicts his heart. He had been speaking to me on the subject of marriage, and gave the very advice which I most dreaded : it was to marry the young lady I have mentioned.

“ I listened as long as I was able ! my heart was torn ! the full hypocrisy of my conduct stood then exposed to my view ! Incapable as I was of answering a word, I hurried from my father in a burst of passion, mingled with self-ab-

horrence, and left him there, most certainly in dreadful conjectures concerning the cause!

“Several notes have passed between me and my family, but no more mention of this affair has been made. I know my father’s heart! I know how tenderly he would forbear to give me pain, while I am heaping anguish upon his head, upon my mother’s, my uncle’s, upon all!”

I wished once more to divert the mind of Henry from a train, or rather a torrent, of thoughts so painful, and remarked to him that he had not yet informed me of the manner in which he became acquainted with his wife?

He gave me this reply:

“I believe you know that I consider it as one of the first duties of man, to his fellow-creatures, to aid those who are unable to aid themselves. A woman that comes to clean and keep my chambers in order, thinking me, as I

suppose, inclined to compassion, informed me that the widow of a clergyman, and her daughter, were in danger of perishing for want; that the mother was ill, and the daughter either in a decline, or in danger, perhaps, of dying, with grief and hunger.

“ You may rationally conclude that I inquired where people in so wretched a condition lived, and that I hastened to afford them some little supply.

“ The circumstances, under which they were, I found to be truly affecting: their necessity was extreme; they had disposed of every thing that decency permitted them to spare, were friendless, had too delicate a sense of shame to ask relief from strangers, and were at that moment reduced to the last extremity.

“ The disease of both was rather that of inanity, and want of food, than of any other definite malady.

The mother I perceived to be a woman who was inoffensive, kind, and

well bred ; but, in other respects, not above the common standard.

But how shall I describe the daughter ? I soon found it had been her father's delight to superintend her education. He was the idol of her heart ! his memory was dear to her recollection ! and she never mentioned his name but with tears, accompanied by that fond filial love which added loveliness to her charms ! I am sure he was a great and good man !

“ When I first saw her, her charms, it is true, were obscured, to the vulgar eye, by the distress of her situation, but not to mine ; and, when relief came, the change was so visible, that I own it became the delight of my heart to supply her wants, soothe her mind, and spend every leisure hour in her company !

“ This charming mind was replenished with so much information, her principles were so correct, and her sensibi-

lities so just and strong, that it was impossible to listen and not to love her. Feminine sweetness was so mingled with sound understanding, there was such harmony between her looks and voice, and so much consistency as well in her actions as in her thoughts, that, they being added to a form and face so delightfully lovely, her person and mind were equally and altogether irresistible!

“Why do I attempt to describe! I wish you to see, to hear, and be convinced! I have yet had no approving friend, to wonder at this part of my happiness, and by approving soothe my anxious heart, which is tormented by its own susceptibilities; its suspicions that the world should pronounce me to be in a wild and ridiculous trance! My opinion can never alter, but the opinion of others——?”

“I own it is absurd thus to torment myself! with what I know is not, can-

not be, doubtful! But, ah! will my honored father, my affectionate mother and uncle, forgive me? Oh God, why did I ever doubt? why practise concealment? It was their approbation that I should first have asked! it was the sympathy of their kind hearts that was wanting, on that sacred occasion, which, while it remains thus unsanctified, is but accurst! Oh, forgive me! forgive your son and nephew, ye first dear objects of my reverence and love! Till I am blessed with your pardon, Marianne herself cannot make me happy."

Thinking of Henrietta, I exclaimed, "Oh, that I were put to the trial!"

"Bryan, you know not what you wish: you have no parents. He who could be satisfied with his conduct, having so wronged the authors of his being, is not a man formed for the happiness of himself or others."

CHAPTER XXXI.

Causes of Admiration : sympathetic Feelings : Sensibility in some People too irritable : a sudden Resolution and a natural Expedient : a Letter that purposely betrays the Secret of my Friend.

