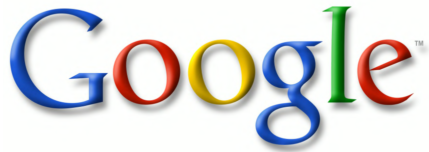

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TALES OF FASHIONABLE LIFE.

"Lord Colambre, I protest!" exclaimed a female voice; and Mrs Raffarty at this instant appeared at the open door. "Lord Colambre!" repeated all present, in different tones.

Absent...

LONDON SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & Co AND OTHER PROPRIETORS

THE ABSENTEE.

MADAME DE FLEURY. EMILIE DE COULANGES.

THE MODERN GRISELDA.

TALES

BY

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

W. Harvey. L. Goodall.

And two girls, one of whom could but just walk, held her hand and clung to her ragged petticoat; forming all together, a complete group of beggars. The woman stopped, and looked after the man.

LONDON, SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & Co

AND OTHER PROPRIETORS.

TALES AND NOVELS

BY

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

IN NINE VOLUMES.

VOL. VI.

THE ABSENTEE;

(A TALE OF FASHIONABLE LIFE.)

MADAME DE FLEURY; EMILIE DE COULANGES;

AND

THE MODERN GRISELDA.

Vol 2

LONDON:

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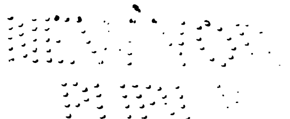

LONDON:
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THE ABSENTEE.

CHAPTER I.

; you to be at Lady Clonbrony's gala next week?" said Langdale to Mrs. Dareville, whilst they were waiting for carriages in the crush-room of the opera-house.

'h, yes! every body's to be there, I hear," replied Mrs. rille. "Your ladyship, of course?"

Vhy, I don't know; if I possibly can. Lady Clonbrony s it such a point with me, that I believe I must look in her for a few minutes. They are going to a prodigious ıse on this occasion. Soho tells me the reception rooms ıll to be new furnished, and in the most magnificent "

ıt what a famous rate those Clonbronies are dashing on," :olonel Heathcock. "Up to any thing."

Vho are they?—these Clonbronies, that one hears of so . of late?" said her grace of Torcaster. "Irish absentees, ıw. But how do they support all this enormous expense?"

'he son *will* have a prodigiously fine estate when some Mr. dies," said Mrs. Dareville.

Yes, every body who comes from Ireland *will* have a fine : when somebody dies," said her grace. "But what have at present?"

Twenty thousand a year, they say," replied Mrs. Dareville.

Ten thousand, I believe," cried Lady Langdale.

Ten thousand, have they?—possibly," said her grace. "I ' nothing about them—have no acquaintance among the . Torcaster knows something of Lady Clonbrony; she has ıed herself by some means upon him; but I charge him

not to *commit* me. Positively, I could not for any body, a
much less for that sort of person, extend the circle of my ɛ
quaintance."

"Now that is so cruel of your grace," said Mrs. Darevil
laughing, "when poor Lady Clonbrony works so hard, and pa
so high to get into certain circles."

"If you knew all she endures, to look, speak, move, breatl
like an Englishwoman, you would pity her," said Lady Lar
dale.

"Yes, and you *cawnt* conceive the *peens* she *teekes* to talk
the *teebles* and *cheers*, and to thank Q, and with so much *tee*
to speak pure English," said Mrs. Dareville.

"Pure cockney, you mean," said Lady Langdale.

"But does Lady Clonbrony expect to pass for English?" sɛ
the duchess.

"Oh, yes! because she is not quite Irish *bred and born*—or
bred, not born," said Mrs. Dareville. "And she could not
five minutes in your grace's company, before she would tell y
that she was *Henglish*, born in *Hoxfordshire*."

"She must be a vastly amusing personage—I should like
meet her if one could see and hear her incog.," said the duche
"And Lord Clonbrony, what is he?"

"Nothing, nobody," said Mrs. Dareville: "one never ev
hears of him."

"A tribe of daughters, too, I suppose?"

"No, no," said Lady Langdale; "daughters would be p
all endurance."

"There's a cousin, though, a Miss Nugent," said Mrs. Da
ville, "that Lady Clonbrony has with her."

"Best part of her, too," said Colonel Heathcock—"d—
fine girl!—never saw her look better than at the op
to-night!"

"Fine *complexion!* as Lady Clonbrony says, when she meɛ
a high colour," said Lady Langdale.

"Miss Nugent is not a lady's beauty," said Mrs. Darevi
"Has she any fortune, colonel?"

"'Pon honour, don't know," said the colonel.

"There's a son, somewhere, is not there?" said Lady La
dale.

"Don't know, 'pon honour," replied the colonel.

"Yes—at Cambridge—not of age yet," said Mrs. Dareville. "Bless me! here is Lady Clonbrony come back. I thought she was gone half an hour ago!"

"Mamma," whispered one of Lady Langdale's daughters, leaning between her mother and Mrs. Dareville, "who is that gentleman that passed us just now?"

"Which way?"

"Towards the door.—There now, mamma, you can see him. He is speaking to Lady Clonbrony—to Miss Nugent—now Lady Clonbrony is introducing him to Miss Broadhurst."

"I see him now," said Lady Langdale, examining him through her glass; "a very gentlemanlike looking young man indeed."

"Not an Irishman, I am sure, by his manner," said her grace.

"Heathcock!" said Lady Langdale, "who is Miss Broadhurst talking to?"

"Eh! now really—'pon honour—don't know," replied Heathcock.

"And yet he certainly looks like somebody one should know," pursued Lady Langdale, "though I don't recollect seeing him any where before."

"Really now!" was all the satisfaction she could gain from the insensible, immovable colonel. However, her ladyship, after sending a whisper along the line, gained the desired information, that the young gentleman was Lord Colambre, son, only son, of Lord and Lady Clonbrony—that he was just come from Cambridge—that he was not yet of age—that he would be of age within a year; that he would then, after the death of somebody, come into possession of a fine estate by the mother's side; "and therefore, Cat'rine, my dear," said she, turning round to the daughter who had first pointed him out, "you understand we should never talk about other people's affairs."

"No, mamma, never. I hope to goodness, mamma, Lord Colambre did not hear what you and Mrs. Dareville were saying!"

"How could he, child?—He was quite at the other end of the world."

"I beg your pardon, ma'am—he was at my elbow, cl
behind us; but I never thought about him till I heard sor
body say 'my lord——'"

"Good heavens!—I hope he didn't hear."

"But, for my part, I said nothing," cried Lady Langdale.

"And for my part, I said nothing but what every body know
cried Mrs. Dareville.

"And for my part, I am guilty only of hearing," said t
duchess. "Do, pray, Colonel Heathcock, have the goodness
see what my people are about, and what chance we have
getting away to-night."

"The Duchess of Torcaster's carriage stops the way!"-
joyful sound to Colonel Heathcock and to her grace, and n
less agreeable, at this instant, to Lady Langdale, who,
moment she was disembarrassed of the duchess, pressed throu
the crowd to Lady Clonbrony, and addressing her with smi
and complacency, was charmed to have a little moment to spe
to her—could *not* sooner get through the crowd—would certai
do herself the honour to be at her ladyship's gala. While La
Langdale spoke, she never seemed to see or think of any bo
but Lady Clonbrony, though, all the time, she was intent up
every motion of Lord Colambre; and whilst she was obliged
listen with a face of sympathy to a long complaint of La
Clonbrony's, about Mr. Soho's want of taste in ottomans, s
was vexed to perceive that his lordship showed no desire to
introduced to her or to her daughters; but, on the contrary, w
standing talking to Miss Nugent. His mother, at the end
her speech, looked round for "Colambre"—called him tw
before he heard—introduced him to Lady Langdale, and
Lady Cat'rine, and Lady Anne ——, and to Mrs. Dareville;
all of whom he bowed with an air of proud coldness, which ga
them reason to regret that their remarks upon his mother a
his family had not been made *sotto voce.*

"Lady Langdale's carriage stops the way!" Lord Colamb
made no offer of his services, notwithstanding a look from
mother. Incapable of the meanness of voluntarily listening to
conversation not intended for him to hear, he had, however, be
compelled, by the pressure of the crowd, to remain a few minu
stationary, where he could not avoid hearing the remarks of t

fashionable friends: disdaining dissimulation, he made no attempt to conceal his displeasure. Perhaps his vexation was increased by his consciousness that there was some mixture of truth in their sarcasms. He was sensible that his mother, in some points—her manners, for instance—was obvious to ridicule and satire. In Lady Clonbrony's address there was a mixture of constraint, affectation, and indecision, unusual in a person of her birth, rank, and knowledge of the world. A natural and unnatural manner seemed struggling in all her gestures, and in every syllable that she articulated—a naturally free, familiar, good-natured, precipitate, Irish manner, had been schooled, and schooled late in life, into a sober, cold, still, stiff deportment, which she mistook for English. A strong Hibernian accent she had, with infinite difficulty, changed into an English tone. Mistaking reverse of wrong for right, she caricatured the English pronunciation; and the extraordinary precision of her London phraseology betrayed her not to be a Londoner, as the man who strove to pass for an Athenian was detected by his Attic dialect. Not aware of her real danger, Lady Clonbrony was, on the opposite side, in continual apprehension every time she opened her lips, lest some treacherous *a* or *e*, some strong *r*, some puzzling aspirate or non-aspirate, some unguarded note, interrogative, or expostulatory, should betray her to be an Irishwoman. Mrs. Dareville had, in her mimicry, perhaps, a little exaggerated, as to the *teebles* and *cheers*, but still the general likeness of the representation of Lady Clonbrony was strong enough to strike and vex her son. He had now, for the first time, an opportunity of judging of the estimation in which his mother and his family were held by certain leaders of the ton, of whom, in her letters, she had spoken so much, and into whose society, or rather into whose parties, she had been admitted. He saw that the renegado cowardice with which she denied, abjured, and reviled her own country, gained nothing but ridicule and contempt. He loved his mother; and, whilst he endeavoured to conceal her faults and foibles as much as possible from his own heart, he could not endure those who dragged them to light and ridicule. The next morning, the first thing that occurred to Lord Colambre's remembrance, when he awoke, was the sound of the contemptuous emphasis which had

been laid on the words IRISH ABSENTEES!—This led to recol lections of his native country, to comparisons of past and pre sent scenes, to future plans of life. Young and careless as he seemed, Lord Colambre was capable of serious reflection. Of naturally quick and strong capacity, ardent affections, impetuous temper, the early years of his childhood passed at his father's castle in Ireland, where, from the lowest servant to the well-dressed dependent of the family, every body had conspired to wait upon, to fondle, to flatter, to worship, this darling of their lord. Yet he was not spoiled—not rendered selfish; for in the midst of this flattery and servility, some strokes of genuine generous affection had gone home to his little heart: and though unqualified submission had increased the natural impetuosity of his temper, and though visions of his future grandeur had touched his infant thought, yet, fortunately, before he acquired any fixed habits of insolence or tyranny, he was carried far away from all that were bound or willing to submit to his commands, far away from all signs of hereditary grandeur—plunged into one of our great public schools—into a new world. Forced to struggle, mind and body, with his equals, his rivals, the little lord became a spirited school-boy, and in time, a man. Fortunately for him, science and literature happened to be the fashion among a set of clever young men with whom he was at Cambridge. His ambition for intellectual superiority was raised, his views were enlarged, his tastes and his manners formed. The sobriety of English good sense mixed most advantageously with Irish vivacity: English prudence governed, but did not extinguish, his Irish enthusiasm. But, in fact, English and Irish had not been invidiously contrasted in his mind: he had been so long resident in England, and so intimately connected with Englishmen, that he was not obvious to any of the commonplace ridicule thrown upon Hibernians; and he had lived with men who were too well informed and liberal to misjudge or depreciate a sister country. He had found, from experience, that, however reserved the English may be in manner, they are warm at heart; that, however averse they may be from forming new acquaintance, their esteem and confidence once gained, they make the most solid friends. He had formed friendships in England; he was fully sensible of the superior comforts, refine-

ment, and information, of English society; but his own country was endeared to him by early association, and a sense of duty and patriotism attached him to Ireland.——"And shall I too be an absentee?" was a question which resulted from these reflections—a question which he was not yet prepared to answer decidedly.

In the mean time, the first business of the morning was to execute a commission for a Cambridge friend. Mr. Berryl had bought from Mr. Mordicai, a famous London coachmaker, a curricle, *warranted sound*, for which he had paid a sound price, upon express condition that Mr. Mordicai should be answerable for all repairs of the curricle for six months. In three, both the carriage and body were found to be good for nothing—the curricle had been returned to Mordicai—nothing had since been heard of it, or from him; and Lord Colambre had undertaken to pay him and it a visit, and to make all proper inquiries. Accordingly, he went to the coachmaker's; and, obtaining no satisfaction from the underlings, desired to see the head of the house. He was answered that Mr. Mordicai was not at home. His lordship had never seen Mr. Mordicai; but just then he saw, walking across the yard, a man who looked something like a Bond-street coxcomb, but not the least like a gentleman, who called, in the tone of a master, for "Mr. Mordicai's barouche!" ——It appeared; and he was stepping into it, when Lord Colambre took the liberty of stopping him; and, pointing to the wreck of Mr. Berryl's curricle, now standing in the yard, began a statement of his friend's grievances, and an appeal to common justice and conscience, which he, unknowing the nature of the man with whom he had to deal, imagined must be irresistible. Mr. Mordicai stood without moving a muscle of his dark wooden face—indeed, in his face there appeared to be no muscles, or none which could move; so that, though he had what are generally called handsome features, there was, altogether, something unnatural and shocking in his countenance. When, at last, his eyes turned and his lips opened, this seemed to be done by machinery, and not by the will of a living creature, or from the impulse of a rational soul. Lord Colambre was so much struck with this strange physiognomy, that he actually forgot much he had to say of springs and wheels—But it was no

matter—Whatever he had said, it would have come to the same thing; and Mordicai would have answered as he now did; "Sir, it was my partner made that bargain, not myself; and I don't hold myself bound by it, for he is the sleeping partner only, and not empowered to act in the way of business. Had Mr. Berryl bargained with me, I should have told him that he should have looked to these things before his carriage went out of our yard."

The indignation of Lord Colambre kindled at these words—but in vain: to all that indignation could by word or look urge against Mordicai, he replied, "May be so, sir: the law is open to your friend—the law is open to all men, who can pay for it."

Lord Colambre turned in despair from the callous coach-maker, and listened to one of his more compassionate-looking workmen, who was reviewing the disabled curricle; and, whilst he was waiting to know the sum of his friend's misfortune, a fat, jolly, Falstaff-looking personage came into the yard, and accosted Mordicai with a degree of familiarity which, from a gentleman, appeared to Lord Colambre to be almost impossible.

"How are you, Mordicai, my good fellow?" cried he, speaking with a strong Irish accent.

"Who is this?" whispered Lord Colambre to the foreman, who was examining the curricle.

"Sir Terence O'Fay, sir——There must be entire new wheels."

"Now tell me, my tight fellow," continued Sir Terence, holding Mordicai fast, "when, in the name of all the saints, good or bad, in the calendar, do you reckon to let us sport the *suicide?*"

"Will you be so good, sir, to finish making out this estimate for me?" interrupted Lord Colambre.

Mordicai forcibly drew his mouth into what he meant for a smile, and answered, "As soon as possible, Sir Terence."

Sir Terence, in a tone of jocose, wheedling expostulation, entreated him to have the carriage finished *out of hand:* "Ah, now! Mordy, my precious! let us have it by the birthday, and come and dine with us o' Monday at the Hibernian Hotel—there's a rare one—will you?"

Mordicai accepted the invitation, and promised faithfully that

the *suicide* should be finished by the birthday. Sir Terence shook hands upon this promise, and, after telling a good story, which made one of the workmen in the yard—an Irishman—grin with delight, walked off. Mordicai, first waiting till the knight was out of hearing, called aloud, "You grinning rascal! mind, at your peril, and don't let that there carriage be touched, d'ye see, till farther orders."

One of Mr. Mordicai's clerks, with a huge long feathered pen behind his ear, observed that Mr. Mordicai was right in that caution, for that, to the best of his comprehension, Sir Terence O'Fay, and his principal too, were over head and ears in debt.

Mordicai coolly answered, that he was well aware of that, but that the estate could afford to dip farther; that, for his part, he was under no apprehension; he knew how to look sharp, and to bite before he was bit: that he knew Sir Terence and his principal were leagued together to give the creditors *the go by;* but that, clever as they were both at that work, he trusted he was their match.

"Immediately, sir—Sixty-nine pound four, and the perch—— Let us see——Mr. Mordicai, ask him, ask Paddy, about Sir Terence," said the foreman, pointing back over his shoulder to the Irish workman, who was at this moment pretending to be wondrous hard at work. However, when Mr. Mordicai defied him to tell him any thing he did not know, Paddy, parting with an untasted bit of tobacco, began and recounted some of Sir Terence O'Fay's exploits in evading duns, replevying cattle, fighting sheriffs, bribing *subs*, managing cants, tricking *custodees*, in language so strange, and with a countenance and gestures so full of enjoyment of the jest, that, whilst Mordicai stood for a moment aghast with astonishment, Lord Colambre could not help laughing, partly at, and partly with, his countryman. All the yard were in a roar of laughter, though they did not understand half of what they heard; but their risible muscles were acted upon mechanically, or maliciously, merely by the sound of the Irish brogue.

Mordicai, waiting till the laugh was over, dryly observed, that "the law is executed in another guess sort of way in England from what it is in Ireland;" therefore, for his part, he desired

nothing better than to set his wits fairly against such
that there was a pleasure in doing up a debtor, which
a creditor could know.

. "In a moment, sir; if you'll have a moment's patien
you please," said the slow foreman to Lord Colambre;
go down the pounds once more, and then I'll let you ha

"I'll tell you what, Smithfield," continued Mr. M
coming close beside his foreman, and speaking very
with a voice trembling with anger, for he was pique
foreman's doubts of his capacity to cope with Sir Terence
"I'll tell you what, Smithfield, I'll be cursed if I don't
inch of them into my power—you know how."

"You are the best judge, sir," replied the foreman
would not undertake Sir Terence; and the question is,
the estate will answer the *tote* of the debts, and whe
know them all for certain——"

"I do, sir, I tell you: there's Green—there's Bla
there's Gray—there's Soho"—naming several more—
my knowledge, Lord Clonbrony——"

"Stop, sir," cried Lord Colambre, in a voice whi
Mordicai and every body present start;—"I am his son

"The devil!" said Mordicai.

"God bless every bone in his body, then, he's an Iri
cried Paddy; "and there was the *ra*son my heart wa
him from the first minute he come into the yard, though
know it till now."

"What, sir! are you my Lord Colambre?" said Mr. M
recovering, but not clearly recovering, his intellects:
pardon, but I did not know you *was* Lord Colambre—I
you told me you was the friend of Mr. Berryl."

"I do not see the incompatibility of the asserti
replied Lord Colambre, taking from the bewildered f
unresisting hand the account which he had been so l
nishing.

"Give me leave, my lord," said Mordicai—"I b
pardon, my lord; perhaps we can compromise that bus
your friend Mr. Berryl; since he is your lordship's
perhaps we can contrive to *compromise* and *split the diff*

To compromise, and *split the difference*, Mordicai thought were favourite phrases, and approved Hibernian modes of doing business, which would conciliate this young Irish nobleman, and dissipate the proud tempest, which had gathered, and now swelled in his breast.

"No, sir, no!" cried Lord Colambre, holding firm the paper: "I want no favour from you. I will accept of none for my friend or for myself."

"Favour! No, my lord, I should not presume to offer—— But I should wish, if you'll allow me, to do your friend justice."

Lord Colambre, recollecting that he had no right, in his pride, to fling away his friend's money, let Mr. Mordicai look at the account; and his impetuous temper in a few moments recovered by good sense, he considered, that, as his person was utterly unknown to Mr. Mordicai, no offence could have been intended to him, and that, perhaps, in what had been said of his father's debts and distress, there might be more truth than he was aware of. Prudently, therefore, controlling his feelings, and commanding himself, he suffered Mr. Mordicai to show him into a parlour to *settle* his friend's business. In a few minutes the account was reduced to a reasonable form, and, in consideration of the partner's having made the bargain, by which Mr. Mordicai felt himself influenced in honour, though not bound in law, he undertook to have the curricle made better than new again, for Mr. Berryl, for twenty guineas. Then came awkward apologies to Lord Colambre, which he ill endured. "Between ourselves, my lord," continued Mordicai——

But the familiarity of the phrase, "Between ourselves"—this implication of equality—Lord Colambre could not admit: he moved hastily towards the door, and departed.

CHAPTER II.

Full of what he had heard, and impatient to obtain farther information respecting the state of his father's affairs, Lord Colambre hastened home; but his father was out, and his mother

was engaged with Mr. Soho, directing, or rather being directed how her apartments should be fitted up for her gala. As Lord Colambre entered the room, he saw his mother, Miss Nugent, and Mr. Soho, standing at a large table, which was covered with rolls of paper, patterns, and drawings of furniture: Mr. Soho was speaking in a conceited, dictatorial tone, asserting that there was no "colour in nature for that room equal to *the belly-o'-the fawn*;" which *belly-o'-the fawn* he so pronounced, that Lady Clonbrony understood it to be *la belle uniforme*, and, under this mistake, repeated and assented to the assertion, till it was set to rights, with condescending superiority, by the upholsterer. This first architectural upholsterer of the age, as he styled himself, and was universally admitted to be by all the world of fashion, then with full powers given to him, spoke *en maître*. The whole face of things must be changed. There must be new hangings, new draperies, new cornices, new candelabras, new every thing!—

> "The upholsterer's eye, in fine frenzy rolling,
> Glances from ceiling to floor, from floor to ceiling;
> And, as imagination bodies forth
> The form of things unknown, the upholsterer's pencil
> Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a NAME."

Of the value of a NAME no one could be more sensible than Mr. Soho.

"Your la'ship sees—this is merely a scratch of my pencil. Your la'ship's sensible—just to give you an idea of the shape, the form of the thing. You fill up your angles here with *encoinières*—round your walls with the *Turkish tent drapery*—a fancy of my own—in apricot cloth, or crimson velvet, suppose, or, *en flute*, in crimson satin draperies, fanned and riched with gold fringes, *en suite*——intermediate spaces, Apollo's head with gold rays——and here, ma'am, you place four *chancelières*, with chimeras at the corners, covered with blue silk and silver fringe, elegantly fanciful——with my STATIRA CANOPY here—light blue silk draperies—aërial tint, with silver balls——and for seats here, the SERAGLIO OTTOMANS, superfine scarlet—your paws—griffin—golden—and golden tripods, here, with antique cranes—and oriental alabaster tables here and there—quite appropriate, your la'ship feels.

"And let me reflect. For the next apartment, it strikes me —as your la'ship don't value expense—*the Alhambra hangings*—my own thought entirely——Now, before I unrol them, Lady Clonbrony, I must beg you'll not mention I've shown them. I give you my sacred honour, not a soul has set eye upon the Alhambra hangings except Mrs. Dareville, who stole a peep; I refused, absolutely refused, the Duchess of Torcaster—but I can't refuse your la'ship——So see, ma'am—(unrolling them)—scagliola porphyry columns supporting the grand dome—entablature, silvered and decorated with imitative bronze ornaments: under the entablature, a *valence in pelmets*, of puffed scarlet silk, would have an unparalleled grand effect, seen through the arches—with the TREBISOND TRELLICE PAPER, would make a *tout ensemble*, novel beyond example. On that trebisond trellice paper, I confess, ladies, I do pique myself.

"Then, for the little room, I recommend turning it temporarily into a Chinese pagoda, with this *Chinese pagoda paper*, with the *porcelain border*, and josses, and jars, and beakers, to match; and I can venture to promise one vase of pre-eminent size and beauty.——Oh, indubitably! if your la'ship prefers it, you can have the *Egyptian hieroglyphic paper*, with the *ibis border* to match!—The only objection is, one sees it every where—quite antediluvian—gone to the hotels even; but, to be sure, if your la'ship has a fancy——at all events, I humbly recommend, what her grace of Torcaster longs to patronise, my MOON CURTAINS, with candlelight draperies. A demi-saison elegance this—I hit off yesterday—and—True, your la'ship's quite correct—out of the common completely. And, of course, you'd have the *sphynx candelabras*, and the phœnix argands——Oh! nothing else lights now, ma'am!——Expense!—Expense of the whole!—Impossible to calculate here on the spot!—but nothing at all worth your ladyship's consideration!"

At another moment, Lord Colambre might have been amused with all this rhodomontade, and with the airs and voluble conceit of the orator; but, after what he had heard at Mr. Mordicai's, this whole scene struck him more with melancholy than with mirth. He was alarmed by the prospect of new and unbounded expense; provoked, almost past enduring, by the jargon and impertinence of this upholsterer;

mortified and vexed to the heart, to see his mother the dupe, the sport of such a coxcomb.

"Prince of puppies!—Insufferable!—My own mother!" Lord Colambre repeated to himself, as he walked hastily up and down the room.

"Colambre, won't you let us have your judgment—your *teeste?*" said his mother.

"Excuse me, ma'am—I have no taste, no judgment in these things."

He sometimes paused, and looked at Mr. Soho, with a strong inclination to ——. But knowing that he should say too much if he said any thing, he was silent; never dared to approach the council table—but continued walking up and down the room, till he heard a voice which at once arrested his attention and soothed his ire. He approached the table instantly, and listened, whilst Miss Nugent said every thing he wished to have said, and with all the propriety and delicacy with which he thought he could not have spoken. He leaned on the table, and fixed his eyes upon her—years ago he had seen his cousin—last night he had thought her handsome, pleasing, graceful—but now he saw a new person, or he saw her in a new light. He marked the superior intelligence, the animation, the eloquence of her countenance, its variety, whilst alternately, with arch raillery, or grave humour, she played off Mr. Soho, and made him magnify the ridicule, till it was apparent even to Lady Clonbrony. He observed the anxiety lest his mother should expose her own foibles; he was touched by the respectful, earnest kindness—the soft tones of persuasion with which she addressed her—the care not to presume upon her own influence—the good sense, the taste, she showed, yet not displaying her superiority—the address, temper, and patience, with which she at last accomplished her purpose, and prevented Lady Clonbrony from doing any thing preposterously absurd, or exorbitantly extravagant.

Lord Colambre was actually sorry when the business was ended—when Mr. Soho departed—for Miss Nugent was then silent; and it was necessary to remove his eyes from that countenance on which he had gazed unobserved. Beautiful quite graceful, yet so unconscious was she of her charms, that the

eye of admiration could rest upon her without her perceiving it —she seemed so intent upon others as totally to forget herself. The whole train of Lord Colambre's thoughts was so completely deranged, that, although he was sensible there was something of importance he had to say to his mother, yet when Mr. Soho's departure left him opportunity to speak, he stood silent, unable to recollect any thing but——Grace Nugent.

When Miss Nugent left the room, after some minutes' silence, and some effort, Lord Colambre said to his mother, "Pray, madam, do you know any thing of Sir Terence O'Fay?"

"I!" said Lady Clonbrony, drawing up her head proudly; "I know he is a person I cannot endure. He is no friend of mine, I can assure you—nor any such sort of person."

"I thought it was impossible!" cried Lord Colambre, with exultation.

"I only wish your father, Colambre, could say as much," added Lady Clonbrony.

Lord Colambre's countenance fell again; and again he was silent for some time.

"Does my father dine at home, ma'am?"

"I suppose not; he seldom dines at home."

"Perhaps, ma'am, my father may have some cause to be uneasy about——"

"About?" said Lady Clonbrony, in a tone, and with a look of curiosity, which convinced her son that she knew nothing of his debts or distresses, if he had any. "About what?" repeated her ladyship.

Here was no receding, and Lord Colambre never had recourse to artifice.

"About his affairs, I was going to say, madam. But, since you know nothing of any difficulties or embarrassments, I am persuaded that none exist."

"Nay, I *cawnt* tell you that, Colambre. There are difficulties for ready money, I confess, when I ask for it, which surprise me often. I know nothing of affairs—ladies of a certain rank seldom do, you know. But, considering your father's estate, and the fortune I brought him," added her ladyship, proudly, "I *cawnt* conceive it at all. Grace Nugent, indeed, often talks to me of *embarrassments and economy*; but that, poor thing! is

very natural for her, because her fortune is not particularly large, and she has left it all, or almost all, in her uncle and guardian's hands. I know she's often distressed for odd money to lend me, and that makes her anxious."

"Is not Miss Nugent very much admired, ma'am, in London?"

"Of course—in the company she is in, you know, she has every advantage. And she has a natural family air of fashion—Not but what she would have *got on* much better, if, when she first appeared in Lon'on, she had taken my advice, and wrote herself on her cards Miss de Nogent, which would have taken off the prejudice against the *Iricism* of Nugent, you know; and there is a Count de Nogent."

"I did not know there was any such prejudice, ma'am. There may be among a certain set; but, I should think, not among well-informed, well-bred people."

"I *big* your *pawdon*, Colambre; surely I, that was born in England, an Henglishwoman *bawn*, must be well *infawmed* on this *pint*, any way."

Lord Colambre was respectfully silent.

"Mother," resumed he, "I wonder that Miss Nugent is not married."

"That is her own fau't entirely; she has refused very good offers—establishments that I own I think, as Lady Langdale says, I was to blame to allow her to let pass: but young *ledies*, till they are twenty, always think they can do better. Mr. Martingale, of Martingale, proposed for her, but she objected to him on account of *he'es* being on the turf; and Mr. St. Albans' 7000*l.* a-year, because—I *reelly* forget what—I believe only because she did not like him—and something about principles. Now there is Colonel Heathcock, one of the most fashionable young men you see, always with the Duchess of Torcaster and that set—Heathcock takes a vast deal of notice of her, for him; and yet, I'm persuaded, she would not have him to-morrow if he came to the *pint*, and for no reason, *reelly* now, that she can give me, but because she says he's a coxcomb. Grace has a tincture of Irish pride. But, for my part, I rejoice that she is so difficult; for I don't know what I should do without her."

"Miss Nugent is indeed——very much attached to you,

mother, I am convinced," said Lord Colambre, beginning his sentence with great enthusiasm, and ending it with great sobriety.

"Indeed, then, she's a sweet girl, and I am very partial to her, there's the truth," cried Lady Clonbrony, in an undisguised Irish accent, and with her natural warm manner. But, a moment afterwards, her features and whole form resumed their constrained stillness and stiffness, and in her English accent she continued, "Before you put my *idears* out of my head, Colambre, I had something to say to you——Oh! I know what it was—we were talking of embarrassments—and I wish to do your father the justice to mention to you, that he has been *uncommon liberal* to me about this gala, and has *reelly* given me carte blanche; and I've a notion—indeed I know,—that it is you, Colambre, I am to thank for this."

"Me, ma'am!"

"Yes: did not your father give you any hint?"

"No, ma'am; I have seen my father but for half an hour since I came to town, and in that time he said nothing to me—— of his affairs."

"But what I allude to is more your affair."

"He did not speak to me of any affairs, ma'am—he spoke only of my horses."

"Then I suppose my lord leaves it to me to open the matter to you. I have the pleasure to tell you, that we have in view for you—and, I think I may say, with more than the approbation of all her family—an alliance——"

"Oh, my dear mother! you cannot be serious," cried Lord Colambre; "you know I am not of years of discretion yet—I shall not think of marrying these ten years, at least."

"Why not? Nay, my dear Colambre, don't go, I beg—I am serious, I assure you—and, to convince you of it, I shall tell you candidly, at once, all your father told me: that now you've done with Cambridge, and are come to Lon'on, he agrees with me in wishing that you should make the figure you ought to make, Colambre, as sole heir apparent to the Clonbrony estate, and all that sort of thing; but, on the other hand, living in Lon'on, and making you the handsome allowance you ought to have, are,

both together, more than your father can afford, without inconvenience, he tells me."

"I assure you, mother, I shall be content ——"

"No, no; you must not be content, child, and you must hear me: you must live in a becoming style, and make a proper appearance. I could not present you to my friends here, nor be happy, if you did not, Colambre. Now the way is clear before you: you have birth and title, here is fortune ready made—you will have a noble estate of your own when old Quin dies, and you will not be any encumbrance or inconvenience to your father or any body. Marrying an heiress accomplishes all this at once—and the young lady is every thing we could wish besides—you will meet again at the gala. Indeed, between ourselves, she is the grand object of the gala—all her friends will come *en masse*, and one should wish that they should see things in proper style. You have seen the young lady in question, Colambre—Miss Broadhurst——Don't you recollect the young lady I introduced you to last night after the opera?"

"The little plain girl, covered with diamonds, who was standing beside Miss Nugent?"

"In di'monds, yes—But you won't think her plain when you see more of her—that wears off—I thought her plain, at first—I hope ——"

"I hope," said Lord Colambre, "that you will not take it unkindly of me, my dear mother, if I tell you, at once, that I have no thoughts of marrying at present—and that I never will marry for money: marrying an heiress is not even a new way of paying old debts—at all events, it is one to which no distress could persuade me to have recourse; and as I must, if I outlive old Mr. Quin, have an independent fortune, *there is no* occasion to purchase one by marriage."

"There is no distress that I know of in the case," cried Lady Clonbrony. "Where is your imagination running, Colambre? But merely for your establishment, your independence."

"Establishment, I want none—independence I do desire, and will preserve. Assure my father, my *dear mother*, that I will not be an expense to him—I will live within the allowance he

ade me at Cambridge—I will give up half of it—I will do any
ing for his convenience—but marry for money, that I cannot
)."

"Then, Colambre, you are very disobliging," said Lady
lonbrony, with an expression of disappointment and displeasure;
for your father says if you don't marry Miss Broadhurst, we
n't live in Lon'on another winter."

This said—which had she been at the moment mistress of
rself, she would not have betrayed—Lady Clonbrony abruptly
itted the room. Her son stood motionless, saying to himself,
Is this my mother?——How altered!"

The next morning he seized an opportunity of speaking to
s father, whom he caught with difficulty just when he was
ing out, as usual, for the day. Lord Colambre, with all the
spect due to his father, and with that affectionate manner by
ich he always knew how to soften the strength of his ex-
essions, made nearly the same declarations of his resolution,
which his mother had been so much surprised and offended.
rd Clonbrony seemed more embarrassed, but not so much
spleased. When Lord Colambre adverted, as delicately as he
uld, to the selfishness of desiring from him the sacrifice of
erty for life, to say nothing of his affections, merely to enable
s family to make a splendid figure in London, Lord Clonbrony
claimed, "That's all nonsense!—cursed nonsense! That's
e way we are obliged to state the thing to your mother, my
ar boy, because I might talk her deaf before she would under-
and or listen to any thing else; but, for my own share, I don't
re a rush if London was sunk in the salt sea. Little Dublin
r my money, as Sir Terence O'Fay says."

"Who is Sir Terence O'Fay, may I ask, sir?"

"Why, don't you know Terry?—Ay, you've been so long
Cambridge—I forgot. And did you never see Terry?"

"I have seen him, sir.—I met him yesterday at Mr. Mordicai's,
e coachmaker's."

"Mordicai's!" exclaimed Lord Clonbrony, with a sudden blush,
ich he endeavoured to hide, by taking snuff. "He is a
mned rascal, that Mordicai! I hope you didn't believe a
rd he said—nobody does that knows him."

"I am glad, sir, that you seem to know him so well, and to be

upon your guard against him," replied Lord Colambre; "I from what I heard of his conversation, when he was not aw who I was, I am convinced he would do you any injury in power."

"He shall never have me in his power, I promise him. shall take care of that——But what did he say?"

Lord Colambre repeated the substance of what Mordicai h said, and Lord Clonbrony reiterated, "Damned rascal!—damn rascal!—I'll get out of his hands—I'll have no more to do wi him." But, as he spoke, he exhibited evident symptoms of u easiness, moving continually, and shifting from leg to leg, like foundered horse.

He could not bring himself positively to deny that he h debts and difficulties; but he would by no means open the sta of his affairs to his son: "No father is called upon to do that said he to himself; "none but a fool would do it."

Lord Colambre, perceiving his father's embarrassment, wit drew his eyes, respectfully refrained from all further inquiri and simply repeated the assurance he had made to his moth that he would put his family to no additional expense; a that, if it was necessary, he would willingly give up half l allowance.

"Not at all, not at all, my dear boy," said his father: ' would rather cramp myself than that you should be cramped, thousand times over. But it is all my Lady Clonbron nonsense. If people would but, as they ought, stay in their ov country, live on their own estates, and kill their own mutto money need never be wanting."

For killing their own mutton, Lord Colambre did not see t indispensable necessity; but he rejoiced to hear his father asse that people should reside in their own country.

"Ay," cried Lord Clonbrony, to strengthen his assertion, he always thought it necessary to do, by quoting some oth person's opinion—"so Sir Terence O'Fay always says, an that's the reason your mother can't endure poor Terry—Yo don't know Terry? No, you have only seen him; but, indee to see him is to know him; for he is the most off-hand, goo fellow in Europe."

"I don't pretend to know him yet," said Lord Colambre

"I am not so presumptuous as to form my opinion at first sight."

"Oh, curse your modesty!" interrupted Lord Clonbrony; "you mean, you don't pretend to like him yet; but Terry will make you like him. I defy you not—I'll introduce you to him—him to you, I mean—most warm-hearted, generous dog upon earth—convivial—jovial—with wit and humour enough, in his own way, to split you—split me if he has not. You need not cast down your eyes, Colambre. What's your objection?"

"I have made none, sir—but, if you urge me, I can only say, that, if he has all these good qualities, it is to be regretted that he does not look and speak a little more like a gentleman."

"A gentleman!—he is as much a gentleman as any of your formal prigs—not the exact Cambridge cut, may be——Curse your English education! 'twas none of my advice——I suppose you mean to take after your mother in the notion, that nothing can be good or genteel but what's English."

"Far from it, sir; I assure you I am as warm a friend to Ireland as your heart could wish. You will have no reason, in that respect, at least, nor, I hope, in any other, to curse my English education—and, if my gratitude and affection can avail, you shall never regret the kindness and liberality with which you have, I fear, distressed yourself to afford me the means of becoming all that a British nobleman ought to be."

"Gad! you distress me now," said Lord Clonbrony, "and I didn't expect it, or I wouldn't make a fool of myself this way," added he, ashamed of his emotion, and whiffling it off. "You have an Irish heart, that I see, which no education can spoil. But you must like Terry—I'll give you time, as he said to me, when first he taught me to like usquebaugh——Good morning to you."

Whilst Lady Clonbrony, in consequence of her residence in London, had become more of a fine lady, Lord Clonbrony, since he left Ireland, had become less of a gentleman. Lady Clonbrony, born an Englishwoman, disclaiming and disencumbering herself of all the Irish in town, had, by giving splendid entertainments, at an enormous expense, made her way into a certain set of fashionable company. But Lord Clonbrony, who was somebody in Ireland, who was a great person in Dublin, found

himself nobody in England, a mere cipher in London. Looked down upon by the fine people with whom his lady associated, and heartily weary of them, he retreated from them altogether, and sought entertainment and self-complacency in society beneath him, indeed, both in rank and education, but in which he had the satisfaction of feeling himself the first person in company. Of these associates, the first in talents, and in jovial profligacy, was Sir Terence O'Fay—a man of low extraction, who had been knighted by an Irish lord-lieutenant in some convivial frolic. No one could tell a good story, or sing a good song, better than Sir Terence; he exaggerated his native brogue, and his natural propensity to blunder, caring little whether the company laughed at him or with him, provided they laughed—"Live and laugh—laugh and live," was his motto; and certainly he lived on laughing, as well as many better men can contrive to live on a thousand a-year.

Lord Clonbrony brought Sir Terence home with him next day, to introduce him to Lord Colambre; and it happened that, on this occasion, Terence appeared to peculiar disadvantage, because, like many other people, "Il gâtoit l'esprit qu'il avoit, en voulant avoir celui qu'il n'avoit pas."

Having been apprised that Lord Colambre was a fine scholar, fresh from Cambridge, and being conscious of his own deficiencies of literature, instead of trusting to his natural talents, he summoned to his aid, with no small effort, all the scraps of learning he had acquired in early days, and even brought before the company all the gods and goddesses with whom he had formed an acquaintance at school. Though embarrassed by this unusual encumbrance of learning, he endeavoured to make all subservient to his immediate design, of paying his court to Lady Clonbrony, by forwarding the object she had most anxiously in view—the match between her son and Miss Broadhurst.

"And so, Miss Nugent," said he, not daring, with all his assurance, to address himself directly to Lady Clonbrony, "and so, Miss Nugent, you are going to have great doings, I'm told, and a wonderful grand gala. There's nothing in the wide world equal to being in a good handsome crowd. No later now than the last ball at the Castle, that was before I left Dublin, Miss

the apartments, owing to the popularity of my lady
t, was so throng—so throng—that I remember very
the doorway, a lady—and a very genteel woman she
—though a stranger to me, saying to me, 'Sir, your
n my ear.'—'I know it, madam,' says I; 'but I can't
it till the crowd give me elbow-room.'
it's the gala I'm thinking of now—I hear you are to
golden Venus, my Lady Clonbrony, won't you?"
,

freezing monosyllable notwithstanding, Sir Terence
his course fluently. "The golden Venus!—sure, Miss
you that are so quick, can't but know I would apostro-
iss Broadhurst that is—but that won't be long so, I
y Lord Colambre, have you seen much yet of that young

sir."
I hope you won't be long so. I hear great talk now
enus of Medici, and the Venus of this and that, with
nce Venus, and the sable Venus, and that other Venus,
shing of her hair, and a hundred other Venuses, some
ne bad. But, be that as it will, my lord, trust a fool—
when he tells you truth—the golden Venus is the
on earth that can stand, or that will stand, through all
temperatures; for gold rules the court, gold rules the
d men below, and heaven above."
ven above!—Take care, Terry! Do you know what you
g?" interrupted Lord Clonbrony.
I?—Don't I?" replied Terry. "Deny, if you please,
that it was for a golden pippin that the three goddesses
that the *Hippomenes* was about golden apples—and did
ules rob a garden for golden apples?—and did not the
eas himself take a golden branch with him to make
welcome to his father in hell?" said Sir Terence, winking
Colambre.
, Terry, you know more about books than I should have
l," said Lord Clonbrony.
you would not have suspected me to have such a great
ance among the goddesses neither, would you, my lord?

But, apropos, before we quit, of what material, think ye, was that same Venus's famous girdle, now, that made roses and lilies so quickly appear? Why, what was it but a girdle of sterling gold, I'll engage?—for gold is the only true thing for a young man to look after in a wife."

Sir Terence paused, but no applause ensued.

"Let them talk of Cupids and darts, and the mother of the Loves and Graces—Minerva may sing odes and *dythambrics*, or whatsoever her wisdomship pleases. Let her sing, or let her say, she'll never get a husband, in this world or the other, without she had a good thumping *fortin*, and then she'd go off like wildfire."

"No, no, Terry, there you're out: Minerva has too bad a character for learning to be a favourite with gentlemen," said Lord Clonbrony.

"Tut—Don't tell me!—I'd get her off before you could say Jack Robinson, and thank you too, if she had 50,000*l.* down, or 1,000*l.* a-year in land. Would you have a man so d—d nice as to balk, when house and land is a going——a going——a going! —because of the incumbrance of a little learning? But, after all, I never heard that Miss Broadhurst was any thing of a learned lady."

"Miss Broadhurst!" said Miss Nugent: "how did you get round to Miss Broadhurst?"

"Oh! by the way of Tipperary," said Lord Colambre.

"I beg your pardon, my lord, it was apropos to good fortune, which, I hope, will not be out of your way, even if you went by Tipperary. She has, besides 100,000*l.* in the funds, a clear landed property of 10,000*l.* per annum. *Well! some people talk of morality, and some of religion, but give me a little snug* PROPERTY.——But, my lord, I've a little business to transact this morning, and must not be idling and indulging myself here." So, bowing to the ladies, he departed.

"Really, I am glad that man is gone," said Lady Clonbrony. "What a relief to one's ears! I am sure I wonder, my lord, how you can bear to carry that strange creature always about with you—so vulgar as he is."

"He diverts me," said Lord Clonbrony; "while many of your

rect-mannered fine ladies or gentlemen put me to sleep. .at signifies what accent people speak in, that have nothing ay, hey, Colambre?"

ord Colambre, from respect to his father, did not express his nion; but his aversion to Sir Terence O'Fay was stronger n than his mother's, though Lady Clonbrony's detestation im was much increased by perceiving that his coarse hints ut Miss Broadhurst had operated against her favourite eme.

The next morning, at breakfast, Lord Clonbrony talked of nging Sir Terence with him that night to her gala—she abso-ly grew pale with horror.

"Good Heavens!—Lady Langdale, Mrs. Dareville, Lady ocke, Lady Chatterton, Lady D——, Lady G——, His ce of V——; what would they think of him! And Miss adhurst, to see him going about with my Lord Clonbrony!" -It could not be. No—her ladyship made the most solemn desperate protestation, that she would sooner give up her a altogether—tie up the knocker—say she was sick—rather ick, or be dead, than be obliged to have such a creature as Terence O'Fay at her gala.

"Have it your own way, my dear, as you have every thing ," cried Lord Clonbrony, taking up his hat, and preparing decamp; "but, take notice, if you won't receive him, you d not expect me. So a good morning to you, my Lady nbrony. You may find a worse friend in need yet, than that e Sir Terence O'Fay."

"I trust I shall never be in need, my lord," replied her lady-. "It would be strange indeed if I were, with the fortune rought."

"Oh, that fortune of hers!" cried Lord Clonbrony, stopping h his ears as he ran out of his room: "shall I never hear the of that fortune, when I've seen the end of it long ago?"

During this matrimonial dialogue, Miss Nugent and Lord ambre never once looked at each other. She was very dili-tly trying the changes that could be made in the positions of hina-mouse, a cat, a dog, a cup, and a brahmin, on the ntel-piece; Lord Colambre as diligently reading the news-er.

"Now, my dear Colambre," said Lady Clonbrony, "put down the paper, and listen to me. Let me entreat you not to neglect Miss Broadhurst to-night, as I know that the family come here chiefly on your account."

"My dear mother, I never can neglect any one of your guests; but I shall be careful not to show any particular attention to Miss Broadhurst, for I never will pretend what I do not feel."

"But, my dear Colambre, Miss Broadhurst is every thing you could wish, except being a beauty."

"Perhaps, madam," said Lord Colambre, fixing his eyes on Miss Nugent, "you think that I can see no farther than a handsome face?"

The unconscious Grace Nugent now made a warm eulogium of Miss Broadhurst's sense, and wit, and independence of character.

"I did not know that Miss Broadhurst was a friend of yours, Miss Nugent?"

"She is, I assure you, a friend of mine; and, as a proof, I will not praise her at this moment. I will go farther still—I will promise that I never will praise her to you till you begin to praise her to me."

Lord Colambre smiled, and now listened as if he wished that she should go on speaking, even of Miss Broadhurst.

"That's my sweet Grace!" cried Lady Clonbrony. "Oh! she knows how to manage these men—not one of them can resist her!"

Lord Colambre, for his part, did not deny the truth of this assertion.

"Grace," added Lady Clonbrony, "make him promise to do as we would have him."

"No—promises are dangerous things to ask or to give," said Grace. "Men and naughty children never make promises, especially promises to be good, without longing to break them the next minute."

"Well, at least, child, persuade him, I charge you, to make my gala go off well. That's the first thing we ought to think of now. Ring the bell!—And all heads and hands I put in requisition for the gala."

CHAPTER III.

THE opening of her gala, the display of her splendid reception rooms, the Turkish tent, the Alhambra, the pagoda, formed a proud moment to Lady Clonbrony. Much did she enjoy, and much too naturally, notwithstanding all her efforts to be stiff and stately, much too naturally did she show her enjoyment of the surprise excited in some and affected by others on their first entrance.

One young, very young lady expressed her astonishment so audibly as to attract the notice of all the bystanders. Lady Clonbrony, delighted, seized both her hands, shook them, and laughed heartily; then, as the young lady with her party passed on, her ladyship recovered herself, drew up her head, and said to the company near her, "Poor thing! I hope I covered her little *naïveté* properly. How NEW she must be!"

Then with well practised dignity, and half subdued self-complacency of aspect, her ladyship went gliding about—most importantly busy, introducing my lady *this* to the sphynx candelabra, and my lady *that* to the Trebisond trellice; placing some delightfully for the perspective of the Alhambra; establishing others quite to her satisfaction on seraglio ottomans; and honouring others with a seat under the Statira canopy. Receiving and answering compliments from successive crowds of select friends, imagining herself the mirror of fashion, and the admiration of the whole world, Lady Clonbrony was, for her hour, as happy certainly as ever woman was in similar circumstances.

Her son looked at her, and wished that this happiness could last. Naturally inclined to sympathy, Lord Colambre reproached himself for not feeling as gay at this instant as the occasion required. But the festive scene, the blazing lights, the "universal hubbub," failed to raise his spirits. As a dead weight upon them hung the remembrance of Mordicai's denunciations; and, through the midst of this eastern magnificence, this unbounded profusion, he thought he saw future domestic misery and ruin to those he loved best in the world.

The only object present on which his eye rested with pleasure was Grace Nugent. Beautiful—in elegant and dignified sim-

plicity—thoughtless of herself—yet with a look of thought, a
with an air of melancholy, which accorded exactly with his o
feelings, and which he believed to arise from the same reflectio
that had passed in his own mind.

"Miss Broadhurst, Colambre! all the Broadhursts!" said
mother, wakening him as she passed by to receive them as th
entered. Miss Broadhurst appeared, plainly dressed—plai
even to singularity—without any diamonds or ornament.

"Brought Philippa to you, my dear Lady Clonbrony,
figure, rather than not bring her at all," said puffing M
Broadhurst, "and had all the difficulty in the world to get
out at all, and now I've promised she shall stay but half
hour. Sore throat—terrible cold she took in the morning.
swear for her, she'd not have come for any one but you."

The young lady did not seem inclined to swear, or even t
this for herself; she stood wonderfully unconcerned and pas
with an expression of humour lurking in her eyes, and abou
corners of her mouth; whilst Lady Clonbrony was "shock
and "gratified," and "concerned," and "flattered;" and w
every body was hoping, and fearing, and busying thems
about her, "Miss Broadhurst, you'd better sit here!"—"O
heaven's sake! Miss Broadhurst, not there!" "Miss Broadh
if you'll take my opinion," and "Miss Broadhurst, if I
advise——"

"Grace Nugent!" cried Lady Clonbrony. "Miss B
hurst always listens to you. Do, my dear, persuade
Broadhurst to take care of herself, and let us take her t
inner little pagoda, where she can be so warm and so re
—the very thing for an invalid——Colambre! pioneer the
for us, for the crowd's immense."

Lady Anne and Lady Catherine H——, Lady Lang
daughters, were at this time leaning on Miss Nugent's arm,
moved along with this party to the inner pagoda. There
to be cards in one room, music in another, dancing in a
and in this little room there were prints and chess-bo
&c.

"Here you will be quite to yourselves," said Lady
brony; "let me establish you comfortably in this, which I
my sanctuary—my *snuggery*—Colambre, that little table!—

Broadhurst, you play chess?—Colambre, you'll play with Miss Broadhurst——"

"I thank your ladyship," said Miss Broadhurst, "but I know nothing of chess but the moves: Lady Catherine, you will play, and I will look on."

Miss Broadhurst drew her seat to the fire; Lady Catherine sat down to play with Lord Colambre: Lady Clonbrony withdrew, again recommending Miss Broadhurst to Grace Nugent's care. After some commonplace conversation, Lady Anne H——, looking at the company in the adjoining apartment, asked her sister how old Miss Somebody was who passed by. This led to reflections upon the comparative age and youthful appearance of several of their acquaintance, and upon the care with which mothers concealed the age of their daughters. Glances passed between Lady Catherine and Lady Anne.

"For my part," said Miss Broadhurst, "my mother would labour that point of secrecy in vain for me; for I am willing to tell my age, even if my face did not tell it for me, to all whom it may concern——I am passed three-and-twenty—shall be four-and-twenty the fifth of next July."

"Three-and-twenty!—Bless me!—I thought you were not twenty!" cried Lady Anne.

"Four-and-twenty next July!—impossible!" cried Lady Catherine.

"Very possible," said Miss Broadhurst, quite unconcerned.

"Now, Lord Colambre, would you believe it? Can you believe it?" asked Lady Catherine.

"Yes, he can," said Miss Broadhurst. "Don't you see that he believes it as firmly as you and I do? Why should you force his lordship to pay a compliment contrary to his better judgment, or extort a smile from him under false pretences? I am sure he sees that you, and I trust he perceives that I, do not think the worse of him for this."

Lord Colambre smiled now without any false pretence; and, relieved at once from all apprehension of her joining in his mother's views, or of her expecting particular attention from him, he became at ease with Miss Broadhurst, showed a desire

to converse with her, and listened eagerly to what she sai
recollected that Miss Nugent had told him, that this you
had no common character; and, neglecting his move at
he looked up at Miss Nugent, as much as to say, "*D*
out, pray."