IN this state of almost intolerable anxiety, in which I very sincerely sympathized, we left the chambers of Henry ; impatient, as he was, to introduce me to his lovely Marianne.

A lovely creature indeed I found her ! Ignorant as I was of the most sacred duties in society, having never, since the death of my dear and loving lady-mother, felt any great portion either of filial affection or respect, even while I admired him, I was almost ready to accuse Henry

of being absurd, for fearing to displease his parents, by having married so beautiful, so supremely intelligent, and so inexpressibly interesting a woman!

She I found had no less sense of the painful situation, in which they stood, than Henry: the blame of herself was no less direct, and unreserved, than that which he had testified; and it would have been equally copious, but that she was suffocated with tears.

I can convey but a feeble idea of the racking doubts by which they were tormented, concerning the best manner of informing the parents of Henry. The keen sufferings of the tender apprehensive Marianne, she who had no support from wealth, from future hopes, or from relationship, were great indeed! She must present herself, not only poor and helpless, but, with the honorable burden of a mother, whom she would

sooner die than desert. This, and every afflicting sense of her situation, were continually present to her mind!

I found it beyond my power to reason them out of their feelings, and left them with so strong an impression of their sufferings, that my own became insupportable. Impatient sensibility had led me into many mistakes, and was still to lead me into more. This irritability my education had been particularly calculated to inspire, and to cherish. The tender affection of my dear and loving lady mother, and the quick loud-tongued bravadoes of my father, however opposite in themselves, concurred to this effect.

My resolution was quickly taken. Henry and Marianne were suffering, and, my adorable Henrietta excepted, they were the only beings on earth whom I felt certain I should for ever love. Their sufferings should end:

that was my decision. Their sense of error was so strong, that they durst not risk the unhappiness, which the knowledge of it might occasion. My conviction of their rectitude was so entire, that I determined, immediately, to write to the father of Henry. Happily, for once, my good genius guided my pen, and inspired thoughts which, however natural, might easily have been missed. My letter was as follows :

“ SIR,

“ Though personally a stranger to you, I am acquainted with your son, Mr. Henry Fairman ; and also with a circumstance which, as it concerns your mutual peace of mind, I venture to disclose.

“ The sufferings of your son are extreme. I have not much experience of the world, but, in my firm belief,

there is not a son existing who has more affection for his parents, or a greater reverence of their virtues. He has committed what he considers to be a crime so unpardonable, and is therefore under such extreme affliction, that I should very much fear for his health and life, if he were long to continue in the same state of mind.

“I am acquainted with the act which he considers as so criminal, and, however wrong it may be in its nature, which he has partly convinced me it is, yet, that very action, which causes him these present torments, will—I speak confidently—will be the greatest blessing of his parents, and a happiness to himself, such as no man has a right to expect.

“He is married.

“How he came to marry, without your knowledge and consent, nobody can explain in so affecting a manner

as himself. His entire affection for you, his profound sense of the injustice he has done you, and the bitter reproaches with which he continually overwhelms himself, were you to hear them, I am certain, from the tender description he gives of you, would rend your heart.

“ It is wholly unnecessary, in this affair, that you should know the person who now addresses you ; and therefore I shall content myself with only signing,

“ Your unknown friend,

“ And very humble servant.

“ P. S. Should this affair take a wrong turn, which I sincerely hope will not be the case, I will then appear, and avow the unhappy mischief I have occasioned.

“ Might I presume to advise, no delay whatever should be made, in coming to an entire explanation ; for,

till that is effected, his sufferings will continue to be such as I am persuaded you would be far from wishing to inflict. I am sure you will not permit yourselves to be too angry with so good a son."

CHAPTER XXXII.

Natural Consequences : Family Happiness and Parental Prudence : a virtuous Resolution : Confidence acquired and Injunctions removed : Persons with whom I was in great Favor : Happiness that might have been : Wishes that were not to be gratified.

You are too sagacious, my good reader, not well to know what must be the character of a father, who was so thoroughly revered and loved by such a son as Henry : neither, I presume, will you feel the least surprise at the effect produced by my letter.