But Grace was too good a friend to comply with that r
she left Miss Broadhurst to unfold her own character.

"It is your move, my lord," said Lady Catherine.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon——"

"Are not these rooms beautiful, Miss Broadhurst?" sa
Catherine, determined, if possible, to turn the conversati
a commonplace, safe channel; for she had just felt, wh
of Miss Broadhurst's acquaintance had in their turn f
she had an odd way of startling people, by setting th
secret little motives suddenly before them.

"Are not these rooms beautiful?"

"Beautiful!—Certainly."

The beauty of the rooms would have answered
Catherine's purpose for some time, had not Lady
imprudently brought the conversation back again t
Broadhurst.

"Do you know, Miss Broadhurst," said she, "that i
fifty sore throats, I could not have refrained from my di
on this GALA night; and such diamonds as you have!
really, I could not believe you to be the same person
blazing at the opera the other night!"

"Really! could not you, Lady Anne? That is tl
thing that entertains me. I only wish that I could lay a
fortune sometimes, as well as my diamonds, and see h
people would know me then. Might not I, Grace,
golden rule, which, next to practice, is the best rule
world, calculate and answer that question?"

"I am persuaded," said Lord Colambre, "that Miss
hurst has friends on whom the experiment would m
difference."

"I am convinced of it," said Miss Broadhurst; "and
what makes me tolerably happy, though I have the mis
to be an heiress."

"That is the oddest speech," said Lady Anne. "Now I should so like to be a great heiress, and to have, like you, such thousands and thousands at command."

"And what can the thousands upon thousands do for me? Hearts, you know, Lady Anne, are to be won only by radiant eyes. Bought hearts your ladyship certainly would not recommend. They're such poor things—no wear at all. Turn them which way you will, you can make nothing of them."

"You've tried, then, have you?" said Lady Catherine.

"To my cost.—Very nearly taken in by them half a dozen times; for they are brought to me by dozens; and they are so made up for sale, and the people do so swear to you that it's real, real love, and it looks so like it: and, if you stoop to examine it, you hear it pressed upon you by such elegant oaths. —By all that's lovely!—By all my hopes of happiness!—By your own charming self! Why, what can one do but look like a fool, and believe? for these men, at the time, all look so like gentlemen, that one cannot bring oneself flatly to tell them that they are cheats and swindlers, that they are perjuring their precious souls. Besides, to call a lover a perjured creature is to encourage him. He would have a right to complain if you went back after that."

"O dear! what a move was there!" cried Lady Catherine. "Miss Broadhurst is so entertaining to-night, notwithstanding her sore throat, that one can positively attend to nothing else. And she talks of love and lovers too with such *connoissance de fait*—counts her lovers by dozens, tied up in true lovers' knots!"

"Lovers!—no, no! Did I say lovers?—suitors I should have said. There's nothing less like a lover, a true lover, than a suitor, as all the world knows, ever since the days of Penelope. Dozens!—never had a lover in my life!—And fear, with much reason, I never shall have one to my mind."

"My lord, you've given up the game," cried Lady Catherine; "but you make no battle."

"It would be so vain to combat against your ladyship," said Lord Colambre, rising, and bowing politely to Lady Catherine, but turning the next instant to converse with Miss Broadhurst.

"But when I talked of liking to be an heiress," said Lady Anne, "I was not thinking of lovers."

"Certainly.—One is not always thinking of lovers, you know," added Lady Catherine.

"Not always," replied Miss Broadhurst. "Well, lovers out of the question on all sides, what would your ladyship buy with the thousands upon thousands?"

"Oh, every thing, if I were you," said Lady Anne.

"Rank, to begin with," said Lady Catherine.

"Still my old objection—bought rank is but a shabby thing."

"But there is so little difference made between bought and hereditary rank in these days," said Lady Catherine.

"I see a great deal still," said Miss Broadhurst; "so much, that I would never buy a title."

"A title, without birth, to be sure," said Lady Anne, "would not be so well worth buying; and as birth certainly is not to be bought ——"

"And even birth, were it to be bought, I would not buy," said Miss Broadhurst, "unless I could be sure to have it with all the politeness, all the noble sentiments, all the magnanimity, in short, all that should grace and dignify high birth."

"Admirable!" said Lord Colambre. Grace Nugent smiled.

"Lord Colambre, will you have the goodness to put my mother in mind, I must go away?"

"I am bound to obey, but I am very sorry for it," said his lordship.

"Are we to have any dancing to-night, I wonder?" said Lady Anne. "Miss Nugent, I am afraid we have made Miss Broadhurst talk so much, in spite of her hoarseness, that Lady Clonbrony will be quite angry with us. And here she comes, Lady Catherine."

My Lady Clonbrony came to hope, to beg, that Miss Broadhurst would not think of running away; but Miss Broadhurst could not be prevailed upon to stay. Lady Clonbrony was delighted to see that her son assisted Grace Nugent most carefully in *shawling* the young heiress—his lordship conducted her to her carriage, and his mother drew many happy auguries from the gallantry of his manner, and from the young lady's

having stayed three quarters, instead of half an hour—a circumstance which Lady Catherine did not fail to remark.

The dancing, which, under various pretences, Lady Clonbrony had delayed till Lord Colambre was at liberty, began immediately after Miss Broadhurst's departure; and the chalked mosaic pavement of the Alhambra was, in a few minutes, effaced by the dancers' feet. How transient are all human joys, especially those of vanity! Even on this long meditated, this long desired, this gala night, Lady Clonbrony found her triumph incomplete—inadequate to her expectations. For the first hour all had been compliment, success, and smiles; presently came the *buts*, and the hesitated objections, and the "damning with faint praise"—all *that* could be borne—every body has his taste—and one person's taste is as good as another's; and while she had Mr. Soho to cite, Lady Clonbrony thought she might be well satisfied. But she could not be satisfied with Colonel Heathcock, who, dressed in black, had stretched his "fashionable length of limb" under the Statira canopy, upon the snow-white swandown couch. When, after having monopolized attention, and been the subject of much bad wit, about black swans and rare birds, and swans being geese and geese being swans, the colonel condescended to rise, and, as Mrs. Dareville said, to vacate his couch—that couch was no longer white—the black impression of the colonel remained on the sullied snow.

"Eh, now! really didn't recollect I was in black," was all the apology he made. Lady Clonbrony was particularly vexed that the appearance of the Statira canopy should be spoiled before the effect had been seen by Lady Pococke, and Lady Chatterton, and Lady G——, Lady P——, and the Duke of V——, and a party of superlative fashionables, who had promised *to look in upon her*, but who, late as it was, had not yet arrived. They came in at last. But Lady Clonbrony had no reason to regret for their sake the Statira couch. It would have been lost upon them, as was every thing else which she had prepared with so much pains and cost to excite their admiration. They came resolute not to admire. Skilled in the art of making others unhappy, they just looked round with an air of apathy.—"Ah! you've had Soho!—Soho has done wonders for you here!—Vastly well!—Vastly well!—*Soho's* very clever in his way!"

Others of great importance came in, full of some slight accident that had happened to themselves, or their horses, or their carriages; and, with privileged selfishness, engrossed the attention of all within their sphere of conversation. Well, Lady Clonbrony got over all this, and got over the history of a letter about a chimney that was on fire, a week ago, at the Duke of V——'s old house, in Brecknockshire. In gratitude for the smiling patience with which she listened to him, his Grace of V—— fixed his glass to look at the Alhambra, and had just pronounced it to be "Well!—very well!" when the Dowager Lady Chatterton made a terrible discovery—a discovery that filled Lady Clonbrony with astonishment and indignation—Mr. Soho had played her false! What was her mortification, when the dowager assured her that these identical Alhambra hangings had not only been shown by Mr. Soho to the Duchess of Torcaster, but that her grace had had the refusal of them, and had actually criticised them, in consequence of Sir Horace Grant, the great traveller's objecting to some of the proportions of the pillars—Soho had engaged to make a new set, vastly improved, by Sir Horace's suggestions, for her Grace of Torcaster.

Now Lady Chatterton was the greatest talker extant; and she went about the rooms telling every body of her acquaintance—and she was acquainted with every body—how shamefully Soho had imposed upon poor Lady Clonbrony, protesting she could not forgive the man. "For," said she, "though the Duchess of Torcaster had been his constant customer for ages, and his patroness, and all that, yet this does not excuse him—and Lady Clonbrony's being a stranger, and from Ireland, makes the thing worse." From Ireland!—that was the unkindest cut of all—but there was no remedy.

In vain poor Lady Clonbrony followed the dowager about the rooms to correct this mistake, and to represent, in justice to Mr. Soho, though he had used her so ill, that he knew she was an Englishwoman. The dowager was deaf, and no whisper could reach her ear. And when Lady Clonbrony was obliged to bawl an explanation in her ear, the dowager only repeated, "In justice to Mr. Soho!—No, no; he has not done you justice, my dear Lady Clonbrony! and I'll expose him to

very body. Englishwoman!—no, no, no!—Soho could not take you for an Englishwoman!"

All who secretly envied or ridiculed Lady Clonbrony enjoyed this scene. The Alhambra hangings, which had been in one short hour before the admiration of the world, were now regarded by every eye with contempt, as *cast* hangings, and every tongue was busy declaiming against Mr. Soho; every body declared, that from the first, the want of proportion "struck them, but that they would not mention it till others found it out."

People usually revenge themselves for having admired too much, by afterwards despising and depreciating without mercy —in all great assemblies the perception of ridicule is quickly caught, and quickly too revealed. Lady Clonbrony, even in her own house, on her gala night, became an object of ridicule,— decently masked, indeed, under the appearance of condolence with her ladyship, and of indignation against "that abominable Mr. Soho!"

Lady Langdale, who was now, for reasons of her own, upon her good behaviour, did penance, as she said, for her former imprudence, by abstaining even from whispered sarcasms. She looked on with penitential gravity, said nothing herself, and endeavoured to keep Mrs. Dareville in order; but that was no easy task. Mrs. Dareville had no daughters, had nothing to gain from the acquaintance of my Lady Clonbrony; and conscious that her ladyship would bear a vast deal from her presence, rather than forego the honour of her sanction, Mrs. Dareville, without any motives of interest, or good-nature of sufficient power to restrain her talent and habit of ridicule, free from hope or fear, gave full scope to all the malice of mockery, and all the insolence of fashion. Her slings and arrows, numerous as they were and outrageous, were directed against such petty objects, and the mischief was so quick in its aim and its operation, that, felt but not seen, it is scarcely possible to register the hits, or to describe the nature of the wounds.

Some hits, sufficiently palpable, however, are recorded for the advantage of posterity. When Lady Clonbrony led her to look at the Chinese pagoda, the lady paused, with her foot on the threshold, as if afraid to *enter this* porcelain Elysium, as she

called it—Fool's Paradise, she would have said; and, by her hesitation, and by the half pronounced word, suggested the idea —"None but belles without petticoats can enter here," said she drawing her clothes tight round her; "fortunately, I have but two, and Lady Langdale has but one." Prevailed upon to venture in, she walked on with prodigious care and trepidation, affecting to be alarmed at the crowd of strange forms and monsters by which she was surrounded.

"Not a creature here that I ever saw before in nature!—Well, now I may boast I've been in a real Chinese pagoda!"

"Why, yes, every thing is appropriate here, I flatter myself," said Lady Clonbrony.

"And how good of you, my dear Lady Clonbrony, in defiance of bulls and blunders, to allow us a comfortable English fire-place and plenty of Newcastle coal in China!—And a white marble—no! white velvet hearthrug painted with beautiful flowers—Oh! the delicate, the *useful* thing!"

Vexed by the emphasis on the word *useful*, Lady Clonbrony endeavoured to turn off the attention of the company. "Lady Langdale, your ladyship's a judge of china—this vase is an unique, I am told."

"I am told," interrupted Mrs. Dareville, "this is the very vase in which B——, the nabob's father, who was, you know, a China captain, smuggled his dear little Chinese wife and all her fortune out of Canton—positively, actually put the lid on, packed her up, and sent her off on shipboard!—True! true! upon my veracity! I'll tell you my authority!"

With this story, Mrs. Dareville drew all attention from the jar, to Lady Clonbrony's infinite mortification.

Lady Langdale at length turned to look at a vast range of china jars.

"Ali Baba and the forty thieves!" exclaimed Mrs. Dareville: "I hope you have boiling oil ready!"

Lady Clonbrony was obliged to laugh, and to vow that Mrs. Dareville was uncommon pleasant to-night——"But now," said her ladyship, "let me take you to the Turkish tent."

Having with great difficulty got the malicious wit out of the pagoda and into the Turkish tent, Lady Clonbrony began to breathe more freely; for here she thought she was upon safe

ground:—"Every thing, I flatter myself," said she, "is correct, and appropriate, and quite picturesque"—The company, dispersed in happy groups, or reposing on seraglio ottomans, drinking lemonade and sherbet—beautiful Fatimas admiring, or being admired—"Every thing here quite correct, appropriate, and picturesque," repeated Mrs. Dareville.

This lady's powers as a mimic were extraordinary, and she found them irresistible. Hitherto she had imitated Lady Clonbrony's air and accent only behind her back; but, bolder grown, she now ventured, in spite of Lady Langdale's warning pinches, to mimic her kind hostess before her face, and to her face. Now, whenever Lady Clonbrony saw any thing that struck her fancy in the dress of her fashionable friends, she had a way of hanging her head aside, and saying, with a peculiarly sentimental drawl, "How pretty!—How elegant!—Now that quite suits my *teeste!*" this phrase, precisely in the same accent, and with the head set to the same angle of affectation, Mrs. Dareville had the assurance to address to her ladyship, apropos to something which she pretended to admire in Lady Clonbrony's *costume*—a costume, which, excessively fashionable in each of its parts, was, altogether, so extraordinarily unbecoming, as to be fit for a print-shop. The perception of this, added to the effect of Mrs. Dareville's mimicry, was almost too much for Lady Langdale; she could not possibly have stood it, but for the appearance of Miss Nugent at this instant behind Lady Clonbrony. Grace gave one glance of indignation, which seemed suddenly to strike Mrs. Dareville. Silence for a moment ensued, and afterwards the tone of the conversation was changed.

"Salisbury!—explain this to me," said a lady, drawing Mr. Salisbury aside. "If you are in the secret, do explain this to me; for unless I had seen it, I could not have believed it. Nay, though I have seen it, I do not believe it. How was that daring spirit laid? By what spell?"

"By the spell which superior minds always cast on inferior spirits."

"Very fine," said the lady, laughing, "but as old as the days of Leonora de Galigai, quoted a million times. Now tell me something new and to the purpose, and better suited to modern days."

"Well, then, since you will not allow me to talk of superior minds in the present day, let me ask you if you have never observed that a wit, once conquered in company by a wit of higher order, is thenceforward in complete subjection to the conqueror, whenever and wherever they meet."

"You would not persuade me that yonder gentle-looking girl could ever be a match for the veteran Mrs. Dareville? She may have the wit, but has she the courage?"

"Yes; no one has more courage, more civil courage, where her own dignity, or the interests of her friends are concerned—I will tell you an instance or two to-morrow."

"To-morrow!—To-night!—tell it me now."

"Not a safe place."

"The safest in the world, in such a crowd as this——Follow my example. Take a glass of orgeat—sip from time to time, thus—speak low, looking innocent all the while straight forward, or now and then up at the lamps—keep on in an even tone—use no names—and you may tell any thing."

"Well, then, when Miss Nugent first came to London, Mrs. Dareville——"

"Two names already—did not I warn ye?"

"But how can I make myself intelligible?"

"Initials—can't you use—or genealogy?—What stops you? ——It is only Lord Colambre, a very safe person, I have a notion, when the eulogium is of Miss Nugent."

Lord Colambre, who had now performed his arduous duties as a dancer, and had disembarrassed himself of all his partners, came into the Turkish tent just at this moment to refresh himself, and just in time to hear Mr. Salisbury's anecdotes.

"Now go on."

"Mrs. Dareville, you remember, some years ago, went to Ireland, with some lady lieutenant, to whom she was related—there she was most hospitably received by Lord and Lady Clonbrony—went to their country house—was as intimate with Lady Clonbrony and with Miss Nugent as possible—stayed at Clonbrony Castle for a month; and yet, when Lady Clonbrony came to London, never took the least notice of her. At last, meeting at the house of a common friend, Mrs. Dareville could not avoid recognizing her ladyship; but, even then, did it in the least civil manner

and most cursory style possible—'Ho! Lady Clonbrony!—didn't know you were in England!—When did you come?—How long shall you stay in town?—Hope, before you leave England, your ladyship and Miss Nugent will give us a day?'—*A day!*—Lady Clonbrony was so astonished by this impudence of ingratitude, that she hesitated how to *take it;* but Miss Nugent, quite coolly, and with a smile, answered, 'A day!—Certainly—to you, who gave us a month!'"

"Admirable!—Now I comprehend perfectly why Mrs. Dareville declines insulting Miss Nugent's friends in her presence."

Lord Colambre said nothing, but thought much. "How I wish my mother," thought he, "had some of Grace Nugent's proper pride! She would not then waste her fortune, spirits, health, and life, in courting such people as these."

He had not seen—he could not have borne to have beheld—the manner in which his mother had been treated by some of her guests; but he observed that she now looked harassed and vexed; and he was provoked and mortified, by hearing her begging and beseeching some of the saucy leaders of the ton to oblige her, to do her the favour, to do her the honour, to stay to supper. It was just ready—actually announced. "No, they would not, they could not; they were obliged to run away: engaged to the Duchess of Torcaster."

"Lord Colambre, what is the matter?" said Miss Nugent, going up to him, as he stood aloof and indignant: "Don't look so like a chafed lion; others may perhaps read your countenance, as well as I do."

"None can read my mind so well," replied he. "Oh, my dear Grace!——"

"Supper!—Supper!" cried she: "your duty to your neighbour, your hand to your partner."

The supper room, fitted up at great expense, with scenery to imitate Vauxhall, opened into a superb greenhouse, lighted with coloured lamps, a band of music at a distance—every delicacy, every luxury that could gratify the senses, appeared in profusion. The company ate and drank—enjoyed themselves—went away—and laughed at their hostess. Some, indeed, who thought they had been neglected, were in too bad humour to

laugh, but abused her in sober earnest; for Lady Clonbrony had offended half, nay, three quarters of her guests, by what they termed her exclusive attention to those very leaders of the ton, from whom she had suffered so much, and who had made it obvious to all that they thought they did her too much honour in appearing at her gala. So ended the gala for which she had lavished such sums; for which she had laboured so indefatigably; and from which she had expected such triumph.

"Colambre, bid the musicians stop—they are playing to empty benches," said Lady Clonbrony. "Grace, my dear, will you see that these lamps are safely put out? I am so tired, so *worn out*, I must go to bed; and I am sure I have caught cold, too. What a *nervous business* it is to manage these things! I wonder how one gets through it, or *why* one does it!"

CHAPTER IV.

Lady Clonbrony was taken ill the day after her gala; she had caught cold by standing, when much overheated, in a violent draught of wind, paying her parting compliments to the Duke of V——, who thought her a *bore*, and wished her in heaven all the time for keeping his horses standing. Her ladyship's illness was severe and long; she was confined to her room for some weeks by a rheumatic fever, and an inflammation in her eyes. Every day, when Lord Colambre went to see his mother, he found Miss Nugent in her apartment, and every hour he found fresh reason to admire this charming girl. The affectionate tenderness, the indefatigable patience, the strong attachment she showed for her aunt, actually raised Lady Clonbrony in her son's opinion. He was persuaded she must surely have some good or great qualities, or she could not have excited such strong affection. A few foibles out of the question, such as her love of fine people, her affectation of being English, and other affectations too tedious to mention, Lady Clonbrony was really a good woman, had good principles, moral and religious, and, selfishness not immediately interfering, she was good-natured; and,

though her whole soul and attention were so completely absorbed in the duties of acquaintanceship that she did not know it, she really had affections—they were concentrated upon a few near relations. She was extremely fond and extremely proud of her son. Next to her son, she was fonder of her niece than of any other creature. She had received Grace Nugent into her family when she was left an orphan, and deserted by some of her other relations. She had bred her up, and had treated her with constant kindness. This kindness and these obligations had raised the warmest gratitude in Miss Nugent's heart; and it was the strong principle of gratitude which rendered her capable of endurance and exertions seemingly far above her strength. This young lady was not of a robust appearance, though she now underwent extraordinary fatigue. Her aunt could scarcely bear that she should leave her for a moment: she could not close her eyes, unless Grace sat up with her many hours every night. Night after night she bore this fatigue; and yet, with little sleep or rest, she preserved her health, at least, supported her spirits; and every morning when Lord Colambre came into his mother's room, he saw Miss Nugent look as blooming as if she had enjoyed the most refreshing sleep. The bloom was, as he observed, not permanent; it came and went with every emotion of her feeling heart; and he soon learned to fancy her almost as handsome when she was pale as when she had a colour. He had thought her beautiful when he beheld her in all the radiance of light, and with all the advantages of dress at the gala, but he found her infinitely more lovely and interesting now, when he saw her in a sick-room—a half-darkened chamber—where often he could but just discern her form, or distinguish her, except by her graceful motion as she passed, or when, but for a moment, a window-curtain drawn aside let the sun shine upon her face, or on the ringlets of her hair.

Much must be allowed for an inflammation in the eyes, and something for a rheumatic fever; yet it may seem strange that Lady Clonbrony should be so blind and deaf as neither to see nor hear all this time; that having lived so long in the world, it should never occur to her that it was rather imprudent to have a young lady, not eighteen, nursing her—and such a young lady!—when her son, not one-and-twenty—and such a son!—came

to visit her daily. But, so it was, Lady Clonbrony knew nothing of love—she had read of it, indeed, in novels, which sometimes for fashion's sake she had looked at, and over which she had been obliged to dose; but this was only love in books—love in real life she had never met with—in the life she led, how should she? She had heard of its making young people, and old people even, do foolish things; but those were foolish people; and if they were worse than foolish, why it was shocking, and nobody visited them. But Lady Clonbrony had not, for her own part, the slightest notion how people could be brought to this pass, nor how any body out of Bedlam could prefer, to a good house, a decent equipage, and a proper establishment, what is called love in a cottage. As to Colambre, she had too good an opinion of his understanding—to say nothing of his duty to his family, his pride, his rank, and his being her son—to let such an idea cross her imagination. As to her niece; in the first place, she was her niece, and first cousins should never marry, because they form no new connexions to strengthen the family interest, or raise its consequence. This doctrine her ladyship had repeated for years so often and so dogmatically, that she conceived it to be incontrovertible, and of as full force as any law of the land, or as any moral or religious obligation. She would as soon have suspected her niece of an intention of stealing her diamond necklace as of purloining Colambre's heart, or marrying this heir of the house of Clonbrony.

Miss Nugent was so well apprized, and so thoroughly convinced of all this, that she never for one moment allowed herself to think of Lord Colambre as a lover. Duty, honour, and gratitude—gratitude, the strong feeling and principle of her mind—forbade it; she had so prepared and accustomed herself to consider him as a person with whom she could not possibly be united, that, with perfect ease and simplicity, she behaved towards him exactly as if he were her brother—not in the equivocating sentimental romance style in which ladies talk of treating men as their brothers, whom they are all the time secretly thinking of and endeavouring to please as lovers—not using this phrase, as a convenient pretence, a safe mode of securing herself from suspicion or scandal, and of enjoying the

advantages of confidence and the intimacy of friendship, till the propitious moment, when it should be time to declare or avow *the secret of the heart.* No: this young lady was quite above all double dealing; she had no mental reservation—no metaphysical subtleties—but, with plain, unsophisticated morality, in good faith and simple truth, acted as she professed, thought what she said, and was that which she seemed to be.

As soon as Lady Clonbrony was able to see any body, her niece sent to Mrs. Broadhurst, who was very intimate with the family; she used to come frequently, almost every evening, to sit with the invalid. Miss Broadhurst accompanied her mother, for she did not like to go out with any other chaperon—it was disagreeable to spend her time alone at home, and most agreeable to spend it with her friend Miss Nugent. In this she had no design; Miss Broadhurst had too lofty and independent a spirit to stoop to coquetry: she thought that, in their interview at the gala, she understood Lord Colambre, and that he understood her—that he was not inclined to court her for her fortune—that she would not be content with any suitor who was not a lover. She was two or three years older than Lord Colambre, perfectly aware of her want of beauty, yet with a just sense of her own merit, and of what was becoming and due to the dignity of her sex. This, she trusted, was visible in her manners, and established in Lord Colambre's mind; so that she ran no risk of being misunderstood by him; and as to what the rest of the world thought, she was so well used to hear weekly and daily reports of her going to be married to fifty different people, that she cared little for what was said on this subject. Indeed, conscious of rectitude, and with an utter contempt for mean and commonplace gossiping, she was, for a woman, and a young woman, rather too disdainful of the opinion of the world. Mrs. Broadhurst, though her daughter had fully explained herself respecting Lord Colambre, before she began this course of visiting, yet rejoiced that even on this footing there should be constant intercourse between them. It was Mrs. Broadhurst's warmest wish that her daughter should obtain rank, and connect herself with an ancient family; she was sensible that the young lady's being older than the gentleman might be an obstacle; and very sorry she was to find that her daughter had so impru-

dently, so unnecessarily, declared her age: but still this little obstacle might be overcome, much greater difficulties in the marriage of inferior heiresses being every day got over, and thought nothing of. Then, as to the young lady's own sentiments, her mother knew them better than she did herself: she understood her daughter's pride, that she dreaded to be made an object of bargain and sale; but Mrs. Broadhurst, who, with all her coarseness of mind, had rather a better notion of love matters than Lady Clonbrony, perceived, through her daughter's horror of being offered to Lord Colambre, through her anxiety that nothing approaching to an advance on the part of her family should be made, that if Lord Colambre should himself advance, he would stand a better chance of being accepted than any other of the numerous persons who had yet aspired to the favour of this heiress. The very circumstance of his having paid no court to her at first operated in his favour; for it proved that he was not mercenary, and that, whatever attention he might afterwards show, she must be sure would be sincere and disinterested.

"And now, let them but see one another in this easy, intimate, kind of way; and you will find, my dear Lady Clonbrony, things will go on of their own accord, all the better for our—minding our cards—and never minding any thing else. I remember, when I was young—but let that pass—let the young people see one another, and manage their own affairs their own way—let them be together—that's all I say. Ask half the men you are acquainted with why they married, and their answer, if they speak truth, will be—'because I met Miss Such-a-one at such a place, and we were continually together.' Propinquity!—Propinquity!—as my father used to say—And he was married five times, and twice to heiresses."

In consequence of this plan of leaving things to themselves, every evening Lady Clonbrony made out her own little card-table with Mrs. Broadhurst, and a Mr. and Miss Pratt, a brother and sister, who were the most obliging, convenient neighbours imaginable. From time to time, as Lady Clonbrony gathered up her cards, she would direct an inquiring glance to the group of young people at the other table; whilst the more prudent Mrs. Broadhurst sat plump with her back to them, pursing up her lips, and contracting her brows in token of deep calculation,

down impenetrable at her cards, never even noticing
lonbrony's glances, but inquiring from her partner,
ıany they were by honours?"
young party generally consisted of Miss Broadhurst,
lambre, Miss Nugent, and her admirer, Mr. Salisbury.
ıbury was a middle-aged gentleman, very agreeable, and
ırmed; he had travelled; had seen a great deal of the
ıad lived in the best company; had acquired what is
ood *tact;* was full of anecdote, not mere gossiping
ıs that lead to nothing, but characteristic of national
, of human nature in general, or of those illustrious
als who excite public curiosity and interest. Miss Nu-
d seen him always in large companies, where he was
for his sçavoir-vivre, and for his entertaining anecdotes,
re he had no opportunity of producing any of the higher
of his understanding, or showing character. She found
. Salisbury appeared to her quite a different person when
ng with Lord Colambre. Lord Colambre, with that
thirst for knowledge which it is always agreeable to
had an air of openness and generosity, a frankness, a
of manner, which, with good breeding, but with some-
yond it and superior to its established forms, irresistibly
confidence and attracted the affection of those with
e conversed. His manners were peculiarly agreeable to
ı like Mr. Salisbury, tired of the sameness and egotism of
the world.

Nugent had seldom till now had the advantage of
much conversation on literary subjects. In the life she
n compelled to lead she had acquired accomplishments,
rcised her understanding upon every thing that passed
ıer, and from circumstances had formed her judgment
taste by observations on real life; but the ample page
ledge had never been unrolled to her eyes. She had
ıd opportunities of acquiring a taste for literature herself,
admired it in others, particularly in her friend Miss
ırst. Miss Broadhurst had received all the advantages
tion which money could procure, and had benefited by
a manner uncommon among those for whom they are
ıd in such abundance: she not only had had many

masters, and read many books, but had thought of what she read, and had supplied, by the strength and energy of her own mind, what cannot be acquired by the assistance of masters. Miss Nugent, perhaps overvaluing the information that she did not possess, and free from all idea of envy, looked up to her friend as to a superior being, with a sort of enthusiastic admiration; and now, with "charmed attention," listened, by turns, to her, to Mr. Salisbury, and to Lord Colambre, whilst they conversed on literary subjects—listened, with a countenance so full of intelligence, of animation, so expressive of every good and kind affection, that the gentlemen did not always know what they were saying.

"Pray go on," said she, once, to Mr. Salisbury: "you stop, perhaps, from politeness to me—from compassion to my ignorance; but though I am ignorant, you do not tire me, I assure you. Did you ever condescend to read the Arabian Tales? Like him whose eyes were touched by the magical application from the dervise, I am enabled at once to see the riches of a new world—Oh! how unlike, how superior to that in which I have lived—the GREAT world, as it is called!"

Lord Colambre brought down a beautiful edition of the Arabian Tales, looked for the story to which Miss Nugent had alluded, and showed it to Miss Broadhurst, who was also searching for it in another volume.

Lady Clonbrony, from her card-table, saw the young people thus engaged ——

"I profess not to understand these things so well as you say you do, my dear Mrs. Broadhurst," whispered she; "but look there now; they are at their books! What do you expect can come of that sort of thing? So ill bred, and downright rude of Colambre, I must give him a hint."

"No, no, for mercy's sake! my dear Lady Clonbrony; no hints, no hints, no remarks! What would you have?—she reading, and my lord at the back of her chair leaning over—and allowed, mind, to lean over to read the same thing. Can't be better!—Never saw any man yet allowed to come so near her! —— Now, Lady Clonbrony, not a word, not a look, I beseech."

"Well, well!—but if they had a little music."

"My daughter's tired of music. How much do I owe your ladyship now?—three rubbers, I think. Now, though you would not believe it of a young girl," continued Mrs. Broadhurst, "I can assure your ladyship, my daughter would often rather go to a book than a ball."

"Well, now, that's very extraordinary, in the style in which she has been brought up; yet books and all that are so fashionable now, that it's very natural," said Lady Clonbrony.

About this time, Mr. Berryl, Lord Colambre's Cambridge friend, for whom his lordship had fought the battle of the curricle with Mordicai, came to town. Lord Colambre introduced him to his mother, by whom he was graciously received; for Mr. Berryl was a young gentleman of good figure, good address, good family, heir to a good fortune, and in every respect a fit match for Miss Nugent. Lady Clonbrony thought that it would be wise to secure him for her niece before he should make his appearance in the London world, where mothers and daughters would soon make him feel his own consequence. Mr. Berryl, as Lord Colambre's intimate friend, was admitted to the private evening parties at Lady Clonbrony's; and he contributed to render them still more agreeable. His information, his habits of thinking, and his views, were all totally different from Mr. Salisbury's; and their collision continually struck out that sparkling novelty which pleases peculiarly in conversation. Mr. Berryl's education, disposition, and tastes, fitted him exactly for the station which he was destined to fill in society—that of *a country gentleman;* not meaning by that expression a mere eating, drinking, hunting, shooting, ignorant, country squire of the old race, which is now nearly extinct; but a cultivated, enlightened, independent English country gentleman — the happiest, perhaps, of human beings. On the comparative felicity of the town and country life; on the dignity, utility, elegance, and interesting nature of their different occupations, and general scheme of passing their time, Mr. Berryl and Mr. Salisbury had one evening a playful, entertaining, and, perhaps, instructive conversation; each party, at the end, remaining, as frequently happens, of their own opinion. It was observed, that Miss Broadhurst ably and warmly defended Mr. Berryl's side of the question; and in *their views, plans,* and estimates of life, there

appeared a remarkable and, as Lord Colambre thought, a happy coincidence. When she was at last called upon to give her decisive judgment between a town and a country life, she declared that if she were condemned to the extremes of either, she should prefer a country life, as much as she should prefer Robinson Crusoe's diary to the journal of the idle man in the Spectator.

"Lord bless me!—Mrs. Broadhurst, do you hear what your daughter is saying?" cried Lady Clonbrony, who, from the card-table, lent an attentive ear to all that was going forward. "Is it possible that Miss Broadhurst, with her fortune, and pretensions, and sense, can really be serious in saying she would be content to live in the country?"

"What's that you say, child, about living in the country?" said Mrs. Broadhurst.

Miss Broadhurst repeated what she had said.

"Girls always think so who have lived in town," said Mrs. Broadhurst: "they are always dreaming of sheep and sheep-hooks; but the first winter in the country cures them: a shepherdess in winter is a sad and sorry sort of personage, except at a masquerade."

"Colambre," said Lady Clonbrony, "I am sure Miss Broadhurst's sentiments about town life, and all that, must delight you——For do you know, ma'am, he is always trying to persuade me to give up living in town? Colambre and Miss Broadhurst perfectly agree."

"Mind your cards, my dear Lady Clonbrony," interrupted Mrs. Broadhurst, "in pity to your partner. Mr. Pratt has certainly the patience of Job—your ladyship has revoked twice this hand."

Lady Clonbrony begged a thousand pardons, fixed her eyes and endeavoured to fix her mind on the cards; but there was something said at the other end of the room, about an estate in Cambridgeshire, which soon distracted her attention again. Mr. Pratt certainly had the patience of Job. She revoked again, and lost the game, though they had four by honours.

As soon as she rose from the card-table, and could speak to Mrs. Broadhurst apart, she communicated her apprehensions. "Seriously, my dear madam," said she, "I believe I have done very wrong to admit Mr. Berryl just now, though it was on

's account I did it. But, ma'am, I did not know Miss
hurst had an estate in Cambridgeshire; their two estates
lose to one another, I heard them say—Lord bless me,
ι! there's the danger of propinquity indeed!"
o danger, no danger," persisted Mrs. Broadhurst. "I
my girl better than you do, begging your ladyship's par-
No one thinks less of estates than she does."
'ell, I only know I heard her talking of them, and earnestly

es, very likely; but don't you know that girls never think
ιt they are talking about, or rather never talk of what
are thinking about? And they have always ten times
to say to the man they don't care for than to him they

ery extraordinary!" said Lady Clonbrony: "I only hope
'e right."
am sure of it," said Mrs. Broadhurst. "Only let things
and mind your cards, I beseech you, to-morrow night
than you did to-night; and you will see that things will
ut just as I prophesied. Lord Colambre will come to a
blank proposal before the end of the week, and will be
ed, or my name's not Broadhurst. Why, in plain English,
clear my girl likes him; and when that's the case, you
can you doubt how the thing will end?"
. Broadhurst was perfectly right in every point of her
ing but one. From long habit of seeing and considering
ιch an heiress as her daughter might marry whom she
d,—from constantly seeing that she was the person to
and to reject,—Mrs. Broadhurst had literally taken it for
d that every thing was to depend upon her daughter's
ιtions: she was not mistaken, in the present case, in opin-
at the young lady would not be averse to Lord Colambre,
ame to what she called a point-blank proposal. It really
occurred to Mrs. Broadhurst, that any man whom her
ter was the least inclined to favour, could think of any
lse. Quick-sighted in these affairs as the matron thought
f, she saw but one side of the question: blind and dull of
ehension as she thought Lady Clonbrony on this subject,
Broadhurst was herself so completely blinded by her own

prejudices, as to be incapable of discerning the plain thing that was before her eyes; *videlicet*, that Lord Colambre preferred Grace Nugent. Lord Colambre made no proposal before the end of the week; but this Mrs. Broadhurst attributed to an unexpected occurrence, which prevented things from going on in the train in which they had been proceeding so smoothly. Sir John Berryl, Mr. Berryl's father, was suddenly seized with a dangerous illness. The news was brought to Mr. Berryl one evening whilst he was at Lady Clonbrony's. The circumstances of domestic distress which afterwards occurred in the family of his friend, entirely occupied Lord Colambre's time and attention. All thoughts of love were suspended, and his whole mind was given up to the active services of friendship. The sudden illness of Sir John Berryl spread an alarm among his creditors, which brought to light at once the disorder of his affairs, of which his son had no knowledge or suspicion. Lady Berryl had been a very expensive woman, especially in equipages; and Mordicai, the coachmaker, appeared at this time the foremost and the most inexorable of their creditors. Conscious that the charges in his account were exorbitant, and that they would not be allowed if examined by a court of justice; that it was a debt which only ignorance and extravagance could have in the first instance incurred, swelled afterwards to an amazing amount by interest, and interest upon interest; Mordicai was impatient to obtain payment, whilst Sir John yet lived, or at least to obtain legal security for the whole sum from the heir. Mr. Berryl offered his bond for the amount of the reasonable charges in his account; but this Mordicai absolutely refused, declaring that now he had the power in his own hands, he would use it to obtain the utmost penny of his debt; that he would not let the thing slip through his fingers; that a debtor never yet escaped him, and never should; that a man's lying upon his deathbed was no excuse to a creditor; that he was not a whiffler to stand upon ceremony about disturbing a gentleman in his last moments; that he was not to be cheated out of his due by such niceties; that he was prepared to go all lengths the law would allow; for that, as to what people said of him, he did not care a doit—"Cover your face with your hands, if you like it, Mr. Berryl; you may be ashamed for me, but I feel no shame for myself—I

am not so weak." Mordicai's countenance said more than his words; livid with malice, and with atrocious determination in his eyes, he stood. "Yes, sir," said he, "you may look at me as you please—it is possible—I am in earnest. Consult what you'll do now behind my back, or before my face, it comes to the same thing; for nothing will do but my money or your bond, Mr. Berryl. The arrest is made on the person of your father, luckily made while the breath is still in the body——Yes —start forward to strike me, if you dare—Your father, Sir John Berryl, sick or well, is my prisoner."

Lady Berryl and Mr. Berryl's sisters, in an agony of grief, rushed into the room.

"It's all useless," cried Mordicai, turning his back upon the ladies: "these tricks upon creditors won't do with me; I'm used to these scenes; I'm not made of such stuff as you think. Leave a gentleman in peace in his last moments—No! he ought not, nor sha'n't die in peace, if he don't pay his debts; and if you are all so mighty sorry, ladies, there's the gentleman you may kneel to: if tenderness is the order of the day, it's for the son to show it, not me. Ay, now, Mr. Berryl," cried he, as Mr. Berryl took up the bond to sign it, "you're beginning to know I'm not a fool to be trifled with. Stop your hand, if you choose it, sir,—it's all the same to me: the person, or the money, I'll carry with me out of this house."

Mr. Berryl signed the bond, and threw it to him.

"There, monster!—quit the house!"

"*Monster* is not actionable—I wish you had called me *knave*," said Mordicai, grinning a horrible smile; and taking up the bond deliberately, returned it to Mr. Berryl: "This paper is worth nothing to me, sir—it is not witnessed."

Mr. Berryl hastily left the room, and returned with Lord Colambre. Mordicai changed countenance and grew pale, for a moment, at sight of Lord Colambre.

"Well, my lord, since it so happens, I am not sorry that you should be witness to this paper," said he; "and indeed not sorry that you should witness the whole proceedings; for I trust I shall be able to explain to you my conduct."

"I do not come here, sir," interrupted Lord Colambre, "to listen to any explanations of *your conduct*, which I perfectly un-

derstand;—I come to witness a bond for my friend Mr. Berryl if you think proper to extort from him such a bond."

"I extort nothing, my lord. Mr. Berryl, it is quite a voluntary act, take notice, on your part; sign or not, witness or not, as you please, gentlemen," said Mordicai, sticking his hands in his pockets, and recovering his look of black and fixed determination.

"Witness it, witness it, my dear lord," said Mr. Berryl, looking at his mother and weeping sisters; "witness it, quick!"

"Mr. Berryl must just run over his name again in your presence, my lord, with a dry pen," said Mordicai, putting the pen into Mr. Berryl's hand.

"No, sir," said Lord Colambre, "my friend shall never sign it."

"As you please, my lord—the bond or the body, before I quit this house," said Mordicai.

"Neither, sir, shall you have: and you quit this house directly."

"How! how!—my lord, how's this?"

"Sir, the arrest you have made is as illegal as it is inhuman."

"Illegal, my lord!" said Mordicai, startled.

"Illegal, sir. I came into this house at the moment when your bailiff asked and was refused admittance. Afterwards, in the confusion of the family above stairs, he forced open the house-door with an iron bar—I saw him—I am ready to give evidence of the fact. Now proceed at your peril."

Mordicai, without reply, snatched up his hat, and walked towards the door; but Lord Colambre held the door open—it was immediately at the head of the stairs—and Mordicai, seeing his indignant look and proud form, hesitated to pass; for he had always heard that Irishmen are "quick in the executive part of justice."

"Pass on, sir," repeated Lord Colambre, with an air of ineffable contempt: "I am a gentleman—you have nothing to fear!"

Mordicai ran down stairs; Lord Colambre, before he went back into the room, waited to see him and his bailiff out of the house. When Mordicai was fairly at the bottom of the stairs,

ned, and, white with rage, looked up at Lord Co-

arity begins at home, my lord," said he. "Look at home
shall pay for this," added he, standing half-shielded by
ıse-door, for Lord Colambre moved forward as he spoke
t words; "and I give you this warning, because I know it
of no use to you——Your most obedient, my lord." The
loor closed after him.

ıank Heaven," thought Lord Colambre, "that I did not
'hip that mean wretch!—This warning shall be of use to
3ut it is not time to think of that yet."

l Colambre turned from his own affairs to those of his
to offer all the assistance and consolation in his power.
ın Berryl died that night. His daughters, who had lived
highest style in London, were left totally unprovided for.
idow had mortgaged her jointure. Mr. Berryl had an
now left to him, but without any income. He could not
lishonest as to refuse to pay his father's just debts; he
ıot let his mother and sisters starve. The scene of distress
:h Lord Colambre was witness in this family made a still
: impression upon him than had been made by the
g or the threats of Mordicai. The similarity between
'cumstances of his friend's family and of his own struck
rcibly.

this evil had arisen from Lady Berryl's passion for living
don and at watering places. She had made her husband
ENTEE—an absentee from his home, his affairs, his duties,
is estate. The sea, the Irish Channel, did not, indeed,
:tween him and his estate; but it was of little importance
ɜr the separation was effected by land or water—the con-
ces, the negligence, the extravagance, were the same."

he few people of his age who are capable of benefiting by
ɔerience of others, Lord Colambre was one. "Experience,"
legant writer has observed, "is an article that may be
ed with safety, and is often dearly bought."

CHAPTER V.

In the mean time, Lady Clonbrony had been occupied with thoughts very different from those which passed in the mind of her son. Though she had never completely recovered from her rheumatic pains, she had become inordinately impatient of confinement to her own house, and weary of those dull evenings at home, which had, in her son's absence, become insupportable. She told over her visiting tickets regularly twice a day, and gave to every card of invitation a heartfelt sigh. Miss Pratt alarmed her ladyship, by bringing intelligence of some parties given by persons of consequence, to which she was not invited. She feared that she should be forgotten in the world, well knowing how soon the world forgets those they do not see every day and every where. How miserable is the fine lady's lot, who cannot forget, and who is forgotten by the world in a moment! How much more miserable still is the condition of a would-be fine lady, working her way up in the world with care and pains! By her, every the slightest failure of attention, from persons of rank and fashion, is marked and felt with a jealous anxiety, and with a sense of mortification the most acute—an invitation omitted is a matter of the most serious consequence, not only as it regards the present but the future; for if she be not invited by Lady A, it will lower her in the eyes of Lady B, and of all the ladies in the alphabet. It will form a precedent of the most dangerous and inevitable application. If she have nine invitations, and the tenth be wanting, the nine have no power to make her happy. This was precisely Lady Clonbrony's case—there was to be a party at Lady St. James's, for which Lady Clonbrony had no card.

"So ungrateful, so monstrous, of Lady St. James!—Whât! was the gala so soon forgotten, and all the marked attentions paid that night to Lady St. James!—attentions, you know, Pratt, which were looked upon with a jealous eye, and made me enemies enough, I am told, in another quarter!—Of all people, I did not expect to be slighted by Lady St. James!"

Miss Pratt, who was ever ready to undertake the defence of any person who had a title, pleaded, in mitigation of censure

that perhaps Lady St. James might not be aware that her ladyship was yet well enough to venture out.

"Oh, my dear Miss Pratt, that cannot be the thing; for, in spite of my rheumatism, which really was bad enough last Sunday, I went on purpose to the Royal Chapel, to show myself in the closet, and knelt close to her ladyship.—And, my dear, we curtsied, and she congratulated me, after church, upon my being abroad again, and was so happy to see me look so well, and all that—Oh! it is something very extraordinary and unaccountable!"

"But, I dare say, a card will come yet," said Miss Pratt.

Upon this hint, Lady Clonbrony's hope revived; and, staying her anger, she began to consider how she could manage to get herself invited. Refreshing tickets were left next morning at Lady St. James's with their corners properly turned up; to do the thing better, separate tickets from herself and Miss Nugent were left for each member of the family; and her civil messages, left with the footmen, extended to the utmost possibility of remainder. It had occurred to her ladyship, that for Miss Somebody, *the companion*, of whom she had never in her life thought before, she had omitted to leave a card last time, and she now left a note of explanation; she farther, with her rheumatic head and arm out of the coach-window, sat, the wind blowing keen upon her, explaining to the porter and the footman, to discover whether her former tickets had gone safely up to Lady St. James; and on the present occasion, to make assurance doubly sure, she slid handsome expedition money into the servant's hand—"Sir, you will be sure to remember"—"Oh, certainly, your ladyship."

She well knew what dire offence has frequently been taken, what sad disasters have occurred in the fashionable world, from the neglect of a porter in delivering, or of a footman in carrying up, one of those talismanic cards. But, in spite of all her manœuvres, no invitation to the party arrived next day. Pratt was next set to work. Miss Pratt was a most convenient go-between, who, in consequence of doing a thousand little services, to which few others of her rank in life would stoop, had obtained the entrée to a number of great houses, and was behind the

scenes in many fashionable families. Pratt could find out, and Pratt could hint, and Pratt could manage to get things done cleverly—and hints were given, in all directions, to *work round* to Lady St. James. But still they did not take effect. At last Pratt suggested, that perhaps, though every thing else had failed, dried salmon might be tried with success. Lord Clonbrony had just had some uncommonly good from Ireland, which Pratt knew Lady St. James would like to have at her supper, because a certain personage, whom she would not name, was particularly fond of it—Wheel within wheel in the fine world, as well as in the political world!—Bribes for all occasions and for all ranks!—The timely present was sent, accepted with many thanks, and understood as it was meant. Per favour of this propitiatory offering, and of a promise of half a dozen pair of real Limerick gloves to Miss Pratt—a promise which Pratt clearly comprehended to be a conditional promise—the grand object was at length accomplished. The very day before the party was to take place came cards of invitation to Lady Clonbrony and to Miss Nugent, with Lady St. James's apologies: her ladyship was concerned to find that, by some negligence of her servants, these cards were not sent in proper time. "How slight an apology will do from some people!" thought Miss Nugent; "how eager to forgive, when it is for our interest or our pleasure! how well people act the being deceived, even when all parties know that they see the whole truth! and how low pride will stoop to gain its object!"

Ashamed of the whole transaction, Miss Nugent earnestly wished that a refusal should be sent, and reminded her aunt of her rheumatism; but rheumatism and all other objections were overruled—Lady Clonbrony would go. It was just when this affair was thus, in her opinion, successfully settled, that Lord Colambre came in, with a countenance of unusual seriousness, his mind full of the melancholy scenes he had witnessed in his friend's family.

"What is the matter, Colambre?"

He related what had passed; he described the brutal conduct of Mordicai; the anguish of the mother and sisters; the distress of Mr. Berryl. Tears rolled down Miss Nugent's cheeks—Lady

Clonbrony declared it was very *shocking;* listened with attention to all the particulars; but never failed to correct her son, whenever he said Mr. Berryl—

"*Sir Arthur* Berryl, you mean."

She was, however, really touched with compassion when he spoke of Lady Berryl's destitute condition; and her son was going on to repeat what Mordicai had said to him, but Lady Clonbrony interrupted, "Oh, my dear Colambre! don't repeat that detestable man's impertinent speeches to me. If there is any thing really about business, speak to your father. At any rate don't tell us of it now, because I've a hundred things to do," said her ladyship, hurrying out of the room——"Grace, Grace Nugent! I want you!"

Lord Colambre sighed deeply.

"Don't despair," said Miss Nugent, as she followed to obey her aunt's summons. "Don't despair; don't attempt to speak to her again till to-morrow morning. Her head is now full of Lady St. James's party. When it is emptied of that, you will have a better chance. Never despair."

"Never, while you encourage me to hope——that any good can be done."

Lady Clonbrony was particularly glad that she had carried her point about this party at Lady St. James's; because, from the first private intimation that the Duchess of Torcaster was to be there, her ladyship flattered herself that the long-desired introduction might then be accomplished. But of this hope Lady St. James had likewise received intimation from the double-dealing Miss Pratt; and a warning note was despatched to the duchess to let her grace know that circumstances had occurred which had rendered it impossible not to *ask the Clonbronies.* An excuse, of course, for not going to this party, was sent by the duchess—her grace did not like large parties—she would have the pleasure of accepting Lady St. James's invitation for her select party on Wednesday, the 10th. Into these select parties Lady Clonbrony had never been admitted. In return for great entertainments she was invited to great entertainments, to large parties; but further she could never penetrate.

At Lady St. James's, and with her set, Lady Clonbrony

suffered a different kind of mortification from that which Lady Langdale and Mrs. Dareville made her endure. She was safe from the witty raillery, the sly inuendo, the insolent mimicry; but she was kept at a cold, impassable distance, by ceremony—"So far shalt thou go, and no further," was expressed in every look, in every word, and in a thousand different ways.

By the most punctilious respect and nice regard to precedency, even by words of courtesy—"Your ladyship does me honour," &c.—Lady St. James contrived to mortify and to mark the difference between those with whom she was, and with whom she was not, upon terms of intimacy and equality. Thus the ancient grandees of Spain drew a line of demarcation between themselves and the newly created nobility. Whenever or wherever they met, they treated the new nobles with the utmost respect, never addressed them but with all their titles, with low bows, and with all the appearance of being, with the most perfect consideration, anything but their equals; whilst towards one another the grandees laid aside their state, and omitting their titles, it was "Alcalá—Medina Sidonia—Infantado," and a freedom and familiarity which marked equality. Entrenched in etiquette in this manner, and mocked with marks of respect, it was impossible either to intrude or to complain of being excluded.

At supper at Lady St. James's, Lady Clonbrony's present was pronounced by some gentlemen to be remarkably high flavoured. This observation turned the conversation to Irish commodities and Ireland. Lady Clonbrony, possessed by the idea that it was disadvantageous to appear as an Irishwoman or as a favourer of Ireland, began to be embarrassed by Lady St. James's repeated thanks. Had it been in her power to offer any thing else with propriety, she would not have thought of sending her ladyship any thing from Ireland. Vexed by the questions that were asked her about her *country*, Lady Clonbrony, as usual, denied it to be her country, and went on to depreciate and abuse every thing Irish; to declare that there was no possibility of living in Ireland; and that, for her own part, she was resolved never to return thither. Lady St. James, preserving perfect silence, let her go on. Lady Clonbrony imagining that this silence arose from coincidence of opinion, proceeded with

all the eloquence she possessed, which was very little, repeating the same exclamations, and reiterating her vow of perpetual expatriation; till at last an elderly lady, who was a stranger to her, and whom she had till this moment scarcely noticed, took up the defence of Ireland with much warmth and energy: the eloquence with which she spoke, and the respect with which she was heard, astonished Lady Clonbrony.

"Who is she?" whispered her ladyship.

"Does not your ladyship know Lady Oranmore—the Irish Lady Oranmore?"

"Lord bless me!—what have I said!—what have I done!—Oh! why did you not give me a hint, Lady St. James?"

"I was not aware that your ladyship was not acquainted with Lady Oranmore," replied Lady St. James, unmoved by her distress.

Every body sympathized with Lady Oranmore, and admired the honest zeal with which she abided by her country, and defended it against unjust aspersions and affected execrations. Every one present enjoyed Lady Clonbrony's confusion, except Miss Nugent, who sat with her eyes bowed down by penetrative shame during the whole of this scene: she was glad that Lord Colambre was not witness to it; and comforted herself with the hope that, upon the whole, Lady Clonbrony would be benefited by the pain she had felt. This instance might convince her that it was not necessary to deny her country to be received in any company in England; and that those who have the courage and steadiness to be themselves, and to support what they feel and believe to be the truth, must command respect. Miss Nugent hoped that in consequence of this conviction Lady Clonbrony would lay aside the little affectations by which her manners were painfully constrained and ridiculous; and, above all, she hoped that what Lady Oranmore had said of Ireland might dispose her aunt to listen with patience to all Lord Colambre might urge in favour of returning to her home. But Miss Nugent hoped in vain. Lady Clonbrony never in her life generalized any observations, or drew any but a partial conclusion from the most striking facts.

"Lord! my dear Grace!" said she, as soon as they were seated in their carriage, "what a scrape I got into to-night at

supper, and what disgrace I came to!—and all this because I did not know Lady Oranmore. Now you see the inconceivable disadvantage of not knowing every body—every body of a certain rank, of course, I mean."

Miss Nugent endeavoured to slide in her own moral on the occasion, but it would not do.

"Yes, my dear, Lady Oranmore may talk in that kind of style of Ireland, because, on the other hand, she is so highly connected in England; and, besides, she is an old lady, and may take liberties; in short, she is Lady Oranmore, and that's enough."

The next morning, when they all met at breakfast, Lady Clonbrony complained bitterly of her increased rheumatism, of the disagreeable, stupid party they had had the preceding night, and of the necessity of going to another formal party to-morrow night, and the next, and the next night, and, in the true fine lady style, deplored her situation, and the impossibility of avoiding those things,

"Which felt they curse, yet covet still to feel."

Miss Nugent determined to retire as soon as she could from the breakfast-room, to leave Lord Colambre an opportunity of talking over his family affairs at full liberty. She knew by the seriousness of his countenance that his mind was intent upon doing so, and she hoped that his influence with his father and mother would not be exerted in vain. But just as she was rising from the breakfast-table, in came Sir Terence O'Fay, and seating himself quite at his ease, in spite of Lady Clonbrony's repulsive looks, his awe of Lord Colambre having now worn off. "I'm tired," said he, "and have a right to be tired; for it's no small walk I've taken for the good of this noble family this morning. And, Miss Nugent, before I say more, I'll take a cup of *ta* from you, if you please."

Lady Clonbrony rose, with great stateliness, and walked to the farthest end of the room, where she established herself at her writing-table, and began to write notes.

Sir Terence wiped his forehead deliberately.—"Then I've had a fine run—Miss Nugent, I believe you never saw me run but I can run, I promise you, when it's to serve a friend—And

my lord (turning to Lord Clonbrony), what do you think I run for this morning—to buy a bargain—and of what?—a bargain of a bad debt—a debt of yours, which I bargained for, and up just in time—and Mordicai's ready to hang himself this minute ——For what do you think that rascal was bringing upon you —but an execution?—he was."

"An execution!" repeated every body present, except Lord Colambre.

"And how has this been prevented, sir?" said Lord Colambre.

"Oh! let me alone for that," said Sir Terence. "I got a hint from my little friend, Paddy Brady, who would not be paid for it either, though he's as poor as a rat. Well! as soon as I got the hint, I dropped the thing I had in my hand, which was the Dublin Evening, and ran for the bare life—for there wasn't a coach—in my slippers, as I was, to get into the prior creditor's shoes, who is the little solicitor that lives in Crutched Friars, which Mordicai never dreamt of, luckily; so he was very genteel, though he was taken on a sudden, and from his breakfast, which an Englishman don't like particularly—I popped him a douceur of a draft, at thirty-one days, on Garraghty, the agent; of which he must get notice; but I won't descant on the law before the ladies—he handed me over his debt and execution, and he made me prior creditor in a trice. Then I took coach in state, the first I met, and away with me to Long Acre—saw Mordicai. 'Sir,' says I, 'I hear you're meditating an execution on a friend of mine.'—'Am I?' said the rascal; 'who told you so?'—'No matter,' said I; 'but I just called in to let you know there's no use in life of your execution; for there's a prior creditor with his execution to be satisfied first.' So he made a great many black faces, and said a great deal, which I never listened to, but came off here clean to tell you all the story."

"Not one word of which do I understand," said Lady Clonbrony.

"Then, my dear, you are very ungrateful," said Lord Clonbrony.

Lord Colambre said nothing, for he wished to learn more of Sir Terence O'Fay's *character*, of the state of his father's

affairs, and of the family methods of proceeding in 1
business.

"Faith! Terry, I know I'm very thankful to you
execution's an ugly thing,—and I hope there's no dan

"Never fear!" said Sir Terence: "hav'n't I been a
ends for myself or my friends ever since I come to ma
—to years of discretion, I should say, for the deuce
estate have I! But use has sharpened my wits prett
your service; so never be in dread, my good lord; for
cried the reckless knight, sticking his arms akimbo,
here! in Sir Terence O'Fay stands a host that desires
than to encounter, single-witted, all the duns in t
kingdoms, Mordicai the Jew inclusive."

"Ah! that's the devil, that Mordicai," said Lord Cl
"that's the only man on earth I dread."

"Why, he is only a coachmaker, is not he?" said L
brony: "I can't think how you can talk, my lord, of
such a low man. Tell him, if he's troublesome, we
speak any more carriages; and, I'm sure, I wish you
be so silly, my lord, to employ him any more, when
he disappointed me the last birthday about the landau
have not got yet."

"Nonsense, my dear," said Lord Clonbrony; "y
know what you are talking of——Terry, I say, even
execution is an ugly thing."

"Phoo! phoo!—an ugly thing!—So is a fit of the g
one's all the better for it after. 'Tis just a renewal o
lord, for which one must pay a bit of a fine, you kno
patience, and leave me to manage all properly—you l
used to these things: only you recollect, if you pleas
managed my friend Lord————it's bad to be m
names—but Lord *Every-body-knows-who*—didn't I b
through cleverly, when there was that rascally attemp
the family plate? I had notice, and what did I do, b
open a partition between that lord's house and my
which I had taken next door; and so, when the sheriff
were searching below on the ground floor, I just sh
plate easy through to my bedchamber at a moment's
and then bid the gentlemen walk in, for they couldn't

in my paradise, the devils!—So they stood looking at it through the wall, and cursing me, and I holding both my sides with laughter at their fallen faces."

Sir Terence and Lord Clonbrony laughed in concert.

"This is a good story," said Miss Nugent, smiling; "but surely, Sir Terence, such things are never done in real life?"

"Done! ay, are they; and I could tell you a hundred better strokes, my dear Miss Nugent."

"Grace!" cried Lady Clonbrony, "do pray have the goodness to seal and send these notes; for really," whispered she, as her niece came to the table, "I *cawnt stee*, I *cawnt* bear that man's *vice*, his accent grows horrider and horrider!"

Her ladyship rose, and left the room.

"Why, then," continued Sir Terence, following Miss Nugent to the table, where she was sealing letters—"I must tell you how I *sa*rved that same man on another occasion, and got the victory, too."

No general officer could talk of his victories, or fight his battles o'er again, with more complacency than Sir Terence O'Fay recounted his *civil* exploits.

"Now I'll tell you, Miss Nugent. There was a footman in the family, not an Irishman, but one of your powdered English scoundrels that ladies are so fond of having hanging to the backs of their carriages; one Fleming he was, that turned spy, and traitor, and informer, went privately and gave notice to the creditors where the plate was hid in the thickness of the chimney; but if he did, what happened? Why, I had my counter-spy, an honest little Irish boy, in the creditor's shop, that I had secured with a little douceur of usquebaugh; and he outwitted, as was natural, the English lying valet, and gave us notice just in the nick, and I got ready for their reception; and, Miss Nugent, I only wish you'd seen the excellent sport we had, letting them follow the scent they got; and when they were sure of their game, what did they find?—Ha! ha! ha!—dragged out, after a world of labour, a heavy box of——a load of brick-bats; not an item of my friend's plate, that was all snug in the coal-hole, where them dunces never thought of looking for it—Ha! ha! ha!"

"But come, Terry," cried Lord Clonbrony, "I'll pull down

your pride.—How finely, another time, your job of the false ceiling answered in the hall. I've heard that story, and have been told how the sheriff's fellow thrust his bayonet up through your false plaster, and down came tumbling the family plate—hey! Terry?——That hit cost your friend, Lord Every-body knows-who, more than your head's worth, Terry."

"I ask your pardon, my lord, it never cost him a farthing."

"When he paid 7000*l*. for the plate, to redeem it?"

"Well! and did not I make up for that at the races of —— The creditors learned that my lord's horse, Naboclish, was to run at —— races; and, as the sheriff's officer knew he dare not touch him on the race-ground, what does he do, but he comes down early in the morning on the mail-coach, and walks straight down to the livery stables. He had an exact description of the stables, and the stall, and the horse's body clothes.

"I was there, seeing the horse taken care of; and, knowing the cut of the fellow's jib, what does I do, but whips the body clothes off Naboclish, and claps them upon a garrone, that the priest would not ride.

"In comes the bailiff—'Good morrow to you, sir,' says I, leading out of the stable my lord's horse, with an *ould* saddle and bridle on.

"'Tim Neal,' says I to the groom, who was rubbing down the garrone's heels, 'mind your hits to-day, and *wee'l* wet the plate to-night.'

"'Not so fast, neither,' says the bailiff—'here's my writ for seizing the horse.'

"'Och,' says I, 'you wouldn't be so cruel.'

"'That's all my eye,' says he, seizing the garrone, while I mounted Naboclish, and rode him off deliberately."

"Ha! ha! ha!—That *was* neat, I grant you, Terry," said Lord Clonbrony. "But what a dolt of a born ignoramus must that sheriff's fellow have been, not to know Naboclish when he saw him!"

"But stay, my lord—stay, Miss Nugent—I have more for you," following her wherever she moved——"I did not let him off so, even. At the cant, I bid and bid against them for the pretended Naboclish, till I left him on their hands for 500 guineas—ha! ha! ha!—was not that famous?"

"But," said Miss Nugent, "I cannot believe you are in earnest, Sir Terence——Surely this would be——"

"What?—out with it, my dear Miss Nugent."

"I am afraid of offending you."

"You can't, my dear, I defy you—say the word that came to the tongue's end; it's always the best."

"I was going to say, swindling," said the young lady, colouring deeply.

"Oh, you was going to say wrong, then! It's not called swindling amongst gentlemen who know the world—it's only jockeying—fine sport—and very honourable to help a friend at a dead lift. Any thing to help a friend out of a present pressing difficulty."

"And when the present difficulty is over, do your friends never think of the future?"

"The future! leave the future to posterity," said Sir Terence; "I'm counsel only for the present; and when the evil comes, it's time enough to think of it. I can't bring the guns of my wits to bear till the enemy's alongside of me, or within sight of me at the least. And besides, there never was a good commander yet, by sea or land, that would tell his little expedients beforehand, or before the very day of battle."

"It must be a sad thing," said Miss Nugent, sighing deeply, "to be reduced to live by little expedients—daily expedients."

Lord Colambre struck his forehead, but said nothing.

"But if you are beating your brains about your own affairs, my Lord Colambre, my dear," said Sir Terence, "there's an easy way of settling your family affairs at once; and since you don't like little daily expedients, Miss Nugent, there's one great expedient, and an expedient for life, that will settle it all to your satisfaction—and ours. I hinted it delicately to you before; but, between friends, delicacy is impertinent; so I tell you, in plain English, you've nothing to do but go and propose yourself, just as you stand, to the heiress Miss B——, that desires no better——"

"Sir!" cried Lord Colambre, stepping forward, red with sudden anger.

Miss Nugent laid her hand upon his arm. "Oh, my lord!"

"Sir Terence O'Fay," continued Lord Colambre, in a moderated tone, "you are wrong to mention that young lady's name in such a manner."

"Why then I said only Miss B——, and there are a whole hive of *bees*. But I'll engage she'd thank me for what I suggested, and think herself the queen bee if my expedient was adopted by you."

"Sir Terence," said his lordship, smiling, "if my father thinks proper that you should manage his affairs, and devise expedients for him, I have nothing to say on that point; but I must beg you will not trouble yourself to suggest expedients for me, and that you will have the goodness to leave me to settle my own affairs."

Sir Terence made a low bow, and was silent for five seconds; then turning to Lord Clonbrony, who looked much more abashed than he did, "By the wise one, my good lord, I believe there are some men—noblemen, too—that don't know their friends from their enemies. It's my firm persuasion, now, that if I had served you as I served my friend I was talking of, your son there would, ten to one, think I had done him an injury by saving the family plate."

"I certainly should, sir. The family plate, sir, is not the first object in my mind," replied Lord Colambre; "family honour ——Nay, Miss Nugent, I must speak," continued his lordship; perceiving, by her countenance, that she was alarmed.

"Never fear, Miss Nugent, dear," said Sir Terence; "I'm as cool as a cucumber.—Faith! then, my Lord Colambre, I agree with you, that family honour's a mighty fine thing, only troublesome to one's self and one's friends, and expensive to keep up with all the other expenses and debts a gentleman has now-a-days. So I, that am under no natural obligations to it by birth or otherwise, have just stood by it through life, and asked myself, before I would volunteer being bound to it, what could this same family honour do for a man in this world? And, first and foremost, I never remember to see family honour stand a man in much stead in a court of law—never saw family honour stand against an execution, or a custodiam, or an injunction even.——'Tis a rare thing, this same family honour, and a very fine thing; but I

never knew it yet, at a pinch, pay for a pair of boots even," added Sir Terence, drawing up his own with much complacency.

At this moment, Sir Terence was called out of the room by one who wanted to speak to him on particular business.

"My dear father," cried Lord Colambre, "do not follow him; stay, for one moment, and hear your son, your true friend."

Miss Nugent left the room.

"Hear your natural friend for one moment," cried Lord Colambre. "Let me beseech you, father, not to have recourse to any of these paltry expedients, but trust your son with the state of your affairs, and we shall find some honourable means——"

"Yes, yes, yes, very true; when you're of age, Colambre, we'll talk of it; but nothing can be done till then. We shall get on, we shall get through, very well, till then, with Terry's assistance; and I must beg you will not say a word more against Terry—I can't bear it—I can't bear it—I can't do without him. Pray don't detain me—I can say no more—except," added he, returning to his usual concluding sentence, "that there need, at all events, be none of this, if people would but live upon their own estates, and kill their own mutton." He stole out of the room, glad to escape, however shabbily, from present explanation and present pain. There are persons without resource, who, in difficulties, return always to the same point, and usually to the same words.

While Lord Colambre was walking up and down the room, much vexed and disappointed at finding that he could make no impression on his father's mind, nor obtain his confidence, Lady Clonbrony's woman, Mrs. Petito, knocked at the door, with a message from her lady, to beg, if Lord Colambre was *by himself*, he would go to her dressing-room, as she wished to have a conference with him. He obeyed her summons.

"Sit down, my dear Colambre——" And she began precisely with her old sentence—"With the fortune I brought your father, and with my lord's estate, I *cawnt* understand the meaning of all these pecuniary difficulties; and all that strange creature Sir Terence says is algebra to me, who speak English. And I am particularly sorry he was let in this morning—but he's such a brute that he does not think any thing of forcing one's door, and

he tells my footman he does not mind *not at home* a pinch of snuff. Now what can you do with a man who could say that sort of thing, you know?—the world's at an end."

"I wish my father had nothing to do with him, ma'am, as much as you can wish it," said Lord Colambre; "but I have said all that a son can say, and without effect."

"What particularly provokes me against him," continued Lady Clonbrony, "is what I have just heard from Grace, who was really hurt by it, too, for she is the warmest friend in the world: I allude to the creature's indelicate way of touching upon a tender *pint*, and mentioning an amiable young heiress's name. My dear Colambre, I trust you have given me credit for my inviolable silence all this time, upon the *pint* nearest my heart. I am rejoiced to hear you *was* so warm when she was mentioned inadvertently by that brute, and I trust you now see the advantages of the projected union in as strong and agreeable a *pint* of view as I do, my own Colambre; and I should leave things to themselves, and let you prolong the *dees* of courtship as you please, only for what I now hear incidentally from my lord and the brute, about pecuniary embarrassments, and the necessity of something being done before next winter. And, indeed, I think now, in propriety, the proposal cannot be delayed much longer; for the world begins to talk of the thing as done; and even Mrs. Broadhurst, I know, had no doubt that, if this *contretemps* about the poor Berryls had not occurred, your proposal would have been made before the end of last week."

Our hero was not a man to make a proposal because Mrs. Broadhurst expected it, or to marry because the world said he was going to be married. He steadily said, that, from the first moment the subject had been mentioned, he had explained himself distinctly; that the young lady's friends could not, therefore, be under any doubt as to his intentions; that, if they had voluntarily deceived themselves, or exposed the lady in situations from which the world was led to make false conclusions, he was not answerable: he felt his conscience at ease—entirely so, as he was convinced that the young lady herself, for whose merit, talents, independence, and generosity of character he professed high respect, esteem, and admiration, had no doubts either of the extent or the nature of his regard.

"Regard, respect, esteem, admiration!—Why, my dearest Colambre! this is saying all I want; satisfies me, and I am sure would satisfy Mrs. Broadhurst, and Miss Broadhurst too."

"No doubt it will, ma'am: but not if I aspired to the honour of Miss Broadhurst's hand, or professed myself her lover."

"My dear, you are mistaken: Miss Broadhurst is too sensible a girl, a vast deal, to look for love, and a dying lover, and all that sort of stuff: I am persuaded—indeed I have it from good, from the best authority, that the young lady—you know one must be delicate in these cases, where a young lady of such fortune, and no despicable family too, is concerned; therefore I cannot speak quite plainly—but I say I have it from the best authority, that you would be preferred to any other suitor, and, in short, that ——"

"I beg your pardon, madam, for interrupting you," cried Lord Colambre, colouring a good deal; "but you must excuse me if I say, that the only authority on which I could believe this is one from which I am morally certain I shall never hear it—from Miss Broadhurst herself."

"Lord, child! if you only ask her the question, she would tell you it is truth, I dare say."

"But as I have no curiosity on the subject, ma'am ——"

"Lord bless me! I thought everybody had curiosity. But still, without curiosity, I am sure it would gratify you when you did hear it; and can't you just put the simple question?"

"Impossible!"

"Impossible!—now that is so very provoking when the thing is all but done. Well, take your own time; all I will ask of you then is, to let things go on as they are going—smoothly and pleasantly; and I'll not press you further on the subject at present. Let things go on smoothly, that's all I ask, and say nothing."

"I wish I could oblige you, mother; but I cannot do this. Since you tell me that the world and Miss Broadhurst's friends have already misunderstood my intentions, it becomes necessary, in justice to the young lady and to myself, that I should make all further doubt impossible—I shall, therefore, put an end to it at once, by leaving town to-morrow."

Lady Clonbrony, breathless for a moment with surprise, exclaimed, "Bless me! leave town to-morrow! Just at the beginning of the season! Impossible!—I never saw such a precipitate rash young man. But stay only a few weeks, Colambre; the physicians advise Buxton for my rheumatism, and you shall take us to Buxton early in the season—you cannot refuse me that. Why, if Miss Broadhurst was a dragon, you could not be in a greater hurry to run away from her. What are you afraid of?"

"Of doing what is wrong—the only thing, I trust, of which I shall ever be afraid."

Lady Clonbrony tried persuasion and argument—such argument as she could use—but all in vain—Lord Colambre was firm in his resolution; at last, she cametotears; and her son, in much agitation, said, "I cannot bear this, mother!—I would do any thing you ask, that I could do with honour; but this is impossible."

"Why impossible? I will take all blame upon myself; and you are sure that Miss Broadhurst does not misunderstand you, and you esteem her, and admire her, and all that; and all I ask is, that you'll go on as you are, and see more of her; and how do you know but you may fall in love with her, as you call it, to-morrow?"

"Because, madam, since you press me so far, my affections are engaged to another person. Do not look so dreadfully shocked, my dear mother—I have told you truly, that I think myself too young, much too young, yet to marry. In the circumstances in which I know my family are, it is probable that I shall not for some years be able to marry as I wish. You may depend upon it that I shall not take any step, I shall not even declare my attachment to the object of my affection, without your knowledge; and, far from being inclined headlong to follow my own passions—strong as they are—be assured that the honour of my family, your happiness, my mother, my father's, are my first objects: I shall never think of my own till these are secured."

Of the conclusion of this speech, Lady Clonbrony heard only the sound of the words; from the moment her son had pronounced that his affections were engaged, she had been running

over in her head every probable and improbable person she could think of; at last, suddenly starting up, she opened one of the folding-doors into the next apartment, and called, "Grace! —Grace Nugent!—put down your pencil, Grace, this minute, and come here!"

Miss Nugent obeyed with her usual alacrity; and the moment she entered the room, Lady Clonbrony, fixing her eyes full upon her, said, "There's your cousin Colambre tells me his affections are engaged."

"Yes, to Miss Broadhurst, no doubt," said Miss Nugent, smiling, with a simplicity and openness of countenance, which assured Lady Clonbrony that all was safe in that quarter: a suspicion which had darted into her mind was dispelled.

"No doubt—Ay, do you hear that *no doubt*, Colambre?—Grace, you see, has no doubt; nobody has any doubt but yourself, Colambre."

"And are your affections engaged, and not to Miss Broadhurst?" said Miss Nugent, approaching Lord Colambre.

"There now! you see how you surprise and disappoint every body, Colambre."

"I am sorry that Miss Nugent should be disappointed," said Lord Colambre.

"But because I am disappointed, pray do not call me Miss Nugent, or turn away from me, as if you were displeased."

"It must, then, be some Cambridgeshire lady," said Lady Clonbrony. "I am sure I am very sorry he ever went to Cambridge—Oxford I advised: one of the Miss Berryls, I presume, who have nothing. I'll have no more to do with those Berryls—there was the reason of the son's vast intimacy. Grace, you may give up all thoughts of Sir Arthur."

"I have no thoughts to give up, ma'am," said Miss Nugent, smiling. "Miss Broadhurst," continued she, going on eagerly with what she was saying to Lord Colambre, "Miss Broadhurst is my friend, a friend I love and admire; but you will allow that I strictly kept my promise, never to praise her to you, till you should begin to praise her to me. Now recollect, last night, you did praise her to me, so justly, that I thought you liked her, I confess; so that it is natural I should feel a little disappointed. Now you know the whole of my mind; I have no intention to

encroach on your confidence; therefore, there is no occasion to look so embarrassed. I give you my word, I will never speak to you again upon the subject," said she, holding out her hand to him, "provided you will never again call me Miss Nugent. Am I not your own cousin Grace?—Do not be displeased with her."

"You are my own dear cousin Grace; and nothing can be farther from my mind than any thought of being displeased with her; especially just at this moment, when I am going away, probably, for a considerable time."

"Away!—when?—where?"

"To-morrow morning, for Ireland."

"Ireland! of all places," cried Lady Clonbrony. "What upon earth puts it into your head to go to Ireland? You do very well to go out of the way of falling in love ridiculously, since that is the reason of your going; but what put Ireland into your head, child?"

"I will not presume to ask my mother what put Ireland out of her head," said Lord Colambre, smiling; "but she will recollect that it is my native country."

"That was your father's fault, not mine," said Lady Clonbrony; "for I wished to have been confined in England: but he would have it to say that his son and heir was born at Clonbrony Castle—and there was a great argument between him and my uncle, and something about the Prince of Wales and Caernarvon Castle was thrown in, and that turned the scale, much against my will; for it was my wish that my son should be an Englishman born—like myself. But, after all, I don't see that having the misfortune to be born in a country should tie one to it in any sort of way; and I should have hoped your English *edication*, Colambre, would have given you too liberal *idears* for that—so I *reely* don't see why you should go to Ireland merely because it's your native country."

"Not merely because it is my native country—but I wish to go thither—I desire to become acquainted with it—because it is the country in which my father's property lies, and from which we draw our subsistence."

"Subsistence! Lord bless me, what a word! fitter for a pauper than a nobleman—subsistence! Then, if you are going

fter your father's property, I hope you will make the
 their duty, and send us remittances. And pray how
ou mean to stay?"

. am of age, madam, if you have no objection. I will
: ensuing months in travelling in Ireland; and I will
re by the time I am of age, unless you and my father
fore that time, be in Ireland."

he least chance of that, if I can prevent it, I promise
l Lady Clonbrony.

olambre and Miss Nugent sighed.

I am sure I shall take it very unkindly of you, Co-
 you go and turn out a partisan for Ireland, after all,
e Nugent."

tisan! no;—I hope not a partisan, but a friend," said
ent.

nse, child!—I hate to hear people, women especially,
g ladies particularly, talk of being friends to this
r that country. What can they know about countries?
ak of being friends to themselves, and friends to their

 wrong," said Miss Nugent, "to call myself a friend
; I meant to say, that Ireland had been a friend to
I found Irish friends, when I had no others; an Irish
ıen I had no other; that my earliest and happiest
ler your kind care, had been spent there; and I can
;et *that*, my dear aunt—I hope you do not wish that I

en forbid, my sweet Grace!" said Lady Clonbrony,
y her voice and manner; "Heaven forbid! I don't
:o do or be any thing but what you are; for I am
 there's nothing I could ask you would not do for me:
ı tell you, there's few things you could ask, love, I
 do for you."

 was instantly expressed in the eyes of her niece.

lonbrony, though not usually quick at interpreting the
others, understood and answered before she ventured
er request in words.

ny thing but *that*, Grace—Return to Clonbrony, while
 to live in London? That I never can or will do for

you or any body!" looking at her son in all the pride of obstinacy: "so there is an end of the matter. Go you where you please, Colambre; and I shall stay where I please:—I suppose, as your mother, I have a right to say this much?"

Her son, with the utmost respect, assured her that he had no design to infringe upon her undoubted liberty of judging for herself; that he had never interfered, except so far as to tell her circumstances of her affairs with which she seemed to be totally unacquainted, and of which it might be dangerous to her to continue in ignorance.

"Don't talk to me about affairs," cried she, drawing her hand away from her son. "Talk to my lord, or my lord's agents, since you are going to Ireland about business—I know nothing about business; but this I know, I shall stay in England, and be in London, every season, as long as I can afford it; and when I cannot afford to live here, I hope I shall not live any where. That's my notion of life; and that's my determination, once for all; for, if none of the rest of the Clonbrony family have any, I thank Heaven I have some spirit." Saying this, in her most stately manner she walked out of the room. Lord Colambre instantly followed her: for after the resolution and the promise he had made, he did not dare to trust himself at this moment with Miss Nugent.

There was to be a concert this night at Lady Clonbrony's, at which Mrs. and Miss Broadhurst were of course expected. That they might not be quite unprepared for the event of her son's going to Ireland, Lady Clonbrony wrote a note to Mrs. Broadhurst, begging her to come half an hour earlier than the time mentioned in the cards, "that she might talk over something *particular* that had just occurred."

What passed at this cabinet council, as it seems to have had no immediate influence on affairs, we need not record. Suffice it to observe, that a great deal was said, and nothing done. Miss Broadhurst, however, was not a young lady who could easily be deceived, even where her passions were concerned. The moment her mother told her of Lord Colambre's intended departure, she saw the whole truth. She had a strong mind, capable of looking steadily at truth. Surrounded as she had been from her childhood by every means of self-indulgence

which wealth and flattery could bestow, she had discovered early what few persons in her situation discover till late in life, that selfish gratifications may render us incapable of other happiness, but can never, of themselves, make us happy. Despising flatterers, she had determined to make herself friends—to make them in the only possible way—by deserving them. Her father realized his immense fortune by the power and habit of constant, bold, and just calculation. The power and habit which she had learned from him she applied on a far larger scale: with him it was confined to speculations for the acquisition of money; with her, it extended to the attainment of happiness. He was calculating and mercenary: she was estimative and generous.

Miss Nugent was dressing for the concert, or rather was sitting half-dressed before her glass, reflecting, when Miss Broadhurst came into her room. Miss Nugent immediately sent her maid out of the room.

"Grace," said Miss Broadhurst, looking at Grace with an air of open deliberate composure, "you and I are thinking of the same thing—of the same person."

"Yes, of Lord Colambre," said Miss Nugent, ingenuously and sorrowfully.

"Then I can put your mind at ease, at once, my dear friend, by assuring you that I shall think of him no more. That I have thought of him, I do not deny—I have thought, that if, notwithstanding the difference in our ages and other differences, he had preferred me, I should have preferred him to any person who has ever yet addressed me. On our first acquaintance, I clearly saw that he was not disposed to pay court to my fortune; and I had also then coolness of judgment sufficient to perceive that it was not probable he should fall in love with my person. But I was too proud in my humility, too strong in my honesty, too brave, too ignorant; in short, I knew nothing of the matter. We are all of us, more or less, subject to the delusions of vanity, or hope, or love——I—even I!—who thought myself so clear-sighted, did not know how, with one flutter of his wings, Cupid can set the whole atmosphere in motion; change the proportions, size, colour, value, of every object; lead us into a *mirage*, and leave us in a dismal desert."

"My dearest friend!" said Miss Nugent in a tone of true sympathy.

"But none but a coward or a fool would sit down in the desert and weep, instead of trying to make his way back before the storm rises, obliterates the track, and overwhelms every thing. Poetry apart, my dear Grace, you may be assured that I shall think no more of Lord Colambre."

"I believe you are right. But I am sorry, very sorry, it must be so."

"Oh, spare me your sorrow!"

"My sorrow is for Lord Colambre," said Miss Nugent. "Where will he find such a wife?—Not in Miss Berryl, I am sure, pretty as she is; a mere fine lady!——Is it possible that Lord Colambre should prefer such a girl——Lord Colambre!"

Miss Broadhurst looked at her friend as she spoke, and saw truth in her eyes; saw that she had no suspicion that she was herself the person beloved.

"Tell me, Grace, are you sorry that Lord Colambre is going away?"

"No, I am glad. I was sorry when I first heard it; but now I am glad, very glad: it may save him from a marriage unworthy of him, restore him to himself, and reserve him for ——, the only woman I ever saw who is suited to him, who is equal to him, who would value and love him as he deserves to be valued and loved."

"Stop, my dear; if you mean me, I am not, and I never can be, that woman. Therefore, as you are my friend, and wish my happiness, as I sincerely believe you do, never, I conjure you, present such an idea before my mind again—it is out of my mind, I hope, for ever. It is important to me that you should know and believe this. At least I will preserve my friends. Now let this subject never be mentioned or alluded to again between us, my dear. We have subjects enough of conversation; we need not have recourse to pernicious sentimental gossipings. There is great difference between wanting *a confidante*, and treating a friend with confidence. My confidence you possess; all that ought, all that is to be known of my mind, you know, and——Now I will leave you in peace to dress for the concert."

"Oh, don't go! you don't interrupt me. I shall be dressed in a few minutes; stay with me, and you may be assured, that neither now, nor at any other time, shall I ever speak to you on the subject you desire me to avoid. I entirely agree with you about *confidantes* and sentimental gossipipings: I love you for not loving them."

A loud knock at the door announced the arrival of company.

"Think no more of love, but as much as you please of admiration—dress yourself as fast as you can," said Miss Broadhurst. "Dress, dress, is the order of the day."

"Order of the day and order of the night, and all for people I don't care for in the least," said Grace. "So life passes!"

"Dear me, Miss Nugent," cried Petito, Lady Clonbrony's woman, coming in with a face of alarm, "not dressed yet! My lady is gone down, and Mrs. Broadhurst and my Lady Pococke's come, and the Honourable Mrs. Trembleham; and signor, the Italian singing gentleman, has been walking up and down the apartments there by himself, disconsolate, this half hour. Oh, merciful! Miss Nugent, if you could stand still for one single particle of a second. So then I thought of stepping in to Miss Nugent; for the young ladies are talking so fast, says I to myself, at the door, they will never know how time goes, unless I give 'em a hint. But now my lady is below, there's no need, to be sure, to be nervous, so we may take the thing quietly, without being in a flustrum. Dear ladies, is not this now a very sudden motion of our young lord's for Ireland? Lud a mercy! Miss Nugent, I'm sure your motions is sudden enough; and your dress behind is all, I'm sure, I can't tell how."

"Oh, never mind," said the young lady, escaping from her; "it will do very well, thank you, Petito."

"It will do very well, never mind," repeated Petito, muttering to herself, as she looked after the ladies, whilst they ran down stairs. "I can't abide to dress any young lady who says never mind, and it will do very well. That, and her never talking to one confi*dan*tially, or trusting one with the least bit of her secrets, is the thing I can't put up with from Miss Nugent; and Miss Broadhurst holding the pins to me, as much as to say, do your business, Petito, and don't talk.——Now, that's so impertinent, as if one wasn't the same flesh and blood, and had not as

good a right to talk of every thing, and hear of every thing, as themselves. And Mrs. Broadhurst, too, cabinet-councilling with my lady, and pursing up her city mouth, when I come in, and turning off the discourse to snuff, forsooth; as if I was an ignoramus, to think they closeted themselves to talk of snuff. Now, I think a lady of quality's woman has as good a right to be trusted with her lady's secrets as with her jewels; and if my Lady Clonbrony was a real lady of quality, she'd know that, and consider the one as much my paraphernalia as the other. So I shall tell my lady to-night, as I always do when she vexes me, that I never lived in an Irish family before, and don't know the ways of it—then she'll tell me she was born in Hoxfordshire—then I shall say, with my saucy look, 'Oh, was you, my lady—I always forget that you was an Englishwoman:' then may be she'll say, 'Forget! you forget yourself strangely, Petito.' Then I shall say, with a great deal of dignity, 'If your ladyship thinks so, my lady, I'd better go.' And I'd desire no better than that she would take me at my word; for my Lady Dashfort's is a much better place, I'm told, and she's dying to have me, I know."

And having formed this resolution, Petito concluded her apparently interminable soliloquy, and went with my lord's gentleman into the antechamber, to hear the concert, and give her judgment on every thing: as she peeped in through the vista of heads into the Apollo saloon—for to-night the Alhambra was transformed into the Apollo saloon—she saw that whilst the company, rank behind rank, in close semicircles, had crowded round the performers to hear a favourite singer, Miss Broadhurst and Lord Colambre were standing in the outer semicircle, talking to one another earnestly. Now would Petito have given up her reversionary chance of the three nearly new gowns she expected from Lady Clonbrony, in case she stayed; or, in case she went, the reversionary chance of any dress of Lady Dashfort's, except her scarlet velvet, merely to hear what Miss Broadhurst and Lord Colambre were saying. Alas! she could only see their lips move; and of what they were talking, whether of music or love, and whether the match was to be on or off, she could only conjecture. But the diplomatic style having now descended to waiting-maids, Mrs. Petito talked to her friends in the ante-

chamber with as mysterious and consequential an air and tone as a chargé d'affaires, or as the lady of a chargé d'affaires, could have assumed. She spoke of her *private belief;* of *the impression left upon her mind;* and her *confidential* reasons for thinking as she did; of her "having had it from the *fountain's* head;" and of "her fear of any *committal* of her authorities."

Notwithstanding all these authorities, Lord Colambre left London next day, and pursued his way to Ireland, determined that he would see and judge of that country for himself, and decide whether his mother's dislike to residing there was founded on caprice or on reasonable causes.

In the mean time, it was reported in London that his lordship was gone to Ireland to make out the title to some estate, which would be necessary for his marriage settlement with the great heiress, Miss Broadhurst. Whether Mrs. Petito or Sir Terence O'Fay had the greater share in raising and spreading this report, it would be difficult to determine; but it is certain, however or by whomsoever raised, it was most useful to Lord Clonbrony, by keeping his creditors quiet.

CHAPTER VI.

The tide did not permit the packet to reach the Pigeon-house, and the impatient Lord Colambre stepped into a boat, and was rowed across the Bay of Dublin. It was a fine summer morning. The sun shone bright on the Wicklow mountains. He admired, he exulted in the beauty of the prospect; and all the early associations of his childhood, and the patriotic hopes of his riper years, swelled his heart as he approached the shores of his native land. But scarcely had he touched his mother earth, when the whole course of his ideas was changed; and if his heart swelled, it swelled no more with pleasurable sensations, for instantly he found himself surrounded and attacked by a swarm of beggars and harpies, with strange figures and stranger tones; some craving his charity, some snatching away his luggage, and at the same time bidding him "never trouble himself," and "never

fear." A scramble in the boat and on shore for bags and parcels began, and an amphibious fight betwixt men, who had one foot on sea and one on land, was seen; and long and loud the battle of trunks and portmanteaus raged! The vanquished departed, clinching their empty hands at their opponents, and swearing inextinguishable hatred; while the smiling victors stood at ease, each grasping his booty—bag, basket, parcel, or portmanteau: "And, your honour, where *will* these go?—Where *will* we carry 'em all to for your honour?" was now the question. Without waiting for an answer, most of the goods were carried at the discretion of the porters to the custom-house, where, to his lordship's astonishment, after this scene of confusion, he found that he had lost nothing but his patience; all his goods were safe, and a few *tinpennies* made his officious porters happy men and boys; blessings were showered upon his honour, and he was left in peace at an excellent hotel, in —— street, Dublin. He rested, refreshed himself, recovered his good-humour, and walked into the coffee-house, where he found several officers, English, Irish, and Scotch. One English officer, a very gentlemanlike, sensible-looking man, of middle age, was sitting reading a little pamphlet, when Lord Colambre entered: he looked up from time to time, and in a few minutes rose and joined the conversation; it turned upon the beauties and defects of the city of Dublin. Sir James Brooke (for that was the name of the gentleman) showed one of his brother officers the book which he had been reading, observing that, in his opinion, it contained one of the best views of Dublin which he had ever seen, evidently drawn by the hand of a master, though in a slight, playful, and ironical style: it was "An intercepted Letter from China." The conversation extended from Dublin to various parts of Ireland, with all which Sir James Brooke showed that he was well acquainted. Observing that this conversation was particularly interesting to Lord Colambre, and quickly perceiving that he was speaking to one not ignorant of books, Sir James spoke of different representations and misrepresentations of Ireland. In answer to Lord Colambre's inquiries, he named the works which had afforded him the most satisfaction; and with discriminative, not superficial celerity, touched on all ancient and modern authors on this subject, from Spenser and Davies to Young and Beaufort.

Lord Colambre became anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of a gentleman who appeared so able and willing to afford him information. Sir James Brooke, on his part, was flattered by this eagerness of attention, and pleased by our hero's manners and conversation: so that, to their mutual satisfaction, they spent much of their time together whilst they were at this hotel; and meeting frequently in society in Dublin, their acquaintance every day increased and grew into intimacy; an intimacy which was highly advantageous to Lord Colambre's views of obtaining a just idea of the state of manners in Ireland. Sir James Brooke had at different periods been quartered in various parts of the country—had resided long enough in each to become familiar with the people, and had varied his residence sufficiently to form comparisons between different counties, their habits, and characteristics. Hence he had it in his power to direct the attention of our young observer at once to the points most worthy of his examination, and to save him from the common error of travellers—the deducing general conclusions from a few particular cases, or arguing from exceptions, as if they were rules. Lord Colambre, from his family connexions, had of course immediate introduction into the best society in Dublin, or rather into all the good society of Dublin. In Dublin there is positively good company, and positively bad; but not, as in London, many degrees of comparison: not innumerable luminaries of the polite world, moving in different orbits of fashion; but all the bright planets of note and name move and revolve in the same narrow limits. Lord Colambre did not find that either his father's or his mother's representations of society resembled the reality which he now beheld. Lady Clonbrony had, in terms of detestation, described Dublin such as it appeared to her soon after the Union; Lord Clonbrony had painted it with convivial enthusiasm, such as he saw it long and long before the Union, when *first* he drank claret at the fashionable clubs. This picture, unchanged in his memory, and unchangeable by his imagination, had remained, and ever would remain, the same. The hospitality of which the father boasted, the son found in all its warmth, but meliorated and refined; less convivial, more social; the fashion of hospitality had improved. To make the stranger eat or drink to excess, to set before him old wine and

old plate, was no longer the sum of good breeding. The guest now escaped the pomp of grand entertainments; was allowed to enjoy ease and conversation, and to taste some of that feast of reason and that flow of soul so often talked of, and so seldom enjoyed. Lord Colambre found a spirit of improvement, a desire for knowledge, and a taste for science and literature, in most companies, particularly among gentlemen belonging to the Irish bar: nor did he in Dublin society see any of that confusion of ranks or predominance of vulgarity, of which his mother had complained. Lady Clonbrony had assured him, that, the last time she had been at the drawing-room at the Castle, a lady, whom she afterwards found to be a grocer's wife, had turned angrily when her ladyship had accidentally trodden on her train, and had exclaimed with a strong brogue, "I'll thank you, ma'am, for the rest of my tail."

Sir James Brooke, to whom Lord Colambre, without *giving up his authority*, mentioned the fact, declared that he had no doubt the thing had happened precisely as it was stated; but that this was one of the extraordinary cases which ought not to pass into a general rule,—that it was a slight instance of that influence of temporary causes, from which no conclusions, as to national manners, should be drawn.

"I happened," continued Sir James, "to be quartered in Dublin soon after the Union took place; and I remember the great but transient change that appeared from the removal of both houses of parliament: most of the nobility and many of the principal families among the Irish commoners, either hurried in high hopes to London, or retired disgusted and in despair to their houses in the country. Immediately, in Dublin, commerce rose into the vacated seats of rank; wealth rose into the place of birth. New faces and new equipages appeared: people, who had never been heard of before, started into notice, pushed themselves forward, not scrupling to elbow their way even at the castle; and they were presented to my lord-lieutenant and to my lady-lieutenant; for their excellencies might have played their vice-regal parts to empty benches, had they not admitted such persons for the moment to fill their court. Those of former times, of hereditary pretensions and high-bred minds and manners, were scandalized at all this; and they complained with

justice, that the whole *tone* of society was altered; that the decorum, elegance, polish, and charm of society was gone. And I, among the rest," said Sir James, "felt and deplored their change. But, now it's all over, we may acknowledge, that, perhaps, even those things which we felt most disagreeable at the time were productive of eventual benefit.

"Formerly, a few families had set the fashion. From time immemorial every thing had, in Dublin, been submitted to their hereditary authority; and conversation, though it had been rendered polite by their example, was, at the same time, limited within narrow bounds. Young people, educated upon a more enlarged plan, in time grew up; and, no authority or fashion forbidding it, necessarily rose to their just place, and enjoyed their due influence in society. The want of manners, joined to the want of knowledge, in the *nouveaux riches*, created universal disgust: they were compelled, some by ridicule, some by bankruptcies, to fall back into their former places, from which they could never more emerge. In the mean time, some of the Irish nobility and gentry, who had been living at an unusual expense in London—an expense beyond their incomes—were glad to return home to refit; and they brought with them a new stock of ideas, and some taste for science and literature, which, within these latter years, have become fashionable, indeed indispensable, in London. That part of the Irish aristocracy, who, immediately upon the first incursions of the vulgarians, had fled in despair to their fastnesses in the country, hearing of the improvements which had gradually taken place in society, and assured of the final expulsion of the barbarians, ventured from their retreats, and returned to their posts in town. So that now," concluded Sir James, "you find a society in Dublin composed of a most agreeable and salutary mixture of birth and education, gentility and knowledge, manner and matter; and you see, pervading the whole, new life and energy, new talent, new ambition, a desire and a determination to improve and be improved—a perception that higher distinction can now be obtained in almost all company, by genius and merit, than by airs and address . . . . So much for the higher order. Now, among the class of tradesmen and shopkeepers, you may amuse your-

self, my lord, with marking the difference between them and persons of the same rank in London."

Lord Colambre had several commissions to execute for his English friends, and he made it his amusement in every shop to observe the manners and habits of the people. He remarked that there are in Dublin two classes of tradespeople: one, who go into business with intent to make it their occupation for life, and as a slow but sure means of providing for themselves and their families; another class, who take up trade merely as a temporary resource, to which they condescend for a few years; trusting that they shall, in that time, make a fortune, retire, and commence or re-commence gentlemen. The Irish regular men of business are like all other men of business—punctual, frugal, careful, and so forth; with the addition of more intelligence, invention, and enterprise, than are usually found in Englishmen of the same rank. But the Dublin tradesmen *pro tempore* are a class by themselves: they begin without capital, buy stock upon credit, in hopes of making large profits, and, in the same hopes, sell upon credit.

Now, if the credit they can obtain is longer than that which they are forced to give, they go on and prosper; if not, they break, become bankrupts, and sometimes, as bankrupts, thrive. By such men, of course, every *short cut* to fortune is followed: whilst every habit, which requires time to prove its advantage, is disregarded; nor, with such views, can a character for *punctuality* have its just value. In the head of a man, who intends to be a tradesman to-day, and a gentleman to-morrow, the ideas of the honesty and the duties of a tradesman, and of the honour and the accomplishments of a gentleman, are oddly jumbled together, and the characteristics of both are lost in the compound.

He will *oblige* you, but he will not obey you; he will do you a favour, but he will not do you *justice;* he will do *anything to serve you,* but the particular thing you order he neglects; he asks your pardon, for he would not, for all the goods in his warehouse, *disoblige* you; not for the sake of your custom, but he has a particular regard for your family. Economy, in the eyes of such a tradesman, is, if not a mean vice, at least a

shabby virtue, of which he is too polite to suspect his customers, and to which he is proud of proving himself superior. Many London tradesmen, after making their thousands and their tens of thousands, feel pride in still continuing to live like plain men of business; but from the moment a Dublin tradesman of this style has made a few hundreds, he sets up his gig, and then his head is in his carriage, and not in his business; and when he has made a few thousands, he buys or builds a country house —and, then, and thenceforward, his head, heart, and soul, are in his country-house, and only his body in the shop with his customers.

Whilst he is making money, his wife, or rather his lady, is spending twice as much out of town as he makes in it. At the word country-house, let no one figure to himself a snug little box like that in which a *warm* London citizen, after long years of toil, indulges himself, one day out of seven, in repose—enjoying, from his gazabo, the smell of the dust, and the view of passing coaches on the London road: no, these Hibernian villas are on a much more magnificent scale; some of them formerly belonged to Irish members of parliament, who were at a distance from their country-seats. After the Union these were bought by citizens and tradesmen, who spoiled, by the mixture of their own fancies, what had originally been designed by men of good taste.

Some time after Lord Colambre's arrival in Dublin, he had an opportunity of seeing one of these villas, which belonged to Mrs. Raffarty, a grocer's lady, and sister to one of Lord Clonbrony's agents, Mr. Nicholas Garraghty. Lord Colambre was surprised to find that his father's agent resided in Dublin: he had been used to see agents, or stewards, as they are called in England, live in the country, and usually on the estate of which they have the management. Mr. Nicholas Garraghty, however, had a handsome house in a fashionable part of Dublin. Lord Colambre called several times to see him, but he was out of town, receiving rents for some other gentlemen, as he was agent for more than one property.

Though our hero had not the honour of seeing Mr. Garraghty, he had the pleasure of finding Mrs. Raffarty one day at her brother's house. Just as his lordship came to the door, she was

going, on her jaunting-car, to her villa, called Tusculum, situate near Bray. She spoke much of the beauties of the vicinity of Dublin; found his lordship was going with Sir James Brooke, and a party of gentlemen, to see the county of Wicklow; and his lordship and party were entreated to do her the honour of taking in their way a little collation at Tusculum.

Our hero was glad to have an opportunity of seeing more of a species of fine lady with which he was unacquainted.

The invitation was verbally made, and verbally accepted; but the lady afterwards thought it necessary to send a written invitation in due form, and the note she sent directed to the *Most Right Honourable* the Lord Viscount Colambre. On opening it he perceived that it could not have been intended for him. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR JULIANA O'LEARY,

"I have got a promise from Colambre, that he will be with us at Tusculum on Friday, the 20th, in his way from the county of Wicklow, for the collation I mentioned; and expect a large party of officers: so pray come early, with your house, or as many as the jaunting-car can bring. And pray, my dear, be *elegant.* You need not let it transpire to Mrs. O'G——; but make my apologies to Miss O'G——, if she says any thing, and tell her I'm quite concerned I can't ask her for that day; because, tell her, I'm so crowded, and am to have none that day but *real quality.*

"Yours ever and ever,

"ANASTASIA RAFFARTY.

"P.S. And I hope to make the gentlemen stop the night with me: so will not have beds. Excuse haste and compliments, &c.

"*Tusculum, Sunday* 15."

After a charming tour in the county of Wicklow, where the beauty of the natural scenery, and the taste with which those natural beauties had been cultivated, far surpassed the sanguine expectations Lord Colambre had formed, his lordship and his

companions arrived at Tusculum, where he found Mrs. Raffarty, and Miss Juliana O'Leary, very elegant, with a large party of the ladies and gentlemen of Bray, assembled in a drawing-room, fine with bad pictures and gaudy gilding; the windows were all shut, and the company were playing cards with all their might. This was the fashion of the neighbourhood. In compliment to Lord Colambre and the officers, the ladies left the card-tables; and Mrs. Raffarty, observing that his lordship seemed *partial* to walking, took him out, as she said, "to do the honours of nature and art."

His lordship was much amused by the mixture, which was now exhibited to him, of taste and incongruity, ingenuity and absurdity, genius and blunder; by the contrast between the finery and vulgarity, the affectation and ignorance, of the lady of the villa. We should be obliged to *stop* too long at Tusculum were we to attempt to detail all the odd circumstances of this visit; but we may record an example or two, which may give a sufficient idea of the whole.

In the first place, before they left the drawing-room, Miss Juliana O'Leary pointed out to his lordship's attention a picture over the drawing-room chimney-piece. "Is not it a fine piece, my lord?" said she, naming the price Mrs. Raffarty had lately paid for it at an auction. "It has a right to be a fine piece, indeed; for it cost a fine price!" Nevertheless this *fine* piece was a vile daub; and our hero could only avoid the sin of flattery, or the danger of offending the lady, by protesting that he had no judgment in pictures.

"Indeed! I don't pretend to be a connoisseur or conoscenti myself; but I'm told the style is undeniably modern. And was not I lucky, Juliana, not to let that *Medona* be knocked down to me? I was just going to bid, when I heard such smart bidding; but, fortunately, the auctioneer let out that it was done by a very old master—a hundred years old. Oh! your most obedient, thinks I!—if that's the case, it's not for my money: so I bought this, in lieu of the smoke-dried thing, and had it a bargain."

In architecture, Mrs. Raffarty had as good a taste and as much skill as in painting. There had been a handsome portico in front of the house: but this interfering with the lady's

desire to have a viranda, which she said could not be dispensed with, she had raised the whole portico to the second story, where it stood, or seemed to stand, upon a tarpaulin roof. But Mrs. Raffarty explained, that the pillars, though they looked so properly substantial, were really hollow and as light as feathers, and were supported with cramps, without *disobliging* the front wall of the house at all to signify.

Before she showed the company any farther, she said, she must premise to his lordship, that she had been originally stinted in room for her improvements, so that she could not follow her genius liberally; she had been reduced to have some things on a confined scale, and occasionally to consult her pocket-compass; but she prided herself upon having put as much into a tight pattern as could well be; that had been her whole ambition, study, and problem; for she was determined to have at least the honour of having a little *taste* of every thing at Tusculum.

So she led the way to a little conservatory, and a little pinery, and a little grapery, and a little aviary, and a little pheasantry, and a little dairy for show, and a little cottage for ditto, with a grotto full of shells, and a little hermitage full of earwigs, and a little ruin full of looking-glass, "to enlarge and multiply the effect of the Gothic."—"But you could only put your head in, because it was just fresh painted, and though there had been a fire ordered in the ruin all night, it had only smoked."

In all Mrs. Raffarty's buildings, whether ancient or modern, there was a studied crookedness.

Yes, she said, she hated every thing straight, it was so formal and *unpicturesque*. "Uniformity and conformity," she observed, "had their day; but now, thank the stars of the present day, irregularity and deformity bear the bell, and have the majority."

As they proceeded and walked through the grounds, from which Mrs. Raffarty, though she had done her best, could not take that which nature had given, she pointed out to my lord "a happy moving termination," consisting of a Chinese bridge, with a fisherman leaning over the rails. On a sudden, the fisherman was seen to tumble over the bridge into the water. The gentlemen ran to extricate the poor fellow, while they

heard Mrs. Raffarty bawling to his lordship to beg he would never mind, and not trouble himself.

When they arrived at the bridge, they saw the man hanging from part of the bridge, and apparently struggling in the water; but when they attempted to pull him up, they found it was only a stuffed figure, which had been pulled into the stream by a real fish, which had seized hold of the bait.

Mrs. Raffarty, vexed by the fisherman's fall, and by the laughter it occasioned, did not recover herself sufficiently to be happily ridiculous during the remainder of the walk, nor till dinner was announced, when she apologized for having changed the collation, at first intended, into a dinner, which she hoped would be found no bad substitute, and which she flattered herself might prevail on my lord and the gentlemen to sleep, as there was no moon.