Immediately he hurried to find his son, met him with open arms, showed him my letter, kindly entreated to be

introduced to his wife, testified every affection of a parental heart to them both, and restored them to that happiness which, by a single act of imprudence, they had mutually forfeited.

Oh! how supreme was the happiness of the family, to find their son so worthily mated! They used no false arguments, made no foolish pretences that a clandestine marriage was not wrong: but neither did they let the slightest reproof escape their lips, since it was wholly unnecessary; or rather since they saw it would have been mischievous. Henry and his bride were sensible of their error: it was one they could not commit again: but they were also bitterly sensible that, by their example, they had given it countenance and encouragement.

When I speak of the family, I include the uncle; for it was a family of concord, such as is rarely seen.

Young Vaughan was completely reinstated in his master's favor. He had not the least habitual inclination to game: he had been betrayed, as he truly and frankly avowed to me, by his vanity. His skill at billiards had been acquired at a private table, of which he had always been acknowledged the hero. He well understood the mean avarice of desiring to win the money of other people; but, on the night that he played with me, he had forgotten the danger of losing his own. He now made a resolution never to stake money on his play, and this resolution he very firmly kept.

Ah, my dear Madam, how happy are those, who thus wisely take warning by the first error they commit!

The parents and uncle of Henry, however, were so well satisfied with my conduct, in the affair I have last related, and with the spirit and feeling

of my letter, that, though they were not without their fears, and therefore were unwilling to have me considered in the sacred character of a friend, those fears were so far relaxed that all injunctions on Henry and Frederic were removed, and their own personal expressions to me were truly kind. This indeed might well be expected, from people of right principles and excellent hearts.

Henry, himself, showed his friendship more even by the goodness of the sentiments and principles, with which he endeavoured to inspire me, than by the cordiality of his manner, though that was great.

I was a high favorite, indeed, with the mother of Marianne; and a still greater, in reality, with Marianne herself; but this she showed rather by her actions than by her words.

Ah me, how happily would this pe-

riod of my life have been spent, had not my desires exceeded the means of gratification! comparatively, it was the happiest part of my youth.

I had as it were stolen into the affections of people, who, though they were friendly and excellent of heart, did not lightly grant their love.

I had no paternal estates; but I was neither in fear of want, nor without the means of attaining eminence, among men, had but those means been properly employed. Could I have been contented with having acquired the power to provide for all my real wants, how active and cheerful my days, how serene might my nights have been!

About this period, it is true, I was, for a time, less inclined to dissipation, or rather had greater power of restraint over myself, than at any other of my early youth. But there was one desire which, though most unreasonable, I

could neither gratify nor subdue: it was that of possessing the heart, and even the hand, of Henrietta! “Why not?” said I. “Of birth I can see no inequality; and, with respect to wealth, that may be obtained. Or, supposing equality of wealth were impossible, my claim is the first: it is indeed paramount to all other claims on earth! To me she owes her life! It was my intrepidity that snatched her from the flames, when her father wanted the power, and her brother the courage!

“I have not yet been just to myself, for justice to myself requires that I should openly, and resolutely, state those claims; and not desert a right, which cannot be disputed.

“Our years are suitable, and our hearts, I hope, and think, are united. Mr. Saville and Lady Jane were witnesses of the dreadful death she must

have suffered ! They saw me save her, and surely they cannot have the injustice, and the cruelty, to refuse a blessing, which I purchased at the peril of my life !”

These, and a thousand thoughts of a similar kind, were daily urging me to pursue the reward which they convinced me was not only my due, but was one that would be granted, if it were but properly asked. While I cherished these hopes, I had indeed a powerful motive to virtue: a stimulus, great beyond all others, to a youth educated as I had been, and having my propensities.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

An old Figure newly varnished: fresh Food for Vanity: false Hopes accompanied by unwelcome Tidings: Arguments that could not convince, for they were not heard: distracting Doubts and Fears: a Lover's Midnight Ramble.