The dinner had two great faults—profusion and pretension. There was, in fact, ten times more on the table than was necessary; and the entertainment was far above the circumstances of the person by whom it was given: for instance, the dish of fish at the head of the table had been brought across the island from Sligo, and had cost five guineas; as the lady of the house failed not to make known. But, after all, things were not of a piece; there was a disparity between the entertainment and the attendants; there was no proportion or fitness of things; a painful endeavour at what could not be attained, and a toiling in vain to conceal and repair deficiencies and blunders. Had the mistress of the house been quiet; had she, as Mrs. Broadhurst would say, but let things alone, let things take their course, all would have passed off with well-bred people; but she was incessantly apologizing, and fussing, and fretting inwardly and outwardly, and directing and calling to her servants—striving to make a butler who was deaf, and a boy who was harebrained, do the business of five accomplished footmen of *parts and figure*. The mistress of the house called for "plates, clean plates!—— plates!"

"But none did come, when she did call."

Mrs. Raffarty called "Lanty! Lanty! My lord's plate, there!

—James! bread to Captain Bowles!—James! port wine to the major!—James! James Kenny! James!"

"And panting *James* toiled after her in vain."

At length one course was fairly got through, and after a torturing half hour, the second course appeared, and James Kenny was intent upon one thing, and Lanty upon another, so that the wine-sauce for the hare was spilt by their collision; but, what was worse, there seemed little chance that the whole of this second course should ever be placed altogether rightly upon the table. Mrs. Raffarty cleared her throat, and nodded, and pointed, and sighed, and sent Lanty after Kenny, and Kenny after Lanty; for what one did, the other undid; and at last the lady's anger kindled, and she spoke: "Kenny! James Kenny! set the sea-cale at this corner, and put down the grass cross-corners; and match your maccaroni yonder with *them* puddens, set—Ogh! James! the pyramid in the middle, can't ye?"

The pyramid, in changing places, was overturned. Then it was that the mistress of the feast, falling back in her seat, and lifting up her hands and eyes in despair, ejaculated, "Oh, James! James!"

The pyramid was raised by the assistance of the military engineers, and stood trembling again on its base; but the lady's temper could not be so easily restored to its equilibrium. She vented her ill humour on her unfortunate husband, who happening not to hear her order to help my lord to some hare, she exclaimed loud, that all the world might hear, "Corny Raffarty! Corny Raffarty! you're no more *gud* at the *fut* of my table than a stick of celery!"

The comedy of errors, which this day's visit exhibited, amused all the spectators. But Lord Colambre, after he had smiled, sometimes sighed.—Similar foibles and follies in persons of different rank, fortune, and manner, appear to common observers so unlike that they laugh without scruples of conscience in one case, at what in another ought to touch themselves most nearly. It was the same desire to appear what they were not, the same vain ambition to vie with superior rank and fortune, or fashion, which actuated Lady Clonbrony and Mrs. Raffarty; and whilst

this ridiculous grocer's wife made herself the sport of some of her guests, Lord Colambre sighed, from the reflection that what she was to them, his mother was to persons in a higher rank of fashion.—He sighed still more deeply, when he considered, that, in whatever station or with whatever fortune, extravagance, that is, the living beyond our income, must lead to distress and meanness, and end in shame and ruin. In the morning as they were riding away from Tusculum and talking over their visit, the officers laughed heartily, and rallying Lord Colambre upon his seriousness, accused him of having fallen in love with Mrs. Raffarty, or with the *elegant* Miss Juliana. Our hero, who wished never to be nice over much, or serious out of season, laughed with those that laughed, and endeavoured to catch the spirit of the jest. But Sir James Brooke, who now was well acquainted with his countenance, and who knew something of the history of his family, understood his real feelings, and, sympathizing in them, endeavoured to give the conversation a new turn.

"Look there, Bowles," said he, as they were just riding into the town of Bray; "look at the barouche standing at that green door, at the farthest end of the town. Is not that Lady Dashfort's barouche?"

"It looks like what she sported in Dublin last year," said Bowles; "but you don't think she'd give us the same two seasons. Besides, she is not in Ireland, is she? I did not hear of her intending to come over again."

"I beg your pardon," said another officer; "she will come again to so good a market, to marry her other daughter. I hear she said or swore that she will marry the young widow, Lady Isabel, to an Irish nobleman."

"Whatever she says, she swears, and whatever she swears, she'll do," replied Bowles.

"Have a care, my Lord Colambre; if she sets her heart upon you for Lady Isabel, she has you. Nothing can save you. Heart she has none, so there you're safe, my lord," said the other officer; "but if Lady Isabel sets her eye upon you, no basilisk's is surer."

"But if Lady Dashfort had landed I am sure we should have heard of it, for she makes noise enough wherever she goes;

especially in Dublin, where all she said and did was echoed and magnified, till one could hear of nothing else. I don't think she has landed."

"I hope to Heaven they may never land again in Ireland!" cried Sir James Brooke: "one worthless woman, especially one worthless Englishwoman of rank, does incalculable mischief in a country like this, which looks up to the sister country for fashion. For my own part, as a warm friend to Ireland, I would rather see all the toads and serpents, and venomous reptiles, that St. Patrick carried off in his bag, come back to this island, than these two *dashers*. Why, they would bite half the women and girls in the kingdom with the rage for mischief, before half the husbands and fathers could turn their heads about. And, once bit, there's no cure in nature or art."

"No horses to this barouche!" cried Captain Bowles.—"Pray, sir, whose carriage is this?" said the captain to a servant, who was standing beside it.

"My Lady Dashfort, sir, it belongs to," answered the servant, in rather a surly English tone; and turning to a boy who was lounging at the door, "Pat, bid them bring out the horses, for my ladies is in a hurry to get home."

Captain Bowles stopped to make his servant alter the girths of his horse, and to satisfy his curiosity; and the whole party halted. Captain Bowles beckoned to the landlord of the inn, who was standing at his door.

"So, Lady Dashfort is here again?—This is her barouche, is not it?"

"Yes, sir, she is—it is."

"And has she sold her fine horses?"

"Oh, no, sir—this is not her carriage at all—she is not here. That is, she is here, in Ireland; but down in the county of Wicklow, on a visit. And this is not her own carriage at all; —that is to say, not that which she has with herself, driving; but only just the cast barouche like, as she keeps for the lady's maids."

"For the lady's maids! that is good! that is new, faith! Sir James, do you hear that?"

"Indeed, then, and it's true, and not a word of a lie!" said the honest landlord. "And this minute, we've got a directory

›f them Abigails, sitting within our house; as fine ladies, dashers too, every bit, as their principals; and kicking uch dust on the road, every grain!—Think of them, now! es of them, that must have four horses, and would not ot with one less!—As the gentleman's gentleman there ing and boasting to me about now, when the barouche lered for them there at the lady's house, where Lady t is on a visit—they said they would not get in till they'd horses; and their ladies backed them: and so the four ⁊as got; and they just drove out here to see the points for fashion's sake, like their betters; and up with their like their ladies; and then out with their watches, and t time to lunch?' So there they have been lunching on what they brought with them; for nothing in our ›uld they touch of course! They brought themselves a t lunch, with Madeira and Champagne to wash it down. entlemen, what do you think, but a set of them, as they agging to me, turned out of a boarding-house at Chelten-it year, because they had not peach pies to their lunch! iere they come! shawls, and veils, and all!—streamers But mum is my cue!—Captain, are these girths to your ›w?" said the landlord, aloud: then, as he stooped to uckle, he said in a voice meant to be heard only by Bowles, "If there's a tongue, male or female, in the agdoms, it's in that foremost woman, Mrs. Petito."

. Petito!" repeated Lord Colambre, as the name caught and, approaching the barouche, in which the five Abi-ere now seated, he saw the identical Mrs. Petito, who, left London, had been in his mother's service.

ecognized his lordship with very gracious intimacy; and, ie had time to ask any questions, she answered all she d he was going to ask, and with a volubility which the landlord's eulogium of her tongue.

, my lord! I left my Lady Clonbrony some time back ly after you left town; and both her ladyship and Miss was charmingly, and would have sent their loves to your , I'm sure, if they'd any notion I should have met you, so soon. And I was very sorry to part with them; but was, my lord," said Mrs. Petito, laying a detaining hand

upon Lord Colambre's whip, one end of which he unwittingly trusted within her reach, "I and my lady had a little difference, which the best friends, you know, sometimes have: so my Lady Clonbrony was so condescending to give me up to my Lady Dashfort—and I knew no more than the child unborn that her ladyship had it in contemplation to cross the seas. But, to oblige my lady, and as Colonel Heathcock, with his regiment of militia, was coming for purtection in the packet at the same time, and we to have the government-yacht, I waived my objections to Ireland. And, indeed, though I was greatly frighted at first, having heard all we've heard, you know, my lord, from Lady Clonbrony, of there being no living in Ireland, and expecting to see no trees, nor accommodation, nor any thing but bogs all along; yet I declare, I was very agreeably surprised; for, as far as I've seen at Dublin and in the vicinity, the accommodations, and every thing of that nature now, is vastly put-up-able with!"

"My lord," said Sir James Brooke, "we shall be late."

Lord Colambre, withdrawing his whip from Mrs. Petito, turned his horse away. She, stretching over the back of the barouche as he rode off, bawled to him, "My lord, we're at Stephen's Green, when we're at Dublin." But as he did not choose to hear, she raised her voice to its highest pitch, adding, "And where are you, my lord, to be found?—as I have a parcel of Miss Nugent's for you."

Lord Colambre instantly turned back, and gave his direction.

"Cleverly done, faith!" said the major.

"I did not hear her say when Lady Dashfort is to be in town," said Captain Bowles.

"What, Bowles! have you a mind to lose more of your guineas to Lady Dashfort, and to be jockeyed out of another horse by Lady Isabel?"

"Oh, confound it—no! I'll keep out of the way of that—I have had enough," said Captain Bowles; "it is my Lord Colambre's turn now; you hear that Lady Dashfort would be very *proud* to see him. His lordship is in for it, and with such an auxiliary as Mrs. Petito, Lady Dashfort has him for Lady Isabel, as sure as he has a heart or hand."

"My compliments to the ladies, but my heart is engaged,"

said Lord Colambre; "and my hand shall go with my heart, or not at all."

"Engaged! engaged to a very amiable, charming woman, no doubt," said Sir James Brooke. "I have an excellent opinion of your taste; and if you can return the compliment to my judgment, take my advice: don't trust to your heart's being engaged, much less plead that engagement; for it would be Lady Dashfort's sport, and Lady Isabel's joy, to make you break your engagement, and break your mistress's heart; the fairer, the more amiable, the more beloved, the greater the triumph, the greater the delight in giving pain. All the time love would be out of the question; neither mother nor daughter would care if you were hanged, or, as Lady Dashfort would herself have expressed it, if you were d—d."

"With such women I should think a man's heart could be in no great danger," said Lord Colambre.

"There you might be mistaken, my lord; there's a way to every man's heart, which no man in his own case is aware of, but which every woman knows right well, and none better than these ladies—by his vanity."

"True," said Captain Bowles.

"I am not so vain as to think myself without vanity," said Lord Colambre; "but love, I should imagine, is a stronger passion than vanity."

"You should imagine! Stay till you are tried, my lord. Excuse me," said Captain Bowles, laughing.

Lord Colambre felt the good sense of this, and determined to have nothing to do with these dangerous ladies: indeed, though he had talked, he had scarcely yet thought of them; for his imagination was intent upon that packet from Miss Nugent, which Mrs. Petito said she had for him. He heard nothing of it, or of her, for some days. He sent his servant every day to Stephen's Green, to inquire if Lady Dashfort had returned to town. Her ladyship at last returned; but Mrs. Petito could not deliver the parcel to any hand but Lord Colambre's own, and she would not stir out, because her lady was indisposed. No longer able to restrain his impatience, Lord Colambre went himself—knocked at Lady Dashfort's door—inquired for Mrs. Petito—was shown into her parlour. The parcel was de-

livered to him; but, to his utter disappointment, it was a parcel *for*, not *from* Miss Nugent. It contained merely an odd volume of some book of Miss Nugent's which Mrs. Petito said she had put up along with her things *in a mistake*, and she thought it her duty to return it by the first opportunity of a safe conveyance.

Whilst Lord Colambre, to comfort himself for his disappointment, was fixing his eyes upon Miss Nugent's name, written by her own hand, in the first leaf of the book, the door opened, and the figure of an interesting-looking lady, in deep mourning, appeared—appeared for one moment, and retired.

"Only my Lord Colambre, about a parcel I was bringing for him from England, my lady—my Lady Isabel, my lord," said Mrs. Petito.

Whilst Mrs. Petito was saying this, the entrance and retreat had been made, and made with such dignity, grace, and modesty: with such innocence, dove-like eyes had been raised upon him, fixed and withdrawn; with such a gracious bend the Lady Isabel had bowed to him as she retired; with such a smile, and with so soft a voice, had repeated "Lord Colambre!" that his lordship, though well aware that all this was mere acting, could not help saying to himself, as he left the house, "It is a pity it is only acting. There is certainly something very engaging in this woman. It is a pity she is an actress. And so young! A much younger woman than I expected. A widow before most women are wives. So young, surely she cannot be such a fiend as they described her to be!"

A few nights afterwards Lord Colambre was with some of his acquaintance at the theatre, when Lady Isabel and her mother came into the box, where seats had been reserved for them, and where their appearance instantly made that *sensation*, which is usually created by the entrance of persons of the first notoriety in the fashionable world. Lord Colambre was not a man to be dazzled by fashion, or to mistake notoriety for deference paid to merit, and for the admiration commanded by beauty or talents. Lady Dashfort's coarse person, loud voice, daring manners, and indelicate wit, disgusted him almost past endurance. He saw Sir James Brooke in the box opposite to him; and twice determined to go round to him. His lordship had

crossed the benches, and once his hand was upon the lock of the door; but, attracted as much by the daughter as repelled by the mother, he could move no farther. The mother's masculine boldness heightened, by contrast, the charms of the daughter's soft sentimentality. The Lady Isabel seemed to shrink from the indelicacy of her mother's manners, and appeared peculiarly distressed by the strange efforts Lady Dashfort made, from time to time, to drag her forward, and to fix upon her the attention of gentlemen. Colonel Heathcock, who, as Mrs. Petito had informed Lord Colambre, had come over with his regiment to Ireland, was beckoned into their box by Lady Dashfort, by her squeezed into a seat next to Lady Isabel; but Lady Isabel seemed to feel sovereign contempt, properly repressed by politeness, for what, in a low whisper to a female friend on the other side of her, she called, "the self-sufficient inanity of this sad coxcomb." Other coxcombs, of a more vivacious style, who stationed themselves round her mother, or to whom her mother stretched from box to box to talk, seemed to engage no more of Lady Isabel's attention than just what she was compelled to give by Lady Dashfort's repeated calls of, "Isabel! Isabel! Colonel G——. Isabel! Lord D—— bowing to you. Bell! Bell! Sir Harry B——. Isabel, child, with your eyes on the stage? Did you never see a play before? Novice! Major P—— waiting to catch your eye this quarter of an hour; and now her eyes gone down to her play-bill! Sir Harry, do take it from her.

'Were eyes so radiant only made to read?'"

Lady Isabel appeared to suffer so exquisitely and so naturally from this persecution, that Lord Colambre said to himself, "If this be acting, it is the best acting I ever saw. If this be art, it deserves to be nature."

And with this sentiment, he did himself the honour of handing Lady Isabel to her carriage this night, and with this sentiment he awoke next morning; and by the time he had dressed and breakfasted, he determined that it was impossible all that he had seen could be acting. "No woman, no young woman, could have such art." Sir James Brooke had been unwarrantably severe; he would go and tell him so.

But Sir James Brooke this day received orders for his regi-

ment to march to quarters in a distant part of Ireland. His head was full of arms, and ammunition, and knapsacks, and billets, and routes; and there was no possibility, even in the present chivalrous disposition of our hero, to enter upon the defence of the Lady Isabel. Indeed, in the regret he felt for the approaching and unexpected departure of his friend, Lord Colambre forgot the fair lady. But just when Sir James had his foot in the stirrup, he stopped.

"By-the-bye, my dear lord, I saw you at the play last night. You seemed to be much interested. Don't think me impertinent if I remind you of our conversation when we were riding home from Tusculum; and if I warn you," said he, mounting his horse, "to beware of counterfeits—for such are abroad." Reining in his impatient steed, Sir James turned again, and added "*Deeds, not words*, is my motto. Remember, we can judge better by the conduct of people towards others than by their manner towards ourselves."

CHAPTER VII.

Our hero was quite convinced of the good sense of his friend's last remark, that it is safer to judge of people by their conduct to others than by their manners towards ourselves; but as yet, he felt scarcely any interest on the subject of Lady Dashfort's or Lady Isabel's characters: however, he inquired and listened to all the evidence he could obtain respecting this mother and daughter.

He heard terrible reports of the mischief they had done in families; the extravagance into which they had led men; the imprudence, to say no worse, into which they had betrayed women. Matches broken off, reputations ruined, husbands alienated from their wives, and wives made jealous of their husbands. But in some of these stories he discovered exaggeration so flagrant as to make him doubt the whole; in others, it could not be positively determined whether the mother or daughter had been the person most to blame.

Lord Colambre always followed the charitable rule of be-

lieving only half what the world says, and here he thought it fair to believe which half he pleased. He farther observed, that, though all joined in abusing these ladies in their absence, when present they seemed universally admired. Though every body cried "shame!" and "shocking!" yet every body visited them. No parties so crowded as Lady Dashfort's; no party deemed pleasant or fashionable where Lady Dashfort or Lady Isabel was not. The bon-mots of the mother were every where repeated; the dress and air of the daughter every where imitated. Yet Lord Colambre could not help being surprised at their popularity in Dublin, because, independently of all moral objections, there were causes of a different sort, sufficient, he thought, to prevent Lady Dashfort from being liked by the Irish, indeed by any society. She in general affected to be ill-bred, and inattentive to the feelings and opinions of others; careless whom she offended by her wit or by her decided tone. There are some persons in so high a region of fashion, that they imagine themselves above the thunder of vulgar censure. Lady Dashfort felt herself in this exalted situation, and fancied she might

"Hear the innocuous thunder roll below."

Her rank was so high that none could dare to call her vulgar: what would have been gross in any one of meaner note, in her was freedom or originality, or Lady Dashfort's way. It was Lady Dashfort's pleasure and pride to show her power in perverting the public taste. She often said to those English companions with whom she was intimate, "Now see what follies I can lead these fools into. Hear the nonsense I can make them repeat as wit." Upon some occasion, one of her friends *ventured* to fear that something she had said was *too strong*. "Too strong, was it? Well, I like to be strong—woe be to the weak!" On another occasion she was told that certain visitors had seen her ladyship yawning. "Yawn, did I?—glad of it—the yawn sent them away, or I should have snored;—rude, was I? they won't complain. To say I was rude to them, would be to say, that I did not think it worth my while to be otherwise. Barbarians! are not we the civilized English, come to teach them manners and fashions? Whoever does not conform, and swear allegiance too, we shall keep out of the English pale."

Lady Dashfort forced her way, and she set the fashion: fashion, which converts the ugliest dress into what is beautiful and charming, governs the public mode in morals and in manners; and thus, when great talents and high rank combine, they can debase or elevate the public taste.

With Lord Colambre she played more artfully: she drew him out in defence of his beloved country, and gave him opportunities of appearing to advantage; this he could not help feeling, especially when the Lady Isabel was present. Lady Dashfort had dealt long enough with human nature to know, that to make any man pleased with her, she should begin by making him pleased with himself.

Insensibly the antipathy that Lord Colambre had originally felt to Lady Dashfort wore off; her faults, he began to think, were assumed; he pardoned her defiance of good-breeding, when he observed that she could, when she chose it, be most engagingly polite. It was not that she did not know what was right, but that she did not think it always for her interest to practise it.

The party opposed to Lady Dashfort affirmed that her wit depended merely on unexpectedness; a characteristic which may be applied to any impropriety of speech, manner, or conduct. In some of her ladyship's repartees, however, Lord Colambre now acknowledged there was more than unexpectedness; there was real wit; but it was of a sort utterly unfit for a woman, and he was sorry that Lady Isabel should hear it. In short, exceptionable as it was altogether, Lady Dashfort's conversation had become entertaining to him; and though he could never esteem, or feel in the least interested about her, he began to allow that she could be agreeable.

"Ay, I knew how it would be," said she, when some of her friends told her this. "He began by detesting me, and did I not tell you that, if I thought it worth my while to make him like me, he must, sooner or later? I delight in seeing people begin with me as they do with olives, making all manner of horrid faces, and silly protestations that they will never touch an olive again as long as they live; but, after a little time, these very folk grow so desperately fond of olives, that there is no dessert without them. Isabel, child, you are in the sweet line—

but sweets cloy. You never heard of any body living on marmalade, did ye?"

Lady Isabel answered by a sweet smile.

"To do you justice, you play Lydia Languish vastly well," pursued the mother; "but Lydia, by herself, would soon tire; somebody must keep up the spirit and bustle, and carry on the plot of the piece, and I am that somebody—as you shall see. Is not that our hero's voice which I hear on the stairs?"

It was Lord Colambre. His lordship had by this time become a constant visitor at Lady Dashfort's. Not that he had forgotten, or that he meant to disregard his friend Sir James Brooke's parting words. He promised himself faithfully, that if any thing should occur to give him reason to suspect designs, such as those to which the warning pointed, he would be on his guard, and would prove his generalship by an able retreat. But to imagine attacks where none were attempted, to suspect ambuscades in the open country, would be ridiculous and cowardly.

"No," thought our hero; "Heaven forefend I should be such a coxcomb as to fancy every woman who speaks to me has designs upon my precious heart, or on my more precious estate!" As he walked from his hotel to Lady Dashfort's house, ingeniously wrong, he came to this conclusion, just as he ascended the stairs, and just as her ladyship had settled her future plan of operations.

After talking over the nothings of the day, and after having given two or three *cuts* at the society of Dublin, with two or three compliments to individuals, who she knew were favourites with his lordship, she suddenly turned to him. "My lord, I think you told me, or my own sagacity discovered, that you want to see something of Ireland, and that you don't intend, like most travellers, to turn round, see nothing, and go home content."

Lord Colambre assured her ladyship that she had judged him rightly, for that nothing would content him but seeing all that was possible to be seen of his native country. It was for this special purpose he came to Ireland.

"Ah!—well—very good purpose—can't be better; but now how to accomplish it. You know the Portuguese proverb says,

'You go to hell for the good things you *intend* to do, and to heaven for those you do.' Now let us see what you will do. Dublin, I suppose, you've seen enough of by this time; through and through—round and round—this makes me first giddy, and then sick. Let me show you the country—not the face of it, but the body of it—the people.—Not Castle this, or Newtown that, but their inhabitants. I know them; I have the key, or the pick-lock to their minds. An Irishman is as different an animal on his guard and off his guard, as a miss in school from a miss out of school. A fine country for game, I'll show you; and if you are a good marksman, you may have plenty of shots 'at folly as it flies.'"

Lord Colambre smiled.

"As to Isabel," pursued her ladyship, "I shall put her in charge of Heathcock, who is going with us. She won't thank me for that, but you will. Nay, no fibs, man; you know, I know, as who does not that has seen the world? that, though a pretty woman is a mighty pretty thing, yet she is confoundedly in one's way, when any thing else is to be seen, heard,—or understood."

Every objection anticipated and removed, and so far a prospect held out of attaining all the information he desired, with more than all the amusement he could have expected, Lord Colambre seemed much tempted to accept the invitation; but he hesitated, because, as he said, her ladyship might be going to pay visits where he was not acquainted.

"Bless you! don't let that be a stumbling-block in the way of your tender conscience. I am going to Killpatricks-town, where you'll be as welcome as light. You know them, they know you; at least you shall have a proper letter of invitation from my Lord and my Lady Killpatrick, and all that. And as to the rest, you know a young man is always welcome every where, a young nobleman kindly welcome—I won't say such a young man, and such a young nobleman, for that might put you to your bows or your blushes—but *nobilitas* by itself, nobility is virtue enough in all parties, in all families, where there are girls, and of course balls, as there are always at Killpatricks-town. Don't be alarmed; you shall not be forced to dance, or asked to marry. I'll be your security. You shall be at full liberty; and it is a

house where you can do just what you will. Indeed, I go to no others. These Killpatricks are the best creatures in the world; they think nothing good or grand enough for me. If I'd let them, they would lay down cloth of gold over their bogs for me to walk upon. Good-hearted beings!" added Lady Dashfort, marking a cloud gathering on Lord Colambre's countenance. "I laugh at them, because I love them. I could not love any thing I might not laugh at—your lordship excepted. So you'll come—that's settled."

And so it was settled. Our hero went to Killpatricks-town.

"Every thing here sumptuous and unfinished, you see," said Lady Dashfort to Lord Colambre, the day after their arrival. "All begun as if the projectors thought they had the command of the mines of Peru, and ended as if the possessors had not sixpence. Luxuries enough for an English prince of the blood: comforts not enough for an English yeoman. And you may be sure that great repairs and alterations have gone on to fit this house for our reception, and for our English eyes!—Poor people!—English visitors, in this point of view, are horribly expensive to the Irish. Did you ever hear, that in the last century, or in the century before the last, to put my story far enough back, so that it shall not touch any body living; when a certain English nobleman, Lord Blank A——, sent to let his Irish friend, Lord Blank B——, know that he and all his train were coming over to pay him a visit; the Irish nobleman, Blank B——, knowing the deplorable condition of his castle, sat down fairly to calculate whether it would cost him most to put the building in good and sufficient repair, fit to receive these English visitors, or to burn it to the ground. He found the balance to be in favour of burning, which was wisely accomplished next day[1]. Perhaps Killpatrick would have done well to follow this example. Resolve me which is worst, to be burnt out of house and home, or to be eaten out of house and home. In this house, above and below stairs, including first and second table, housekeeper's room, lady's maids' room, butler's room, and gentleman's, one hundred and four people sit down to dinner every day, as Petito informs me, besides kitchen boys, and what

[1] Fact.

they call *char*-women, who never sit down, but who do not eat or waste the less for that; and retainers and friends, friends to the fifth and sixth generation, who 'must get their bit and their sup;' for 'sure, it's only Biddy,' they say;" continued Lady Dashfort, imitating their Irish brogue. "And 'sure, 'tis nothing at all, out of all his honour my lord has. How could he *feel* it[2]?—Long life to him! —He's not that way: not a couple in all Ireland, and that's saying a great dale, looks less after their own, nor is more off-handeder, or open-hearteder, or greater openhouse-keeper, *nor*[3] my Lord and my Lady Killpatrick.' Now there's encouragement for a lord and a lady to ruin themselves."

Lady Dashfort imitated the Irish brogue in perfection; boasted that "she was mistress of fourteen different brogues, and had brogues for all occasions." By her mixture of mimicry, sarcasm, exaggeration, and truth, she succeeded continually in making Lord Colambre laugh at every thing at which she wished to make him laugh; at every *thing*, but not at every *body*: whenever she became personal, he became serious, or at least endeavoured to become serious; and if he could not instantly resume the command of his risible muscles, he reproached himself.

"It is shameful to laugh at these people, indeed, Lady Dashfort, in their own house—these hospitable people, who are entertaining us."

"Entertaining us! true, and if we are *entertained*, how can we help laughing?"

All expostulation was thus turned off by a jest, as it was her pride to make Lord Colambre laugh in spite of his better feelings and principles. This he saw, and this seemed to him to be her sole object; but there he was mistaken. *Off-handed* as she pretended to be, none dealt more in the *impromptu fait à loisir;* and, mentally short-sighted as she affected to be, none had more *longanimity* for their own interest.

It was her settled purpose to make the Irish and Ireland ridiculous and contemptible to Lord Colambre; to disgust him with his native country; to make him abandon the wish of residing on his own estate. To confirm him an absentee was

2 *Feel* it, become sensible of it, know it.

3 *Nor*, than.

her object, previously to her ultimate plan of marrying him to her daughter. Her daughter was poor, she would therefore be glad to *get* an Irish peer for her; but would be very sorry, she said, to see Isabel banished to Ireland; and the young widow declared she could never bring herself to be buried alive in Clonbrony Castle.

In addition to these considerations, Lady Dashfort received certain hints from Mrs. Petito, which worked all to the same point.

"Why, yes, my lady; I heard a great deal about all that, when I was at Lady Clonbrony's," said Petito, one day, as she was attending at her lady's toilette, and encouraged to begin chattering. "And I own I was originally under the universal error that my Lord Colambre was to be married to the great heiress, Miss Broadhurst; but I have been converted and reformed on that score, and am at present quite in another way of thinking."

Petito paused, in hopes that her lady would ask what was her present way of thinking? But Lady Dashfort, certain that she would tell her without being asked, did not take the trouble to speak, particularly as she did not choose to appear violently interested on the subject.

"My present way of thinking," resumed Petito, "is in consequence of my having, with my own eyes and ears, witnessed and overheard his lordship's behaviour and words, the morning he was coming away from *Lunnun* for Ireland; when he was morally certain nobody was up, nor overhearing nor overseeing him, there did I notice him, my lady, stopping in the ante-chamber, ejaculating over one of Miss Nugent's gloves, which he had picked up. 'Limerick!' said he, quite loud enough to himself; for it was a Limerick glove, my lady—'Limerick!—dear Ireland! she loves you as well as I do!'—or words to that effect; and then a sigh, and down stairs and off. So, thinks I, now the cat's out of the bag. And I wouldn't give much myself for Miss Broadhurst's chance of that young lord, with all her Bank stock, scrip, and *omnum*. Now, I see how the land lies, and I'm sorry for it; for she's no *fortin;* and she's so proud, she never said a hint to me of the matter: but my Lord Colambre is a sweet gentleman; and ——"

"Petito! don't run on so; you must not meddle with what you don't understand: the Miss Killpatricks, to be sure, are sweet girls, particularly the youngest."

Her ladyship's toilette was finished; and she left Petito to go down to my Lady Killpatrick's woman, to tell, as a very great secret, the schemes that were in contemplation, among the higher powers, in favour of the youngest of the Miss Killpatricks.

"So Ireland is at the bottom of his heart, is it?" repeated Lady Dashfort to herself: "it shall not be long so."

From this time forward, not a day, scarcely an hour passed, but her ladyship did or said something to depreciate the country, or its inhabitants, in our hero's estimation. With treacherous ability, she knew and followed all the arts of misrepresentation; all those injurious arts which his friend, Sir James Brooke, had, with such honest indignation, reprobated. She knew how, not only to seize the ridiculous points, to make the most respectable people ridiculous, but she knew how to select the worst instances, the worst exceptions; and to produce them as examples, as precedents, from which to condemn whole classes, and establish general false conclusions respecting a nation.

In the neighbourhood of Killpatrick's-town, Lady Dashfort said, there were several *squireens*, or little squires; a race of men who have succeeded to the *buckeens*, described by Young and Crumpe. *Squireens* are persons who, with good long leases, or valuable farms, possess incomes from three to eight hundred a year, who keep a pack of hounds; *take out* a commission of the peace, sometimes before they can spell (as her ladyship said), and almost always before they know any thing of law or justice. Busy and loud about small matters; *jobbers at assizes;* combining with one another, and trying upon every occasion, public or private, to push themselves forward, to the annoyance of their superiors, and the terror of those below them.

In the usual course of things, these men are not often to be found in the society of gentry except, perhaps, among those gentlemen or noblemen who like to see hangers-on at their tables: or who find it for their convenience to have underling magistrates, to *protect* their favourites, or to propose and *carry* jobs for them on grand juries. At election times, however, these persons rise into sudden importance with all who

have views upon the county. Lady Dashfort hinted to Lord Killpatrick, that her private letters from England spoke of an approaching dissolution of parliament: she knew that, upon this hint, a round of invitations would be sent to the squireens; and she was morally certain that they would be more disagreeable to Lord Colambre, and give him a worse idea of the country, than any other people who could be produced. Day after day some of these personages made their appearance; and Lady Dashfort took care to draw them out upon the subjects on which she knew that they would show the most self-sufficient ignorance, and the most illiberal spirit. They succeeded beyond her most sanguine expectations.

"Lord Colambre! how I pity you, for being compelled to these permanent sittings after dinner!" said Lady Isabel to him one night, when he came late to the ladies from the dining-room.

"Lord Killpatrick insisted upon my staying to help him to push about that never-ending, still-beginning electioneering bottle," said Lord Colambre.

"Oh! if that were all; if these gentlemen would only drink: —but their conversation!"

"I don't wonder my mother dreads returning to Clonbrony Castle, if my father must have such company as this. But, surely, it cannot be necessary."

"Oh, indispensable! positively indispensable!" cried Lady Dashfort; "no living in Ireland without it. You know, in every country in the world, you must live with the people of the country, or be torn to pieces: for my part, I should prefer being torn to pieces."

Lady Dashfort and Lady Isabel knew how to take advantage of the contrast between their own conversation, and that of the persons by whom Lord Colambre was so justly disgusted: they happily relieved his fatigue with wit, satire, poetry, and sentiment; so that he every day became more exclusively fond of their company; for Lady Killpatrick and the Miss Killpatricks were mere commonplace people. In the mornings, he rode or walked with Lady Dashfort and Lady Isabel: Lady Dashfort, by way of fulfilling her promise of showing him the people, used frequently to take him into the cabins, and talk to their inhabitants. Lord and Lady Killpatrick, who had lived always for the fashion-

able world, had taken little pains to improve the condition of their tenants: the few attempts they had made were injudicious. They had built ornamented, picturesque cottages, within view of their park; and favourite followers of the family, people with half a century's habit of indolence and dirt, were *promoted* to these fine dwellings. The consequences were such as Lady Dashfort delighted to point out: every thing let to go to ruin for the want of a moment's care, or pulled to pieces for the sake of the most surreptitious profit: the people most assisted always appearing proportionally wretched and discontented. No one could, with more ease and more knowledge of her ground, than Lady Dashfort, do the *dishonours* of a country. In every cabin that she entered, by the first glance of her eye at the head, kerchiefed in no comely guise, or by the drawn-down corners of the mouth, or by the bit of a broken pipe, which in Ireland never characterizes *stout labour*, or by the first sound of the voice, the drawling accent on "your honour," or, "my lady," she could distinguish the proper objects of her charitable designs, that is to say, those of the old uneducated race, whom no one can help, because they will never help themselves. To these she constantly addressed herself, making them give, in all their despairing tones, a history of their complaints and grievances; then asking them questions, aptly contrived to expose their habits of self-contradiction, their servility and flattery one moment, and their litigious and encroaching spirit the next: thus giving Lord Colambre the most unfavourable idea of the disposition and character of the lower class of the Irish people. Lady Isabel the while standing by, with the most amiable air of pity, with expressions of the finest moral sensibility, softening all her mother said, finding ever some excuse for the poor creatures, and following, with angelic sweetness, to heal the wounds her mother inflicted.

When Lady Dashfort thought she had sufficiently worked upon Lord Colambre's mind to weaken his enthusiasm for his native country; and when Lady Isabel had, by the appearance of every virtue, added to a delicate preference, if not partiality for our hero, ingratiated herself into his good opinion, and obtained an interest in his mind, the wily mother ventured an attack of a more decisive nature; and so contrived it was, that,

if it failed, it should appear to have been made without design to injure, and in total ignorance.

One day, Lady Dashfort, who, in fact, was not proud of her family, though she pretended to be so, was herself prevailed on, though with much difficulty, by Lady Killpatrick, to do the very thing she wanted to do, to show her genealogy, which had been beautifully blazoned, and which was to be produced in evidence in the lawsuit that brought her to Ireland. Lord Colambre stood politely looking on and listening, while her ladyship explained the splendid intermarriages of her family, pointing to each medallion that was filled gloriously with noble, and even with royal names, till at last she stopped short, and covering one medallion with her finger, she said, "Pass over that, dear Lady Killpatrick. You are not to see that, Lord Colambre—that's a little blot in our scutcheon. You know, Isabel, we never talk of that prudent match of great uncle John's: what could he expect by marrying into *that* family, where, you know, all the men were not *sans peur*, and none of the women *sans reproche?*"

"Oh, mamma!" cried Lady Isabel, "not one exception!"

"Not one, Isabel," persisted Lady Dashfort: "there was Lady ——, and the other sister, that married the man with the long nose; and the daughter again, of whom they contrived to make an honest woman, by getting her married in time to a *blue riband*, and who contrived to get herself into Doctors' Commons the very next year."

"Well, dear mamma, that is enough, and too much. Oh! pray don't go on," cried Lady Isabel, who had appeared very much distressed during her mother's speech. "You don't know what you are saying: indeed, ma'am, you don't."

"Very likely, child; but that compliment I can return to you on the spot, and with interest; for you seem to me, at this instant, not to know either what you are saying, or what you are doing. Come, come, explain."

"Oh, no, ma'am—Pray say no more; I will explain myself another time."

"Nay, there you are wrong, Isabel; in point of good-breeding, any thing is better than hints and mystery. Since I have been so unlucky as to touch upon the subject, better go through with it, and, with all the boldness of innocence, I ask

the question, Are you, my Lord Colambre, or are you not related to or connected with any of the St. Omars?"

"Not that I know of," said Lord Colambre; "but I really am so bad a genealogist, that I cannot answer positively."

"Then I must put the substance of my question into a new form. Have you, or have you not, a cousin of the name of Nugent?"

"Miss Nugent!—Grace Nugent!—Yes," said Lord Colambre, with as much firmness of voice as he could command, and with as little change of countenance as possible; but, as the question came upon him so unexpectedly, it was not in his power to answer with an air of absolute indifference and composure.

"And her mother was——" said Lady Dashfort.

"My aunt, by marriage; her maiden name was Reynolds, I think. But she died when I was quite a child. I know very little about her. I never saw her in my life; but I am certain she was a Reynolds."

"Oh, my dear lord," continued Lady Dashfort; "I am perfectly aware that she did take and bear the name of Reynolds; but that was not her maiden name—her maiden name was——; but perhaps it is a family secret that has been kept, for some good reason, from you, and from the poor girl herself; the maiden name was St. Omar, depend upon it. Nay, I would not have told this to you, my lord, if I could have conceived that it would affect you so violently," pursued Lady Dashfort, in a tone of raillery; "you see you are no worse off than we are. We have an intermarriage with the St. Omars. I did not think you would be so much shocked at a discovery, which proves that our family and yours have some little connexion."

Lord Colambre endeavoured to answer, and mechanically said something about "happy to have the honour." Lady Dashfort, truly happy to see that her blow had hit the mark so well, turned from his lordship without seeming to observe how seriously he was affected; and Lady Isabel sighed, and looked with compassion on Lord Colambre, and then reproachfully at her mother. But Lord Colambre heeded not her looks, and heard none of her sighs; he heard nothing, saw nothing, though his eyes were intently fixed on the genealogy, on which Lady

Dashfort was still descanting to Lady Killpatrick. He took the first opportunity he could of quitting the room, and went out to take a solitary walk.

"There he is, departed, but not in peace, to reflect upon what has been said," whispered Lady Dashfort to her daughter. "I hope it will do him a vast deal of good."

"None of the women *sans reproche!* None!—without one exception," said Lord Colambre to himself; "and Grace Nugent's mother a St. Omar!—Is it possible? Lady Dashfort seems certain. She could not assert a positive falsehood—no motive. She does not know that Miss Nugent is the person to whom I am attached—she spoke at random. And I have heard it first from a stranger,—not from my mother. Why was it kept secret from me? Now I understand the reason why my mother evidently never wished that I should think of Miss Nugent—why she always spoke so vehemently against the marriages of relations, of cousins. Why not tell me the truth? It would have had the strongest effect, had she known my mind."

Lord Colambre had the greatest dread of marrying any woman whose mother had conducted herself ill. His reason, his prejudices, his pride, his delicacy, and even his limited experience were all against it. All his hopes, his plans of future happiness, were shaken to their very foundation; he felt as if he had received a blow that stunned his mind, and from which he could not recover his faculties. The whole of that day he was like one in a dream. At night the painful idea continually recurred to him; and whenever he was fallen asleep, the sound of Lady Dashfort's voice returned upon his ear, saying the words, "What could he expect when he married one of the St. Omars? None of the women *sans reproche.*"

In the morning he rose early; and the first thing he did was to write a letter to his mother, requesting (unless there was some important reason for her declining to answer the question) that she would immediately relieve his mind from a great *uneasiness* (he altered the word four times, but at last left it uneasiness). He stated what he had heard, and besought his mother to tell him the whole truth without reserve.

CHAPTER VIII.

One morning Lady Dashfort had formed an ingenious scheme for leaving Lady Isabel and Lord Colambre *tête-à-tête;* but the sudden entrance of Heathcock disconcerted her intentions. He came to beg Lady Dashfort's interest with Count O'Halloran, for permission to hunt and shoot on his grounds next season.—"Not for myself, 'pon honour, but for two officers who are quartered at the next *town* here, who will indubitably hang or drown themselves if they are debarred from sporting."

"Who is this Count O'Halloran?" said Lord Colambre.

Miss White, Lady Killpatrick's companion, said, "he was a great oddity;" Lady Dashfort, "that he was singular;" and the clergyman of the parish, who was at breakfast, declared "that he was a man of uncommon knowledge, merit, and politeness."

"All I know of him," said Heathcock, "is, that he is a great sportsman, with a long queue, a gold-laced hat, and long skirts to a laced waistcoat."

Lord Colambre expressed a wish to see this extraordinary personage; and Lady Dashfort, to cover her former design, and, perhaps thinking absence might be as effectual as too much propinquity, immediately offered to call upon the officers in their way, and carry them with Heathcock and Lord Colambre to Halloran Castle.

Lady Isabel retired with much mortification, but with becoming grace; and Major Benson and Captain Williamson were taken to the count's. Major Benson, who was a famous *whip*, took his seat on the box of the barouche; and the rest of the party had the pleasure of her ladyship's conversation for three or four miles: of her ladyship's conversation—for Lord Colambre's thoughts were far distant; Captain Williamson had not any thing to say; and Heathcock nothing but "Eh! re'lly now!—'pon honour!"

They arrived at Halloran Castle—a fine old building, part of it in ruins, and part repaired with great judgment and taste. When the carriage stopped, a respectable-looking man-servant appeared on the steps, at the open hall-door.

Count O'Halloran was out fishing; but his servant said that he would be at home immediately, if Lady Dashfort and the gentlemen would be pleased to walk in.

On one side of the lofty and spacious hall stood the skeleton of an elk; on the other side, the perfect skeleton of a moose-deer, which, as the servant said, his master had made out, with great care, from the different bones of many of this curious species of leer, found in the lakes in the neighbourhood. The leash of officers witnessed their wonder with sundry strange oaths and exclamations.—"Eh! 'pon honour—re'lly now!" said Heathcock; and, too genteel to wonder at or admire any thing in the creation, dragged out his watch with some difficulty, saying, "I wonder now whether they are likely to think of giving us any hing to eat in this place?" And, turning his back upon the noose-deer, he straight walked out again upon the steps, called o his groom, and began to make some inquiry about his led iorse. Lord Colambre surveyed the prodigious skeletons with ational curiosity, and with that sense of awe and admiration, by which a superior mind is always struck on beholding any of the great works of Providence.

"Come, my dear lord!" said Lady Dashfort; "with our ublime sensations, we are keeping my old friend, Mr. Ulick Brady, this venerable person, waiting to show us into the recep-ion-room."

The servant bowed respectfully—more respectfully than ervants of modern date.

"My lady, the reception-room has been lately painted,—the mell of paint may be disagreeable; with your leave, I will take he liberty of showing you into my master's study."

He opened the door, went in before her, and stood holding up is finger, as if making a signal of silence to some one within. Her ladyship entered, and found herself in the midst of an odd ssembly: an eagle, a goat, a dog, an otter, several gold and ilver fish in a glass globe, and a white mouse in a cage. The agle, quick of eye but quiet of demeanour, was perched upon is stand; the otter lay under the table, perfectly harmless; the Angora goat, a beautiful and remarkably little creature of its ind, with long, curling, silky hair, was walking about the room

with the air of a beauty and a favourite; the dog, a tall Irish greyhound—one of the few of that fine race, which is now almost extinct—had been given to Count O'Halloran by an Irish nobleman, a relation of Lady Dashfort's. This dog, who had formerly known her ladyship, looked at her with ears erect, recognized her, and went to meet her the moment she entered. The servant answered for the peaceable behaviour of all the rest of the company of animals, and retired. Lady Dashfort began to feed the eagle from a silver plate on his stand; Lord Colambre examined the inscription on his collar; the other men stood in amaze. Heathcock, who came in last, astonished out of his constant "Eh! re'lly now!" the moment he put himself in at the door, exclaimed, "Zounds! what's all this live lumber?" and he stumbled over the goat, who was at that moment crossing the way. The colonel's spur caught in the goat's curly beard; the colonel shook his foot, and entangled the spur worse and worse; the goat struggled and butted; the colonel skated forward on the polished oak floor, balancing himself with outstretched arms.

The indignant eagle screamed, and, passing by, perched on Heathcock's shoulders. Too well bred to have recourse to the terrors of his beak, he scrupled not to scream, and flap his wings about the colonel's ears. Lady Dashfort, the while, threw herself back in her chair, laughing, and begging Heathcock's pardon. "Oh, take care of the dog, my dear colonel!" cried she; "for this kind of dog seizes his enemy by the back, and shakes him to death." The officers, holding their sides, laughed and begged—no pardon; while Lord Colambre, the only person who was not absolutely incapacitated, tried to disentangle the spur, and to liberate the colonel from the goat, and the goat from the colonel; an attempt in which he at last succeeded, at the expense of a considerable portion of the goat's beard. The eagle, however, still kept his place; and, yet mindful of the wrongs of his insulted friend the goat, had stretched his wings to give another buffet. Count O'Halloran entered; and the bird, quitting his prey, flew down to greet his master. The count was a fine old military-looking gentleman, fresh from fishing: his fishing accoutrements hanging carelessly

about him, he advanced, unembarrassed, to Lady Dashfort; and received his other guests with a mixture of military ease and gentlemanlike dignity.

Without adverting to the awkward and ridiculous situation in which he had found poor Heathcock, he apologized in general for his troublesome favourites. "For one of them," said he, patting the head of the dog, which lay quiet at Lady Dashfort's feet, "I see I have no need to apologize; he is where he ought to be. Poor fellow! he has never lost his taste for the good company to which he was early accustomed. As to the rest," said he, turning to Lady Dashfort, "a mouse, a bird, and a fish, are, you know, tribute from earth, air, and water, to a conqueror ——"

"But from no barbarous Scythian!" said Lord Colambre, smiling. The count looked at Lord Colambre, as at a person worthy his attention; but his first care was to keep the peace between his loving subjects and his foreign visitors. It was difficult to dislodge the old settlers, to make room for the new comers: but he adjusted these things with admirable facility; and, with a master's hand and master's eye, compelled each favourite to retreat into the back settlements. With becoming attention, he stroked and kept quiet old Victory, his eagle, who eyed Colonel Heathcock still, as if he did not like him; and whom the colonel eyed as if he wished his neck fairly wrung off. The little goat had nestled himself close up to his liberator, Lord Colambre, and lay perfectly quiet, with his eyes closed, going very wisely to sleep, and submitting philosophically to the loss of one half of his beard. Conversation now commenced, and was carried on by Count O'Halloran with much ability and spirit, and with such quickness of discrimination and delicacy of taste, as quite surprised and delighted our hero. To the lady the count's attention was first directed: he listened to her as she spoke, bending with an air of deference and devotion. She made her request for permission for Major Benson and Captain Williamson to hunt and shoot in his grounds next season: this was instantly granted.

Her ladyship's requests were to him commands, the count said.—His gamekeeper should be instructed to give the gentlemen, her friends, every liberty, and all possible assistance.

Then, turning to the officers, he said, he had just heard that several regiments of English militia had lately landed in Ireland; that one regiment was arrived at Killpatrick's-town. He rejoiced in the advantages Ireland, and he hoped he might be permitted to add, England, would probably derive from the exchange of the militia of both countries: habits would be improved, ideas enlarged. The two countries have the same interest; and, from the inhabitants discovering more of each other's good qualities, and interchanging little good offices in common life, their esteem and affection for each other would increase, and rest upon the firm basis of mutual utility.

To all this Major Benson answered only, "We are not militia officers."

"The major looks so like a stuffed man of straw," whispered Lady Dashfort to Lord Colambre, "and the captain so like the king of spades, putting forth one manly leg."

Count O'Halloran now turned the conversation to field sports, and then the captain and major opened at once.

"Pray now, sir," said the major, "you fox-hunt in this country, I suppose; and now do you manage the thing here as we do? Over night, you know, before the hunt, when the fox is out, stopping up the earths of the cover we mean to draw, and all the rest for four miles round. Next morning we assemble at the cover's side, and the huntsman throws in the hounds. The gossip here is no small part of the entertainment: but as soon as we hear the hounds give tongue ——"

"The favourite hounds," interposed Williamson.

"The favourite hounds, to be sure," continued Benson: "there is a dead silence till pug is well out of cover, and the whole pack well in: then cheer the hounds with tally-ho! till your lungs crack. Away he goes in gallant style, and the whole field is hard up, till pug takes a stiff country: then they who haven't pluck lag, see no more of him, and, with a fine blazing scent, there are but few of us in at the death."

"Well, we are fairly in at the death, I hope," said Lady Dashfort: "I was thrown out sadly at one time in the chase."

Lord Colambre, with the count's permission, took up a book in which the count's pencil lay, "Pasley on the Military Policy

Britain;" it was marked with many notes of admiration,
hands pointing to remarkable passages.
t is a book that leaves a strong impression on the mind,"
count.
Colambre read one of the marked passages, beginning
All that distinguishes a soldier in outward appearance
citizen is so trifling——" but at this instant our hero's
was distracted by seeing in a black-letter book this title
pter: "Burial-place of the Nugents."
now, sir," said Captain Williamson, "if I don't inter-
, as you are a fisherman too; now in Ireland do you,
-"
rt pinch on his elbow from his major, who stood behind
pped the captain short, as he pronounced the word *Mr.*
awkward people, he turned directly to ask, by his looks,
s the matter.
ajor took advantage of his discomfiture, and, stepping
m, determined to have the fishing to himself, and went
"Count O'Halloran, I presume you understand fishing,
ell as hunting?"
unt bowed: "I do not presume to say that, sir."
pray, count, in this country, do you arm your hook this
Give me leave;" taking the whip from Williamson's
hand, "this ways, laying the outermost part of your
his fashion next to your hook, and the point next to
nk, this wise, and that wise; and then, sir,—count, you
hackle of a cock's neck——"
over's topping's better," said Williamson.
work your gold and silver thread," pursued Benson,
our wings, and when your head's made, you fasten all."
you never showed how your head's made," interrupted
on.
gentleman knows how a head's made; any man can
ead, I suppose: so, sir, you fasten all."
ll never get your head fast on that way, while the
nds," cried Williamson.
enough for all purposes; I'll bet you a rump and
aptain: and then, sir,—count, you divide your wings
edle."

"A pin's point will do," said Williamson.

The count, to reconcile matters, produced from an Indian cabinet, which he had opened for Lady Dashfort's inspection, a little basket containing a variety of artificial flies of curious construction, which, as he spread them on the table, made Williamson and Benson's eyes almost sparkle with delight. There was the *dun-fly*, for the month of March; and the *stone-fly*, much in vogue for April; and the *ruddy-fly*, of red wool, black silk, and red capon's feathers.

Lord Colambre, whose head was in the burial-place of the Nugents, wished them all at the bottom of the sea.

"And the *green-fly*, and the *moorish-fly!*" cried Benson, snatching them up with transport; "and, chief, the *sad-yellow-fly*, in which the fish delight in June; the *sad-yellow-fly*, made with the buzzard's wings, bound with black braked hemp, and the *shell-fly*, for the middle of July, made of greenish wool, wrapped about with the herle of a peacock's tail, famous for creating excellent sport." All these and more were spread upon the table before the sportsmen's wondering eyes.

"Capital flies! capital, faith!" cried Williamson.

"Treasures, faith, real treasures, by G—!" cried Benson.

"Eh! 'pon honour! re'lly now," were the first words which Heathcock had uttered since his battle with the goat.

"My dear Heathcock, are you alive still?" said Lady Dashfort: "I had really forgotten your existence."

So had Count O'Halloran, but he did not say so.

"Your ladyship has the advantage of me there," said Heathcock, stretching himself; "I wish I could forget my existence, for, in my mind, existence is a horrible *bore*."

"I thought you *was* a sportsman," said Williamson.

"Well, sir?"

"And a fisherman?"

"Well, sir?"

"Why look you there, sir," pointing to the flies, "and tell a body life's a bore."

"One can't *always* fish or shoot, I apprehend, sir," said Heathcock.

"Not always—but sometimes," said Williamson, laughing;

for I suspect shrewdly you've forgot some of your sporting in
ond-street."

"Eh! 'pon honour! re'lly now!" said the colonel, retreating
gain to his safe entrenchment of affectation, from which he
ever could venture without imminent danger.

"'Pon honour," cried Lady Dashfort, "I can swear for
Ieathcock, that I have eaten excellent hares and ducks of his
hooting, which, to my knowledge," added she, in a loud whis-
er, "he bought in the market."

"*Emptum aprum!*" said Lord Colambre to the count, without
langer of being understood by those whom it concerned.

The count smiled a second time; but politely turning the
ttention of the company from the unfortunate colonel, by ad-
lressing himself to the laughing sportsmen, "Gentlemen, you
eem to value these," said he, sweeping the artificial flies from
he table into the little basket from which they had been taken;
' would you do me the honour to accept of them? They are all
f my own making, and consequently of Irish manufacture."
Then, ringing the bell, he asked Lady Dashfort's permission to
ave the basket put into her carriage.

Benson and Williamson followed the servant, to prevent them
rom being tossed into the boot. Heathcock stood still in the
niddle of the room, taking snuff.

Count O'Halloran turned from him to Lord Colambre, who
ad just got happily to *the burial-place of the Nugents*, when
Lady Dashfort, coming between them, and spying the title of
he chapter, exclaimed, "What have you there?—Antiquities!
ny delight!—but I never look at engravings when I can see
ealities."

Lord Colambre was then compelled to follow, as she led the
ay, into the hall, where the count took down golden ornaments,
nd brass-headed spears, and jointed horns of curious workman-
hip, that had been found on his estate; and he told of sperma-
eti wrapped in carpets, and he showed small urns, enclosing
shes; and from among these urns he selected one, which he
ut into the hands of Lord Colambre, telling him, that it had
een lately found in an old abbey-ground in his neighbourhood,
hich had been the burial-place of some of the Nugent family.

"I was just looking at the account of it, in the book which

you saw open on my table.—And as you seem to take an interest in that family, my lord, perhaps," said the count, "you may think this urn worth your acceptance."

Lord Colambre said, "It would be highly valuable to him—as the Nugents were his near relations."

Lady Dashfort little expected this blow; she, however, carried him off to the moose-deer, and from moose-deer to round-towers, to various architectural antiquities, and to the real and fabulous history of Ireland, on all which the count spoke with learning and enthusiasm. But now, to Colonel Heathcock's great joy and relief, a handsome collation appeared in the dining-room, of which Ulick opened the folding-doors.

"Count, you have made an excellent house of your castle," said Lady Dashfort.

"It will be, when it is finished," said the count. "I am afraid," added he, smiling, "I live like many other Irish gentlemen, who never are, but always to be, blessed with a good house. I began on too large a scale, and can never hope to live to finish it."

"'Pon honour! here's a good thing, which I hope we shall live to finish," said Heathcock, sitting down before the collation; and heartily did he eat of eel-pie, and of Irish ortolans[1], which, as Lady Dashfort observed, "afforded him indemnity for the past, and security for the future."

[1] As it may be satisfactory to a large portion of the public, and to all men of taste, the editor subjoins the following account of the Irish ortolan, which will convince the world that this bird is not in the class of fabulous animals:

"There is a small bird, which is said to be peculiar to the Blasquet Islands, called by the Irish, Gourder, the English name of which I am at a loss for, nor do I find it mentioned by naturalists. It is somewhat larger than a sparrow; the feathers of the back are dark, and those of the belly are white; the bill is straight, short, and thick; and it is web-footed: they are almost one lump of fat; when roasted, of a most delicious taste, and are reckoned to exceed an ortolan; for which reason the gentry hereabouts call them the *Irish Ortolan.* These birds are worthy of being transmitted a great way to market; for ortolans, it is well known, are brought from France to supply the markets of London."—See Smith's Account of the County of Kerry, p. 186.

"Eh! re'lly now! your Irish ortolans are famous good eating," said Heathcock.

"Worth being quartered in Ireland, faith! to taste 'em," said Benson.

The count recommended to Lady Dashfort some of "that delicate sweetmeat, the Irish plum."

"Bless me, sir,—count!" cried Williamson, "it's by far the best thing of the kind I ever tasted in all my life: where could you get this?"

"In Dublin, at my dear Mrs. Godey's; where *only*, in his majesty's dominions, it is to be had," said the count.

The whole vanished in a few seconds.

"'Pon honour! I do believe this is the thing the queen's so fond of," said Heathcock.

Then heartily did he drink of the count's excellent Hungarian wines; and, by the common bond of sympathy between those who have no other tastes but eating and drinking, the colonel, the major, and the captain, were now all the best companions possible for one another.

Whilst "they prolonged the rich repast," Lady Dashfort and Lord Colambre went to the window to admire the prospect: Lady Dashfort asked the count the name of some distant hill.

"Ah!" said the count, "that hill was once covered with fine wood; but it was all cut down two years ago."

"Who could have been so cruel?" said her ladyship.

"I forget the present proprietor's name," said the count; "but he is one of those who, according to *the clause of distress* in their leases, *lead, drive, and carry away*, but never *enter* their lands; one of those enemies to Ireland—those cruel absentees!"

Lady Dashfort looked through her glass at the mountain:—Lord Colambre sighed, and, endeavouring to pass it off with a smile, said frankly to the count, "You are not aware, I am sure, count, that you are speaking to the son of an Irish absentee family. Nay, do not be shocked, my dear sir; I tell you only because I thought it fair to do so: but let me assure you, that nothing you could say on that subject could hurt me personally, because I feel that I am not, that I never can be, an enemy to Ireland. An absentee, voluntarily, I never yet have been; and as to the future, I declare——"

"I declare you know nothing of the future," interrupted Lady Dashfort, in a half peremptory, half playful tone—"you know nothing: make no rash vows, and you will break none."

The undaunted assurance of Lady Dashfort's genius for intrigue gave her an air of frank imprudence, which prevented Lord Colambre from suspecting that more was meant than met the ear. The count and he took leave of one another with mutual regard; and Lady Dashfort rejoiced to have got our hero out of Halloran Castle.

CHAPTER IX.

Lord Colambre had waited with great impatience for an answer to the letter of inquiry which he had written about Miss Nugent's mother. A letter from Lady Clonbrony arrived: he opened it with the greatest eagerness—passed over "Rheumatism—warm weather—warm bath—Buxton balls—Miss Broadhurst—your *friend*, Sir Arthur Berryl, very assiduous!" The name of Grace Nugent he found at last, and read as follows:—

"Her mother's maiden name was *St. Omar;* and there was a *faux pas*, certainly. She was, I am told, (for it was before my time,) educated at a convent abroad; and there was an affair with a Captain Reynolds, a young officer, which her friends were obliged to hush up. She brought an infant to England with her, and took the name of Reynolds—but none of that family would acknowledge her: and she lived in great obscurity, till your Uncle Nugent saw, fell in love with her, and (knowing her whole history) married her. He adopted the child, gave her his name, and, after some years, the whole story was forgotten. Nothing could be more disadvantageous to Grace than to have it revived: this is the reason we kept it secret."

Lord Colambre tore the letter to bits.

From the perturbation which Lady Dashfort saw in his countenance, she guessed the nature of the letter which he had

been reading, and for the arrival of which he had been so impatient.

"It has worked!" said she to herself. "*Pour le coup Philippe je te tiens!*"

Lord Colambre appeared this day more sensible than he had ever yet seemed to the charms of the fair Isabel.

"Many a tennis-ball, and many a heart, is caught at the rebound," said Lady Dashfort. "Isabel! now is your time!"

And so it was—or so, perhaps, it would have been, but for a circumstance which her ladyship, with all her genius for intrigue, had never taken into her consideration. Count O'Halloran came to return the visit which had been paid to him; and, in the course of conversation, he spoke of the officers who had been introduced to him, and told Lady Dashfort that he had heard a report which shocked him much—he hoped it could not be true—that one of these officers had introduced his mistress as his wife to Lady Oranmore, who lived in the neighbourhood. This officer, it was said, had let Lady Oranmore send her carriage for this woman; and that she had dined at Oranmore with her ladyship and her daughters. "But I cannot believe it! I cannot believe it to be possible, that any gentleman, that any *officer* could do such a thing!" said the count.

"And is this all?" exclaimed Lady Dashfort. "Is this all the terrible affair, my good count, which has brought your face to this prodigious length?"

The count looked at Lady Dashfort with astonishment.

"Such a look of virtuous indignation," continued she, "did I never behold on or off the stage. Forgive me for laughing, count; but, believe me, comedy goes through the world better than tragedy, and, take it all in all, does rather less mischief. As to the thing in question, I know nothing about it; I dare say it is not true: but, now, suppose it were—it is only a silly *quiz* of a raw young officer upon a prudish old dowager. I know nothing about it, for my part: but, after all, what irreparable mischief has been done? Laugh at the thing, and then it is a jest—a bad one, perhaps, but still only a jest—and there's an end of it: but take it seriously, and there is no knowing where it might end—in this poor man's being broke, and in half a dozen duels, may be."

"Of that, madam," said the count, "Lady Oranmore's prudence and presence of mind have prevented all danger. Her ladyship *would* not understand the insult. She said, or she acted as if she said, '*Je ne veux rien voir, rien écouter, rien savoir.*' Lady Oranmore is one of the most respectable——"

"Count, I beg your pardon!" interrupted Lady Dashfort; "but I must tell you, that your favourite, Lady Oranmore, has behaved very ill to me; purposely omitted to invite Isabel to her ball; offended and insulted me:—her praises, therefore, cannot be the most agreeable subject of conversation you can choose for my amusement; and as to the rest, you, who have such variety and so much politeness, will, I am sure, have the goodness to indulge my caprice in this instance."

"I shall obey your ladyship, and be silent, whatever pleasure it might give me to speak on that subject," said the count; "and I trust Lady Dashfort will reward me by the assurance, that, however playfully she may have just now spoken, she seriously disapproves, and is shocked."

"Oh, shocked! shocked to death! if that will satisfy you, my dear count."

The count, obviously, was not satisfied: he had civil, as well as military courage, and his sense of right and wrong could stand against the raillery and ridicule of a fine lady.

The conversation ended: Lady Dashfort thought it would have no farther consequences; and she did not regret the loss of a man like Count O'Halloran, who lived retired in his castle, and who could not have any influence upon the opinion of the fashionable world. However, upon turning from the count to Lord Colambre, who she thought had been occupied with Lady Isabel, and to whom she imagined all this dispute was uninteresting, she perceived, by his countenance, that she had made a great mistake. Still she trusted that her power over Lord Colambre was sufficient easily to efface whatever unfavourable impression this conversation had made upon his mind. He had no personal interest in the affair; and she had generally found that people are easily satisfied about any wrong or insult, public or private, in which they have no immediate concern. But all the charms of her conversation were now tried in vain to reclaim him from the reverie into which he had fallen.

His friend Sir James Brooke's parting advice occurred to our hero: his eyes began to open to Lady Dashfort's character; and he was, from this moment, freed from her power. Lady Isabel, however, had taken no part in all this—she was blameless; and, independently of her mother, and in pretended opposition of sentiment, she might have continued to retain the influence she had gained over Lord Colambre, but that a slight accident revealed to him *her* real disposition.

It happened, on the evening of this day, that Lady Isabel came into the library with one of the young ladies of the house, talking very eagerly, without perceiving Lord Colambre, who was sitting in one of the recesses reading.

"My dear creature, you are quite mistaken," said Lady Isabel, "he was never a favourite of mine; I always detested him; I only flirted with him to plague his wife. Oh, that wife! my dear Elizabeth, I do hate," cried she, clasping her hands, and expressing hatred with all her soul, and with all her strength. "I detest that Lady de Cressy to such a degree, that, to purchase the pleasure of making her feel the pangs of jealousy for one hour, look, I would this moment lay down this finger and let it be cut off."

The face, the whole figure of Lady Isabel, at this moment, appeared to Lord Colambre suddenly metamorphosed; instead of the soft, gentle, amiable female, all sweet charity and tender sympathy, formed to love and to be loved, he beheld one possessed and convulsed by an evil spirit—her beauty, if beauty it could be called, the beauty of a fiend. Some ejaculation, which he unconsciously uttered, made Lady Isabel start. She saw him—saw the expression of his countenance, and knew that all was over.

Lord Colambre, to the utter astonishment and disappointment of Lady Dashfort, and to the still greater mortification of Lady Isabel, announced this night that it was necessary he should immediately pursue his tour in Ireland. We pass over all the castles in the air which the young ladies of the family had built, and which now fell to the ground. We pass all the civil speeches of Lord and Lady Killpatrick; all the vehement remonstrances of Lady Dashfort; and the vain sighs of Lady Isabel. To the last moment Lady Dashfort said, "He will not go."

But he went; and, when he was gone, Lady Dashfort e
claimed, "That man has escaped from me." After a pau
turning to her daughter, she, in the most taunting and co
temptuous terms, reproached her as the cause of this failu
concluding by a declaration, that she must in future manage h
own affairs, and had best settle her mind to marry Heathcoc
since every one else was too wise to think of her.

Lady Isabel of course retorted. But we leave this amiab
mother and daughter to recriminate in appropriate terms, a
we follow our hero, rejoiced that he has been disentangled fro
their snares. Those who have never been in similar peril w
wonder much that he did not escape sooner; those who ha
ever been in like danger will wonder more that he escaped
all. They who are best acquainted with the heart or imaginati
of man will be most ready to acknowledge that the combin
charms of wit, beauty, and flattery, may, for a time, su
pend the action of right reason in the mind of the greate
philosopher, or operate against the resolutions of the greatest
heroes.

Lord Colambre pursued his way to Halloran Castle, desirou
before he quitted this part of the country, to take leave of t
count, who had shown him much civility, and for who
honourable conduct and generous character he had conceiv
a high esteem, which no little peculiarities of antiquated dre
or manner could diminish. Indeed, the old-fashioned politene
of what was formerly called a well-bred gentleman pleased hi
better than the indolent or insolent selfishness of modern men
the ton. Perhaps, notwithstanding our hero's determination
turn his mind from every thing connected with the idea of Mi
Nugent, some latent curiosity about the burial-place of t
Nugents might have operated to make him call upon the coun
In this hope he was disappointed; for a cross miller, to who
the abbey-ground was let, on which the burial-place was foun
had taken it into his head to refuse admittance, and none cou
enter his ground.

Count O'Halloran was much pleased by Lord Colambre
visit. The very day of his arrival at Halloran Castle, the cou
was going to Oranmore; he was dressed, and his carriage wa
waiting: therefore Lord Colambre begged that he might n

detain him, and the count requested his lordship to accompany him.

"Let me have the honour of introducing you, my lord, to a family, with whom, I am persuaded, you will be pleased; by whom you will be appreciated; and at whose house you will have an opportunity of seeing the best manner of living of the Irish nobility."

Lord Colambre accepted the invitation, and was introduced at Oranmore. The dignified appearance and respectable character of Lady Oranmore; the charming unaffected manners of her daughters; the air of domestic happiness and comfort in her family; the becoming magnificence, free from ostentation, in her whole establishment; the respect and affection with which she was treated by all who approached her, delighted and touched Lord Colambre; the more, perhaps, because he had heard this family so unjustly abused; and because he saw Lady Oranmore and her daughter in immediate contrast with Lady Dashfort and Lady Isabel.

A little circumstance which occurred during this visit, increased his interest for the family. When Lady de Cressy's little boys came in after dinner, one of them was playing with a seal, which had just been torn from a letter. The child showed it to Lord Colambre, and asked him to read the motto. The motto was, "Deeds, not words." His friend Sir James Brooke's motto, and his arms. Lord Colambre eagerly inquired if this family was acquainted with Sir James, and he soon perceived that they were not only acquainted with him, but that they were particularly interested about him.

Lady Oranmore's second daughter, Lady Harriot, appeared particularly pleased by the manner in which Lord Colambre spoke of Sir James. And the child, who had now established himself on his lordship's knee, turned round, and whispered in his ear, "'Twas aunt Harriot gave me the seal; Sir James is to be married to aunt Harriot, and then he will be my uncle."

Some of the principal gentry of this part of the country happened to dine at Oranmore on one of the days Lord Colambre was there. He was surprised at the discovery, that there were so many agreeable, well-informed, and well-bred people, of whom, while he was at Killpatrick's-town, he had seen nothing.

He now discerned how far he had been deceived by Lady Dashfort.

Both the count, and Lord and Lady Oranmore, who were warmly attached to their country, exhorted him to make himself amends for the time he had lost, by seeing with his own eyes, and judging with his own understanding, of the country and its inhabitants, during the remainder of the time he was to stay in Ireland. The higher classes, in most countries, they observed, were generally similar; but, in the lower class, he would find many characteristic differences.

When he first came to Ireland, he had been very eager to go and see his father's estate, and to judge of the conduct of his agents, and the condition of his tenantry; but this eagerness had subsided, and the design had almost faded from his mind, whilst under the influence of Lady Dashfort's misrepresentations. A mistake, relative to some remittance from his banker in Dublin, obliged him to delay his journey a few days, and during that time, Lord and Lady Oranmore showed him the neat cottages, and well-attended schools, in their neighbourhood. They showed him not only what could be done, but what had been done, by the influence of great proprietors residing on their own estates, and encouraging the people by judicious kindness.

He saw,—he acknowledged the truth of this; but it did not come home to his feelings now as it would have done a little while ago. His views and plans were altered: he had looked forward to the idea of marrying and settling in Ireland, and then every thing in the country was interesting to him; but since he had forbidden himself to think of a union with Miss Nugent, his mind had lost its object and its spring; he was not sufficiently calm to think of the public good; his thoughts were absorbed by his private concerns. He knew and repeated to himself, that he ought to visit his own and his father's estates, and to see the condition of his tenantry; he desired to fulfil his duties, but they ceased to appear to him easy and pleasurable, for hope and love no longer brightened his prospects.

That he might see and hear more than he could as heir-apparent to the estate, he sent his servant to Dublin to wait for him there. He travelled *incognito*, wrapped himself in a shabby great-coat, and took the name of Evans. He arrived at a

village, or, as it was called, a town, which bore the name of Colambre. He was agreeably surprised by the air of neatness and finish in the houses and in the street, which had a nicely swept paved footway. He slept at a small but excellent inn,—excellent, perhaps, because it was small, and proportioned to the situation and business of the place. Good supper, good bed, good attendance; nothing out of repair; no things pressed into services for which they were never intended by nature or art. No chambermaid slipshod, or waiter smelling of whiskey; but all tight and right, and every body doing their own business, and doing it as if it were their every day occupation, not as if it were done by particular desire, for the first or last time this season. The landlord came in at supper to inquire whether any thing was wanted. Lord Colambre took this opportunity of entering into conversation with him, and asked him to whom the town belonged, and who were the proprietors of the neighbouring estates.

"The town belongs to an absentee lord—one Lord Clonbrony, who lives always beyond the seas, in London; and who had never seen the town since it was a town, to call a town."

"And does the land in the neighbourhood belong to this Lord Clonbrony?"

"It does, sir; he's a great proprietor, but knows nothing of his property, nor of us. Never set foot among us, to my knowledge, since I was as high as the table. He might as well be a West India planter, and we negroes, for any thing he knows to the contrary—has no more care, nor thought about us, than it he were in Jamaica, or the other world. Shame for him! But there's too many to keep him in countenance."

Lord Colambre asked him what wine he could have; and then inquired who managed the estate for this absentee.

"Mr. Burke, sir. And I don't know why God was so kind to give so good an agent to an absentee like Lord Clonbrony, except it was for the sake of us, who is under him, and knows the blessing, and is thankful for the same."

"Very good cutlets," said Lord Colambre.

"I am happy to hear it, sir. They have a right to be good, for Mrs. Burke sent her own cook to teach my wife to dress cutlets."

"So the agent is a good agent, is he?"

"He is, thanks be to Heaven! And that's what few can boast, especially when the landlord's living over the seas: we have the luck to have got a good agent over us, in Mr. Burke, who is a right bred gentleman; a snug little property of his own, honestly made; with the good-will, and good wishes, and respect of all."

"Does he live in the neighbourhood?"

"Just *convanient*[1]. At the end of the town; in the house on the hill as you passed, sir; to the left, with the trees about it, all of his own planting, grown too; for there's a blessing on all he does, and he has done a deal.—There's salad, sir, if you are *partial* to it. Very fine lettuce. Mrs. Burke sent us the plants herself."

"Excellent salad! So this Mr. Burke has done a great deal, has he? In what way?"

"In every way, sir,—sure was not it he that had improved, and fostered, and *made* the town of Colambre?—no thanks to the proprietor, nor to the young man whose name it bears, neither!"

"Have you any porter, pray, sir?"

"We have, sir, as good, I hope, as you'd drink in London, for it's the same you get there, I understand, from Cork. And I have some of my own brewing, which, they say, you could not tell the difference between it and Cork quality—if you'd be pleased to try.—Harry, the corkscrew."

The porter of his own brewing was pronounced to be extremely good; and the landlord observed it was Mr. Burke encouraged him to learn to brew, and lent him his own brewer for a time to teach him.

"Your Mr. Burke, I find, is *apropos* to porter, *apropos* to salad, *apropos* to cutlets, *apropos* to every thing," said Lord Colambre, smiling: "he seems to be a very uncommon agent. I suppose you are a great favourite of his, and you do what you please with him."

"Oh, no, sir, I could not say that; Mr. Burke does not have favourites any way; but, according to my deserts, I trust I stand well enough with him; for, in truth, he is a right good agent."

[1] *Convenient*, near.

Lord Colambre still pressed for particulars; he was an Englishman, and a stranger, he said, and did not exactly know what was meant in Ireland by a good agent.

"Why, he is the man that will encourage the improving tenant; and show no favour or affection, but justice, which comes even to all, and does best for all at the long run; and, residing always in the country, like Mr. Burke, and understanding country business, and going about continually among the tenantry, he knows when to press for the rent, and when to leave the money to lay out upon the land; and, according as they would want it, can give a tenant a help or a check properly. Then no duty work called for, no presents, nor *glove money*, nor *sealing money* even, taken or offered; no underhand hints about proposals, when land would be out of lease; but a considerable preference, if desarved, to the old tenant, and if not, a fair advertisement, and the best offer and tenant accepted: no screwing of the land to the highest penny, just to please the head landlord for the minute, and ruin him at the end, by the tenant's racking the land, and running off with the year's rent; nor no bargains to his own relations or friends did Mr. Burke ever give or grant, but all fair between landlord and tenant; and that's the thing that will last; and that's what I call the good agent."

Lord Colambre poured out a glass of wine, and begged the innkeeper to drink the good agent's health, in which he was heartily pledged. "I thank your honour:—Mr. Burke's health! and long may he live over and amongst us; he saved me from drink and ruin, when I was once inclined to it, and made a man of me and all my family."

The particulars we cannot stay to detail; this grateful man, however, took pleasure in sounding the praises of his benefactor, and in raising him in the opinion of the traveller.

"As you've time, and are curious about such things, sir, perhaps you'd walk up to the school that Mrs. Burke has for the poor children: and look at the market house, and see how clean he takes a pride to keep the town: and any house in the town, from the priest to the parson's, that you'd go into, will give you the same character as I do of Mr. Burke; from the brogue to

the boot, all speak the same of him, and can say no other. God for ever bless and keep him over us!"

Upon making further inquiries, every thing the innkeeper had said was confirmed by different inhabitants of the village. Lord Colambre conversed with the shopkeepers, with the cottagers; and, without making any alarming inquiries, he obtained all the information he wanted. He went to the village-school—a pretty, cheerful house, with a neat garden and a play-green; met Mrs. Burke; introduced himself to her as a traveller. The school was shown to him: it was just what it ought to be—neither too much nor too little had been attempted; there was neither too much interference nor too little attention. Nothing for exhibition; care to teach well, without any vain attempt to teach in a wonderfully short time. All that experience proves to be useful, in both Dr. Bell's and Mr. Lancaster's modes of teaching, Mrs. Burke had adopted; leaving it to "graceless zealots" to fight about the rest. That no attempts at proselytism had been made, and that no illiberal distinctions had been made in his school, Lord Colambre was convinced, in the best manner possible, by seeing the children of protestants and catholics sitting on the same benches, learning from the same books, and speaking to one another with the same cordial familiarity. Mrs. Burke was an unaffected, sensible woman, free from all party prejudices, and without ostentation, desirous and capable of doing good. Lord Colambre was much pleased with her, and very glad that she invited him to tea.

Mr. Burke did not come in till late; for he had been detained portioning out some meadows, which were of great consequence to the inhabitants of the town. He brought home to tea with him the clergyman and the priest of the parish, both of whom he had taken successful pains to accommodate with the land which suited their respective convenience. The good terms on which they seemed to be with each other, and with him, appeared to Lord Colambre to do honour to Mr. Burke. All the favourable accounts his lordship had received of this gentleman were confirmed by what he saw and heard. After the clergyman and priest had taken leave, upon Lord Colambre's expressing some surprise, mixed with satisfaction, at seeing the harmony

which subsisted between them, Mr. Burke assured him that this was the same in many parts of Ireland. He observed, that "as the suspicion of ill-will never fails to produce it," so he had often found, that taking it for granted that no ill-will exists, has the most conciliating effect. He said, to please opposite parties, he used no arts; but he tried to make all his neighbours live comfortably together, by making them acquainted with each other's good qualities; by giving them opportunities of meeting sociably, and, from time to time, of doing each other little services and good offices. Fortunately, he had so much to do, he said, that he had no time for controversy. He was a plain man, made it a rule not to meddle with speculative points, and to avoid all irritating discussions: he was not to rule the country, but to live in it, and make others live as happily as he could.

Having nothing to conceal in his character, opinions, or circumstances, Mr. Burke was perfectly open and unreserved in his manner and conversation; freely answered all the traveller's inquiries, and took pains to show him every thing he desired to see. Lord Colambre said he had thoughts of settling in Ireland; and declared, with truth, that he had not seen any part of the country he should like better to live in than this neighbourhood. He went over most of the estate with Mr. Burke, and had ample opportunities of convincing himself that this gentleman was indeed, as the innkeeper had described him, "a right good gentleman, and a right good agent."

He paid Mr. Burke some just compliments on the state of the tenantry, and the neat and flourishing appearance of the town of Colambre.

"What pleasure it will give the proprietor when he sees all you have done!" said Lord Colambre.

"Oh, sir, don't speak of it!—that breaks my heart; he never has shown the least interest in any thing I have done: he is quite dissatisfied with me, because I have not ruined his tenantry, by forcing them to pay more than the land is worth; because I have not squeezed money from them, by fining down rents; and —but all this, as an Englishman, sir, must be unintelligible to you. The end of the matter is, that, attached as I am to this place and the people about me, and, as I hope, the tenantry are to me,—*I fear* I shall be obliged to give up the agency.

"Give up the agency! How so? you must not," cried L Colambre, and, for the moment, he forgot himself; but Burke took this only for an expression of good-will.

"I must, I am afraid," continued he. "My employer, L Clonbrony, is displeased with me—continual calls for mo come upon me from England, and complaints of my slow re tances."

"Perhaps Lord Clonbrony is in embarrassed circumstanc said Lord Colambre.

"I never speak of my employer's affairs, sir," replied Burke; now for the first time assuming an air of reserve.

"I beg pardon, sir—I seem to have asked an indisc question." Mr. Burke was silent.

"Lest my reserve should give you a false impression, I add, sir," resumed Mr. Burke, "that I really am not quainted with the state of his lordship's affairs in general. know only what belongs to the estate under my own man ment. The principal part of his lordship's property, the C brony estate, is under another agent, Mr. Garraghty."

"Garraghty!" repeated Lord Colambre; "what sort person is he? But I may take it for granted, that it cannot to the lot of one and the same absentee to have two such ag as Mr. Burke."

Mr. Burke bowed, and seemed pleased with the complim which he knew he deserved—but not a word did he sa Mr. Garraghty; and Lord Colambre, afraid of betraying self by some other indiscreet question, changed the conversati

The next night the post brought a letter to Mr. Burke, f Lord Clonbrony, which he gave to his wife as soon as he read it, saying, "See the reward of all my services!"

Mrs. Burke glanced her eye over the letter, and b extremely fond of her husband, and sensible of his deserving different treatment, burst into indignant exclamations—"See reward of all your services, indeed!—What an unreasona ungrateful man!—So, this is the thanks for all you have d for Lord Clonbrony!"

"He does not know what I have done, my dear. He n has seen what I have done."

"More shame for him!"

"He never, I suppose, looks over his accounts, or understands them."

"More shame for him!"

"He listens to foolish reports, or misrepresentations, perhaps. He is at a distance, and cannot find out the truth."

"More shame for him!"

"Take it quietly, my dear; we have the comfort of a good conscience. The agency may be taken from me by this lord; but the sense of having done my duty, no lord or man upon earth can give or take away."

"Such a letter!" said Mrs. Burke, taking it up again. "Not even the civility to write with his own hand!—only his signature to the scrawl—looks as if it was written by a drunken man, does not it, Mr. Evans?" said she, showing the letter to Lord Colambre, who immediately recognized the writing of Sir Terence O'Fay.

"It does not look like the hand of a gentleman, indeed," said Lord Colambre.

"It has Lord Clonbrony's own signature, let it be what it will," said Mr. Burke, looking closely at it; "Lord Clonbrony's own writing the signature is, I am clear of that."

Lord Clonbrony's son was clear of it, also; but he took care not to give any opinion on that point.

"Oh, pray read it, sir, read it," said Mrs. Burke; "read it, pray; a gentleman may write a bad hand, but no *gentleman* could write such a letter as that to Mr. Burke—pray read it, sir; you who have seen something of what he has done for the town of Colambre, and what he has made of the tenantry and the estate of Lord Clonbrony."

Lord Colambre read, and was convinced that his father had never written or read the letter, but had signed it, trusting to Sir Terence O'Fay's having expressed his sentiments properly.

"SIR,

"As I have no farther occasion for your services, you will take notice, that I hereby request you will forthwith hand over, on or before the 1st of November next, your accounts, with the balance due of the *hanging-gale* (which, I understand, is more than ought to be at this season) to Nicholas Garraghty, Esq.,

College-green, Dublin, who, in future, will act as agent, and shall get, by post, immediately, a power of attorney for the same, entitling him to receive and manage the Colambre, as well as the Clonbrony estate, for,

"Sir, your obedient humble servant,

"CLONBRONY.

"*Grosvenor-square.*"

Though misrepresentation, caprice, or interest, might have induced Lord Clonbrony to desire to change his agent, yet Lord Colambre knew that his father never could have announced his wishes in such a style; and, as he returned the letter to Mrs. Burke, he repeated, he was convinced that it was impossible that any nobleman could have written such a letter; that it must have been written by some inferior person; and that his lordship had signed it without reading it.

"My dear, I'm sorry you showed that letter to Mr. Evans," said Mr. Burke; "I don't like to expose Lord Clonbrony; he is a well-meaning gentleman, misled by ignorant or designing people; at all events, it is not for us to expose him."

"He has exposed himself," said Mrs. Burke; "and the world should know it."

"He was very kind to me when I was a young man," said Mr. Burke; "we must not forget that now, because we are angry, my love."

"Why, no, my love, to be sure we should not; but who could have recollected it just at this minute but yourself? And now, sir," turning to Lord Colambre, "you see what kind of a man this is: now is it not difficult for me to bear patiently to see him ill-treated?"

"Not only difficult, but impossible, I should think, madam," said Lord Colambre; "I know even I, who am a stranger, cannot help feeling for both of you, as you must see I do."

"But half the world, who don't know him," continued Mrs. Burke, "when they hear that Lord Clonbrony's agency is taken from him, will think perhaps that he is to blame."

"No, madam," said Lord Colambre, "that you need not fear; Mr. Burke may safely trust to his character: from what I have within these two days seen and heard, I am convinced that such

is the respect he has deserved and acquired, that no blame can touch him."

"Sir, I thank you," said Mrs. Burke, the tears coming into her eyes: "you can judge—you do him justice; but there are so many who don't know him, and who will decide without knowing any of the facts."

"That, my dear, happens about every thing to every body," said Mr. Burke; "but we must have patience; time sets all judgments right, sooner or later."

"But the sooner the better," said Mrs. Burke. "Mr. Evans, I hope you will be so kind, if ever you hear this business talked of——"

"Mr. Evans lives in Wales, my dear."

"But he is travelling through Ireland, my dear, and he said he should return to Dublin, and, you know, there he certainly will hear it talked of; and I hope he will do me the favour to state what he has seen and knows to be the truth."

"Be assured that I will do Mr. Burke justice—as far as it is in my power," said Lord Colambre, restraining himself much, that he might not say more than became his assumed character. He took leave of this worthy family that night, and, early the next morning, departed.

"Ah!" thought he, as he drove away from this well-regulated and flourishing place, "how happy I might be, settled here with such a wife as—— her of whom I must think no more."

He pursued his way to Clonbrony, his father's other estate, which was at a considerable distance from Colambre: he was resolved to know what kind of agent Mr. Nicholas Garraghty might be, who was to supersede Mr. Burke, and, by power of attorney, to be immediately entitled to receive and manage the Colambre as well as the Clonbrony estate.

CHAPTER X.

Towards the evening of the second day's journey, the driver of Lord Colambre's hackney chaise stopped, and jumping off the

wooden bar, on which he had been seated, exclaimed, "We're come to the bad step, now. The bad road's beginning upon us, please your honour."

"Bad road! that is very uncommon in this country. I never saw such fine roads as you have in Ireland."

"That's true; and God bless your honour, that's sensible of that same, for it's not what all the foreign quality I drive have the manners to notice. God bless your honour! I heard you're a Welshman, but whether or no, I am sure you are a jantleman, any way, Welsh or other."

Notwithstanding the shabby great coat, the shrewd postilion perceived, by our hero's language, that he was a gentleman. After much dragging at the horses' heads, and pushing and lifting, the carriage was got over what the postilion said was the worst part of *the bad step;* but as the road "was not yet to say good," he continued walking beside the carriage.

"It's only bad just hereabouts, and that by accident," said he, "on account of there being no jantleman resident in it, nor near; but only a bit of an under-agent, a great little rogue, who gets his own turn out of the roads, and every thing else in life. I, Larry Brady, that am telling your honour, have a good right to know; for myself, and my father, and my brother, Pat Brady, the wheelwright, had once a farm under him; but was ruined, horse and foot, all along with him, and cast out, and my brother forced to fly the country, and is now working in some coach-maker's yard, in London: banished he is!—and here am I, forced to be what I am—and now that I'm reduced to drive a hack, the agent's a curse to me still, with these bad roads, killing my horses and wheels—and a shame to the country, which I think more of—Bad luck to him!"

"I know your brother; he lives with Mr. Mordicai, in Long-Acre, in London."

"Oh, God bless you for that!"

They came at this time within view of a range of about four-and-twenty men and boys, sitting astride on four-and-twenty heaps of broken stones, on each side of the road; they were all armed with hammers, with which they began to pound with great diligence and noise as soon as they saw the carriage. The chaise passed between these batteries, the stones flying on all sides.

"How are you, Jem?—How are you Phil?" said Larry. "But hold your hand, can't ye, while I stop and get the stones out of the horses' *feet*. So you're making up the rent, are you, for St. Dennis?"

"Whoosh!" said one of the pounders, coming close to the postilion, and pointing his thumb back towards the chaise. "Who have you in it?"

"Oh, you need not scruple, he's a very honest man;—he's only a man from North Wales, one Mr. Evans, an innocent jantleman, that's sent over to travel up and down the country, to find is there any copper mines in it."

"How do you know, Larry?"

"Because I know very well, from one that was tould, and I *seen* him tax the man of the King's Head with a copper half-crown at first sight, which was only lead to look at, you'd think, to them that was not skilful in copper. So lend me a knife, till I cut a linchpin out of the hedge, for this one won't go far."

Whilst Larry was making the linchpin, all scruple being removed, his question about St. Dennis and the rent was answered.

"Ay, it's the rint, sure enough, we're pounding out for him; for he sent the driver round last night-was-eight days, to warn us Old Nick would be down a'-Monday, to take a sweep among us; and there's only six clear days, Saturday night, before the assizes, sure: so we must see and get it finished any way, to clear the presentment again' the swearing day, for he and Paddy Hart is the overseers themselves, and Paddy is to swear to it."

"St. Dennis, is it? Then you've one great comfort and security — that he won't be *particular* about the swearing; for since ever he had his head on his shoulders, an oath never stuck in St. Dennis's throat, more than in his own brother, Old Nick's."

"His head upon his shoulders!" repeated Lord Colambre. "Pray, did you ever hear that St. Dennis's head was off his shoulders?"

"It never was, plase your honour, to my knowledge."

"Did you never, among your saints, hear of St. Dennis carrying his head in his hand?" said Lord Colambre.

"The *rael* saint!" said the postilion, suddenly changing his

tone, and looking shocked. "Oh, don't be talking that way of the saints, plase your honour."

"Then of what St. Dennis were you talking just now?—Whom do you mean by St. Dennis, and whom do you call Old Nick?"

"Old Nick," answered the postilion, coming close to the side of the carriage, and whispering,—"Old Nick, plase your honour, is our nickname for one Nicholas Garraghty, Esq., of College-green, Dublin, and St. Dennis is his brother Dennis, who is Old Nick's brother in all things, and would fain be a saint, only he's a sinner. He lives just by here, in the country, under-agent to Lord Clonbrony, as Old Nick is upper-agent—it's only a joke among the people, that are not fond of them at all. Lord Clonbrony himself is a very good jantleman, if he was not an absentee, resident in London, leaving us and every thing to the likes of them."

Lord Colambre listened with all possible composure and attention; but the postilion, having now made his linchpin of wood, and *fixed himself*, he mounted his bar, and drove on, saying to Lord Colambre, as he looked at the road-makers, "Poor *cratures!* They couldn't keep their cattle out of pound, or themselves out of jail, but by making this road."

"Is road-making, then, a very profitable business!—Have road-makers higher wages than other men in this part of the country?"

"It is, and it is not—they have, and they have not—plase your honour."

"I don't understand you."

"No, beca-ase you're an Englishman—that is, a Welshman—I beg your honour's pardon. But I'll tell you how that is, and I'll go slow over these broken stones—for I can't go fast: it is where there's no jantleman over these under-agents, as here, they do as they plase; and when they have set the land they get rasonable from the head landlords, to poor cratures at a rackrent, that they can't live and pay the rent, they say ——"

"Who says?"

"Them under-agents, that have no conscience at all. Not all—but *some*, like Dennis, says, says he, 'I'll get you a road to

make up the rent:' that is, plase your honour, the agent gets them a presentment for so many perches of road from the grand jury, at twice the price that would make the road. And tenants are, by this means, as they take the road by contract, at the price given by the county, able to pay all they get by the job, over and above potatoes and salt, back again to the agent, for the arrear on the land. Do I make your honour *sensible*[1]?"

"You make me much more sensible than I ever was before," said Lord Colambre: "but is not this cheating the county?"

"Well, and suppose," replied Larry, "is not it all for my good, and yours too, plase your honour?" said Larry, looking very shrewdly.

"My good!" said Lord Colambre, startled. "What have I to do with it?"

"Haven't you to do with the roads as well as me, when you're travelling upon them, plase your honour? And sure, they'd never be got made at all, if they wern't made this ways; and it's the best way in the wide world, and the finest roads we have. And when the *rael* jantleman's resident in the country, there's no jobbing can be, because they're then the leading men on the grand jury; and these journeymen jantlemen are then kept in order, and all's right."

Lord Colambre was much surprised at Larry's knowledge of the manner in which county business is managed, as well as by his shrewd good sense: he did not know that this is not uncommon in his rank of life in Ireland.

Whilst Larry was speaking, Lord Colambre was looking from side to side at the desolation of the prospect.

"So this is Lord Clonbrony's estate, is it?"

"Ay, all you see, and as far and farther than you can see. My Lord Clonbrony wrote, and ordered plantations here, time back; and enough was paid to labourers for ditching and planting. And, what next?—Why, what did the under-agent do, but let the goats in through gaps, left o' purpose, to bark the trees, and then the trees was all banished. And next, the cattle was let in trespassing, and winked at, till the land was all poached: and then the land was waste, and cried down: and

[1] Do I make you understand?

Saint Dennis wrote up to Dublin to Old Nick, and he over to the landlord, how none would take it, or bid any thing at all for it: so then it fell to him a cheap bargain. Oh, the tricks of them! who knows 'em, if I don't?"

Presently, Lord Colambre's attention was roused again, by seeing a man running, as if for his life, across a bog, near the road-side: he leaped over the ditch, and was upon the road in an instant. He seemed startled at first, at the sight of the carriage; but, looking at the postilion, Larry nodded, and he smiled and said, "All's safe!"

"Pray, my good friend, may I ask what that is you have on your shoulder?" said Lord Colambre.

"*Plase* your honour, it is only a private still, which I've just caught out yonder in the bog; and I'm carrying it in with all speed to the gauger, to make a discovery, that the jantleman may benefit by the reward: I expect he'll make me a compliment."

"Get up behind, and I'll give you a lift," said the postilion.

"Thank you kindly—but better my legs!" said the man; and, turning down a lane, off he ran again, as fast as possible.

"Expect he'll make me a compliment," repeated Lord Colambre, "to make a discovery!"

"Ay, plase your honour; for the law is," said Larry, "that, if an unlawful still, that is, a still without licence for whiskey, is found, half the benefit of the fine that's put upon the parish goes to him that made the discovery: that's what that man is after; for he's an informer."

"I should not have thought, from what I see of you," said Lord Colambre, smiling, "that you, Larry, would have offered an informer a lift."

"Oh, plase your honour!" said Larry, smiling archly, "would not I give the laws a lift, when in my power?"

Scarcely had he uttered these words, and scarcely was the informer out of sight, when, across the same bog, and over the ditch, came another man, a half kind of gentleman, with a red silk handkerchief about his neck, and a silver-handled whip in his hand.

"Did you see any man pass the road, friend?" said he to the postilion.

who would I see? or why would I tell?" replied Larry
:y tone.
ıe, come, be smart!" said the man with the silver whip,
to put half-a-crown into the postilion's hand; "point me
ay he took."
ıave none o' your silver! don't touch me with it!" said
'But, if you'll take my advice, you'll strike across back,
ıw the fields, out to Killogenesawce."
ɜxciseman set out again immediately, in an opposite
ı to that which the man who carried the still had taken.
ılambre now perceived that the pretended informer had
ıning off to conceal a still of his own.
gauger, plase your honour," said Larry, looking back at
lambre; "the gauger is a *still-hunting!*"
. you put him on a wrong scent!" said Lord Co-

:, I told him no lie: I only said, 'If you'll take my ad-
ınd why was he such a fool as to take my advice, when
ı't take his fee?"
his is the way, Larry, you give a lift to the laws!"
ıe laws would give a lift to me, plase your honour, may
ɔ as much by them. But it's only these revenue laws I
'or I never, to my knowledge, broke another command-
ıut it's what no honest poor man among his neighbours
:ruple to take—a glass of *potsheen.*"
lass of what, in the name of Heaven?" said Lord Co-

heen, plase your honour;—beca-ase it's the little whiskey
ade in the private still or pot; and *sheen,* because it's a
:d for whatsoever we'd like, and for what we have little
vould make much of: after taking the glass of it, no
ıld go and inform to ruin the *cratures;* for they all
n that estate under favour of them that go shares, and
ıt of 'em—but I'd never inform again' 'em. And, after
e truth was known, and my Lord Clonbrony should be
. against, and presented, for it's his neglect is the bottom
ıisance——"
d all the blame is thrown upon this poor Lord Clon-
said Lord Colambre.

"Because he is absent," said Larry: "it would not be so
he *prisint*. But your honour was talking to me about the la
Your honour's a stranger in this country, and astray about th
things. Sure, why would I mind the laws about whiskey, m
than the quality, or the *jidge* on the bench?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why! was not I *prisint* in the court-house myself, when
jidge was on the bench judging a still, and across the co
came in one with a sly jug of *potsheen* for the *jidge* himself, w
prefarred it, when the right thing, to claret; and when I s
that, by the laws! a man might talk himself dumb to me a
again' potsheen, or in favour of the revenue, or revenue offic
And there they may go on, with their gaugers, and their s
veyors, and their supervisors, and their *watching officers*, a
their coursing officers, setting 'em one after another, or one o
the head of another, or what way they will—we can baffle a
laugh at 'em. Didn't I know, next door to our inn, last ye
ten *watching officers* set upon one distiller, and he was
cunning for them; and it will always be so, while ever
people think it no sin. No, till then, not all their dockets a
permits signify a rush, or a turf. And the gauging rod, eve
who fears it? They may spare that rod, for it will never ma
the child."

How much longer Larry's dissertation on the distillery la
would have continued, had not his ideas been interrupted,
cannot guess; but he saw he was coming to a town, and
gathered up the reins, and plied the whip, ambitious to make
figure in the eyes of its inhabitants.

This *town* consisted of one row of miserable huts, sunk bene
the side of the road, the mud walls crooked in every directi
some of them opening in wide cracks, or zigzag fissures, fr
top to bottom, as if there had just been an earthquake—all
roofs sunk in various places—thatch off, or overgrown w
grass—no chimneys, the smoke making its way through a h
in the roof, or rising in clouds from the top of the open door
dunghills before the doors, and green standing puddles—squa
children, with scarcely rags to cover them, gazing at
carriage.

"Nugent's town," said the postilion, "once a snug pla

when my Lady Clonbrony was at home to white-wash it, and the like."

As they drove by, some men and women put their heads through the smoke out of the cabins; pale women, with long, black, or yellow locks—men with countenances and figures bereft of hope and energy.

"Wretched, wretched people!" said Lord Colambre.

"Then it's not their fault, neither," said Larry; "for my uncle's one of them, and as thriving and hard a working man as could be in all Ireland, he was, *afore* he was tramped under foot, and his heart broke. I was at his funeral, this time last year; and for it, may the agent's own heart, if he has any, burn in——"

Lord Colambre interrupted this denunciation by touching Larry's shoulder, and asking some question, which, as Larry did not distinctly comprehend, he pulled up the reins, and the various noises of the vehicle stopped suddenly.

"I did not hear well, plase your honour."

"What are those people?" pointing to a man and woman, curious figures, who had come out of a cabin, the door of which the woman, who came out last, locked, and carefully hiding the key in the thatch, turned her back upon the man, and they walked away in different directions: the woman bending under a huge bundle on her back, covered by a yellow petticoat turned over her shoulders; from the top of this bundle the head of an infant appeared; a little boy, almost naked, followed her with a kettle, and two girls, one of whom could but just walk, held her hand and clung to her ragged petticoat; forming, all together, a complete group of beggars. The woman stopped, and looked after the man.

The man was a Spanish-looking figure, with gray hair; a wallet hung at the end of a stick over one shoulder, a reaping-hook in the other hand: he walked off stoutly, without ever casting a look behind him.

"A kind harvest to you, John Dolan," cried the postilion, "and success to ye, Winny, with the quality. There's a luck-penny for the child to begin with," added he, throwing the child a penny. "Your honour, they're only poor *cratures* going up the country to beg, while the man goes over to reap the

harvest in England. Nor this would not be, neither, if the lord was in it to give 'em *employ*. That man, now, was a good and willing *slave* in his day: I mind him working with myself in the shrubberies at Clonbrony Castle, when I was a boy—but I'll not be detaining your honour, now the road's better."

The postilion drove on at a good rate for some time, till he came to a piece of the road freshly covered with broken stones, where he was obliged again to go slowly.

They overtook a string of cars, on which were piled up high, beds, tables, chairs, trunks, boxes, band-boxes.

"How are you, Finnucan? you've fine loading there—from Dublin, are you?"

"From Bray."

"And what news?"

"*Great* news and bad for Old Nick, or some belonging to him, thanks be to Heaven! for myself hates him."

"What's happened him?"

"His sister's husband that's failed, the great grocer that was, the man that had the wife that *ow'd*[1] the fine house near Bray, that they got that time the parliament *flitted*, and that I seen in her carriage flaming—well, it's all out; they're all *done up*."

"Tut! is that all? then they'll thrive, and set up again grander than ever, I'll engage: have not they Old Nick for an attorney at their back? a good warrant?"

"Oh, trust him for that! he won't *go security*, nor pay a farthing, for his *shister*, nor wouldn't, was she his father; I heard him telling her so, which I could not have done in his place, at that time, and she crying as if her heart would break, and I standing by in the parlour."

"The *neger*[2]! And did he speak that way, and you by?"

"Ay, did he; and said, 'Mrs. Raffarty,' says he, 'it's all your own fault; you're an extravagant fool, and ever was, and I wash my hands of you:' that was the word he spoke; and she answered, and said, 'And mayn't I send the beds and blankets?' said she, 'and what I can, by the cars, out of the way of the creditors, to Clonbrony Castle? and won't you let me hide there, from the shame, till the bustle's over?' 'You may do that,'

[1] Owned. [2] *Neger*, quasi negro; meo periculo, *niggard*.

says he, 'for what I care; but remember,' says he, 'that I've the first claim to them goods;' and that's all he would grant. So they are coming down all o' Monday—them are the band-boxes, and all—to settle it; and faith it was a pity of her! to hear her sobbing, and to see her own brother speak and look so hard! and she a lady."

"Sure, she's not a lady born, no more than himself," said Larry; "but that's no excuse for him. His heart's as hard as that stone," said Larry; "and my own people knew that long ago, and now his own know it: and what right have we to complain, since he's as bad to his own flesh and blood as to us?"

With this consolation, and with a "God speed you," given to the carman, Larry was driving off; but the carman called to him, and pointed to a house, at the corner of which, on a high pole, was swinging an iron sign of three horse-shoes, set in a crooked frame, and at the window hung an empty bottle, proclaiming whiskey within.

"Well, I don't care if I do," said Larry; "for I've no other comfort left me in life now. I beg your honour's pardon, sir, for a minute," added he, throwing the reins into the carriage to Lord Colambre, as he leaped down. All remonstrance and power of lungs to reclaim him were vain! He darted into the whiskey-house with the carman—re-appeared before Lord Colambre could accomplish getting out, remounted his seat, and, taking the reins, "I thank your honour," said he; "and I'll bring you into Clonbrony before it's pitch-dark, though it's nightfall, and that's four good miles, but 'a spur in the head is worth two in the heel.'"

Larry, to demonstrate the truth of his favourite axiom, drove off at such a furious rate over great stones left in the middle of the road by carmen, who had been driving in the gudgeons of their axletrees to hinder them from lacing[3], that Lord Colambre thought life and limb in imminent danger; and feeling that, at all events, the jolting and bumping was past endurance, he had recourse to Larry's shoulder, and shook and pulled, and called to him to go slower, but in vain: at last the wheel struck full against a heap of stones at a turn of the road, the wooden

[3] *Opening;* perhaps, from *lacher*, to loosen.

linchpin came off, and the chaise was overset: Lord Colambre was a little bruised, but glad to escape without fractured bones.

"I beg your honour's pardon," said Larry, completely sobered; "I'm as glad as the best pair of boots ever I see, to see your honour nothing the worse for it. It was the linchpin, and them barrows of loose stones, that ought to be fined any way, if there was any justice in the country."

"The pole is broke; how are we to get on?" said Lord Colambre.

"Murder! murder!—and no smith nearer than Clonbrony; nor rope even. It's a folly to talk, we can't get to Clonbrony, nor stir a step backward or forward the night."

"What, then, do you mean to leave me all night in the middle of the road?" cried Lord Colambre, quite exasperated.

"Is it me? plase your honour. I would not use any jantleman so ill, *barring* I could do no other," replied the postilion, coolly: then, leaping across the ditch, or, as he called it, the *gripe* of the ditch, he scrambled up, and while he was scrambling, said, "If your honour will lend me your hand, till I pull you up the back of the ditch, the horses will stand while we go. I'll find you as pretty a lodging for the night, with a widow of a brother of my shister's husband that was, as ever you slept in your life; for Old Nick or St. Dennis has not found 'em out yet: and your honour will be, no compare, snugger than at the inn at Clonbrony, which has no roof, the devil a stick. But where will I get your honour's hand; for it's coming on so dark, I can't see rightly. There, you're up now safe. Yonder candle's the house."

"Go and ask whether they can give us a night's lodging."

"Is it *ask?* when I see the light!—Sure they'd be proud to give the traveller all the beds in the house, let alone one. Take care of the potatoe furrows, that's all, and follow me straight. I'll go on to meet the dog, who knows me, and might be strange to your honour."

"Kindly welcome," were the first words Lord Colambre heard when he approached the cottage; and "kindly welcome" was in the sound of the voice and in the countenance of the old woman who came out, shading her rush-candle from the wind, and

holding it so as to light the path. When he entered the cottage, he saw a cheerful fire and a neat pretty young woman making it blaze; she curtsied, put her spinning-wheel out of the way, set a stool by the fire for the stranger, and repeating, in a very low tone of voice, "Kindly welcome, sir," retired.

"Put down some eggs, dear, there's plenty in the bowl," said the old woman, calling to her; "I'll do the bacon. Was not we lucky to be up?—The boy's gone to bed, but waken him," said she, turning to the postilion; "and he'll help you with the chay, and put your horses in the bier for the night."

No: Larry chose to go on to Clonbrony with the horses, that he might get the chaise mended betimes for his honour. The table was set; clean trenchers, hot potatoes, milk, eggs, bacon, and "kindly welcome to all."