OUR immortal bard has told us there is a tide in the affairs of men; and you, my good reader, with your accustomed accuracy, have often remarked its ebbs and flows. It rarely continues quite at high water, or at low, long together; for, though it may seem so to continue, the fancies of the human mind are such, it rises and falls perhaps with not much less regularity than if it were influenced by the moon.

The cherished hopes of my heart were destined soon to fade, and my hour of tribulation was at hand.

Among my other qualifications, when I dreamed of Henrietta, it is but natural that I should remember one of which my father had been so proud; a handsome person. Remembering also, as I do, the fine form and features of my dear and loving lady mother, it is not wonderful that, from such parents, this should be my inheritance; and the value I set upon it was not little. In this respect, there were few young men in England who could vie with me.

In short, when I summed up the whole of my merits, mental and personal, and added them to the claims already mentioned, the conclusion that Henrietta must and would be mine was, in my own opinion, indubitable.

One evening, being in company

with Henry and his dear Marianne, my imagination warmed by the happiness I beheld, and indulging in my sanguine reveries, I exclaimed—"Ah! the day I hope will come, when I shall no longer have cause to envy you."

I had spoken too frequently of Henrietta for them to be ignorant of the attachment of my heart: they both guessed my thoughts, and were for a moment silent.

Henry, after some reflection, turned the discourse on the ill consequences of indulging false hopes, and on the facility with which they took possession of the mind, and grew to such strength as sometimes to occasion the worst of effects.

His discourse gave me pain, for I was aware of its tendency, and could not endure that Henry should conceive that the hopes in which I had indulged

were ill founded; or that they could possibly be false.

He said no more, at that time; but, a few evenings afterward, he remarked that there was a rumor abroad, much credited and probably true, that young Lord Campion had made proposals of marriage to the beautiful Miss Saville; and that the nuptials, it was supposed, would take place in a few weeks.

Henry, who watched my countenance, saw me turn pale: for a moment, I was speechless: at length, I cried, "Is it possible!" Again I sat silent, lost in the distraction of my own thoughts, till a glimmering of hope relieved the bitter anguish of my soul, and I exclaimed—"It is a false report! It cannot be true!"

Instead of confirming the truth, or arguing on its probability, Henry turned the conversation to the subject of fortitude, in which he ingenuously be-

gan to blame himself for having wanted that virtue, and to show that it was one of the distinguishing marks of a wise and great man.

He soon perceived that I was too much lost in thought for his discourse to make the impression he desired, and therefore endeavored to draw me into conversation on common-place topics; but in vain: I sat absorbed, scarcely answering, or knowing that I was spoken to, and at last started from my chair, snatched my hat, wished them a good night, and hurried out of the house, without knowing what I intended, or where I meant to go.

I wandered about the streets and squares, avoiding or passing, without perceiving, every human being. Recollection seemed to have left me, except the recollection of Henrietta; and of her not a word, or action, that ever passed between us, was perhaps for-

gotten. A thousand times I again bore her in my arms, shrieking from the flames! A thousand times I again sat, conversing with her, in the parlour of Mrs. Vaughan! I remembered every word that had been spoken, every look that had passed, and interpreted each and all in the manner that my fond and foolish wishes demanded; still inflicting new torments on myself, as the dreadful idea of her marriage with another darted through my mind, or when I did but so much as suppose such an event possible.

Till that afflicting night, if any doubts of her finally being mine obtruded themselves, I had the power readily to appease them; and that power I labored to regain. Nothing that could favor my desires escaped my memory; but all could not drive away the racking image of seeing her in the arms of another.

At one o'clock in the morning, I was awakened from my trance by a watchman, who demanded where I was going, what I wanted, and why I walked so long under that house, and stared so much at the windows? It was the house where Henrietta lived, and I was seeking the window which I supposed to be hers!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Doubts and vain Attempts: Indignation at imaginary Wrongs: Steps retraced: an Interview: a Burst of Passion and friendly Advice: my Claims asserted: an Answer which, though equivocal, was well understood.

MY first business, in the morning, was an endeavor to ascertain whether what Henry had told me had any foundation in truth; but I continued eagerly to persuade myself that it was nothing more than a false report, to which the beauty of Henrietta had given birth.

But to whom could I apply? Nothing less than the authority of Henrietta herself could convince me that such a marriage was in agitation.

She ought to have known, nay she must, how deeply my affection was rooted; and it could not but be returned, I was persuaded, as well from a sense of gratitude as discrimination.

She could not be insensible to my merit. The service I had rendered her was an obligation never to be forgotten, never to be equalled, never to be repaid, but by devoting her life to make me happy!

Where was the man, whose form could rival mine! Where was the heart, that had so true and deep a sense of her angelic excellence? Who could ever feel the same affection, as I felt?

Full of these thoughts, buoying up my hopes with extravagant encomiums on myself, and with forced endeavors to shut my eyes on the truth, I hastened back to the house of Mrs. Vaughan, as early as it was possible for me to gain admission. I knocked at the door, was

told she was at home, and was shown into the parlour. Words cannot describe the perturbation of my heart.

Mrs. Vaughan appeared: I stood like a culprit, trembling and speechless, yet devoured by my passions, though unable to shake off my confusion.

Perceiving, by my appearance, that my thoughts were greatly disturbed, she assumed an air of even more complacency than usual, and addressed me first:

“Good morning, Mr. Perdue. You are here early.”

“Yes, Madam.”

“I hope you are well?”

“No, Madam.”

“Indeed! I am sorry to hear it! You had news lately from Mr. Saville, I believe?”

“Yes, Madam.”

“Did he give you any particular information?”

“No, Madam.”

“He has made a long residence abroad?”

“Yes, Madam.”

“Henrietta will be glad to see him, and perhaps will soon have that pleasure.”

“She is——There is—I heard——”

“What have you heard?”

“A strange report.”

“Have you, indeed?”

“A very strange one.”

“Of what nature?”

“May I for once be indulged the honor of speaking with Miss Saville alone, for five minutes?”

“I should be happy to oblige you in every thing proper, Mr. Perdue, but Henrietta cannot leave her mamma. Lady Jane and she are now consulting together, and it would be improper for me to intrude upon them.”

“Consulting, Madam?”

“Yes.”

“Perhaps you know the subject? I have heard—— Is it any thing particular?”

“An affair of the greatest consequence to both.”

“Is it?”

“You do not indeed look well! Pray sit down! Tell me if I can do you any service.”

“Is it——”

“How wild you look! What is the matter? What would you ask me?”

“I wish I could speak to Henrietta.”

“Indeed, indeed, Mr. Perdue, I would gladly oblige you, but I cannot.”

“I snatched her from the flames.”

“I know you did.”

“When no one else durst move.”

“Henrietta, Lady Jane, every body knows it.”

“Do they! Do they remember it! Must I not be allowed to speak to her.”

“There are reasons.”

“Lady Jane would have had no daughter, if I had not ventured my life to save her.”

“For Heaven’s sake, Mr. Perdue, cool yourself! Why are you so greatly disturbed?”

“Am I now denied so much as to speak to her?”

“I entreat you to recollect yourself? What can you have to say to her, that may not be delivered to me?”

“To you! Oh!” I violently struck my fist against my forehead.

“You terrify me! Cool yourself! Recover your reason! The servants will hear you.”

“Is the report true?”

“What report?”

“Marriage? Lord Champion!”

While Mrs. Vaughan paused for an answer, a servant fortunately came to inform her that Lady Jane was im-

patient to speak to her; and Mrs. Vaughan, with the utmost suavity, when retiring, said:

“ You perceive, Mr. Perdue, I cannot stay with you any longer; but pray be persuaded: I am your sincere friend: return home, and converse with your other friends, particularly with young Mr. Fairman. Be guided by their advice. I should be sorry, indeed, should you entertain desires which, upon reflection, you must know to be unreasonable. Let me hope there is no fear that you should be so weak! There are many who love you, and, were it so, it would greatly grieve them all: indeed, indeed, it would; and few people more than myself. I entreat, I beg you to be calm.”