"Set the salt, dear; and the butter, love: where's your head, Grace, dear."

"Grace!" repeated Lord Colambre, looking up: and, to apologize for his involuntary exclamation, he added, "Is Grace a common name in Ireland?"

"I can't say, plase your honour; but it was give her by Lady Clonbrony, from a niece of her own, God bless her! and a very kind lady she was to us and to all when she was living in it; but those times are gone past," said the old woman, with a sigh. The young woman sighed too; and, sitting down by the fire, began to count the notches in a little bit of stick, which she held in her hand; and after she had counted them, sighed again.

"But don't be sighing, Grace, now," said the old woman; "sighs is bad sauce for the traveller's supper; and we won't be troubling him with more," added she, turning to Lord Colambre with a smile.

"Is your egg done to your liking?"

"Perfectly, thank you."

"Then I wish it was a chicken, for your sake, which it should have been, and roast too, had we time. I wish I could see you eat another egg."

"No more, thank you, my good lady; I never ate a better supper, nor received a more hospitable welcome."

"Oh, the welcome is all we have to offer."

"May I ask what that is?" said Lord Colambre, looking at the notched stick, which the young woman held in her hand, and on which her eyes were still fixed.

"It's a *tally*, plase your honour. Oh, you're a foreigner;—it's the way the labourers do keep the account of the day's work with the overseer, the bailiff; a notch for every day the bailiff makes on his stick, and the labourer the like on his stick, to tally; and when we come to make up the account, it's by the notches we go. And there's been a mistake, and is a dispute here between our boy and the overseer: and she was counting the boy's tally, that's in bed, tired, for in truth he's overworked."

"Would you want any thing more from me, mother?" said the girl, rising and turning her head away.

"No, child; get away, for your heart's full."

She went instantly.

"Is the boy her brother?" said Lord Colambre.

"No; he's her bachelor," said the old woman, lowering her voice.

"Her bachelor?"

"That is, her sweetheart: for she is not my daughter, though you heard her call me mother. The boy's my son; but I am *afeard* they must give it up; for they're too poor, and the times is hard, and the agent's harder than the times: there's two of them, the under and the upper; and they grind the substance of one between them, and then blow one away like chaff; but we'll not be talking of that, to spoil your honour's night's rest. The room's ready, and here's the rushlight."

She showed him into a very small but neat room.

"What a comfortable-looking bed!" said Lord Colambre.

"Ah, these red check curtains," said she, letting them down; "these have lasted well: they were give me by a good friend, now far away, over the seas—my Lady Clonbrony; and made by the prettiest hands ever you see, her niece's, Miss Grace Nugent's, and she a little child that time; sweet love! all gone!"

The old woman wiped a tear from her eye, and Lord Colambre did what he could to appear indifferent. She set down the

candle, and left the room; Lord Colambre went to bed, but he lay awake,

"Revolving sweet and bitter thoughts."

CHAPTER XI.

The kettle was on the fire, tea-things set, every thing prepared for her guest by the hospitable hostess, who thinking the gentleman would take tea to his breakfast, had sent off a *gossoon* by the *first light* to Clonbrony, for an ounce of tea, a *quarter of sugar*, and a loaf of white bread; and there was on the little table good cream, milk, butter, eggs—all the promise of an excellent breakfast. It was a *fresh* morning, and there was a pleasant fire on the hearth, neatly swept up. The old woman was sitting in her chimney corner, behind a little skreen of whitewashed wall, built out into the room, for the purpose of keeping those who sat at the fire from the *blast of the door*. There was a loop-hole in this wall, to let the light in, just at the height of a person's head, who was sitting near the chimney. The rays of the morning sun now came through it, shining across the face of the old woman, as she sat knitting: Lord Colambre thought he had seldom seen a more agreeable countenance, intelligent eyes, benevolent smile, a natural expression of cheerfulness, subdued by age and misfortune.

"A good morrow to you kindly, sir, and I hope you got the night well?—A fine day for us this holyday morning; my Grace is gone to early prayers, so your honour will be content with an old woman to make your tea. Oh, let me put in plenty of tea, or it will never be good; and if your honour takes stirabout, an old hand will engage to make that to your liking, any way; for by great happiness, we have what will just answer for you of the nicest meal the miller made my Grace a compliment of, last time she went to the mill."

Lord Colambre observed, that this miller had good taste; and his lordship paid some compliment to Grace's beauty, which

the old woman received with a smile, but turned off the conversation.

"Then," said she, looking out of the window, "is not that there a nice little garden the boy dug for her and me, at his breakfast and dinner hours? Ah! he's a good boy, and good warrant to work; and the good son *desarves* the good wife, and it's he that will make the good husband; and with my good-will he, and no other, shall get her, and with her good-will the same; and I bid 'em keep up their heart, and hope the best, for there's no use in fearing the worst till it comes."

Lord Colambre wished very much to know the worst. "If you would not think a stranger impertinent for asking," said he, "and if it would not be painful to you to explain."

"Oh, impertinent, your honour! it's very kind—and, sure, none's a stranger to one's heart, that feels for one. And for myself, I can talk of my troubles without thinking of them. So, I'll tell you all—if the worst comes to the worst—all that is, is, that we must quit, and give up this little snug place, and house, and farm, and all, to the agent—which would be hard on us, and me a widow, when my husband did all that is done to the land; and if your honour was a judge, you could see, if you stepped out, there has been a deal done, and built the house, and all—but it plased Heaven to take him. Well, he was too good for this world, and I'm satisfied—I'm not saying a word again' that—I trust we shall meet in heaven, and be happy, surely. And, meantime, here's my boy, that will make me as happy as ever widow was on earth—if the agent will let him. And I can't think the agent, though they that know him best call him Old Nick, would be so wicked to take from us that which he never gave us. The good lord himself granted us the *lase*; the life's dropped, and the years is out; but we had a promise of renewal in writing from the landlord. God bless him! if he was not away, he'd be a good gentleman, and we'd be happy and safe."

"But if you have a promise in writing of a renewal, surely you are safe, whether your landlord is absent or present."

"Ah, no! that makes a great *differ*, when there's no eye or hand over the agent. I would not wish to speak or think ill of him or any man; but was he an angel, he could not know to do

the tenantry justice, the way he is living always in Dublin, and coming down to the country only the receiving days, to make a sweep among us, and gather up the rents in a hurry, and he in such haste back to town—can just stay to count over our money, and give the receipts. Happy for us if we get that same!—but can't expect he should have time to see or hear us, or mind our improvements, any more than listen to our complaints! Oh, there's great excuse for the gentleman, if that was any comfort for us," added she, smiling.

"But, if he does not live amongst you himself, has not he some under agent, who lives in the country?" said Lord Colambre.

"He has so."

"And he should know your concerns: does he mind them?"

"He should know—he should know better; but as to minding our concerns, your honour knows," continued she, smiling again, "every one in this world must mind their own concerns: and it would be a good world, if it was even so. There's a great deal in all things, that don't appear at first sight. Mr. Dennis wanted Grace for a wife for his bailiff, but she would not have him; and Mr. Dennis was very sweet to her himself—but Grace is rather high with him as proper, and he has a grudge *again'* us ever since. Yet, indeed, there," added she, after another pause, "as you say, I think we are safe; for we have that memorandum in writing, with a pencil, given under his own hand, on the back of the *lase* to me, by the same token when my good lord had his foot on the step of the coach, going away; and I'll never forget the smile of her that got that good turn done for me, Miss Grace. And just when she was going to England and London, and, young as she was, to have the thought to stop and turn to the likes of me! Oh, then, if you could see her, and know her, as I did! *That* was the comforting angel upon earth—look, and voice, and heart, and all! Oh, that she was here present, this minute!—But did you scald yourself?" said the widow to Lord Colambre. "Sure you must have scalded yourself; for you poured the kettle straight over your hand, and it boiling!—O *deear;* to think of so young a gentleman's hand shaking so like my own."

Luckily, to prevent her pursuing her observations from the

hand to the face, which might have betrayed more than Lord Colambre wished she should know, her own Grace came in at this instant—"There it's for you, safe, mother dear—the *lase*!" said Grace, throwing a packet into her lap. The old woman lifted up her hands to heaven, with the lease between them—"Thanks be to Heaven!" Grace passed on, and sunk down on the first seat she could reach. Her face flushed, and, looking much fatigued, she loosened the strings of her bonnet and cloak—"Then, I'm tired;" but, recollecting herself, she rose, and curtsied to the gentleman.

"What tired ye, dear?"

"Why, after prayers, we had to go—for the agent was not at prayers, nor at home for us, when we called—we had to go all the way up to the castle; and there, by great good luck, we found Mr. Nick Garraghty himself, come from Dublin, and the *lase* in his hands; and he sealed it up that way, and handed it to me very civil. I never saw him so good—though he offered me a glass of spirits, which was not manners to a decent young woman, in a morning—as Brian noticed after. Brian would not take any either, nor never does. We met Mr. Dennis and the driver coming home; and he says, the rent must be paid to-morrow, or, instead of renewing, he'll seize, and sell all. Mother dear, I would have dropped with the walk, but for Brian's arm."

"It's a wonder, dear, what makes you so weak, that used to be so strong."

"But if we can sell the cow for any thing at all to Mr. Dennis, since his eye is set upon her, better let him have her mother, dear; and that and my yarn, which Mrs. Garraghty says she'll allow me for, will make up the rent—and Brian need not talk of America. But it must be in golden guineas, the agent will take the rent no other way; and you won't get a guinea for less than five shillings. Well, even so, it's easy selling my new gown to one that covets it, and that will give me in exchange the price of the gold; or, suppose that would not do, add this cloak—it's handsome, and I know a friend would be glad to take it, and I'd part it as ready as look at it—Any thing at all, sure, rather than that he should be forced to talk of emigrating: or, oh, worse again, listing for the bounty—

to save us from the cant or the jail, by going to the hospital, or his grave, may be—oh, mother!"

"Oh, child! This is what makes you weak, fretting. Don't be that way. Sure here's the *lase*, and that's good comfort; and the soldiers will be gone out of Clonbrony to-morrow, and then that's off your mind. And as to America, it's only talk—I won't let him, he's dutiful; and would sooner sell my dresser, and down to my bed, dear, than see you sell any thing of yours, love. Promise me you won't. Why didn't Brian come home all the way with you, Grace?"

"He would have seen me home," said Grace, "only that he went up a piece of the mountain for some stones or ore for the gentleman,—for he had the manners to think of him this morning, though, shame for me, I had not, when I come in, or I would not have told you all this, and he by. See, there *he* is, mother."

Brian came in very hot, out of breath, with his hat full of stones. "Good morrow to your honour. I was in bed last night; and sorry they did not call me up to be of *sarvice*. Larry was telling us, this morning, your honour's from Wales, and looking for mines in Ireland, and I heard talk that there was one on our mountain—may be, you'd be *curous* to see, and so I brought the best I could, but I'm no judge."

"Nor I, neither," thought Lord Colambre; but he thanked the young man, and determined to avail himself of Larry's misconception of false report; examined the stones very gravely, and said, "This promises well. Lapis caliminaris, schist, plum-pudding stone, rhomboidal, crystal, blend, garrawachy," and all the strange names he could think of, jumbling them together at a venture.

"The *lase!*" cried the young man, with joy sparkling in his eyes, as his mother held up the packet. "Lend me the papers."

He cracked the seals, and taking off the cover—"Ay, I know it's the *lase* sure enough. But stay, where's the memorandum?"

"It's there, sure," said his mother, "where my lord's pencil writ it. I don't read. Grace, dear, look."

The young man put it into her hands, and stood withou
power to utter a syllable.

"It's not here! It's gone!—no sign of it."

"Gracious Heaven! that can't be," said the old woman
putting on her spectacles; "let me see,—I remember the ver
spot."

"It's taken away—it's rubbed clean out!—Oh, wasn't I fool?—
But who could have thought he'd be the villain!"

The young man seemed neither to see nor hear, but to be ab
sorbed in thought. Grace, with her eyes fixed upon him, grew
as pale as death.—"He'll go—he's gone."

"She's gone!" cried Lord Colambre, and the mother just
caught her in her arms as she was falling.

"The chaise is ready, plase your honour," said Larry, coming
into the room. "Death! what's here?"

"Air!—she's coming to," said the young man—"Take a
drop of water, my own Grace."

"Young man, I promise you," cried Lord Colambre, (speak-
ing in the tone of a master,) striking the young man's shoulder
who was kneeling at Grace's feet, but recollecting and restraining
himself, he added, in a quiet voice—"I promise you I shal
never forget the hospitality I have received in this house, and I
am sorry to be obliged to leave you in distress."

These words uttered with difficulty, he hurried out of the
house, and into his carriage. "Go back to them," said he to
the postilion: "go back and ask whether, if I should stay a day
or two longer in this country, they would let me return at nigh
and lodge with them. And here, man, stay, take this," putting
money into his hands, "for the good woman of the house."

The postilion went in, and returned.

"She won't at all—I knew she would not."

"Well, I am obliged to her for the night's lodging she did
give me; I have no right to expect more."

"What is it?—Sure she bid me tell you,—'and welcome to
the lodging; for,' said she, 'he's a kind-hearted gentleman;' but
here's the money; it's that I was telling you she would not
have at all."

"Thank you. Now, my good friend, Larry, drive me to

Clonbrony, and do not say another word, for I'm not in a talking humour."

Larry nodded, mounted, and drove to Clonbrony. Clonbrony was now a melancholy scene. The houses, which had been built in a better style of architecture than usual, were in a ruinous condition; the dashing was off the walls, no glass in the windows, and many of the roofs without slates. For the stillness of the place Lord Colambre in some measure accounted, by considering that it was holiday; therefore, of course, all the shops were shut up, and all the people at prayers. He alighted at the inn, which completely answered Larry's representation of it. Nobody to be seen but a drunken waiter, who, as well as he could articulate, informed Lord Colambre, that "his mistress was in her bed since Thursday-was-a-week; the hostler at the *wash-woman's*, and the cook at second prayers."

Lord Colambre walked to the church, but the church gate was locked and broken—a calf, two pigs, and an ass, in the churchyard; and several boys (with more of skin apparent than clothes) were playing at pitch and toss upon a tombstone, which, upon nearer observation, he saw was the monument of his own family. One of the boys came to the gate, and told Lord Colambre, "There was no use in going into the church, because there was no church there; nor had not been this twelvemonth; beca-ase there was no curate: and the parson was away always, since the lord was at home—that is, was not at home—he nor the family."

Lord Colambre returned to the inn, where, after waiting a considerable time, he gave up the point—he could not get any dinner—and in the evening he walked out again into the town. He found several public-houses, however, open, which were full of people; all of them as busy and as noisy as possible. He observed that the interest was created by an advertisement of several farms on the Clonbrony estate, to be set by Nicholas Garraghty, Esq. He could not help smiling at his being witness *incognito* to various schemes for outwitting the agents, and defrauding the landlord; but, on a sudden, the scene was changed; a boy ran in, crying out, that "St. Dennis was riding down the hill into the town; and, if you would not have the licence," said the boy, "take care of yourself, Brannagan." "*If you wouldn't*

have the licence," Lord Colambre perceived, by what followed, meant, "*If you have not a licence.*" Brannagan immediately snatched an untasted glass of whiskey from a customer's lips (who cried, murder!), gave it and the bottle he held in his hand to his wife, who swallowed the spirits, and ran away with the bottle and glass into some back hole; whilst the bystanders laughed, saying, "Well thought of, Peggy!"

"Clear out all of you at the back door, for the love of Heaven, if you wouldn't be the ruin of me," said the man of the house, setting a ladder to a corner of the shop. "Phil, hoist me up the keg to the loft," added he, running up the ladder; "and one of *yees* step up street, and give Rose M'Givney notice, for she's selling, too."

The keg was hoisted up; the ladder removed; the shop cleared of all the customers; the shutters shut; the door barred; the counter cleaned.

"Lift your stones, sir, if you plase," said the wife, as she rubbed the counter, "and say nothing of what you *seen* at all; but that you're a stranger and a traveller seeking a lodging, if you're questioned, or waiting to see Mr. Dennis. There's no smell of whiskey in it now, is there, sir?"

Lord Colambre could not flatter her so far as to say this—he could only hope no one would perceive it.

"Oh, and if he would, the smell of whiskey was nothing," as the wife affirmed, "for it was every where in nature, and no proof again' any one, good or bad."

"Now, St. Dennis may come when he will, or Old Nick himself!" So she tied up a blue handkerchief over her head, and had the toothache "very bad."

Lord Colambre turned to look for the man of the house.

"He's safe in bed," said the wife.

"In bed! When?"

"Whilst you turned your head, while I was tying the handkerchief over my face. Within the room, look, he is snug."

And there he was in bed certainly, and his clothes on the chest.

A knock, a loud knock at the door.

"St. Dennis himself!—Stay, till I unbar the door," said the woman; and, making a great difficulty, she let him in, groaning

and saying. "We was all done up for the night, *plase* your honour, and myself with the toothache, very bad—And the lodger, that's going to take an egg only, before he'd go into his bed. My man's in it, and asleep long ago."

With a magisterial air, though with a look of blank disappointment, Mr. Dennis Garraghty walked on, looked into *the room*, saw the good man of the house asleep, heard him snore, and then, returning, asked Lord Colambre, "who he was, and what brought him there?"

Our hero said, he was from England, and a traveller; and now, bolder grown as a geologist, he talked of his specimens, and his hopes of finding a mine in the neighbouring mountains; then adopting, as well as he could, the servile tone and abject manner, in which he found Mr. Dennis was to be addressed, "he hoped he might get encouragement from the gentlemen at the head of the estate."

"To bore, is it?—Well, don't *bore* me about it. I can't give you any answer now, my good friend; I am engaged."

Out he strutted. "Stick to him up the town, if you have a mind to get your answer," whispered the woman. Lord Colambre followed, for he wished to see the end of this scene.

"Well, sir, what are you following and sticking to me, like my shadow, for?" said Mr. Dennis, turning suddenly upon Lord Colambre.

His lordship bowed low. "Waiting for my answer, sir, when you are at leisure. Or, may I call upon you to-morrow?"

"You seem to be a civil kind of fellow; but, as to boring, I don't know—if you undertake it at your own expense. I dare say there may be minerals in the ground. Well, you may call at the castle to-morrow, and when my brother has done with the tenantry, I'll speak to him *for* you, and we'll consult together, and see what we think. It's too late to-night. In Ireland, nobody speaks to a gentleman about business after dinner,—your servant, sir; any body can show you the way to the castle in the morning." And, pushing by his lordship, he called to a man on the other side of the street, who had obviously been waiting for him; he went under a gateway with this man, and gave him a bag of guineas. He then called for his horse, which was brought to him by a man whom Lord Colambre had heard

declaring that he would bid for the land that was advertised; whilst another, who had the same intentions, most respectfully held his stirrup, whilst he mounted without thanking either of these men. St. Dennis clapped spurs to his steed, and rode away. No thanks, indeed, were deserved; for the moment he was out of hearing, both cursed him after the manner of their country.

"Bad luck go with you, then!—And may you break your neck before you get home, if it was not for the *lase* I'm to get, and that's paid for."

Lord Colambre followed the crowd into a public-house, where a new scene presented itself to his view.

The man to whom St. Dennis gave the bag of gold was now selling this very gold to the tenants, who were to pay their rent next day at the castle.

The agent would take nothing but gold. The same guineas were bought and sold several times over, to the great profit of the agent and loss of the poor tenants; for as the rents were paid, the guineas were resold to another set: and the remittances made through bankers to the landlord, who, as the poor man that explained the transaction to Lord Colambre expressed it, "gained nothing by the business, bad or good, but the ill-will of the tenantry."

The higgling for the price of the gold; the time lost in disputing about the goodness of the notes, among some poor tenants, who could not read or write, and who were at the mercy of the man with the bag in his hand; the vexation, the useless harassing of all who were obliged to submit ultimately—Lord Colambre saw: and all this time he endured the smell of tobacco and whiskey, and the sound of various brogues, the din of men wrangling, brawling, threatening, whining, drawling, cajoling, cursing, and every variety of wretchedness.

"And is this my father's town of Clonbrony?" thought Lord Colambre. "Is this Ireland? No, it is not Ireland. Let me not, like most of those who forsake their native country, traduce it. Let me not, even to my own mind, commit the injustice of taking a speck for the whole. What I have just seen is the picture only of that to which an Irish estate and Irish tenantry may be degraded in the absence of those whose duty and inte-

rest it is to reside in Ireland, to uphold justice by example and authority; but who, neglecting this duty, commit power to bad hands and bad hearts—abandon their tenantry to oppression, and their property to ruin."

It was now fine moonlight, and Lord Colambre met with a boy, who said he could show him a short way across the fields to the widow O'Neil's cottage.

CHAPTER XII.

All were asleep at the cottage, when Lord Colambre arrived, except the widow, who was sitting up, waiting for him; and who had brought her dog into the house, that he might not fly at him, or bark at his return. She had a roast chicken ready for her guest, and it was—but this she never told him—the only chicken she had left; all the others had been sent with the *duty fowl*, as a present to the under-agent's lady. While he was eating his supper, which he ate with the better appetite, as he had had no dinner, the good woman took down from the shelf a pocket-book, which she gave him: "Is not that your book?" said she. "My boy Brian found it after you in the potatoe furrow, where you dropped it."

"Thank you," said Lord Colambre; "there are bank notes in it, which I could not afford to lose."

"Are there?" said she: "he never opened it—nor I."

Then, in answer to his inquiries about Grace and the young man, the widow answered, "They are all in heart now, I thank e kindly, sir, for asking; they'll sleep easy to-night, any way, nd I'm in great spirits for them and myself—for all's smooth ow. After we parted you, Brian saw Mr. Dennis himself bout the *lase* and memorandum, which he never denied, but new nothing about. 'But, be that as it may,' says he, 'you're nproving tenants, and I'm confident my brother will consider ; so what you'll do is, you'll give up the possession to-morrow myself, that will call for it by cock-crow, just for form's sake; d then go up to the castle with the new *lase* ready drawn, in

your hand, and if all's paid off clear of the rent, and all that's due, you'll get the new *lase* signed: I'll promise you this upon the word and honour of a gentleman.' And there's no going beyond that, you know, sir. So my boy came home as light as a feather, and as gay as a lark, to bring us the good news; only he was afraid we might not make up the rent, guineas and all; and because he could not get paid for the work he done, on account of the mistake in the overseer's tally, I sold the cow to a neighbour, dog-cheap; but needs must, as they say, when Old Nick *drives*," said the widow, smiling. "Well, still it was but paper we got for the cow; then that must be gold before the agent would take or touch it—so I was laying out to sell the dresser, and had taken the plates and cups, and little things off it, and my boy was lifting it out with Andy the carpenter, that was agreeing for it, when in comes Grace, all rosy and out of breath—it's a wonder I never minded her run out, nor ever missed her. 'Mother,' says she, 'here's the gold for you; don't be stirring your dresser.'—'And where's your gown and cloak, Grace?' says I. But, I beg your pardon, sir; may be, I'm tiring you?"

Lord Colambre encouraged her to go on.

"'Where's your gown and cloak, Grace?' says I. 'Gone,' says she. 'The cloak was too warm and heavy, and I don' doubt, mother, but it was that helped to make me faint this morning. And as to the gown, sure I've a very nice one here, that you spun for me, yourself, mother; and that I prize above all the gowns ever came out of a loom; and that Brian said become me to his fancy above any gown ever he see me wear; and what could I wish for more?' Now I'd a mind to scold her for going to sell the gown unknown'st to me, but I don't know how it was, I couldn't scold her just then, so kissed her, and Brian the same, and that was what no man ever did before. And she had a mind to be angry with him, but could not, nor ought not, says I, 'for he's as good as your husband now, Grace; and no man can part yees now,' says I, putting their hands together. Well, I never saw her look so pretty; nor there was not a happier boy that minute on God's earth than my son, nor a happier mother than myself; and I thanked God, that had given them to me; and down they both fell on their

knees for my blessing, little worth as it was; and my heart's blessing they had, and I laid my hands upon them. 'It's the priest you must get to do this for you to-morrow,' says I. And Brian just held up the ring, to show me all was ready on his part, but could not speak. 'Then there's no America between us any more!' said Grace, low to me, and her heart was on her lips; but the colour came and went, and I was *afeard* she'd have swooned again, but not for sorrow, so I carried her off. Well, if she was not my own—but she is not my own born, so I may say it—there never was a better girl, not a more kind-hearted, nor generous; never thinking any thing she could do, or give, too much for them she loved, and any thing at all would do for herself; the sweetest natured and tempered both, and always was, from this high; the bond that held all together, and joy of the house."

"Just like her namesake," cried Lord Colambre.

"Plase your honour!"

"Is not it late?" said Lord Colambre, stretching himself and gaping; "I've walked a great way to-day."

The old woman lighted his rushlight, showed him to his red check bed, and wished him a very good night; not without some slight sentiment of displeasure at his gaping thus at the panegyric on her darling Grace. Before she left the room, however, her short-lived resentment vanished, upon his saying, that he hoped, with her permission, to be present at the wedding of the young couple.

Early in the morning Brian went to the priest, to ask his reverence when it would be convenient to marry him; and whilst he was gone, Mr. Dennis Garraghty came to the cottage, to receive the rent and possession. The rent was ready, in gold, and counted into his hand.

"No occasion for a receipt; for a new *lase* is a receipt in full for every thing."

"Very well, sir," said the widow; "I know nothing of law. You know best—whatever you direct—for you are acting as a friend to us now. My son got the attorney to draw the pair of new *lases* yesterday, and here they are ready, all to signing."

Mr. Dennis said, his brother must settle that part of the busi-

ness, and that they must carry them up to the castle; "but first give me the possession."

Then, as he instructed her, she gave up the key of the door to him, and a bit of the thatch of the house; and he raked out the fire, and said every living creature must go out. "It's only form of law," said he.

"And must my lodger get up, and turn out, sir?" said she.

"He must turn out, to be sure—not a living soul must be left in it, or it's no legal possession, properly. Who is your lodger?"

On Lord Colambre's appearing, Mr. Dennis showed some surprise, and said, "I thought you were lodging at Brannagan's; are not you the man who spoke to me at his house about the gold mines?"

"No, sir, he never lodged at Brannagan's," said the widow.

"Yes, sir, I am the person who spoke to you about the gold mines at Brannagan's; but I did not like to lodge——"

"Well, no matter where you liked to lodge; you must walk out of this lodging now, if you please, my good friend."

So Mr. Dennis pushed his lordship out by the shoulders, repeating, as the widow turned back, and looked with some surprise and alarm, "only for form sake, only for form sake!" then locking the door, took the key, and put it into his pocket. The widow held out her hand for it: "The form's gone through now, sir; is not it? Be plased to let us in again."

"When the new lease is signed, I'll give you possession again; but not till then—for that's the law. So make away with you to the castle; and mind," added he, winking slily, "mind you take sealing-money with you, and something to buy gloves."

"Oh, where will I find all that?" said the widow.

"I have it, mother; don't fret," said Grace. "I have it—the price of—what I can want[1]. So let us go off to the castle without delay. Brian will meet us on the road, you know."

"They set off for Clonbrony Castle, Lord Colambre accompanying them. Brian met them on the road. "Father Tom is

[1] What I can do without.

eady, dear mother; bring her in, and he'll marry us. I'm not ay own man till she's mine. Who knows what may happen?"

"Who knows? that's true," said the widow.

"Better go to the castle first," said Grace.

"And keep the priest waiting! You can't use his reverence o," said Brian.

So she let him lead her into the priest's house, and she did not aake any of the awkward draggings back, or ridiculous scenes f grimace sometimes exhibited on these occasions; but blushng rosy red, yet with more self-possession than could have been xpected from her timid nature, she gave her hand to the man he loved, and listened with attentive devotion to the holy eremony.

"Ah!" thought Lord Colambre, whilst he congratulated the ride, "shall I ever be as happy as these poor people are at this noment?" He longed to make them some little present, but ll he could venture at this moment was to pay the priest's dues.

The priest positively refused to take any thing.

"They are the best couple in my parish," said he; "and I'll ake nothing, sir, from you, a stranger and my guest."

"Now, come what will, I'm a match for it. No trouble can ouch me," said Brian.

"Oh, don't be bragging," said the widow.

"Whatever trouble God sends, he has given one now will help to bear it, and sure I may be thankful," said Grace.

"Such good hearts must be happy,—shall be happy!" said Lord Colambre.

"Oh, you're very kind," said the widow, smiling; "and I wouldn't doubt you, if you had the power. I hope, then, the agent will give you encouragement about them mines, that we may keep you among us."

"I am determined to settle among you, warm-hearted, generous people!" cried Lord Colambre; "whether the agent gives me encouragement or not," added he.

It was a long walk to Clonbrony Castle; the old woman, as she said herself, would not have been able for it, but for a *lift* given to her by a friendly carman, whom she overtook on the road with an empty car. This carman was Finnucan, who dissipated Lord Colambre's fears of meeting and being recognized by Mrs.

Raffarty; for he, in answer to the question of "Who is at the castle?" replied, "Mrs. Raffarty will be in it afore night; but she's on the road still. There's none but Old Nick in it yet; and he's more of a *neger* than ever; for think, that he would not pay me a farthing for the carriage of his *shister's* boxes and band-boxes down. If you're going to have any dealings with him, God grant ye a safe deliverance!"

"Amen!" said the widow, and her son and daughter.

Lord Colambre's attention was now engaged by the view of the castle and park of Clonbrony. He had not seen it since he was six years old. Some faint reminiscence from his childhood made him feel or fancy that he knew the place. It was a fine castle, spacious park; but all about it, from the broken piers at the great entrance, to the mossy gravel and loose steps at the hall-door, had an air of desertion and melancholy. Walks overgrown, shrubberies wild, plantations run up into bare poles; fine trees cut down, and lying on the ground in lots to be sold. A hill that had been covered with an oak wood, where in his childhood our hero used to play, and which he called the black forest, was gone; nothing to be seen but the white stumps of the trees, for it had been freshly cut down, to make up the last remittances.—"And how it went, when sold!—but no matter," said Finnucan; "it's all alike.—It's the back way into the yard, I'll take you, I suppose."

"And such a yard! but it's no matter," repeated Lord Colambre to himself; "it's all alike."

In the kitchen, a great dinner was dressing for Mr. Garraghty's friends, who were to make merry with him when the business of the day was over.

"Where's the keys of the cellar, till I get out the claret for after dinner," says one; "and the wine for the cook—sure there's venison," cries another.—"Venison!—That's the way my lord's deer goes," says a third, laughing.—"Ay, sure! and very proper, when he's not here to eat 'em."—"Keep your nose out of the kitchen, young man, if you *plase*," said the agent's cook, shutting the door in Lord Colambre's face. "There's the way to the office, if you've money to pay, up the back stairs."

"No; up the grand staircase they must,—Mr. Garraghty ordered," said the footman; "because the office is damp for him,

and it's not there he'll see any body to-day; but in my lady's dressing-room."

So up the grand staircase they went, and through the magnificent apartments, hung with pictures of great value, spoiling with damp.

"Then, isn't it a pity to see them? There's my lady, and all spoiling," said the widow.

Lord Colambre stopped before a portrait of Miss Nugent— "Shamefully damaged!" cried he.

"Pass on, or let me pass, if you *plase*," said one of the tenants; "and don't be stopping the door-way."

"I have business more nor you with the agent," said the surveyor; "where is he?"

"In the *presence-chamber*," replied another: "Where should the viceroy be but in the *presence-chamber?*"

There was a full levee, and fine smell of great coats.—"Oh! would you put your hats on the silk cushions?" said the widow to some men in the doorway, who were throwing off their greasy hats on a damask sofa.

"Why not? where else?"

"If the lady was in it, you wouldn't," said she, sighing.

"No, to be sure, I wouldn't: great news! would I make no *differ* in the presence of Old Nick and my lady?" said he, in Irish. "Have I no sense or manners, good woman, think ye?" added he, as he shook the ink out of the pen on the Wilton carpet, when he had finished signing his name to a paper on his knee.

"You may wait long before you get to the speech of the great man," said another, who was working his way through numbers.

They continued pushing forward, till they came within sight of Mr. Nicholas Garraghty, seated in state; and a worse countenance, or a more perfect picture of an insolent, petty tyrant in office, Lord Colambre had never beheld.

We forbear all further detail of this levee. "It's all the same!" as Lord Colambre repeated to himself, on every fresh instance of roguery or oppression to which he was witness; and having completely made up his mind on the subject, he sat down quietly in the back-ground, waiting till it should come to the widow's turn to be dealt with, for he was now interested only to

see how she would be treated. The room gradually thinned: Mr. Dennis Garraghty came in, and sat down at the table, to help his brother to count the heaps of gold.

"Oh, Mr. Dennis, I'm glad to see you as kind as your promise, meeting me here," said the widow O'Neil, walking up to him; "I'm sure you'll speak a good word for me: here's the *lases*—who will I offer this to?" said she, holding the *glove-money* and *sealing-money*, "for I'm strange and ashamed."

"Oh, don't be ashamed—there's no strangeness in bringing money or taking it," said Mr. Nicholas Garraghty, holding out his hand. "Is this the proper compliment?"

"I hope so, sir: your honour knows best."

"Very well," slipping it into his private purse. "Now what's your business?"

"The *lases* to sign—the rent's all paid up."

"Leases! Why, woman, is the possession given up?"

"It was, *plase* your honour; and Mr. Dennis has the key of our little place in his pocket."

"Then I hope he'll keep it there. *Your* little place—it's no longer yours; I've promised it to the surveyor. You don't think I'm such a fool as to renew to you at this rent."

"Mr. Dennis named the rent. But any thing your honour *plases*—any thing at all that we can pay."

"Oh, it's out of the question—put it out of your head. No rent you can offer would do, for I have promised it to the surveyor."

"Sir, Mr. Dennis knows my lord gave us his promise in writing of a renewal, on the back of the *ould lase*."

"Produce it."

"Here's the *lase*, but the promise is rubbed out."

"Nonsense! coming to me with a promise that's rubbed out. Who'll listen to that in a court of justice, do you think?"

"I don't know, plase your honour; but this I'm sure of, my lord and Miss Nugent, though but a child at the time, God bless her! who was by when my lord wrote it with his pencil, will remember it."

"Miss Nugent! what can she know of business?—What has she to do with the management of my Lord Clonbrony's estate, pray?"

"Management!—no, sir."

"Do you wish to get Miss Nugent turned out of the house?"

"Oh, God forbid!—how could that be?"

"Very easily; if you set about to make her meddle and witness in what my lord does not choose."

"Well, then, I'll never mention Miss Nugent's name in it at all, if it was ever so with me. But be *plased*, sir, to write over to my lord, and ask him; I'm sure he'll remember it."

"Write to my lord about such a trifle—trouble him about such nonsense!"

"I'd be sorry to trouble him. Then take it on my word, and believe me, sir; for I would not tell a lie, nor cheat rich or poor, if in my power, for the whole estate, nor the whole world: for there's an eye above."

"Cant! nonsense!—Take those leases off the table; I never will sign them. Walk off, ye canting hag; it's an imposition—I will never sign them."

"You *will*, then, sir," cried Brian, growing red with indignation; "for the law shall make you, so it shall; and you'd as good have been civil to my mother, whatever you did—for I'll stand by her while I've life; and I know she has right, and shall have law. I saw the memorandum written before ever it went into your hands, sir, whatever became of it after; and will swear to it too."

"Swear away, my good friend; much your swearing will avail in your own case in a court of justice," continued Old Nick.

"And against a gentleman of my brother's established character and property," said St. Dennis. "What's your mother's character against a gentleman's like his?"

"Character! take care how you go to that, any way, sir," cried Brian.

Grace put her hand before his mouth, to stop him.

"Grace, dear, I must speak, if I die for it; sure it's for my mother," said the young man, struggling forward, while his mother held him back; "I must speak."

"Oh, he's ruined, I see it," said Grace, putting her hand before her eyes, "and he won't mind me."

"Go on, let him go on, pray, young woman," said Mr.

Garraghty, pale with anger and fear, his lips quivering; "I shall be happy to take down his words."

"Write them; and may all the world read it, and welcome!"

His mother and wife stopped his mouth by force.

"Write you, Dennis," said Mr. Garraghty, giving the pen to his brother; for his hand shook so he could not form a letter. "Write the very words, and at the top" (pointing) "after warning, *with malice prepense.*"

"Write, then—mother, Grace—let me," cried Brian, speaking in a smothered voice, as their hands were over his mouth. "Write then, that, if you'd either of you a character like my mother, you might defy the world; and your word would be as good as your oath."

"*Oath!* mind that, Dennis," said Mr. Garraghty.

"Oh, sir! sir! won't you stop him?" cried Grace, turning suddenly to Lord Colambre.

"Oh, dear, dear, if you haven't lost your feeling for us," cried the widow.

"Let him speak," said Lord Colambre, in a tone of authority; "let the voice of truth be heard."

"*Truth!*" cried St. Dennis, and dropped the pen.

"And who the devil are you, sir?" said Old Nick.

"Lord Colambre, I protest!" exclaimed a female voice; and Mrs. Raffarty at this instant appeared at the open door.

"Lord Colambre!" repeated all present, in different tones.

"My lord, I beg pardon," continued Mrs. Raffarty, advancing as if her legs were tied; "had I known you was down here, I would not have presumed. I'd better retire; for I see you're busy."

"You'd best; for you're mad, sister," said St. Dennis, pushing her back; "and we *are* busy; go to your room, and keep quiet, if you can."

"First, madam," said Lord Colambre, going between her and the door, "let me beg that you will consider yourself as at home in this house, whilst any circumstances make it desirable to you. The hospitality you showed me you cannot think I now forget."

"Oh, my lord, you're too good—how few—too kind—kinder than my own;" and, bursting into tears, she escaped out of the room.

Lord Colambre returned to the party round the table, who were in various attitudes of astonishment, and with faces of fear, horror, hope, joy, doubt.

"Distress," continued his lordship, "however incurred, if not by vice, will always find a refuge in this house. I speak in my father's name, for I know I speak his sentiments. But never more shall vice," said he, darting such a look at the brother agents as they felt to the back-bone—"never more shall vice, shall fraud enter here."

He paused, and there was a momentary silence.

"There spoke the true thing! and the *rael* gentleman; my own heart's satisfied," said Brian, folding his arms, and standing erect.

"Then so is mine," said Grace, taking breath, with a deep sigh.

The widow advancing, put on her spectacles, and, looking up close at Lord Colambre's face—"Then it's a wonder I didn't know the family likeness."

Lord Colambre, now recollecting that he still wore the old great coat, threw it off.

"Oh, bless him! Then now I'd know him any where. I'm willing to die now, for we'll all be happy."

"My lord, since it is so—my lord, may I ask you," said Mr. Garraghty, now sufficiently recovered to be able to articulate, but scarcely to express his ideas; "if what your lordship hinted just now——"

"I hinted nothing, sir; I spoke plainly."

"I beg pardon, my lord," said Old Nick; "respecting vice, was levelled at me; because, if it was, my lord," trying to stand erect; "let me tell your lordship, if I could think it was——"

"If it did not hit you, sir, no matter at whom it was levelled."

"And let me ask, my lord, if I may presume, whether, in what you suggested by the word fraud, your lordship had any particular meaning?" said St. Dennis.

"A very particular meaning, sir—feel in your pocket for the key of this widow's house, and deliver it to her."

"Oh, if that's all the meaning, with all the pleasure in life. I

never meant to detain it longer than till the leases were signed," said St. Dennis.

"And I'm ready to sign the leases this minute," said the brother.

"Do it, sir, this minute; I have read them; I will be answerable to my father."

"Oh, as to that, my lord, I have power to sign for your father."

He signed the leases; they were duly witnessed by Lord Colambre.

"I deliver this as my act and deed," said Mr. Garraghty: "My lord," continued he, "you see, at the first word from you; and had I known sooner the interest you took in the family, there would have been no difficulty; for I'd make it a principle to oblige you, my lord."

"Oblige me!" said Lord Colambre, with disdain.

"But when gentlemen and noblemen travel *incognito*, and lodge in cabins," added St. Dennis, with a satanic smile, glancing his eye on Grace, "they have good reasons, no doubt."

"Do not judge my heart by your own, sir," said Lord Colambre, coolly; "no two things in nature can, I trust, be more different. My purpose in travelling *incognito* has been fully answered: I was determined to see and judge how my father's estates were managed; and I have seen, compared, and judged. I have seen the difference between the Clonbrony and the Colambre property; and I shall represent what I have seen to my father."

"As to that, my lord, if we are to come to that—but I trust your lordship will suffer me to explain these matters. Go about your business, my good friends; you have all you want; and, my lord, after dinner, when you are cool, I hope I shall be able to make you sensible that things have been represented to your lordship in a mistaken light; and, I flatter myself, I shall convince you, I have not only always acted the part of a friend to the family, but am particularly willing to conciliate your lordship's good-will," said he, sweeping the rouleaus of gold into a bag; "any accommodation in my power, at any time."

"I want no accommodation, sir—were I starving, I would

accept of none from you. Never can you conciliate my good-will; for you can never deserve it."

"If that be the case, my lord, I must conduct myself accordingly: but it's fair to warn you, before you make any representation to my Lord Clonbrony, that, if he should think of changing his agent, there are accounts to be settled between us—that may be a consideration."

"No, sir; no consideration—my father never shall be the slave of such a paltry consideration."

"Oh, very well, my lord; you know best. If you choose to make an assumpsit, I'm sure I shall not object to the security. Your lordship will be of age soon, I know—I'm sure I'm satisfied—but," added he, with a malicious smile, "I rather apprehend you don't know what you undertake: I only premise that the balance of accounts between us is not what can properly be called a paltry consideration."

"On that point, perhaps, sir, you and I may differ."

"Very well, my lord, you will follow your own principles, if it suits your convenience."

"Whether it does or not, sir, I shall abide by my principles."

"Dennis! the letters to the post—When do you go to England, my lord?"

"Immediately, sir," said Lord Colambre: his lordship saw new leases from his father to Mr. Dennis Garraghty, lying on the table, unsigned.

"Immediately!" repeated Messrs. Nicholas and Dennis, with an air of dismay. Nicholas got up, looked out of the window, and whispered something to his brother, who instantly left the room

Lord Colambre saw the postchaise at the door, which had brought Mrs. Raffarty to the castle, and Larry standing beside it: his lordship instantly threw up the sash, and holding between his finger and thumb a six shilling piece, cried, "Larry, my friend, let me have the horses."

"You shall have 'em—your honour," said Larry.

Mr. Dennis Garraghty appeared below, speaking in a magisterial tone. "Larry, my brother must have the horses."

"He can't, *plase* your honour—they're engaged."

"Half a crown!—a crown!—half a guinea!" said Mr. Dennis

Garraghty, raising his voice, as he increased his proffered bribe. To each offer Larry replied, "You can't, *plase* your honour, they're engaged;" and, looking up to the window at Lord Colambre, he said, "As soon as they have ate their oats, you shall have 'em."

No other horses were to be had. The agent was in consternation. Lord Colambre ordered that Larry should have some dinner, and whilst the postilion was eating, and the horses finished their oats, his lordship wrote the following letter to his father, which, to prevent all possibility of accident, he determined to put, with his own hand, into the post-office at Clonbrony, as he passed through the town.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I hope to be with you in a few days. Lest any thing should detain me on the road, I write this, to make an earnest request, that you will not sign any papers, or transact any farther business with Messrs. Nicholas or Dennis Garraghty before you see

"Your affectionate son,

"COLAMBRE."

The horses came out. Larry sent word he was ready, and Lord Colambre, having first eaten a slice of his own venison, ran down to the carriage, followed by the thanks and blessings of the widow, her son, and daughter, who could hardly make their way after him to the chaise-door, so great was the crowd which had gathered on the report of his lordship's arrival.

"Long life to your honour! Long life to your lordship!" echoed on all sides. "Just come, and going, are you?"

"Good bye to you all, good people!"

"Then *good bye* is the only word we wouldn't wish to hear from your honour."

"For the sake both of landlord and tenant, I must leave you now, my good friends; but I hope to return to you at some future time."

"God bless you! and speed ye! and a safe journey to your honour!—and a happy return to us, and soon!" cried a multitude of voices.

Lord Colambre stopped at the chaise-door, and beckoned to the widow O'Neil, before whom others had pressed. An opening was made for her instantly.

"There! that was the very way his father stood, with his foot on the step. And Miss Nugent was *in it*."

Lord Colambre forgot what he was going to say,—with some difficulty recollected. "This pocket-book," said he, which your son restored to me—I intend it for your daughter—don't keep it as your son kept it for me, without opening it. Let what is withinside," added he, as he got into the carriage, "replace the cloak and gown, and let all things necessary for a bride be bought; 'for the bride that has all things to borrow has surely mickle to do.' Shut the door, and drive on."

"Blessings be *wid* you," cried the widow, "and God give you grace!"

CHAPTER XIII.

Larry drove off at full gallop, and kept on at a good rate, till he got out of the great gate, and beyond the sight of the crowd: then, pulling up, he turned to Lord Colambre—"*Plase* your honour, I did not know nor guess ye was my lord, when I let you have the horses: did not know who you was from Adam, I'll take my affidavit."

"There's no occasion," said Lord Colambre; "I hope you don't repent letting me have the horses, now you do know who I am?"

"Oh! not at all, sure: I'm as glad as the best horse ever I crossed, that your honour is my lord—but I was only telling your honour, that you might not be looking upon me as a *timesarver*."

"I do not look upon you as a *timesarver*, Larry; but keep on, that time may serve me."

In two words, he explained his cause of haste; and no sooner explained than understood. Larry thundered away through the town of Clonbrony, bending over his horses, plying the whip, and lending his very soul at every lash. With much difficulty,

Lord Colambre stopped him at the end of the town, at the post-office. The post was gone out—gone a quarter of an hour.

"May be, we'll overtake the mail," said Larry: and, as he spoke, he slid down from his seat, and darted into the public-house, re-appearing, in a few moments, with a *copper* of ale and a horn in his hand: he and another man held open the horses' mouths, and poured the ale through the horn down their throats.

"Now, they'll go with spirit!"

And, with the hope of overtaking the mail, Larry made them go "for life or death," as he said: but in vain! At the next stage, at his own inn-door, Larry roared for fresh horses till he got them, harnessed them with his own hands, holding the six shilling piece, which Lord Colambre had given him, in his mouth, all the while: for he could not take time to put it into his pocket.

"Speed ye! I wish I was driving you all the way, then," said he. The other postilion was not yet ready. "Then your honour sees," said he, putting his head into the carriage, "*consarning* of them Garraghties — Old Nick and St. Dennis —the best part, that is, the worst part, of what I told you, proved true; and I'm glad of it, that is, I'm sorry for it— but glad your honour knows it in time. So Heaven prosper you! And may all the saints (*barring* St. Dennis) have charge of you, and all belonging to you, till we see you here again! —And when will it be?"

"I cannot say when I shall return to you myself, but I will do my best to send your landlord to you soon. In the mean time, my good fellow, keep away from the sign of the Horse-shoe—a man of your sense to drink and make an idiot and a brute of yourself!"

"True!—And it was only when I had lost hope I took to it— but now! Bring me the book one of *yees*, out of the landlady's parlour. By the virtue of this book, and by all the books that ever was shut and opened, I won't touch a drop of spirits, good or bad, till I see your honour again, or some of the family, this time twelvemonth—that long I live on hope,—but mind, if you disappoint me, I don't swear but I'll take to the whiskey, for comfort, all the rest of my days. But don't be staying here,

wasting your time, advising me. Bartley! take the reins, can't
e?" cried he, giving them to the fresh postilion; "and keep
n, for your life, for there's thousands of pounds depending on
he race—so off, off, Bartley, with speed of light!"

Bartley did his best; and such was the excellence of the roads,
hat, notwithstanding the rate at which our hero travelled, he
rrived safely in Dublin, just in time to put his letter into the
ost-office, and to sail in that night's packet. The wind was
air when Lord Colambre went on board, but before they got
ut of the Bay it changed; they made no way all night: in the
ourse of the next day, they had the mortification to see another
acket from Dublin sail past them, and when they landed at
Holyhead, were told the packet, which had left Ireland twelve
ours after them, had been in an hour before them. The
assengers had taken their places in the coach, and engaged
what horses could be had. Lord Colambre was afraid that Mr.
Garraghty was one of them; a person exactly answering his
escription had taken four horses, and set out half an hour
efore in great haste for London. Luckily, just as those who
ad taken their places in the mail were getting into the coach,
Lord Colambre saw among them a gentleman, with whom he
ad been acquainted in Dublin, a barrister, who was come over
uring the long vacation, to make a tour of pleasure in England.
When Lord Colambre explained the reason he had for being
n haste to reach London, he had the good-nature to give up to
im his place in the coach. Lord Colambre travelled all night,
nd delayed not one moment, till he reached his father's house,
n London.

"My father at home?"

"Yes, my lord, in his own room—the agent from Ireland
with him, on particular business—desired not to be interrupted
—but I'll go and tell him, my lord, you are come."

Lord Colambre ran past the servant, as he spoke—made his
way into the room—found his father, Sir Terence O'Fay, and
Mr. Garraghty—leases open on the table before them; a candle
lighted; Sir Terence sealing; Garraghty emptying a bag of
guineas on the table, and Lord Clonbrony actually with a pen
n his hand, ready to sign.

As the door opened, Garraghty started back, so that half the contents of his bag rolled upon the floor.

"Stop, my dear father, I conjure you," cried Lord Colambre, springing forward, and snatching the pen from his father's hand.

"Colambre! God bless you, my dear boy! at all events. But how came you here?—And what do you mean?" said his father.

"Burn it!" cried Sir Terence, pinching the sealing-wax; "for I burnt myself with the pleasure of the surprise."

Garraghty, without saying a word, was picking up the guineas that were scattered upon the floor.

"How fortunate I am," cried Lord Colambre, "to have arrived just in time to tell you, my dear father, before you put your signature to these papers, before you conclude this bargain, all I know, all I have seen of that man!"

"Nick Garraghty, honest old Nick; do you know him, my lord?" said Sir Terence.

"Too well, sir."

"Mr. Garraghty, what have you done to offend my son? I did not expect this," said Lord Clonbrony.

"Upon my conscience, my lord, nothing to my knowledge," said Mr. Garraghty, picking up the guineas; "but showed him every civility, even so far as offering to accommodate him with cash without security; and where will you find the other agent, in Ireland, or any where else, will do that? To my knowledge, I never did any thing, by word or deed, to offend my Lord Colambre; nor could not, for I never saw him but for ten minutes, in my days; and then he was in such a foaming passion, begging his lordship's pardon, owing to the misrepresentations he met with of me, I presume, from a parcel of blackguards that he went amongst, *incognito*, he would not let me or my brother Dennis say a word to set him right; but exposed me before all the tenantry, and then threw himself into a hack, and drove off here, to stop the signing of these leases, I perceive. But I trust," concluded he, putting the replenished money-bag down, with a heavy sound on the table, opposite to Lord Clonbrony, "I trust my Lord Clonbrony will do me justice; that's all I have to say."

"I comprehend the force of your last argument fully, sir," said Lord Colambre. "May I ask, how many guineas there are in the bag?—I don't ask whether they are my father's or not."

"They are to be your lordship's father's, sir, if he thinks proper," replied Garraghty. "How many, I don't know that I can justly, positively say—five hundred, suppose."

"And they would be my father's, if he signed those leases—I understand that perfectly, and understand that my father will lose three times that sum by the bargain. My dear father, you start—but it is true—is not this the rent, sir, at which you are going to let Mr. Garraghty have the land?" placing a paper before Lord Clonbrony.

"It is—the very thing."

"And here, sir, written with my own hand, are copies of the proposals I saw from responsible, respectable tenants, offered and refused. Is it so, or is it not, Mr. Garraghty?—deny it, if you can."

Mr. Garraghty grew pale; his lips quivered; he stammered; and, after a shocking convulsion of face, could at last articulate—only, "That there was a great difference between tenant and tenant, his lordship must be sensible—especially for so large a rent."

"As great a difference as between agent and agent, I am sensible—especially for so large a property!" said Lord Colambre, with cool contempt. "You find, sir, I am well informed with regard to this transaction; you will find, also, that I am equally well informed with respect to every part of your conduct towards my father and his tenantry. If, in relating to him what I have seen and heard, I should make any mistakes, you are here; and I am glad you are, to set me right, and to do yourself justice."

"Oh! as to that, I should not presume to contradict any thing your lordship asserts from your own authority: where would be the use? I leave it all to your lordship. But, as it is not particularly agreeable to stay to hear one's self abused—Sir Terence! I'll thank you to hand me my hat!——And if you'll have the goodness, my Lord Clonbrony, to look over finally the accounts before morning, I'll call at your leisure to

settle the balance, as you find convenient: as to the leases, I'm quite indifferent." So saying, he took up his money-bag.

"Well, you'll call again in the morning, Mr. Garraghty?" said Sir Terence; "and, by that time, I hope we shall understand this misunderstanding better."

Sir Terence pulled Lord Clonbrony's sleeve: "Don't let him go with the money—it's much wanted."