So saying, she quitted the room.

CHAPTER XXXV.

*Dreams and Meditations of a distracted
 Lover.*

I RETURNED to my lodgings almost in a state of frenzy. In the eyes of Mrs. Vaughan, I had read a confirmation of my doubts; yet I would not believe them to be true. I abjured them, and pronounced them to be false, with all the imprecations of madness.

When I got home, I locked myself up in my room, and paced it backward and forward, despondingly one minute, and ferociously the next. I could find no ease, no gentle means of quieting my heart; and the sole resource of my mind appeared to be in thoughts of mischief. Strange to tell,

imaginary destruction had somewhat the power to sooth me.

After revolving the same ideas a thousand times in my mind, my spirits began to flag. I had not once slept, or slumbered, during the past night: exhausted by the bitterness of my soul, at length, I sunk on the bed asleep.

This relaxation of the faculties, which is common to extreme affliction of mind, did not long continue: my dreams became vivid, and my misery, while sleeping, was perhaps more intolerable than when I was awake.

My sleep was short, but dreadful. I soon fell into the same train of wretched thoughts when I rose: from these I wished to relieve myself, but found it impossible.

The company of Henry, or of any human being, except one, would have been a curse. Again I could find no relief, but in imaginary mischief: the

very soul of my father seemed to possess me wholly. I uttered maledictions, seriously and heart-felt, and was like one ready to perpetrate any crime that villainy could propose.

After a time, the image of Henrietta, mild and beaming, in all her sweetness and all her virtues, rose upon me. Gentle affections, and associations of events that might have been, stole over me: I remembered the noble birth and bright virtues of my dear and loving lady mother; wished that my father had resembled her in goodness, as he was almost her equal in a fine form; imagined how happy I might then have been, how boldly I might then have made my claims, how irresistible they would have been, how certain, how ecstatic, how miserable my father's vices had made me, and I burst into tears.

Every thing tender now rose to my mind: the form of my departed guar-

dian governor accompanied the vision, and seemed to float before me: the gentle souled yet noble Henry, and the most lovely Marianne, who was now become the consolation and delight not only of Henry but of his dear and honored parents: clothed in virtue I beheld them all!

The profound melancholy into which this threw me was indeed most painful, but it was sanative: it gradually lowered and appeased the frenzy of my spirits, which was become dangerous, and the effects of which I had myself begun to dread.

It did not, however, take from me the sense of the injustice that I suffered, the conviction that this injustice was real, and, as my spirits returned, the desire of taking a wild revenge. I knew not on what or whom; for still the persons, whom I supposed to have injured

me, were sacred to my thoughts: not indeed Lady Jane, for with her I had had no intercourse: I had even seen her but seldom, while I lived with Mr. Saville, and knew not what part she might have taken in the affair; therefore I thought but little of her.

Of Mrs. Vaughan it was impossible to think without respect. I could not connect the ideas of revenge and her, much less with the lovely Henrietta. Wrong had been done me, but I knew not how or by whom. I imagined the motives for it to originate with the opinions of the world, and I cursed those opinions, pronounced them to be false, and on the world wished to have my revenge.

The idea at length suggested itself to me that, by writing, all my doubts might be removed: I might learn how much was truth, and how much false-

hood, in the report that had thus distracted me; and might honestly and boldly assert my claims.

But to whom should I write? To Henrietta? It would be vain! A letter from me would never reach her hand! To Mrs. Vaughan? That would be equally vain! She would answer it only with more good advice. To Lady Jane? My feelings were all repugnant and rose in arms. I should be despised, overlooked, and but expose my folly.

What likewise could be the subject of my letter? What cause had I to complain? What right to make any demand? No promise had been made me, no open intimation had been given; I had not dared to give any myself. My love and my claims had never been heard of, till now; and could I thus suddenly and at once declare them? What would Mr. Saville say, when he should be informed?

In fine, after hours of continual and torturing passion, where hopes were few and fears were innumerable, I sunk at last into a state of despondency and inanition.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.





UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 047690950