"Let him go," said Lord Colambre: "money can be had by honourable means."

"Wheugh!—He talks as if he had the bank of England at his command, as every young man does," said Sir Terence.

Lord Colambre deigned no reply. Lord Clonbrony walked undecidedly between his agent and his son—looked at Sir Terence, and said nothing.

Mr. Garraghty departed: Lord Clonbrony called after him from the head of the stairs, "I shall be at home and at leisure in the morning."

Sir Terence ran down stairs after him: Lord Colambre waited quietly for their return.

"Fifteen hundred guineas at a stroke of a goose-quill!—That was a neat hit, narrowly missed, of honest Nick's!" said Lord Clonbrony. "Too bad! too bad, faith!—I am much, very much obliged to you, Colambre, for that hint: by to-morrow morning we shall have him in another tune."

"And he must double the bag, or quit," said Sir Terence.

"Treble it, if you please, Terry. Sure, three times five's fifteen:—fifteen hundred down, or he does not get my signature to those leases for his brother, nor get the agency of the Colambre estate.——— Colambre, what more have you to tell of him? for, since he is making out his accounts against me, it is no harm to have a *per contra* against him, that may ease my balance."

"Very fair! very fair!" said Sir Terence. "My lord, trust me for remembering all the charges against him—every item: and when he can't clear himself, if I don't make him buy a good character dear enough, why, say I am a fool, and don't know the value of character, good or bad!"

"If you know the value of character, Sir Terence," said Lord Colambre, "you know that it is not to be bought or sold." Then turning from Sir Terence to his father, he gave a full and true

account of all he had seen in his progress through his Irish estates; and drew a faithful picture both of the bad and good agent. Lord Clonbrony, who had benevolent feelings, and was fond of his tenantry, was touched; and when his son ceased speaking, repeated several times, "Rascal! rascal! How dare he use my tenants so—the O'Neills in particular!—Rascal! bad heart!—I'll have no more to do with him." But, suddenly recollecting himself, he turned to Sir Terence, and added, "That's sooner said than done——————I'll tell you honestly, Colambre, your friend Mr. Burke may be the best man in the world—but he is the worst man to apply to for a remittance or a loan, in a HURRY! He always tells me, 'he can't distress the tenants.'"

"And he never, at coming into the agency even," said Sir Terence, "*advanced* a good round sum to the landlord, by way of security for his good behaviour. Now honest Nick did that much for us at coming in."

"And at going out is he not to be repaid?" said Lord Colambre.

"That's the devil!" said Lord Clonbrony: "that's the very reason I can't conveniently turn him out."

"I will make it convenient to you, sir, if you will permit me," said Lord Colambre. "In a few days I shall be of age, and will join with you in raising whatever sum you want, to free you from this man. Allow me to look over his account; and whatever the honest balance may be, let him have it."

"My dear boy!" said Lord Clonbrony, "you're a generous fellow. Fine Irish heart!—glad you're my son! But there's more, much more, that you don't know," added he, looking at Sir Terence, who cleared his throat; and Lord Clonbrony, who was on the point of opening all his affairs to his son, stopped short.

"Colambre," said he, "we will not say any thing more of this at present; for nothing effectual can be done till you are of age, and then we shall see all about it."

Lord Colambre perfectly understood what his father meant, and what was meant by the clearing of Sir Terence's throat. Lord Clonbrony wanted his son to join him in opening the estate to pay his debts; and Sir Terence feared that if Lord Colambre were abruptly told the whole sum total of the debts, he

would never be persuaded to join in selling or mortgaging so much of his patrimony as would be necessary for their payment. Sir Terence thought that the young man, ignorant probably of business, and unsuspicious of the state of his father's affairs, might be brought, by proper management, to any measures they desired. Lord Clonbrony wavered between the temptation to throw himself upon the generosity of his son, and the immediate convenience of borrowing a sum of money from his agent, to relieve his present embarrassments.

"Nothing can be settled," repeated he, "till Colambre is of age; so it does not signify talking of it."

"Why so, sir?" said Lord Colambre. "Though my act, in law, may not be valid till I am of age, my promise, as a man of honour, is binding now; and, I trust, would be as satisfactory to my father as any legal deed whatever."

"Undoubtedly, my dear boy; but——"

"But what?" said Lord Colambre, following his father's eye, which turned to Sir Terence O'Fay, as if asking his permission to explain. "As my father's friend, sir, you ought, permit me to say, at this moment to use your influence to prevail upon him to throw aside all reserve with a son, whose warmest wish is to serve him, and to see him at ease and happy."

"Generous, dear boy," cried Lord Clonbrony. "Terence, I can't stand it; but how shall I bring myself to name the amount of the debts?"

"At some time or other, I must know it," said Lord Colambre: "I cannot be better prepared at any moment than the present; never more disposed to give my assistance to relieve all difficulties. Blindfold, I cannot be led to any purpose, sir," said he, looking at Sir Terence: "the attempt would be degrading and futile. Blindfolded I will not be—but, with my eyes open, I will see, and go straight and prompt as heart can go, to my father's interest, without a look or thought to my own."

"By St. Patrick! the spirit of a prince, and an Irish prince, spoke there," cried Sir Terence: "and if I'd fifty hearts, you'd have all in your hand this minute, at your service, and warm. Blindfold you! After that, the man that would attempt it *desarves* to be shot; and I'd have no sincerer pleasure in life than shooting him this moment, was he my best friend. But it's not Clon-

brony, or your father, my lord, would act that way, no more than Sir Terence O'Fay—there's the schedule of the debts," drawing a paper from his bosom; "and I'll swear to the lot, and not a man on earth could do that but myself."

Lord Colambre opened the paper. His father turned aside, covering his face with both his hands.

"Tut, man," said Sir Terence: "I know him now better than you; he will stand, you'll find, the shock of that regiment of figures—he is steel to the backbone, and proof spirit."

"I thank you, my dear father," said Lord Colambre, "for trusting me thus at once with a view of the truth. At first sight it is, I acknowledge, worse than I expected; but I make no doubt that, when you allow me to examine Mr. Garraghty's accounts and Mr. Mordicai's claims, we shall be able to reduce this alarming total considerably."

"The devil a pound, nor a penny," said Sir Terence; "for you have to deal with a Jew and Old Nick; and, since I'm not a match for them, I don't know who is; and I have no hope of getting any abatement. I've looked over the accounts till I'm sick."

"Nevertheless, you will observe that fifteen hundred guineas have been saved to my father at one stroke, by his not signing those leases."

"Saved to you, my lord; not your father, if you please," said Sir Terence. "For now I'm upon the square with you, I must be straight as an arrow, and deal with you as the son and friend of my friend: before, I was considering you only as the son and heir, which is quite another thing, you know; accordingly, acting for your father here, I was making the best bargain against you I could: honestly, now, I tell you. I knew the value of the lands well enough: I was as sharp as Garraghty, and he knew it; I was to have had for your father *the difference* from him, partly in cash and partly in balance of accounts—you comprehend—and you only would have been the loser, and never would have known it, may be, till after we all were dead and buried; and then you might have set aside Garraghty's lease easy, and no harm done to any but a rogue that *desarved* it; and, in the mean time, an accommodation to my honest friend, my lord, your father here. But, as fate would have it,

you upset all by your progress incognito through them estates. Well, it's best as it is, and I am better pleased to be as we are, trusting all to a generous son's own heart. Now put the poor father out of pain, and tell us what you'll do, my dear."

"In one word, then," said Lord Colambre, "I will, upon two conditions, either join my father in levying fines to enable him to sell or mortgage whatever portion of his estate is necessary for the payment of these debts; or I will, in whatever mode he can point out, as more agreeable or more advantageous to him, join in giving security to his creditors."

"Dear, noble fellow!" cried Sir Terence: "none but an Irishman could do it."

Lord Clonbrony, melted to tears, could not articulate, but held his arms open to embrace his son.

"But you have not heard my conditions yet," said Lord Colambre.

"Oh, confound the conditions!" cried Sir Terence.

"What conditions could he ask, that I could refuse at this minute?" said Lord Clonbrony.

"Nor I—was it my heart's blood, and were I to be hanged for it," cried Sir Terence. "And what are the conditions?"

"That Mr. Garraghty shall be dismissed from the agency."

"And welcome, and glad to get rid of him—the rogue, the tyrant," said Lord Clonbrony; "and, to be beforehand with you in your next wish, put Mr. Burke into his place."

"I'll write the letter for you to sign, my lord, this minute," cried Terry, "with all the pleasure in life. No; it's my Lord Colambre should do that in all justice."

"But what's your next condition? I hope it's no worse," said Lord Clonbrony.

"That you and my mother should cease to be absentees."

"Oh, murder!" said Sir Terence; "may be that's not so easy; for there are two words to that bargain."

Lord Clonbrony declared that, for his own part, he was ready to return to Ireland next morning, and to promise to reside on his estate all the rest of his days; that there was nothing he desired more, provided Lady Clonbrony would consent to it; but that he could not promise for her; that she was as obstinate as a mule on that point; that he had often tried, but that there

was no moving her; and that, in short, he could not promise on her part.

But it was on this condition, Lord Colambre said, he must insist. Unless this condition were granted, he would not engage to do any thing.

"Well, we must only see how it will be when she comes to town; she will come up from Buxton the day you're of age to sign some papers," said Lord Clonbrony; "but," added he with a very dejected look and voice, "if all's to depend on my Lady Clonbrony's consenting to return to Ireland, I'm as far from all hope of being at ease as ever."

"Upon my conscience, we're all at sea again," said Sir Terence.

Lord Colambre was silent; but in his silence there was such an air of firmness, that both Lord Clonbrony and Sir Terence were convinced entreaties would, on this point, be fruitless. Lord Clonbrony sighed deeply.

"But when it's ruin or safety! and her husband and all belonging to her at stake, the woman can't persist in being a mule," said Sir Terence.

"Of whom are you talking, sir?" said Lord Colambre.

"Of whom? Oh, I beg your lordship's pardon—I thought I was talking to my lord; but, in other words, as you are her son, I'm persuaded her ladyship, your mother, will prove herself a reasonable woman—when she sees she can't help it. So, my Lord Clonbrony, cheer up; a great deal may be done by the fear of Mordicai, and an execution, especially now there's no prior creditor. Since there's no reserve between you and I now, my Lord Colambre," said Sir Terence, "I must tell you all, and how we shambled on those months while you were in Ireland. First, Mordicai went to law, to prove I was in a conspiracy with your father, pretending to be prior creditor, to keep him off and out of his own; which, after a world of swearing and law—law always takes time to do justice, that's one comfort—the villain proved at last to be true enough, and so cast us; and I was forced to be paid off last week. So there's no prior creditor, or any shield of pretence that way. Then his execution was coming down upon us, and nothing to stay it till I thought of a monthly annuity to Mordicai, in the shape of a wager. So the morning

after he cast us, I went to him: 'Mr. Mordicai,' says I, 'you must be *plased* to see a man you've beaten so handsomely; and though I'm sore, both for myself and my friend, yet you see I can laugh still, though an execution is no laughing matter, and I'm sensible you've one in petto in your sleeve for my friend Lord Clonbrony. But I'll lay you a wager of a hundred guineas on paper, that a marriage of his son with an heiress, before next Lady-day, will set all to rights, and pay you with a compliment too."

"Good heavens, Sir Terence! surely you said no such thing?"

"I did—but what was it but a wager? which is nothing but a dream; and, when lost, as I am as sensible as you are that it must be, why what is it, after all, but a bonus, in a gentlemanlike form, to Mordicai? which, I grant you, is more than he deserves—for staying the execution till you be of age; and even for my Lady Clonbrony's sake, though I know she hates me like poison, rather than have her disturbed by an execution, I'd pay the hundred guineas this minute out of my own pocket, if I had 'em in it."

A thundering knock at the door was heard at this moment.

"Never heed it; let 'em thunder," said Sir Terence: "whoever it is, they won't get in; for my lord bid them let none in for their life. It's necessary for us to be very particular about the street-door now; and I advise a double chain for it, and to have the footmen well tutored to look before they run to a double rap; for a double rap might be a double trap."

"My lady and Miss Nugent, my lord," said a footman, throwing open the door.

"My mother! Miss Nugent!" cried Lord Colambre, springing eagerly forward.

"Colambre! Here!" said his mother: "but it's all too late now, and no matter where you are."

Lady Clonbrony coldly suffered her son to embrace her; and he, without considering the coldness of her manner, scarcely hearing, and not at all understanding, the words she said, fixed his eyes on his cousin, who, with a countenance all radiant with affectionate joy, held out her hand to him.

"Dear cousin Colambre, what an unexpected pleasure!"

He seized the hand; but, as he was going to kiss it, the

recollection of *St. Omar* crossed his mind: he checked himself, and said something about joy and pleasure, but his countenance expressed neither; and Miss Nugent, much surprised by the coldness of his manner, withdrew her hand, and, turning away, left the room.

"Grace! darling!" called Lord Clonbrony, "whither so fast, before you've given me a word or a kiss?"

She came back, and hastily kissed her uncle, who folded her in his arms. "Why must I let you go? And what makes you so pale, my dear child?"

"I am a little, a little tired—I will be with you again soon."

Her uncle let her go.

"Your famous Buxton baths don't seem to have agreed with her, by all I can see," said Lord Clonbrony.

"My lord, the Buxton baths are no way to blame; but I know what is to blame and who is to blame," said Lady Clonbrony, in a tone of displeasure, fixing her eyes upon her son. "Yes, you may well look confounded, Colambre; but it is too late now—you should have known your own mind in time. I see you have heard it, then—but I am sure I don't know how; for it was only decided the day I left Buxton. The news could hardly travel faster than I did. Pray how did you hear it?"

"Hear what, ma'am?" said Colambre.

"Why, that Miss Broadhurst is going to be married."

"Oh, is that all, ma'am?" said our hero, much relieved.

"All! Now, Lord Colambre, you *reelly* are too much for my patience. But I flatter myself you will feel, when I tell you that it is your friend, Sir Arthur Berryl, as I always prophesied, who has carried off the prize from you."

"But for the fear of displeasing my dear mother, I should say, that I do feel sincere pleasure in this marriage—I always wished it: my friend, Sir Arthur, from the first moment, trusted me with the secret of his attachment; he knew that he had my warm good wishes for his success; he knew that I thought most highly of the young lady; but that I never thought of her as a wife for myself."

"And why did not you? that is the very thing I complain of," said Lady Clonbrony. "But it is all over now. You may set your heart at ease, for they are to be married on Thursday;

and poor Mrs. Broadhurst is ready to break her heart, for she was set upon a coronet for her daughter; and you, ungrateful as you are, you don't know how she wished you to be the happy man. But only conceive, after all that has passed, Miss Broadhurst had the assurance to expect I would let my niece be her bride's-maid. Oh, I flatly refused; that is, I told Grace it could not be; and, that there might be no affront to Mrs. Broadhurst, who did not deserve it, I pretended Grace had never mentioned it; but ordered my carriage, and left Buxton directly. Grace was hurt, for she is very warm in her friendships. I am sorry to hurt Grace. But *reelly* I could not let her be bride's-maid:—and that, if you must know, is what vexed her, and made the tears come in her eyes, I suppose—and I'm sorry for it; but one must keep up one's dignity a little. After all, Miss Broadhurst was only a citizen—and *reelly* now, a very odd girl; never did any thing like any body else; settled her marriage at last in the oddest way. Grace can tell you the particulars. I own, I am tired of the subject, and tired of my journey. My lord, I shall take leave to dine in my own room to-day," continued her ladyship, as she quitted the room.

"I hope her ladyship did not notice me," said Sir Terence O'Fay, coming from behind a window-curtain.

"Why, Terry, what did you hide for?" said Lord Clonbrony.

"Hide! I didn't hide, nor wouldn't from any man living, *let alone* any woman[1]. Hide! no; but I just stood looking out of the window, behind this curtain, that my poor Lady Clonbrony might not be discomfited and shocked by the sight of one whom she can't abide, the very minute she come home. Oh, I've some consideration—it would have put her out of humour worse with both of you too; and for that there's no need, as far as I see. So I'll take myself off to my coffee-house to dine, and may be you may get her down and into spirits again. But, for your lives, don't touch upon Ireland this night, nor till she has fairly got the better of the marriage. *Apropos*—there's my wager to Mordicai gone at a slap. It's I that ought to be scolding you, my Lord Colambre; but I trust you will do as well yet, not in point of purse, may be. But I'm not one of those that think

[1] Leaving any woman out of the question.

that money's every thing—though, I grant you, in this world there's nothing to be had without it—love excepted,—which most people don't believe in—but not I—in particular cases. So I leave you, with my blessing, and I've a notion, at this time, that is better than my company—your most devoted."

The good-natured Sir Terence would not be persuaded by Lord Clonbrony to stay. Nodding at Lord Colambre as he went out of the room, he said, "I've an eye, in going, to your h.art's ease too. When I played myself, I never liked standers-by."

Sir Terence was not deficient in penetration, but he never could help boasting of his discoveries.

Lord Colambre was grateful for his judicious departure; and followed his equally judicious advice, not to touch upon Ireland this night.

Lady Clonbrony was full of Buxton, and he was glad to be relieved from the necessity of talking; and he indulged himself in considering what might be passing in Miss Nugent's mind. She now appeared in remarkably good spirits; for her aunt had given her a hint that she thought her out of humour because she had not been permitted to be Miss Broadhurst's bride's-maid, and she was determined to exert herself to dispel this notion. This it was now easy for her to do, because she had, by this time, in her own imagination, found a plausible excuse for that coldness in Lord Colambre's reception of her, by which she had at first been hurt: she had settled it, that he had taken it for granted she was of his mother's sentiments respecting Miss Broadhurst's marriage, and that this idea, and perhaps the apprehension of her reproaches, had caused this embarrassment —she knew that she could easily set this misunderstanding right. Accordingly, when Lady Clonbrony had talked herself to sleep about Buxton, and was taking her afternoon's nap, as it was her custom to do when she had neither cards nor company to keep her awake, Miss Nugent began to explain her own sentiments, and to give Lord Colambre, as her aunt had desired, an account of the manner in which Miss Broadhurst's marriage had been settled.

"In the first place," said she, "let me assure you, that I rejoice in this marriage: I think your friend, Sir Arthur Berryl, is every way deserving of my friend Miss Broadhurst; and this

from me," said she, smiling, "is no slight eulogium. I have marked the rise and progress of their attachment; and it has been founded on the perception of such excellent qualities on each side, that I have no fear for its permanence. Sir Arthur Berryl's honourable conduct in paying his father's debts, and his generosity to his mother and sisters, whose fortunes were left entirely dependent upon him, first pleased my friend. It was like what she would have done herself, and like—in short, it is what few young men, as she said, of the present day would do. Then his refraining from all personal expenses, his going without equipage and without horses, that he might do what he felt to be right, whilst it exposed him continually to the ridicule of fashionable young men, or to the charge of avarice, made a very different impression on Miss Broadhurst's mind; her esteem and admiration were excited by these proofs of strength of character, and of just and good principles."

"If you go on you will make me envious and jealous of my friend," said Lord Colambre.

"You jealous!—Oh, it is too late now—besides, you cannot be jealous, for you never loved."

"I never loved Miss Broadhurst, I acknowledge."

"There was the advantage Sir Arthur Berryl had over you—he loved, and my friend saw it."

"She was clear-sighted," said Lord Colambre.

"She was clear-sighted," repeated Miss Nugent; "but if you mean that she was vain, and apt to fancy people in love with her, I can assure you that you are mistaken. Never was woman, young or old, more clear-sighted to the views of those by whom she was addressed. No flattery, no fashion, could blind her judgment."

"She knew how to choose a friend well, I am sure," said Lord Colambre.

"And a friend for life, too, I am sure you will allow—and she had such numbers, such strange variety of admirers, as might have puzzled the choice and turned the brain of any inferior person. Such a succession of lovers as she has had this summer, ever since you went to Ireland—they appeared and vanished like figures in a magic lantern. She had three noble admirers—rank in three different forms offered themselves.

First came in, hobbling, rank and gout; next, rank and gaming; then rank, very high rank, over head and ears in debt. All of these were rejected; and, as they moved off, I thought Mrs. Broadhurst would have broken her heart. Next came fashion, with his head, heart, and soul in his cravat—he quickly made his bow, or rather his nod, and walked off, taking a pinch of snuff. Then came a man of wit—but it was wit without worth; and presently came 'worth without wit.' She preferred 'wit and worth united,' which she fortunately at last found, Lord Colambre, in your friend, Sir Arthur Berryl."

"Grace, my girl!" said her uncle, "I'm glad to see you've got up your spirits again, though you were not to be bride's-maid. Well, I hope you'll be bride soon—I'm sure you ought to be—and you should think of rewarding that poor Mr. Salisbury, who plagues me to death, whenever he can catch hold of me, about you. He must have our definitive at last, you know, Grace."

A silence ensued, which neither Miss Nugent nor Lord Colambre seemed able or willing to break.

"Very good company, faith, you three!—One of ye asleep, and the other two saying nothing, to keep one awake. Colambre, have you no Dublin news? Grace, have you no Buxton scandal? What was it Lady Clonbrony told us you'd tell us, about the oddness of Miss Broadhurst's settling her marriage? Tell me that, for I love to hear odd things."

"Perhaps you will not think it odd," said she. "One evening ——but I should begin by telling you that three of her admirers, besides Sir Arthur Berryl, had followed her to Buxton, and had been paying their court to her all the time we were there; and at last grew impatient for her decision."

"Ay, for her definitive!" said Lord Clonbrony. Miss Nugent was put out again, but resumed.

"So one evening, just before the dancing began, the gentlemen were all standing round Miss Broadhurst; one of them said, 'I wish Miss Broadhurst would decide—that whoever she dances with to-night should be her partner for life: what a happy man he would be!'

"'But how can I decide?' said Miss Broadhurst.

"'I wish I had a friend to plead for me!' said one of the suitors, looking at me.

"'Have you no friend of your own?' said Miss Broadhurst.

"'Plenty of friends,' said the gentleman.

"'Plenty!—then you must be a very happy man,' replied Miss Broadhurst. 'Come,' said she, laughing, 'I will dance with that man who can convince me that he has, near relations excepted, one true friend in the world! That man who has made the best friend, I dare say, will make the best husband!'

"At that moment," continued Miss Nugent, "I was certain who would be her choice. The gentlemen all declared at first that they had abundance of excellent friends—the best friends in the world! but when Miss Broadhurst cross-examined them, as to what their friends had done for them, or what they were willing to do, modern friendship dwindled into a ridiculously small compass. I cannot give you the particulars of the cross-examination, though it was conducted with great spirit and humour by Miss Broadhurst; but I can tell you the result—that Sir Arthur Berryl, by incontrovertible facts, and eloquence warm from the heart, convinced every body present that he had the best friend in the world; and Miss Broadhurst, as he finished speaking, gave him her hand, and he led her off in triumph—So you see, Lord Colambre, you were at last the cause of my friend's marriage!"

She turned to Lord Colambre as she spoke these words, with such an affectionate smile, and such an expression of open, innocent tenderness in her whole countenance, that our hero could hardly resist the impulse of his passion—could hardly restrain himself from falling at her feet that instant, and declaring his love. "But St. Omar! St. Omar!—It must not be!"

"I must be gone!" said Lord Clonbrony, pulling out his watch. "It is time to go to my club; and poor Terry will wonder what has become of me."

Lord Colambre instantly offered to accompany his father; much to Lord Clonbrony's, and more to Miss Nugent's surprise.

"What!" said she to herself, "after so long an absence, leave me!—Leave his mother, with whom he always used to stay—on purpose to avoid me! What can I have done to displease him?

It is clear it was not about Miss Broadhurst's marriage he was offended; for he looked pleased, and like himself, whilst I was talking of that: but the moment afterwards, what a constrained, unintelligible expression of countenance—and leaves me to go to a club which he detests!"

As the gentlemen shut the door on leaving the room, Lady Clonbrony awakened, and, starting up, exclaimed, "What's the matter? Are they gone? Is Colambre gone?"

"Yes, ma'am, with my uncle."

"Very odd! very odd of him to go and leave me! he always used to stay with me—what did he say about me?"

"Nothing, ma'am."

"Well, then, I have nothing to say about him, or about any thing, indeed, for I'm excessively tired and stupid—alone in Lon'on's as bad as any where else. Ring the bell, and we'll go to bed directly—if you have no objection, Grace."

Grace made no objection: Lady Clonbrony went to bed and to sleep in ten minutes. Miss Nugent went to bed; but she lay awake, considering what could be the cause of her cousin Colambre's hard unkindness, and of "his altered eye." She was openness itself; and she determined that, the first moment she could speak to him alone, she would at once ask for an explanation. With this resolution, she rose in the morning, and went down to the breakfast-room, in hopes of meeting him, as it had formerly been his custom to be early; and she expected to find him reading in his usual place.

CHAPTER XIV.

No—Lord Colambre was not in his accustomed place, reading in the breakfast-room; nor did he make his appearance till both his father and mother had been some time at breakfast.

"Good morning to you, my Lord Colambre," said his mother, in a reproachful tone, the moment he entered; "I am much obliged to you for your company last night."

"Good morning to you, Colambre," said his father, in a more

jocose tone of reproach; "I am obliged to you for your goo company last night."

"Good morning to you, Lord Colambre," said Miss Nugent and though she endeavoured to throw all reproach from he looks, and to let none be heard in her voice, yet there was slight tremulous motion in that voice, which struck our hero t the heart.

"I thank you, ma'am, for missing me," said he, addressin himself to his mother: "I stayed away but half an hour; accompanied my father to St. James's-street, and when I re turned I found that every one had retired to rest."

"Oh, was that the case?" said Lady Clonbrony: "I own thought it very unlike you to leave me in that sort of way."

"And, lest you should be jealous of that half hour when h was accompanying me," said Lord Clonbrony, "I must remark that, though I had his body with me, I had none of his mind that he left at home with you ladies, or with some fair on across the water, for the deuce of two words did he bestow upo me, with all his pretence of accompanying me."

"Lord Colambre seems to have a fair chance of a pleasan breakfast," said Miss Nugent, smiling; "reproaches on al sides."

"I have heard none on your side, Grace," said Lor Clonbrony; "and that's the reason, I suppose, he wisely take his seat beside you. But come, we will not badger you an more, my dear boy. We have given him as fine a complexio amongst us as if he had been out hunting these three hours have not we, Grace?"

"When Colambre has been a season or two more in Lon'on he'll not be so easily put out of countenance," said Lad Clonbrony; "you don't see young men of fashion here blush ing about nothing."

"No, nor about any thing, my dear," said Lord Clonbrony "but that's no proof they do nothing they ought to blush for."

"What they do, there's no occasion for ladies to inquire," sai Lady Clonbrony; "but this I know, that it's a great disad vantage to a young man of a certain rank to blush; for n people, who live in a certain set, ever do: and it is the mo opposite thing possible to a certain air, which, I own, I thin

Colambre wants; and now that he has done travelling in Ireland, which is no use in *pint* of giving a gentleman a travelled air, or any thing of that sort, I hope he will put himself under my conduct for next winter's campaign in town."

Lord Clonbrony looked as if he did not know how to look; and, after drumming on the table for some seconds, said, "Colambre, I told you how it would be: that's a fatal hard condition of yours."

"Not a hard condition, I hope, my dear father," said Lord Colambre.

"Hard it must be, since it can't be fulfilled, or won't be fulfilled, which comes to the same thing," replied Lord Clonbrony, sighing.

"I am persuaded, sir, that it will be fulfilled," said Lord Colambre; "I am persuaded that, when my mother hears the truth, and the whole truth—when she finds that your happiness, and the happiness of her whole family, depend upon her yielding her taste on one subject——"

"Oh, I see now what you are about," cried Lady Clonbrony; "you are coming round with your persuasions and prefaces to ask me to give up Lon'on, and go back with you to Ireland, my lord. You may save yourselves the trouble, all of you; for no earthly persuasions shall make me do it. I will never give up my taste on that *pint*. My happiness has a right to be as much considered as your father's, Colambre, or any body's; and, in one word, I won't do it," cried she, rising angrily from the breakfast-table.

"There! did not I tell you how it would be?" cried Lord Clonbrony.

"My mother has not heard me yet," said Lord Colambre, laying his hand upon his mother's arm, as she attempted to pass: "hear me, madam, for your own sake. You do not know what will happen, this very day—this very hour, perhaps—if you do not listen to me."

"And what will happen?" said Lady Clonbrony, stopping short.

"Ay, indeed; she little knows," said Lord Clonbrony, "what's hanging over her head."

"Hanging over my head?" said Lady Clonbrony, looking up; "nonsense!—what?"

"An execution, madam!" said Lord Colambre.

"Gracious me! an execution!" said Lady Clonbrony, sitting down again; "but I heard you talk of an execution months ago, my lord, before my son went to Ireland, and it blew over—I heard no more of it."

"It won't blow over now," said Lord Clonbrony; "you'll hear more of it now. Sir Terence O'Fay it was, you may remember, that settled it then."

"Well, and can't he settle it now? Send for him, since he understands these cases; and I will ask him to dinner myself, for your sake, and be very civil to him, my lord."

"All your civility, either for my sake or your own, will not signify a straw, my dear, in this case—any thing that poor Terry could do, he'd do, and welcome, without it; but he can do nothing."

"Nothing!—that's very extraordinary. But I'm clear no one dare to bring a real execution against us in earnest; and you are only trying to frighten me to your purpose, like a child; but it shan't do."

"Very well, my dear; you'll see—too late."

A knock at the house door.

"Who is it?—What is it?" cried Lord Clonbrony, growing very pale.

Lord Colambre changed colour too, and ran down stairs. "Don't let 'em let any body in, for your life, Colambre; under any pretence," cried Lord Clonbrony, calling from the head of the stairs: then running to the window, "By all that's good, it's Mordicai himself! and the people with him."

"Lean your head on me, my dear aunt," said Miss Nugent: Lady Clonbrony leant back, trembling, and ready to faint.

"But he's walking off now; the rascal could not get in—safe for the present!" cried Lord Clonbrony, rubbing his hands, and repeating, "safe for the present!"

"Safe for the present!" repeated Lord Colambre, coming again into the room. "Safe for the present hour."

"He could not get in, I suppose.—Oh, I warned all the servants well," said Lord Clonbrony; "and so did Terry. Ay,

there's the rascal Mordicai walking off, at the end of the street; I know his walk a mile off. Gad! I can breathe again. I am glad he's gone. But he will come back and always lie in wait, and some time or other, when we're off our guard (unawares), he'll slide in."

"Slide in! Oh, horrid!" cried Lady Clonbrony, sitting up, and wiping away the water which Miss Nugent had sprinkled on her face.

"Were you much alarmed?" said Lord Colambre, with a voice of tenderness, looking at his mother first, but his eyes fixing on Miss Nugent.

"Shockingly!" said Lady Clonbrony; "I never thought it would *reelly* come to this."

"It will really come to much more, my dear," said Lord Clonbrony, "that you may depend upon, unless you prevent it."

"Lord! What can I do?—I know nothing of business: how should I, Lord Clonbrony? But I know there's Colambre—I was always told that when he was of age, every thing should be settled; and why can't he settle it when he's upon the spot?"

"And upon one condition, I will," cried Lord Colambre; "at what loss to myself, my dear mother, I need not mention."

"Then I will mention it," cried Lord Clonbrony: "at the loss it will be of nearly half the estate he would have had, if we had not spent it."

"Loss! Oh, I am excessively sorry my son's to be at such a loss—it must not be."

"It cannot be otherwise," said Lord Clonbrony; "nor it can't be this way either, my Lady Clonbrony, unless you comply with his condition, and consent to return to Ireland."

"I cannot—I will not," replied Lady Clonbrony. "Is this your condition, Colambre?—I take it exceedingly ill of you. I think it very unkind, and unhandsome, and ungenerous, and undutiful of you, Colambre; you my son!" She poured forth a torrent of reproaches; then came to entreaties and tears. But our hero, prepared for this, had steeled his mind; and he stood resolved not to indulge his own feelings, or to yield to caprice or persuasion, but to do that which he knew was best for the happiness of hundreds of tenants, who depended upon them—best

for both his father and his mother's ultimate happiness respectability.

"It's all in vain," cried Lord Clonbrony; "I have no reso but one, and I must condescend now to go to him this mi for Mordicai will be back and seize all—I must sign and l all to Garraghty."

"Well, sign, sign, my lord, and settle with Garraghty. lambre, I've heard all the complaints you brought over ag that man. My lord spent half the night telling them to but all agents are bad, I suppose; at any rate I can't help sign, sign, my lord; he has money—yes, do; go and settle him, my lord."

Lord Colambre and Miss Nugent, at one and the same ment, stopped Lord Clonbrony as he was quitting the room then approached Lady Clonbrony with supplicating looks she turned her head to the other side, and, as if putting their entreaties, made a repelling motion with both her h and exclaimed, "No, Grace Nugent!—no, Colambre—no Colambre! I'll never hear of leaving Lon'on—there's no l out of Lon'on—I can't, I won't live out of Lon'on, I say."

Her son saw that the *Londonomania* was now stronger ever upon her, but resolved to make one desperate appeal t natural feelings, which, though smothered, he could not be were wholly extinguished: he caught her repelling hands pressing them with respectful tenderness to his lips, "Oh dear mother, you once loved your son," said he; "loved better than any thing in this world: if one spark of affectio him remains, hear him now, and forgive him, if he pa bounds—bounds he never passed before—of filial duty. Mo in compliance with your wishes my father left Ireland—le home, his duties, his friends, his natural connexions, an many years he has lived in England, and you have spent i seasons in London."

"Yes, in the very best company—in the very first circ said Lady Clonbrony; "cold as the high-bred English are to be in general to strangers."

"Yes," replied Lord Colambre, "the very best compan you mean the most fashionable) have accepted of our enter

ments. We have forced our way into their frozen circles; we have been permitted to breathe in these elevated regions of fashion; we have it to say, that the Duke of *This*, and my Lady *That*, are of our acquaintance.—We may say more: we may boast that we have vied with those whom we could never equal. And at what expense have we done all this? For a single season, the last winter (I will go no farther), at the expense of a great part of your timber, the growth of a century—swallowed in the entertainments of one winter in London! Our hills to be bare for another half century to come! But let the trees go: I think more of your tenants—of those left under the tyranny of a bad agent, at the expense of every comfort, every hope they enjoyed!—tenants, who were thriving and prosperous; who used to smile upon you, and to bless you both! In one cottage, I have seen——"

Here Lord Clonbrony, unable to restrain his emotion, hurried out of the room.

"Then I am sure it is not my fault," said Lady Clonbrony; "for I brought my lord a large fortune: and I am confident I have not, after all, spent more any season, in the best company, than he has among a set of low people, in his muddling, discreditable way."

"And how has he been reduced to this?" said Lord Colambre. "Did he not formerly live with gentlemen, his equals, in his own country; his contemporaries? Men of the first station and character, whom I met in Dublin, spoke of him in a manner that gratified the heart of his son: he was respectable and respected, at his own home; but when he was forced away from that home, deprived of his objects and his occupations, compelled to live in London, or at watering-places, where he could find no employments that were suitable to him—set down, late in life, in the midst of strangers, to him cold and reserved—himself too proud to bend to those who disdained him as an Irishman—is he not more to be pitied than blamed for—yes, I, his son, must say the word—the degradation which has ensued? And do not the feelings, which have this moment forced him to leave the room, show of what he is capable? Oh, mother!" cried Lord Colambre, throwing himself at Lady Clonbrony's feet, "restore my father to himself! Should such feelings be

wasted?—No; give them again to expand in benevolent, in kind, useful actions; give him again to his tenantry, his duties, his country, his home; return to that home yourself, dear mother! leave all the nonsense of high life—scorn the impertinence of these dictators of fashion, who, in return for all the pains we take to imitate, to court them—in return for the sacrifice of health, fortune, peace of mind—bestow sarcasm, contempt, ridicule, and mimicry!"

"Oh, Colambre! Colambre! mimicry—I'll never believe it."

"Believe me—believe me, mother; for I speak of what I know. Scorn them—quit them! Return to an unsophisticated people—to poor, but grateful hearts, still warm with the remembrance of your kindness, still blessing you for favours long since conferred, ever praying to see you once more. Believe me, for I speak of what I know—your son has heard these prayers, has felt these blessings. Here! at my heart felt, and still feel them, when I was not known to be your son, in the cottage of the widow O'Neil."

"Oh, did you see the widow O'Neil! and does she remember me?" said Lady Clonbrony.

"Remember you! and you, Miss Nugent! I have slept in the bed——I would tell you more, but I cannot."

"Well! I never should have thought they would have remembered me so long! poor people!" said Lady Clonbrony. "I thought all in Ireland must have forgotten me, it is now so long since I was at home."

"You are not forgotten in Ireland by any rank, I can answer for that. Return home, my dearest mother—let me see you once more among your natural friends, beloved, respected, happy!"

"Oh, return! let us return home!" cried Miss Nugent, with a voice of great emotion. "Return, let us return home! My beloved aunt, speak to us! say that you grant our request!" She kneeled beside Lord Colambre, as she spoke.

"Is it possible to resist that voice, that look?" thought Lord Colambre.

"If any body knew," said Lady Clonbrony, "if any body could conceive, how I detest the sight, the thoughts of that old yellow damask furniture, in the drawing-room at Clonbrony *Castle*——"

"Good Heavens!" cried Lord Colambre, starting up, and looking at his mother in stupified astonishment; "is *that* what you are thinking of, ma'am?"

"The yellow damask furniture!" said her niece, smiling. "Oh, if that's all, that shall never offend your eyes again. Aunt, my painted velvet chairs are finished; and trust the furnishing that room to me. The legacy lately left me cannot be better applied—you shall see how beautifully it will be furnished."

"Oh, if I had money, I should like to do it myself; but it would take an immensity to new furnish Clonbrony Castle properly."

"The furniture in this house," said Miss Nugent, looking round——

"Would do a great deal towards it, I declare," cried Lady Clonbrony; "that never struck me before, Grace, I protest—and what would not suit one might sell or exchange here—and it would be a great amusement to me—and I should like to set the fashion of something better in that country. And I declare now, I should like to see those poor people, and that widow O'Neil. I do assure you, I think I was happier at home; only that one gets, I don't know how, a notion, one's nobody out of Lon'on. But, after all, there's many drawbacks in Lon'on—and many people are very impertinent, I'll allow—and if there's a woman in the world I hate, it is Mrs. Dareville—and, if I was leaving Lon'on, I should not regret Lady Langdale neither—and Lady St. James is as cold as a stone. Colambre may well say *frozen circles*—these sort of people are really very cold, and have, I do believe, no hearts. I don't verily think there is one of them would regret me more——Hey! let me see, Dublin—the winter—Merrion-square—new furnished—and the summer—Clonbrony Castle!"

Lord Colambre and Miss Nugent waited in silence till her mind should have worked itself clear. One great obstacle had been removed; and now that the yellow damask had been taken out of her imagination, they no longer despaired.

Lord Clonbrony put his head into the room. "What hopes?—any? if not, let me go." He saw the doubting expression of Lady Clonbrony's countenance—hope in the face of his son and

niece. "My dear, dear Lady Clonbrony, make us all happy by one word," said he, kissing her.

"You never kissed me so since we left Ireland before," said Lady Clonbrony. "Well, since it must be so, let us go," said she.

"Did I ever see such joy!" said Lord Clonbrony, clasping his hands: "I never expected such joy in my life!—I must go and tell poor Terry!" and off he ran.

"And now, since we are to go," said Lady Clonbrony, "pray let us go immediately, before the thing gets wind, else I shall have Mrs. Dareville, and Lady Langdale, and Lady St. James, and all the world, coming to condole with me, just to satisfy their own curiosity: and then, Miss Pratt, who hears every thing that every body says, and more than they say, will come and tell me how it is reported every where that we are ruined. Oh! I never could bear to stay and hear all this. I'll tell you what I'll do—you are to be of age soon, Colambre,—very well, there are some papers for me to sign,—I must stay to put my name to them, and, that done, that minute I'll leave you and Lord Clonbrony to settle all the rest; and I'll get into my carriage, with Grace, and go down to Buxton again; where you can come for me, and take me up, when you're all ready to go to Ireland—and we shall be so far on our way. Colambre, what do you say to this?"

"That, if you like it, madam," said he, giving one hasty glance at Miss Nugent, and withdrawing his eyes, "it is the best possible arrangement."

"So," thought Grace, "that is the best possible arrangement which takes us away."

"If I like it!" said Lady Clonbrony; "to be sure I do, or I should not propose it. What is Colambre thinking of? I know, Grace, at all events, what you and I must think of—of having the furniture packed up, and settling what's to go, and what's to be exchanged, and all that. Now, my dear, go and write a note directly to Mr. Soho, and bid him come himself, immediately; and we'll go and make out a catalogue this instant of what furniture I will have packed."

So with her head full of furniture, Lady Clonbrony retired. "I

go to my business, Colambre: and I leave you to settle yours in peace."

In peace!—Never was our hero's mind less at peace than at this moment. The more his heart felt that it was painful, the more his reason told him it was necessary that he should part from Grace Nugent. To his union with her there was an obstacle which his prudence told him ought to be insurmountable; yet he felt that, during the few days he had been with her, the few hours he had been near her, he had, with his utmost power over himself, scarcely been master of his passion, or capable of concealing its object. It could not have been done but for her perfect simplicity and innocence. But how could this be supported on his part? How could he venture to live with this charming girl? How could he settle at home? What resource?

His mind turned towards the army: he thought that abroad, and in active life, he should lose all the painful recollections, and drive from his heart all the sentiments, which could now be only a source of unavailing regret. But his mother—his mother, who had now yielded her own taste to his entreaties, for the good of her family—she expected him to return and live with her in Ireland. Though not actually promised or specified, he knew that she took it for granted; that it was upon this hope, this faith, she consented: he knew that she would be shocked at the bare idea of his going into the army. There was one chance—our hero tried, at this moment, to think it the best possible chance—that Miss Nugent might marry Mr. Salisbury, and settle in England. On this idea he relied, as the only means of extricating him from difficulties.

It was necessary to turn his thoughts immediately to business, to execute his promises to his father. Two great objects were now to be accomplished—the payment of his father's debts, and the settlement of the Irish agent's accounts; and, in transacting this complicated business, he derived considerable assistance from Sir Terence O'Fay, and from Sir Arthur Berryl's solicitor, Mr. Edwards. Whilst acting for Sir Arthur, on a former occasion, Lord Colambre had gained the entire confidence of this solicitor, who was a man of the first eminence. Mr. Edwards took the papers and Lord Clonbrony's title-deeds home with him, saying

that he would give an answer the next morning. He then waited upon Lord Colambre, and informed him that he had just received a letter from Sir Arthur Berryl, who, with the consent and desire of his lady, requested that whatever money might be required by Lord Clonbrony should be immediately supplied on their account, without waiting till Lord Colambre should be of age, as the ready money might be of some convenience to him in accelerating the journey to Ireland, which Sir Arthur and Lady Berryl knew was his lordship's object. Sir Terence O'Fay now supplied Mr. Edwards with accurate information as to the demands that were made upon Lord Clonbrony, and of the respective characters of the creditors. Mr. Edwards undertook to settle with the fair claimants; Sir Terence with the rogues: so that by the advancement of ready money from *the Berryls*, and by the detection of false and exaggerated charges which Sir Terence made among the inferior class, the debts were reduced nearly to one-half of their former amount. Mordicai, who had been foiled in his vile attempt to become sole creditor, had, however, a demand of more than seven thousand pounds upon Lord Clonbrony, which he had raised to this enormous sum in six or seven years, by means well known to himself. He stood the foremost in the list: not from the greatness of the sum; but from the danger of his adding to it the expenses of law. Sir Terence undertook to pay the whole with five thousand pounds. Lord Clonbrony thought it impossible: the solicitor thought it improvident, because he knew that upon a trial a much greater abatement would be allowed; but Lord Colambre was determined, from the present embarrassments of his own situation, to leave nothing undone that could be accomplished immediately.

Sir Terence, pleased with his commission, immediately went to Mordicai.

"Well, Sir Terence," said Mordicai, "I hope you are come to pay me my hundred guineas; for Miss Broadhurst is married!"

"Well, Mister Mordicai, what then? The ides of March are come, but not gone! Stay, if you plase, Mister Mordicai, till Lady-day, when it becomes due: in the mean time, I have a handful, or rather an armful, of bank-notes for you, from my Lord Colambre."

"Humph." said Mordicai: "how's that? he'll not be of age these three days."

"Don't matter for that: he has sent me to look over your accounts, and to hope that you will make some small ABATEMENT in the total."

"Harkee, Sir Terence—you think yourself very clever in things of this sort, but you've mistaken your man: I have an execution for the whole, and I'll be d—d if all your cunning shall MAKE me take up with part!"

"Be *aisy*, Mister Mordicai!—you sha'n't make me break your bones, nor make me drop one actionable word against your high character; for I know your clerk there, with that long goose-quill behind his ear, would be ready evidence again' me. But I beg to know, in one word, whether you will take five thousand down, and GIVE Lord Clonbrony a discharge?"

"No, Mr. Terence! nor six thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine pounds. My demand is seven thousand one hundred and thirty pounds, odd shillings: if you have that money, pay it; if not, I know how to get it, and along with it complete revenge for all the insults I have received from that greenhorn, his son."

"Paddy Brady!" cried Sir Terence, "do you hear that? Remember that word *revenge!*—Mind I call you to witness!"

"What, sir, will you raise a rebellion among my workmen?"

"No, Mr. Mordicai, no rebellion; and I hope you won't cut the boy's ears off for listening to a little of the brogue—so listen, my good lad. Now, Mr. Mordicai, I offer you here, before little goosequill, 5000*l.* ready penny—take it, or leave it: take your money, and leave your revenge; or take your revenge, and lose your money."

"Sir Terence, I value neither your threats nor your cunning. Good morning to you."

"Good morning to you, Mr. Mordicai—but not kindly! Mr. Edwards, the solicitor, has been at the office to take off the execution: so now you may have law to your heart's content! And it was only to plase the young lord that the *ould* one consented to my carrying this bundle to you," showing the bank-notes.

"Mr. Edwards employed!" cried Mordicai. "Why, how the

devil did Lord Clonbrony get into such hands as his? The execution taken off! Well, sir, go to law—I am ready for you: Jack Latitat IS A MATCH for your sober solicitor."

"Good morning again to you, Mr. Mordicai: we're fairly out of your clutches, and we have enough to do with our money."

"Well, Sir Terence, I must allow you have a very wheedling way——Here, Mr. Thompson, make out a receipt for Lord Clonbrony: I never go to law with an old customer, if I can help it."

This business settled, Mr. Soho was next to be dealt with.

He came at Lady Clonbrony's summons; and was taking directions with the utmost *sang froid*, for packing up and sending off the very furniture for which he was not paid.

Lord Colambre called him into his father's study; and, producing his bill, he began to point out various articles which were charged at prices that were obviously extravagant.

"Why, really, my lord, they are *abundantly* extravagant: if I charged vulgar prices, I should be only a vulgar tradesman. I, however, am not a broker, nor a Jew. Of the article superintendence, which is only 500*l.*, I cannot abate a doit: on the rest of the bill, if you mean to offer *ready*, I mean, without any negotiation, to abate thirty per cent., and I hope that is a fair and gentlemanly offer."

"Mr. Soho, there is your money!"

"My Lord Colambre! I would give the contents of three such bills to be sure of such noblemanly conduct as yours. Lady Clonbrony's furniture shall be safely packed, without costing her a farthing."

With the help of Mr. Edwards, the solicitor, every other claim was soon settled; and Lord Clonbrony, for the first time since he left Ireland, found himself out of debt, and out of danger.

Old Nick's account could not be settled in London. Lord Colambre had detected numerous false charges, and sundry impositions: the land, which had been purposely let to run wild, so far from yielding any rent, was made a source of constant expense, as remaining still unset: this was a large tract, for which St. Dennis had at length offered a small rent.

Upon a fair calculation of the profits of the ground, and from other items in the account, Nicholas Garraghty, Esq., appeared at last to be, not the creditor, but the debtor to Lord Clonbrony.

He was dismissed with disgrace; which perhaps he might not have felt, if it had not been accompanied by pecuniary loss, and followed by the fear of losing his other agencies, and by the dread of immediate bankruptcy.

Mr. Burke was appointed agent in his stead to the Clonbrony as well as the Colambre estate. His appointment was announced to him by the following letter:—

"TO MRS. BURKE, AT COLAMBRE.

"DEAR MADAM,

"The traveller whom you so hospitably received some months ago was Lord Colambre; he now writes to you in his proper person. He promised you that he would, as far as it might be in his power, do justice to Mr. Burke's conduct and character, by representing what he had done for Lord Clonbrony in the town of Colambre, and in the whole management of the tenantry and property under his care.

"Happily for my father, my dear madam, he is now as fully convinced as you could wish him to be of Mr. Burke's merits; and he begs me to express his sense of the obligations he is under to him and to you. He entreats that you will pardon the impropriety of a letter, which, as I assured you the moment I saw it, he never wrote or read.

"He hopes that you will forget that such a letter was ever received, and that you will use your influence with Mr. Burke to induce him to continue to our family his regard and valuable services. Lord Clonbrony encloses a power of attorney, enabling Mr. Burke to act in future for him, if Mr. Burke will do him that favour, in managing the Clonbrony as well as the Colambre estate.

"Lord Clonbrony will be in Ireland in the course of next month, and intends to have the pleasure of soon paying his respects in person to Mr. Burke, at Colambre.

"I am, dear madam,

"Your obliged guest,

"And faithful servant,

"COLAMBRE.

"*Grosvenor-square, London.*"

Lord Colambre was so continually occupied with business, during the days previous to his coming of age, every morning at his solicitor's chambers, every evening in his father's study, that Miss Nugent never saw him but at breakfast or dinner; and, though she watched for it most anxiously, never could find an opportunity of speaking to him alone, or of asking an explanation of the change and inconsistencies of his manner. At last, she began to think, that, in the midst of so much business of importance, by which he seemed harassed, she should do wrong to torment him, by speaking of any small uneasiness that concerned only herself. She determined to suppress her doubts, to keep her feelings to herself, and endeavour, by constant kindness, to regain that place in his affections, which she imagined that she had lost. "Every thing will go right again," thought she, "and we shall all be happy, when he returns with us to Ireland —to that dear home which he loves as well as I do!"

The day Lord Colambre was of age, the first thing he did was to sign a bond for five thousand pounds, Miss Nugent's fortune, which had been lent to his father, who was her guardian.

"This, sir, I believe," said he, giving it to his father as soon as signed, "this, I believe, is the first debt you would wish to have secured."

"Well thought of, my dear boy!—God bless you!—that has weighed more upon my conscience and heart than all the rest, though I never said any thing about it. I used, whenever I met Mr. Salisbury, to wish myself fairly down at the centre of the earth: not that he ever thought of fortune, I'm sure; for he often told me, and I believed him, he would rather have Miss Nugent without a penny, if he could get her, than the first fortune in the empire. But I'm glad she will not go to him pennyless, for all that; and by my fault, especially. There, there's my name to it—do witness it, Terry. But, Colambre, you must give it to her—you must take it to Grace."

"Excuse me, sir; it is no gift of mine—it is a debt of yours. I beg you will take the bond to her yourself, my dear father."

"My dear son, you must not always have your own way, and hide every thing good you do, or give me the honour of it—I won't be the jay in borrowed feathers. I have borrowed enough in my life, and I've done with borrowing now, thanks to you,

Colambre—so come along with me; for I'll be hanged if ever I give this joint bond to Miss Nugent, unless you are with me. Leave Lady Clonbrony here to sign these papers. Terry will witness them properly, and do you come along with me."

"And pray, my lord," said her ladyship, "order the carriage to the door; for, as soon as you have my signature, I hope you'll let me off to Buxton."

"Oh, certainly—the carriage is ordered—every thing ready, my dear."

"And pray tell Grace to be ready," added Lady Clonbrony.

"That's not necessary; for she is always ready," said Lord Clonbrony. "Come, Colambre," added he, taking his son under the arm, and carrying him up to Miss Nugent's dressing-room.

They knocked, and were admitted.

"Ready!" said Lord Clonbrony; "ay, always ready—so I said. Here's Colambre, my darling," continued he, "has secured your fortune to you to my heart's content; but he would not condescend to come up to tell you so, till I made him. Here's the bond; and now, all I have to ask of you, Colambre, is, to persuade her to marry out of hand, that I may see her happy before I die. Now my heart's at ease; I can meet Mr. Salisbury with a safe conscience. One kiss, my little Grace. If any body can persuade you, I'm sure it's that man that's now leaning against the mantel-piece. It's Colambre will, or your heart's not made like mine—so I leave you."

And out of the room walked he, leaving his poor son in as awkward, embarrassing, and painful a situation as could well be conceived. Half a dozen indistinct ideas crossed his mind; quick conflicting feelings made his heart beat and stop. And how it would have ended, if he had been left to himself; whether he would have stood or fallen, have spoken or have continued silent, can never now be known, for all was decided without the action of his will. He was awakened from his trance by these simple words from Miss Nugent: "I'm much obliged to you, cousin Colambre—more obliged to you for your kindness in thinking of me first, in the midst of all your other business, than by your securing my fortune. Friendship—and your friendship—is worth more to me than fortune. May I believe that *is secured?*"

"Believe it! Oh, Grace, can you doubt it?"

"I will not; it would make me too unhappy. I will not."

"You need not."

"That is enough—I am satisfied—I ask no farther explanation. You are truth itself—one word from you is security sufficient. We are friends for life," said she; "are not we?"

"We are—and therefore sit down, cousin Grace, and let me claim the privilege of friendship, and speak to you of him who aspires to be more than your friend for life, Mr. ———."

"Mr. Salisbury!" said Miss Nugent; "I saw him yesterday. We had a very long conversation; I believe he understands my sentiments perfectly, and that he no longer thinks of being *more* to me than a friend for life."

"You have refused him!"

"Yes. I have a high opinion of Mr. Salisbury's understanding, a great esteem for his character; I like his manners and conversation; but I do not love him, and, therefore, you know, I could not marry him."

"But, my dear Miss Nugent, with a high opinion, a great esteem, and liking his manners and conversation, in such a well-regulated mind as yours, can there be a better foundation for love?"

"It is an excellent foundation," said she; "but I never went any farther than the foundation; and, indeed, I never wished to proceed any farther."

Lord Colambre scarcely dared to ask why; but after some pause he said, "I don't wish to intrude upon your confidence."

"You cannot intrude upon my confidence; I am ready to give it to you entirely, frankly; I hesitated only because another person was concerned. Do you remember, at my aunt's gala, a lady who danced with Mr. Salisbury?"

"Not in the least."

"A lady with whom you and Mr. Salisbury were talking, just before supper, in the Turkish tent."

"Not in the least."

"As we went down to supper, you told me you had had a delightful conversation with her; that you thought her a charming woman."

"A charming woman!—I have not the slightest recollection of her."

"And you told me that she and Mr. Salisbury had been praising me *à l'envie l'une de l'autre.*"

"Oh, I recollect her now perfectly," said Lord Colambre: "but what of her?"

"She is the woman who, I hope, will be Mrs. Salisbury. Ever since I have been acquainted with them both, I have seen that they were suited to each other; I fancy, indeed I am almost sure, that she could love him, tenderly love him—and, I know, I could not. But my own sentiments, you may be sure, are all I ever told Mr. Salisbury."

"But of your own sentiments you may not be sure," said Lord Colambre; "and I see no reason why you should give him up from false generosity."

"Generosity!" interrupted Miss Nugent; "you totally misunderstand me; there is no generosity, nothing for me to give up in the case. I did not refuse Mr. Salisbury from generosity, but because I did not love him. Perhaps my seeing early what I have just mentioned to you prevented me from thinking of him as a lover; but, from whatever cause, I certainly never felt love for Mr. Salisbury, nor any of that pity which is said to lead to love: perhaps," added she, smiling, "because I was aware that he would be so much better off after I refused him—so much happier with one suited to him in age, talents, fortune, and love—'What bliss, did he but know his bliss,' were *his!*"

"Did he but know his bliss!" repeated Lord Colambre; "but is not he the best judge of his own bliss?"

"And am not I the best judge of mine?" said Miss Nugent: "I go no farther."

"You are; and I have no right to go farther. Yet, this much permit me to say, my dear Grace, that it would give me sincere pleasure, that is, real satisfaction, to see you happily—established."

"Thank you, my dear Lord Colambre; but you spoke that like a man of seventy at least, with the most solemn gravity of demeanour."

"I meant to be serious, not solemn," said Lord Colambre, *endeavouring to change his tone.*

"There now," said she, in a playful tone, "you have *seriousl*
accomplished the task my good uncle set you; so I will repor
well of you to him, and certify that you did all that in you lay t
exhort me to marry; that you have even assured me that i
would give you sincere pleasure, that is, real satisfaction, to see
me happily established."

"Oh, Grace, if you knew how much I felt when I said that
you would spare this raillery."

"I will be serious—I am most seriously convinced of the sin-
cerity of your affection for me; I know my happiness is you
object in all you have said, and I thank you from my heart fo
the interest you take about me. But really and truly I do no
wish to marry. This is not a mere commonplace speech; but I
have not yet seen any man I could love. I am happy as I am
especially now we are all going to dear Ireland, home, to liv
together: you cannot conceive with what pleasure I look forwar
to that."

Lord Colambre was not vain; but love quickly sees love, o
foresees the probability, the possibility, of its existence. H
saw that Miss Nugent might love him tenderly, passionately
but that duty, habit, the prepossession that it was impossible sh
could marry her cousin Colambre,—a prepossession instilled int
her by his mother—had absolutely prevented her from ever ye
thinking of him as a lover. He saw the hazard for her, he fel
the danger for himself. Never had she appeared to him s
attractive as at this moment, when he felt the hope that he coul
obtain return of love.

"But St. Omar!—Why! why is she a St. Omar?—illegit
mate!—'No St. Omar *sans reproche.*' My wife she cannot b
—I will not engage her affections."

Swift as thoughts in moments of strong feeling pass in th
mind without being put into words, our hero thought all this, an
determined, cost what it would, to act honourably.

"You spoke of my returning to Ireland, my dear Grace.
have not yet told you my plans."

"Plans! are not you returning with us?" said she, precipi
tately; "are not you going to Ireland—home—with us?"

"No:—I am going to serve a campaign or two abroad.
think every young man in these times——"

"Good Heavens! What does this mean? What can you mean?" cried she, fixing her eyes upon his, as if she would read his very soul. "Why? what reason?—Oh, tell me the truth—and at once."

His change of colour—his hand that trembled, and withdrew from hers—the expression of his eyes as they met hers—revealed the truth to her at once. As it flashed across her mind, she started back; her face grew crimson, and, in the same instant, pale as death.

"Yes—you see, you feel the truth now," said Lord Colambre. "You see, you feel, that I love you—passionately."

"Oh, let me not hear it!" said she; "I must not—ought not. Never till this moment did such a thought cross my mind—I thought it impossible—Oh, make me think so still."

"I will—it *is* impossible that we can ever be united."

"I always thought so," said she, taking breath with a deep sigh. "Then, why not live as we have lived?"

"I cannot—I cannot answer for myself—I will not run the risk; and therefore I must quit you, knowing, as I do, that there is an invincible obstacle to our union; of what nature I cannot explain; I beg you not to inquire."

"You need not beg it—I shall not inquire—I have no curiosity—none," said she in a passive, dejected tone; "that is not what I am thinking of in the least. I know there are invincible obstacles; I wish it to be so. But, if invincible, you who have so much sense, honour, and virtue——"

"I hope, my dear cousin, that I have honour and virtue. But there are temptations to which no wise, no good man will expose himself. Innocent creature! you do not know the power of love. I rejoice that you have always thought it impossible—think so still—it will save you from——all I must endure. Think of me but as your cousin, your friend—give your heart to some happier man. As your friend, your true friend, I conjure you, give your heart to some more fortunate man. Marry, if you can feel love—marry, and be happy. Honour! virtue! Yes, I have both, and I will not forfeit them. Yes, I will merit your esteem and my own—by actions, not words; and I give you the strongest proof, by tearing myself from you at this moment. Farewell!"

"The carriage at the door, Miss Nugent, and my lady calling for you," said her maid. "Here's your key, ma'am, and here's your gloves, my dear ma'am."

"The carriage at the door, Miss Nugent," said Lady Clonbrony's woman, coming eagerly with parcels in her hand, as Miss Nugent passed her, and ran down stairs; "and I don't know where I laid my lady's *numbrella*, for my life—do you, Anne?"

"No, indeed—but I know here's my own young lady's watch that she has left. Bless me! I never knew her to forget any thing on a journey before."

"Then she is going to be married, as sure as my name's Le Maistre, and to my Lord Colambre; for he has been here this hour, to my certain Bible knowledge. Oh, you'll see she will be Lady Colambre."

"I wish she may, with all my heart," said Anne; "but I must run down—they're waiting."

"Oh, no!" said Mrs. Le Maistre, seizing Anne's arm, and holding her fast; "stay—you may safely—for they're all kissing and taking leave, and all that, you know; and *my* lady is talking on about Mr. Soho, and giving a hundred directions about legs of tables, and so forth, I warrant—she's always an hour after she's ready before she gets in—and I'm looking for the *numbrella*. So stay, and tell me——Mrs. Petito wrote over word it was to be Lady Isabel; and then a contradiction came—it was turned into the youngest of the Killpatricks; and now here he's in Miss Nugent's dressing-room to the last moment. Now, in my opinion, that am not censorious, this does not look so pretty; but, according to my verdict, he is only making a fool of Miss Nugent, like the rest; and his lordship seems too like what you might call a male *cocket* or a masculine jilt."

"No more like a masculine jilt than yourself, Mrs. Le Maistre," cried Anne, taking fire. "And my young lady is not a lady to be made a fool of, I promise you; nor is my lord likely to make a fool of any woman."

"Bless us all! that's no great praise for any young nobleman, Miss Anne."

"Mrs. Le Maistre! Mrs. Le Maistre! are you above?" cried

a footman from the bottom of the stairs: "my lady's calling for you."

"Very well! Very well!" said sharp Mrs. Le Maistre; "Very well! and if she is—manners, sir!—Come up for one, can't you, and don't stand bawling at the bottom of the stairs, as if one had no ears to be saved. I'm coming as fast as I can—conveniently can."

Mrs. Le Maistre stood in the door-way, so as to fill it up, and prevent Anne from passing.

"Miss Anne! Miss Anne! Mrs. Le Maistre!" cried another footman; "my lady's in the carriage, and Miss Nugent."

"Miss Nugent!—is she?" cried Mrs. Le Maistre, running down stairs, followed by Anne. "Now, for the world in pocket-pieces wouldn't I have missed seeing him hand Miss Nugent in; for by that I could have judged definitively."

"My lord, I beg pardon!—I'm *afeard* I'm late," said Mrs. Le Maistre, as she passed Lord Colambre, who was standing motionless in the hall. "I beg a thousand pardons; but I was hunting, high and low, for my lady's *numbrella*."

Lord Colambre did not hear or heed her: his eyes were fixed, and they never moved.

Lord Clonbrony was at the open carriage-door, kneeling on the step, and receiving Lady Clonbrony's "more last words" for Mr. Soho. The two waiting-maids stood together on the steps.

"Look at our young lord, how he stands," whispered Mrs. Le Maistre to Anne, "the image of despair! And she, the picture of death!—I don't know what to think."

"Nor I: but don't stare, if you can help it," said Anne. "Get in, get in, Mrs. Le Maistre," added she, as Lord Clonbrony now rose from the step, and made way for them.

"Ay, in with you—in with you, Mrs. Le Maistre," said Lord Clonbrony. "Good bye to you, Anne, and take care of your young mistress at Buxton: let me see her blooming when we meet again; I don't half like her looks, and I never thought Buxton agreed with her."

"Buxton never did any body harm," said Lady Clonbrony: "and as to bloom, I'm sure, if Grace has not bloom enough in her cheeks this moment to please you, I don't know what you'd

have, my dear lord——Rouge?—Shut the door, John! Oh, stay!——Colambre!—Where upon earth's Colambre?" cried her ladyship, stretching from the farthest side of the coach to the window.—"Colambre!"

Colambre was forced to appear.

"Colambre, my dear! I forgot to say, that, if any thing detains you longer than Wednesday se'nnight, I beg you will not fail to write, or I shall be miserable."

"I will write: at all events, my dearest mother, you shall hear from me."

"Then I shall be quite happy. Go on!"

The carriage drove on.

"I do believe Colambre's ill: I never saw a man look so ill in my life—did you, Grace?—as he did the minute we drove on. He should take advice. I've a mind," cried Lady Clonbrony, laying her hand on the cord, to stop the coachman, "I've a mind to turn about—tell him so—and ask what is the matter with him."

"Better not!" said Miss Nugent: "he will write to you, and tell you—if any thing is the matter with him. Better go on now to Buxton!" continued she, scarcely able to speak. Lady Clonbrony let go the cord.

"But what is the matter with you, my dear Grace? for you are certainly going to die too!"

"I will tell you—as soon as I can; but don't ask me now, my dear aunt!"

"Grace, Grace! pull the cord!" cried Lady Clonbrony—"Mr. Salisbury's phaeton!——Mr. Salisbury, I'm happy to see you! We're on our way to Buxton—as I told you."

"So am I," said Mr. Salisbury. "I hope to be there before your ladyship: will you honour me with any commands?—of course, I will see that every thing is ready for your reception."

Her ladyship had not any commands. Mr. Salisbury drove on rapidly.

Lady Clonbrony's ideas had now taken the Salisbury channel. "You didn't know that Mr. Salisbury was going to Buxton to meet you, did you, Grace?" said Lady Clonbrony.

"No, indeed, I did not!" said Miss Nugent; "and I am very sorry for it."

"Young ladies, as Mrs. Broadhurst says, 'never know, or at least never tell, what they are sorry or glad for,'" replied Lady Clonbrony. "At all events, Grace, my love, it has brought the fine bloom back to your cheeks; and I own I am satisfied."

CHAPTER XV.

"GONE! for ever gone from me!" said Lord Colambre to himself, as the carriage drove away. "Never shall I see her more—never *will* I see her more, till she is married."

Lord Colambre went to his own room, locked the door, and was relieved in some degree by the sense of privacy; by the feeling that he could now indulge his reflections undisturbed. He had consolation—he had done what was honourable—he had transgressed no duty, abandoned no principle—he had not injured the happiness of any human being—he had not, to gratify himself, hazarded the peace of the woman he loved—he had not sought to win her heart. Of her innocent, her warm, susceptible heart, he might, perhaps, have robbed her—he knew it—but he had left it untouched, he hoped entire, in her own power, to bless with it hereafter some man worthy of her. In the hope that she might be happy, Lord Colambre felt relief; and in the consciousness that he had made his parents happy, he rejoiced; but, as soon as his mind turned that way for consolation, came the bitter reflection, that his mother must be disappointed in her hopes of his accompanying her home, and of his living with her in Ireland: she would be miserable when she should hear that he was going abroad into the army—and yet it must be so—and he must write, and tell her so. "The sooner this difficulty is off my mind, the sooner this painful letter is written, the better," thought he. "It must be done—I will do it immediately."

He snatched up his pen, and began a letter.

"My dear mother, Miss Nugent——" He was interrupted by a knock at his door.

"A gentleman below, my lord," said a servant, "who wishes to see you."

"I cannot see any gentleman. Did you say I was at home?"

"No, my lord, I said you was not at home; for I thought you would not choose to be at home, and your own man was not in the way for me to ask—so I denied you: but the gentleman would not be denied; he said I must come and see if you was at home. So, as he spoke as if he was a gentleman not used to be denied, I thought it might be somebody of consequence, and I showed him into the front drawing-room. I think he said he was sure you'd be at home for a friend from Ireland."

"A friend from Ireland! Why did not you tell me that sooner?" said Lord Colambre, rising, and running down stairs. "Sir James Brooke, I dare say."

No, not Sir James Brooke; but one he was almost as glad to see—Count O'Halloran!

"My dear count! the greater pleasure for being unexpected."

"I came to London but yesterday," said the count; "but I could not be here a day, without doing myself the honour of paying my respects to Lord Colambre."

"You do me not only honour, but pleasure, my dear count. People, when they like one another, always find each other out, and contrive to meet, even in London."

"You are too polite to ask what brought such a superannuated militaire as I am," said the count, "from his retirement into this gay world again. A relation of mine, who is one of the ministry, knew that I had some maps, and plans, and charts, which might be serviceable in an expedition they are planning. I might have trusted my charts across the channel, without coming myself to convoy them, you will say. But my relation fancied—young relations, you know, if they are good for any thing, are apt to overvalue the heads of old relations—fancied that mine was worth bringing all the way from Halloran Castle to London, to consult with *tête-à-tête*. So, you know, when this was signified to me by a letter from the secretary in office, *private, most confidential*, what could I do, but do myself the honour to obey? For though honour's voice cannot provoke the silent dust, yet 'flattery soothes the dull cold ear of *age*.'—But enough and too much of myself," said the count: "tell me,

my dear lord, something of yourself. I do not think England seems to agree with you so well as Ireland; for, excuse me, in point of health, you don't look like the same man I saw some weeks ago."

"My mind has been ill at ease of late," said Lord Colambre.

"Ay, there's the thing! The body pays for the mind—but those who have feeling minds, pain and pleasure altogether computed, have the advantage; or at least they think so; for they would not change with those who have them not, were they to gain by the bargain the most robust body that the most selfish coxcomb, or the heaviest dunce extant, ever boasted. For instance, would you now, my lord, at this moment, change altogether with Major Benson, or Captain Williamson, or even with our friend, 'Eh, really now, 'pon honour'—would you?—I'm glad to see you smile."

"I thank you for making me smile, for I assure you I want it. I wish—if you would not think me encroaching upon your politeness in honouring me with this visit——You see," continued he, opening the doors of the back drawing-room, and pointing to large packages, "you see we are all preparing for a march: my mother has left town half an hour ago—my father engaged to dine abroad—only I at home—and, in this state of confusion, could I even venture to ask Count O'Halloran to stay and dine with me, without being able to offer him Irish ortolans or Irish plums—in short, will you let me rob you of two or three hours of your time? I am anxious to have your opinion on a subject of some importance to me, and on one where you are peculiarly qualified to judge and decide for me."

"My dear lord, frankly, I have nothing half so good or so agreeable to do with my time; command my hours. I have already told you how much it flatters me to be consulted by the most helpless clerk in office; how much more about the private concerns of an enlightened young—friend, will Lord Colambre permit me to say? I hope so; for, though the length of our acquaintance might not justify the word, yet regard and intimacy are not always in proportion to the time people have known each other, but to their mutual perception of certain attaching qualities, a certain similarity and suitableness of character."

The good count, seeing that Lord Colambre was in much distress of mind, did all he could to soothe him by kindness: far from making any difficulty about giving up a few hours of his time, he seemed to have no other object in London, and no purpose in life, but to attend to our hero. To put him at ease, and to give him time to recover and arrange his thoughts, the count talked of indifferent subjects.

"I think I heard you mention the name of Sir James Brooke."

"Yes, I expected to have seen him when the servant first mentioned a friend from Ireland; because Sir James had told me that, as soon as he could get leave of absence, he would come to England."

"He is come; is now at his estate in Huntingdonshire; doing, what do you think? I will give you a leading hint; recollect the seal which the little De Cressy put into your hands the day you dined at Oranmore. Faithful to his motto, 'Deeds, not words,' he is this instant, I believe, at deeds, title deeds; making out marriage settlements, getting ready to put his seal to the happy articles."

"Happy man! I give him joy," said Lord Colambre: "happy man! going to be married to such a woman—daughter of such a mother."

"Daughter of such a mother! That is indeed a great addition and a great security to his happiness," said the count. "Such a family to marry into; good from generation to generation; illustrious by character as well as by genealogy; 'all the sons brave, and all the daughters chaste.' "

Lord Colambre with difficulty repressed his feelings. "If I could choose," said the count, "I would rather that a woman I loved were of such a family than that she had for her dower the mines of Peru."

"So would I," cried Lord Colambre.

"I am glad to hear you say so, my lord, and with such energy; so few young men of the present day look to what I call good connexion. In marrying, a man does not, to be sure, marry his wife's mother; and yet a prudent man, when he begins to think of the daughter, would look sharp at the mother; ay, and back to the grandmother too, and along the whole female line of ancestry."

"True—most true—he ought—he must."

"And I have a notion," said the count, smiling, "your lordship's practice has been conformable to your theory."

"I!—mine!" said Lord Colambre, starting, and looking at the count with surprise.

"I beg your pardon," said the count; "I did not intend to surprise your confidence. But you forget that I was present, and saw the impression which was made on your mind by a mother's want of a proper sense of delicacy and propriety—Lady Dashfort."

"Oh, Lady Dashfort! she was quite out of my head."

"And Lady Isabel?—I hope she is quite out of your heart."

"She never was in it," said Lord Colambre.

"Only laid siege to it," said the count. "Well, I am glad your heart did not surrender at discretion, or rather without discretion. Then I may tell you, without fear or preface, that the Lady Isabel, who talks of 'refinement, delicacy, sense,' is going to stoop at once, and marry—Heathcock."

Lord Colambre was not surprised, but concerned and disgusted, as he always felt, even when he did not care for the individual, from hearing any thing which tended to lower the female sex in public estimation.

"As to myself," said he, "I cannot say I have had an escape, for I don't think I ever was in much danger."

"It is difficult to measure danger when it is over—past danger, like past pain, is soon forgotten," said the old general. "At all events, I rejoice in your present safety."

"But is she really going to be married to Heathcock?" said Lord Colambre.

"Positively: they all came over in the same packet with me, and they are all in town now, buying jewels, and equipages, and horses. Heathcock, you know, is as good as another man for all those purposes: his father is dead, and has left him a large estate. *Que voulez-vous?* as the French valet said to me on the occasion, *c'est que monsieur est un homme de bien: il a des biens, à ce qu'on dit.*"

Lord Colambre could not help smiling.

"How they got Heathcock to fall in love is what puzzles

me," said his lordship. "I should as soon have thought of an oyster's falling in love as that being."

"I own I should have sooner thought," replied the count, "of his falling in love with an oyster; and so would you, if you had seen him, as I did, devouring oysters on shipboard.

'Say, can the lovely *heroine* hope to vie
With a fat turtle or a ven'son pie?'

But that is not our affair; let the Lady Isabel look to it."

Dinner was announced; and no farther conversation of any consequence passed between the count and Lord Colambre till the cloth was removed and the servants had withdrawn. Then our hero opened on the subject which was heavy at his heart.

"My dear count—I have a mind to serve a campaign or two, if I could get a commission in a regiment going to Spain; but I understand so many are eager to go at this moment, that it is very difficult to get a commission in such a regiment."

"It is difficult," said the count. "But," added he, after thinking for a moment, "I have it! I can get the thing done for you, and directly. Major Benson, who is in danger of being broke, in consequence of that affair, you know, about his mistress, wants to sell out; and that regiment is to be ordered immediately to Spain: I will have the thing done for you, if you request it."

"First, give me your advice, Count O'Halloran: you are well acquainted with the military profession, with military life. Would you advise me—I won't speak of myself, because we judge better by general views than by particular cases—would you advise a young man at present to go into the army?"

The count was silent for a few minutes, and then replied: "Since you seriously ask my opinion, my lord, I must lay aside my own prepossessions, and endeavour to speak with impartiality. To go into the army in these days, my lord, is, in my sober opinion, the most absurd and base, or the wisest and noblest thing a young man can do. To enter into the army, with the hope of escaping from the application necessary to acquire knowledge, letters, and science—I run no risk, my lord, in saying this to you—to go into the army, with the hope of escaping from

knowledge, letters, science, and morality; to wear a red coat and an epaulette; to be called captain; to figure at a ball; to lounge away time in country sports, at country quarters, was never, even in times of peace, creditable; but it is now absurd and base. Submitting to a certain portion of ennui and contempt, this mode of life for an officer was formerly practicable —but now cannot be submitted to without utter, irremediable disgrace. Officers are now, in general, men of education and information; want of knowledge, sense, manners, must consequently be immediately detected, ridiculed, and despised, in a military man. Of this we have not long since seen lamentable examples in the raw officers who have lately disgraced themselves in my neighbourhood in Ireland — that Major Benson and Captain Williamson. But I will not advert to such insignificant individuals, such are rare exceptions—I leave them out of the question—I reason on general principles. The life of an officer is not now a life of parade, of coxcombical or of profligate idleness—but of active service, of continual hardship and danger. All the descriptions which we see in ancient history of a soldier's life, descriptions which in times of peace appeared like romance, are now realized; military exploits fill every day's newspapers, every day's conversation. A martial spirit is now essential to the liberty and the existence of our own country. In the present state of things, the military must be the most honourable profession, because the most useful. Every movement of an army is followed wherever it goes, by the public hopes and fears. Every officer must now feel, besides this sense of collective importance, a belief that his only dependence must be on his own merit—and thus his ambition, his enthusiasm, are raised; and, when once this noble ardour is kindled in the breast, it excites to exertion, and supports under endurance. But I forget myself," said the count, checking his enthusiasm; "I promised to speak soberly. If I have said too much, your own good sense, my lord, will correct me, and your good nature will forgive the prolixity of an old man, touched upon his favourite subject —the passion of his youth."

Lord Colambre, of course, assured the count that he was not tired. Indeed, the enthusiasm with which this old officer spoke of his profession, and the high point of view in which he placed

it, increased our hero's desire to serve a campaign abro
Good sense, politeness, and experience of the world preser
Count O'Halloran from that foible with which old officers
commonly reproached, of talking continually of their o
military exploits. Though retired from the world, he h
contrived, by reading the best books, and corresponding w
persons of good information, to keep up with the current
modern affairs; and he seldom spoke of those in which he h
been formerly engaged. He rather too studiously avoid
speaking of himself; and this fear of egotism diminished t
peculiar interest he might have inspired: it disappointed curiosi
and deprived those with whom he conversed of many enterta
ing and instructive anecdotes. However, he sometimes ma
exceptions to his general rule in favour of persons who peculia
pleased him, and Lord Colambre was of this number.

He this evening, for the first time, spoke to his lordship of t
years he had spent in the Austrian service; told him anecdo
of the emperor; spoke of many distinguished public charact
whom he had known abroad; of those officers who had been l
friends and companions. Among others he mentioned, wi
particular regard, a young English officer who had been at t
same time with him in the Austrian service, a gentleman of t
name of Reynolds.

The name struck Lord Colambre: it was the name of the offic
who had been the cause of the disgrace of Miss St. Omar—
Miss Nugent's mother. "But there are so many Reynoldses.'

He eagerly asked the age—the character of this officer.

"He was a gallant youth," said the count, "but too adve
turous—too rash. He fell, after distinguishing himself in
glorious manner, in his twentieth year—died in my arms."

"Married or unmarried?" cried Lord Colambre.

"Married—he had been privately married, less than a ye
before his death, to a very young English lady, who had be
educated at a convent in Vienna. He was heir to a considerab
property, I believe, and the young lady had little fortune; a
the affair was kept secret, from the fear of offending his friend
or for some other reason—I do not recollect the particulars."

"Did he acknowledge his marriage?" said Lord Colambre.

"Never, till he was dying—then he confided his secret to me.

"Do you recollect the name of the young lady he married?"

"Yes—a Miss St. Omar."

"St. Omar!" repeated Lord Colambre, with an expression of lively joy in his countenance. "But are you certain, my dear count, that she was really married, legally married, to Mr. Reynolds? Her marriage has been denied by all his friends and relations—hers have never been able to establish it—her daughter is——My dear count, were you present at the marriage?"

"No," said the count, "I was not present at the marriage; I never saw the lady; nor do I know any thing of the affair, except that Mr. Reynolds, when he was dying, assured me that he was privately married to a Miss St. Omar, who was then boarding at a convent in Vienna. The young man expressed great regret at leaving her totally unprovided for; but said that he trusted his father would acknowledge her, and that her friends would be reconciled to her. He was not of age, he said, to make a will; but I think he told me that his child, who at that time was not born, would, even if it should be a girl, inherit a considerable property. With this I cannot, however, charge my memory positively; but he put a packet into my hands which, he told me, contained a certificate of his marriage, and, I think he said, a letter to his father: this he requested that I would transmit to England by some safe hand. Immediately after his death, I went to the English ambassador, who was then leaving Vienna, and delivered the packet into his hands: he promised to have it safely delivered. I was obliged to go the next day, with the troops, to a distant part of the country. When I returned, I inquired at the convent what had become of Miss St. Omar—I should say Mrs. Reynolds; and I was told that she had removed from the convent to private lodgings in the town, some time previous to the birth of her child. The abbess seemed much scandalized by the whole transaction; and I remember I relieved her mind by assuring her that there had been a regular marriage. For poor young Reynolds' sake, I made farther inquiries about the widow, intending, of course, to act as a friend, if she were in any difficulty or distress. But I found, on inquiry at her lodgings, that her brother had come from England for her, and had carried her and her infant away. The active scenes," continued the count, "in which I was immediately afterwards

engaged, drove the whole affair from my mind. Now that your questions have recalled them, I feel certain of the facts I have mentioned; and I am ready to establish them by my testimony."

Lord Colambre thanked him with an eagerness that showed how much he was interested in the event. It was clear, he said, that either the packet left with the ambassador had not been delivered, or that the father of Mr. Reynolds had suppressed the certificate of the marriage, as it had never been acknowledged by him or by any of the family. Lord Colambre now frankly told the count why he was so anxious about this affair; and Count O'Halloran, with all the warmth of youth, and with all the ardent generosity characteristic of his country, entered into his feelings, declaring that he would never rest till he had established the truth.

"Unfortunately," said the count, "the ambassador who took the packet in charge is dead. I am afraid we shall have difficulty."

"But he must have had some secretary," said Lord Colambre: "who was his secretary?—we can apply to him."

"His secretary is now chargé d'affaires in Vienna—we cannot get at him."

"Into whose hands have that ambassador's papers fallen—who is his executor?" said Lord Colambre.

"His executor!—now you have it," cried the count. "His executor is the very man who will do your business—your friend Sir James Brooke is the executor. All papers, of course, are in his hands; or he can have access to any that are in the hands of the family. The family seat is within a few miles of Sir James Brooke's, in Huntingdonshire, where, as I told you before, he now is."

"I'll go to him immediately—set out in the mail this night. Just in time!" cried Lord Colambre, pulling out his watch with one hand, and ringing the bell with the other.

"Run and take a place for me in the mail for Huntingdon. Go directly," said Lord Colambre to the servant.

"And take two places, if you please, sir," said the count. "My lord, I will accompany you."

But this Lord Colambre would not permit, as it would be unnecessary to fatigue the good old general; and a letter from his

ɜs Brooke would do all that the count could effect by
e: the search for the papers would be made by Sir
. if the packet could be recovered, or if any memo-
' mode of ascertaining that it had actually been
ɔ old Reynolds could be discovered, Lord Colambre
ıld then call upon the count for his assistance, and
ı to identify the packet; or to go with him to Mr.
ɔ make farther inquiries; and to certify, at all events,
man's dying acknowledgment of his marriage and of

e in the mail, just in time, was taken. Lord Colambre
ınt in search of his father, with a note, explaining
:y of his sudden departure. All the business which
ɔ be done in town he knew Lord Clonbrony could
without his assistance. Then he wrote a few lines to
on the very sheet of paper on which, a few hours
ıad sorrowfully and slowly begun,
ır mother—Miss Nugent."
'fully and rapidly went on,

ɔEAR MOTHER AND MISS NUGENT,
to be with you on Wednesday se'nnight; but if
circumstances should delay me, I will certainly write
n. Dear mother, believe me,

Your obliged and grateful son,

"COLAMBRE."

ıt, in the mean time, wrote a letter for him to Sir
ıke, describing the packet which he had given to the
, and relating all the circumstances that could lead
ɜry. Lord Colambre, almost before the wax was hard,
etter; the count seeming almost as eager to hurry
ıe was to set out. He thanked the count with few
with strong feeling. Joy and love returned in full
ur hero's soul; all the military ideas, which but an
ɜ filled his imagination, were put to flight: Spain
nd green Ireland reappeared.
ıey shook hands at parting, the good old general,
ɜ, said to him, "I believe I had better not stir in the

matter of Benson's commission till I hear more from you. My harangue, in favour of the military profession, will, I fancy, prove, like most other harangues, a waste of words."

CHAPTER XVI.

In what words of polite circumlocution, or of cautious diplomacy, shall we say, or hint, that the deceased ambassador's papers were found in shameful disorder. His excellency's executor, Sir James Brooke, however, was indefatigable in his researches. He and Lord Colambre spent two whole days in looking over portfolios of letters, and memorials, and manifestoes, and bundles of paper of the most heterogeneous sorts; some of them without any docket or direction to lead to a knowledge of their contents; others written upon in such a manner as to give an erroneous notion of their nature; so that it was necessary to untie every paper separately. At last, when they had opened, as they thought, every paper, and, wearied and in despair, were just on the point of giving up the search, Lord Colambre spied a bundle of old newspapers at the bottom of a trunk.

"They are only old Vienna Gazettes; I looked at them," said Sir James.

Lord Colambre, upon this assurance, was going to throw them into the trunk again; but observing that the bundle had not been untied, he opened it, and withinside of the newspapers he found a rough copy of the ambassador's journal, and with it the packet directed to Ralph Reynolds, sen., Esq., Old Court, Suffolk, per favour of his excellency Earl * * * * *—a note on the cover, signed O'Halloran, stating when received by him, and the date of the day when delivered to the ambassador—seals unbroken. Our hero was in such a transport of joy at the sight of this packet, and his friend Sir James Brooke so full of his congratulations, that they forgot to curse the ambassador's carelessness, which had been the cause of so much evil.

The next thing to be done was to deliver the packet to Ralph Reynolds, Old Court, Suffolk. But when Lord Colambre arrived

t Old Court, Suffolk, he found all the gates locked, and no dmittance to be had. At last an old woman came out of the orter's lodge, who said Mr. Reynolds was not there, and she ould not say where he was. After our hero had opened her eart by the present of half a guinea, she explained, that she could not *justly* say where he was, because that he never let ny body of his own people know where he was any day; he had everal different houses and places in different parts, and far off ounties, and other shires, as she heard, and by times he was at ne, and by times at another. The names of two of the places, 'oddrington and Little Wrestham, she knew; but there were thers to which she could give no direction. He had houses in dd parts of London, too, that he let; and sometimes, when the odgers' time was out, he would go, and be never heard of for a onth, may be, in one of them. In short, there was no telling r saying where he was or would be one day of the week, by here he had been the last."

When Lord Colambre expressed some surprise that an old entleman, as he conceived Mr. Ralph Reynolds to be, should hange places so frequently, the old woman answered, "that hough her master was a deal on the wrong side of seventy, and hough, to look at him, you'd think he was glued to his chair, nd would fall to pieces if he should stir out of it, yet he was as lert, and thought no more of going about, than if he was as oung as the gentleman who was now speaking to her. It was ld Mr. Reynolds' delight to come down and surprise his eople at his different places, and see that they were keeping ll tight."

"What sort of a man is he?—Is he a miser?" said Lord Colambre.

"He is a miser, and he is not a miser," said the woman. 'Now he'd think as much of the waste of a penny as another man would of a hundred pounds, and yet he would give a hundred pounds easier than another would give a penny, when he's in the humour. But his humour is very odd, and there's no knowing where to have him; he's cross-grained, and more *positiver*-like than a mule; and his deafness made him worse in this, because he never heard what nobody said, but would say on his own way—he was very *odd*, but not *cracked*—no, he

was as clear-headed, when he took a thing the right way, as any man could be, and as clever, and could talk as well as any member of parliament—and good-natured, and kind-hearted, where he would take a fancy—but then, may be, it would be to a dog (he was remarkably fond of dogs), or a cat, or a rat even, that he would take a fancy, and think more of 'em than he would of a Christian. But, poor gentleman, there's great allowance," said she, "to be made for him, that lost his son and heir—that would have been heir to all, and a fine youth that he doted upon. But," continued the old woman, in whose mind the transitions from great to little, from serious to trivial, were ludicrously abrupt, "that was no reason why the old gentleman should scold me last time he was here, as he did, for as long as ever he could stand over me, only because I killed a mouse who was eating my cheese; and, before night, he beat a boy for stealing a piece of that same cheese; and he would never, when down here, let me set a mouse-trap."

"Well, my good woman," interrupted Lord Colambre, who was little interested in this affair of the mouse-trap, and nowise curious to learn more of Mr. Reynolds' domestic economy, "I'll not trouble you any farther, if you can be so good as to tell me the road to Toddrington, or to Little Wickham, I think you call it."

"Little Wickham!" repeated the woman, laughing—"Bless you, sir, where do you come from? It's Little Wrestham: sure every body knows, near Lantry; and keep the *pike* till you come to the turn at Rotherford, and then you strike off into the by-road to the left, and then turn again at the ford to the right. But, if you are going to Toddrington, you don't go the road to market, which is at the first turn to the left, and the cross country road, where there's no quarter, and Toddrington lies—but for Wrestham, you take the road to market."

It was some time before our hero could persuade the old woman to stick to Little Wrestham, or to Toddrington, and not to mix the directions for the different roads together—he took patience, for his impatience only confused his director the more. In process of time he made out, and wrote down, the various turns that he was to follow, to reach Little Wrestham; but no human power could get her from Little Wrestham to Toddring-

ton, though she knew the road perfectly well; but she had, for the seventeen last years, been used to go "the other road," and all the carriers went that way, and passed the door, and that was all she could certify.

Little Wrestham, after turning to the left and right as often as his directory required, our hero happily reached: but, unhappily, he found no Mr. Reynolds there; only a steward, who gave nearly the same account of his master as had been given by the old woman, and could not guess even where the gentleman might now be. Toddrington was as likely as any place—but he could not say.

"Perseverance against fortune." To Toddrington our hero proceeded, through cross country roads—such roads!—very different from the Irish roads. Waggon ruts, into which the carriage wheels sunk nearly to the nave—and, from time to time, "sloughs of despond," through which it seemed impossible to drag, walk, wade, or swim, and all the time with a sulky postilion. "Oh, how unlike my Larry!" thought Lord Colambre.

At length, in a very narrow lane, going up a hill, said to be two miles of ascent, they overtook a heavy laden waggon, and they were obliged to go step by step behind it, whilst, enjoying the gentleman's impatience much, and the postilion's sulkiness more, the waggoner, in his embroidered frock, walked in state, with his long sceptre in his hand.

The postilion muttered "curses not loud, but deep." Deep or loud, no purpose would they have answered; the waggoner's temper was proof against curse in or out of the English language; and from their snail's pace neither *Dickens*, nor devil, nor any postilion in England could make him put his horses. Lord Colambre jumped out of the chaise, and, walking beside him, began to talk to him; and spoke of his horses, their bells, their trappings; the beauty and strength of the thill-horse—the value of the whole team, which his lordship happening to guess right within ten pounds, and showing, moreover, some skill about road-making and waggon-wheels, and being fortunately of the waggoner's own opinion in the great question about conical and cylindrical rims, he was pleased with the young chap of a gentleman; and, in spite of the chuffiness of his appearance and churlishness of his speech, this waggoner's bosom being "made

of penetrable stuff," he determined to let the gentleman pass. Accordingly, when half way up the hill, and the head of the fore-horse came near an open gate, the waggoner, without saying one word or turning his head, touched the horse with his long whip —and the horse turned in at the gate, and then came, "Dobbin! —Jeho!" and strange calls and sounds, which all the other horses of the team obeyed; and the waggon turned into the farm-yard.

"Now, master! while I turn, you may pass."

The covering of the waggon caught in the hedge as the waggon turned in; and as the sacking was drawn back, some of the packages were disturbed—a cheese was just rolling off on the side next Lord Colambre; he stopped it from falling: the direction caught his quick eye—"To Ralph Reynolds, Esq."— "*Toddrington*" scratched out; "Red Lion Square, London," written in another hand below.

"Now I have found him! And surely I know that hand!" said Lord Colambre to himself, looking more closely at the direction.

The original direction was certainly in a hand-writing well known to him—it was Lady Dashfort's.

"That there cheese, that you're looking at so cur'ously," said the waggoner, "has been a great traveller; for it came all the way down from Lon'on, and now its going all the way up again back, on account of not finding the gentleman at home; and the man that booked it told me as how it came from foreign parts."

Lord Colambre took down the direction, tossed the honest waggoner a guinea, wished him good night, passed, and went on. As soon as he could, he turned into the London road—at the first town, got a place in the mail—reached London—saw his father—went directly to his friend, Count O'Halloran, who was delighted when he beheld the packet. Lord Colambre was extremely eager to go immediately to old Reynolds, fatigued as he was; for he had travelled night and day, and had scarcely allowed himself, mind or body, one moment's repose.

"Heroes must sleep, and lovers too; or they soon will cease to be heroes or lovers!" said the count. "Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! this night; and to-morrow morning we'll finish the ad-

ventures in Red Lion Square, or I will accompany you when and where you will; if necessary, to earth's remotest bounds."

The next morning Lord Colambre went to breakfast with the count. The count, who was not in love, was not up, for our hero was half an hour earlier than the time appointed. The old servant Ulick, who had attended his master to England, was very glad to see Lord Colambre again, and, showing him into the breakfast parlour, could not help saying, in defence of his master's punctuality, "Your clocks, I suppose, my lord, are half an hour faster than ours: my master will be ready to the moment."

The count soon appeared—breakfast was soon over, and the carriage at the door; for the count sympathized in his young friend's impatience. As they were setting out, the count's large Irish dog pushed out of the house-door to follow them; and his master would have forbidden him, but Lord Colambre begged that he might be permitted to accompany them; for his lordship recollected the old woman's having mentioned that Mr. Reynolds was fond of dogs.

They arrived in Red Lion Square, found the house of Mr. Reynolds, and, contrary to the count's prognostics, found the old gentleman up, and they saw him in his red night-cap at his parlour window. After some minutes' running backwards and forwards of a boy in the passage, and two or three peeps taken over the blinds by the old gentleman, they were admitted.

The boy could not master their names; so they were obliged reciprocally to announce themselves—"Count O'Halloran and Lord Colambre." The names seemed to make no impression on the old gentleman; but he deliberately looked at the count and his lordship, as if studying *what* rather than *who* they were. In spite of the red night-cap, and a flowered dressing-gown, Mr. Reynolds looked like a gentleman, an odd gentleman—but still a gentleman.

As Count O'Halloran came into the room, and as his large dog attempted to follow, the count's look expressed—

"Say, shall I let him in, or shut the door?"

"Oh, let him in, by all means, sir, if you please! I am fond of dogs; and a finer one I never saw: pray, gentlemen, be

seated," said he—a portion of the complacency, inspired by the sight of the dog, diffusing itself over his manner towards the master of so fine an animal, and even extending to the master's companion, though in an inferior degree. Whilst Mr. Reynolds stroked the dog, the count told him that "the dog was of a curious breed, now almost extinct—the Irish greyhound; only one nobleman in Ireland, it is said, has a few of the species remaining in his possession——Now, lie down, Hannibal," said the count. "Mr. Reynolds, we have taken the liberty, though strangers, of waiting upon you——"

"I beg your pardon, sir," interrupted Mr. Reynolds; "but did I understand you rightly, that a few of the same species are still to be had from one nobleman in Ireland? Pray, what is his name?" said he, taking out his pencil.

The count wrote the name for him, but observed, that "he had asserted only that a few of these dogs remained in the possession of that nobleman; he could not answer for it that they were *to be had.*"

"Oh, I have ways and means," said old Reynolds; and, rapping his snuff-box, and talking, as it was his custom, loud to himself, "Lady Dashfort knows all those Irish lords: she shall get one for me—ay! ay!"

Count O'Halloran replied, as if the words had been addressed to him, "Lady Dashfort is in England."

"I know it, sir; she is in London," said Mr. Reynolds, hastily. "What do you know of her?"

"I know, sir, that she is not likely to return to Ireland, and that I am; and so is my young friend here: and if the thing can be accomplished, we will get it done for you."

Lord Colambre joined in this promise, and added, that, "if the dog could be obtained, he would undertake to have him safely sent over to England."

"Sir—gentlemen! I'm much obliged; that is, when you have done the thing I shall be much obliged. Bnt, may be, you are only making me civil speeches!"

"Of that, sir," said the count, smiling with much temper, "your own sagacity and knowledge of the world must enable you to judge."

"For my own part, I can only say," cried Lord Colambre,

"that I am not in the habit of being reproached with saying one thing and meaning another."

"Hot! I see," said old Reynolds, nodding as he looked at Lord Colambre: "Cool!" added he, nodding at the count. "But a time for every thing; I was hot once: both answers good for their ages."

This speech Lord Colambre and the count tacitly agreed to consider as another *apart*, which they were not to hear, or seem to hear. The count began again on the business of their visit, as he saw that Lord Colambre was boiling with impatience, and feared that he should *boil over*, and spoil all. The count commenced with, "Mr. Reynolds, your name sounds to me like the name of a friend; for I had once a friend of that name: I once had the pleasure (and a very great pleasure it was to me) to be intimately acquainted abroad, on the continent, with a very amiable and gallant youth—your son!"

"Take care, sir," said the old man, starting up from his chair, and instantly sinking down again, "take care! Don't mention him to me—unless you would strike me dead on the spot!"

The convulsed motions of his fingers and face worked for some moments; whilst the count and Lord Colambre, much shocked and alarmed, stood in silence.

The convulsed motions ceased; and the old man unbuttoned his waistcoat, as if to relieve some sense of oppression; uncovered his gray hairs; and, after leaning back to rest himself, with his eyes fixed, and in reverie for a few moments, he sat upright again in his chair, and exclaimed, as he looked round, "Son!—Did not somebody say that word? Who is so cruel to say that word before me? Nobody has ever spoken of him to me—but once, since his death! Do you know, sir," said he, fixing his eyes on Count O'Halloran, and laying his cold hand on him, "do you know where he was buried, I ask you, sir? do you remember how he died?"

"Too well! too well!" cried the count, so much affected as to be scarcely able to pronounce the words; "he died in my arms: I buried him myself!"

"Impossible!" cried Mr. Reynolds. "Why do you say so, sir?" said he, studying the count's face with a sort of bewildered

earnestness. "Impossible! His body was sent over to me in a lead coffin; and I saw it—and I was asked——and I answered, 'In the family vault.' But the shock is over," said he: "and, gentlemen, if the business of your visit relates to that subject, I trust I am now sufficiently composed to attend to you. Indeed, I ought to be prepared; for I had reason, for years, to expect the stroke; and yet, when it came, it seemed sudden!—it stunned me—put an end to all my worldly prospects—left me childless, without a single descendant, or relation near enough to be dear to me! I am an insulated being!"

"No, sir, you are not an insulated being," said Lord Colambre: "You have a near relation, who will, who must, be dear to you; who will make you amends for all you have lost, all you have suffered—who will bring peace and joy to your heart: you have a grand-daughter."

"No, sir; I have no grand-daughter," said old Reynolds, his face and whole form becoming rigid with the expression of obstinacy. "Rather have no descendant than be forced to acknowledge an illegitimate child."

"My lord, I entreat as a friend—I command you to be patient," said the count, who saw Lord Colambre's indignation suddenly rise.

"So, then, this is the purpose of your visit," continued old Reynolds: "and you come from my enemies, from the St. Omars, and you are in a league with them," continued old Reynolds: "and all this time it is of my eldest son you have been talking."

"Yes, sir," replied the count; "of Captain Reynolds, who fell in battle, in the Austrian service, about nineteen years ago—a more gallant and amiable youth never lived."

Pleasure revived through the dull look of obstinacy in the father's eyes.

"He was, as you say, sir, a gallant, an amiable youth, once—and he was my pride, and I loved him, too, once—but did not you know I had another?"

"No, sir, we did not—we are, you may perceive, totally ignorant of your family and of your affairs—we have no connexion whatever or knowledge of any of the St. Omars."

"I detest the sound of the name," cried Lord Colambre.

"Oh, good! good!—Well! well! I beg your pardon, gentlemen,

housand times—I am a hasty, very hasty old man; but I have
en harassed, persecuted, hunted by wretches, who got a scent of
r gold; often in my rage I longed to throw my treasure-bags
my pursuers, and bid them leave me to die in peace. You
ve feelings, I see, both of you, gentlemen; excuse, and bear
th my temper."

"Bear with you! Much enforced, the best tempers will emit
hasty spark," said the count, looking at Lord Colambre, who
is now cool again; and who, with a countenance full of
mpassion, sat with his eyes fixed upon the poor—no, not the
or, but the unhappy old man.

"Yes, I had another son," continued Mr. Reynolds, "and
him all my affections concentrated when I lost my eldest,
d for him I desired to preserve the estate which his mother
ought into the family. Since you know nothing of my affairs,
me explain to you: that estate was so settled, that it would
ve gone to the child, even the daughter of my eldest son, if
ere had been a legitimate child. But I knew there was no
rriage, and I held out firm to my opinion. 'If there was a
rriage,' said I, 'show me the marriage certificate, and I will
knowledge the marriage, and acknowledge the child:' but
y could not, and I knew they could not; and I kept the
ate for my darling boy," cried the old gentleman, with the
ultation of successful positiveness again appearing strong in
physiognomy: but, suddenly changing and relaxing, his
untenance fell, and he added, "But now I have no darling
y. What use all!—all must go to the heir at law, or I must
ll it to a stranger—a lady of quality, who has just found out
e is my relation—God knows how! I'm no genealogist—and
nds me Irish cheese, and Iceland moss, for my breakfast, and
r waiting gentlewoman to namby-pamby me. Oh, I'm sick of
all—see through it—wish I was blind—wish I had a hiding-
ace, where flatterers could not find me—pursued, chased—
ust change my lodgings again to-morrow—will, will——I beg
ur pardon, gentlemen, again: you were going to tell me, sir,
mething more of my eldest son; and how I was led away
om the subject, I don't know; but I meant only to have
sured you that his memory was dear to me, till I was so
rmented about that unfortunate affair of his pretended

marriage, that at length I hated to hear him named; heir at law, at last, will triumph over me."

"No, my good sir, not if you triumph over yoursel justice," cried Lord Colambre; "if you listen to the tru my friend will tell you, and if you will read and b confirmation of it, under your son's own hand, in this p

"His own hand indeed! His seal—unbroken. Bu when—where—why was it kept so long, and how ca your hands?"

Count O'Halloran told Mr. Reynolds that the pa been given to him by Captain Reynolds on his d related the dying acknowledgment which Captain Rey made of his marriage; and gave an account of the d the packet to the ambassador, who had promised to tr faithfully. Lord Colambre told the manner in whic been mislaid, and at last recovered from among the ambassador's papers. The father still gazed at the and re-examined the seals.

"My son's hand-writing—my son's seals! But wh certificate of the marriage?" repeated he; "if it is of this packet, I have done great *in*——but I am co never was a marriage. Yet I wish now it could be only, in that case, I have for years done great ——"

"Won't you open the packet, sir?" said Lord Colan

Mr. Reynolds looked up at him with a look that don't clearly know what interest you have in all thi unable to speak, and his hands trembling so that scarcely break the seals, he tore off the cover, laid t before him, sat down, and took breath. Lord Colam ever impatient, had now too much humanity to hurr gentleman: he only ran for the spectacles, which he the chimney-piece, rubbed them bright, and held the Mr. Reynolds stretched his hand out for them, put ther the first paper he opened was the certificate of the mar read it aloud, and, putting it down, said, "Now I ack the marriage. I always said, if there is a marriage tl be a certificate. And you see now there is a cert acknowledge the marriage."

"And now," cried Lord Colambre, "I am happy,

happy. Acknowledge your grand-daughter, sir—acknowledge Miss Nugent."

"Acknowledge whom, sir?"

"Acknowledge Miss Reynolds—your grand-daughter; I ask no more—do what you will with your fortune."

"Oh, now I understand—I begin to understand, this young gentleman is in love—but where is my grand-daughter? how shall I know she is my grand-daughter? I have not heard of her since she was an infant—I forgot her existence—I have done her great injustice."

"She knows nothing of it, sir," said Lord Colambre, who now entered into a full explanation of Miss Nugent's history, and of her connexion with his family, and of his own attachment to her; concluding the whole by assuring Mr. Reynolds that his grand-daughter had every virtue under heaven. "And as to your fortune, sir, I know that she will, as I do, say——"

"No matter what she will say," interrupted old Reynolds; "where is she? When I see her, I shall hear what she says. Tell me where she is—let me see her. I long to see whether there is any likeness to her poor father. Where is she? Let me see her immediately."

"She is one hundred and sixty miles off, sir, at Buxton."

"Well, my lord, and what is a hundred and sixty miles? I suppose you think I can't stir from my chair, but you are mistaken. I think nothing of a journey of a hundred and sixty miles—I am ready to set off to-morrow—this instant."

Lord Colambre said, that he was sure Miss Reynolds would obey her grandfather's slightest summons, as it was her duty to do, and would be with him as soon as possible, if this would be more agreeable to him. "I will write to her instantly," said his lordship, "if you will commission me."

"No, my lord, I do not commission—I will go—I think nothing, I say, of a journey of a hundred and sixty miles—I'll go—and set out to-morrow morning."

Lord Colambre and the count, perfectly satisfied with the result of their visit, now thought it best to leave old Reynolds at liberty to rest himself, after so many strong and varied feelings. They paid their parting compliments, settled the time for the next day's journey, and were just going to quit the room, when

Lord Colambre heard in the passage a well-known voice—the voice of Mrs. Petito.

"Oh, no, my Lady Dashfort's best compliments, and I will call again."

"No, no," cried old Reynolds, pulling his bell; "I'll have no calling again—I'll be hanged if I do! Let her in now, and I'll see her—Jack! let in that woman now or never."

"The lady's gone, sir, out of the street door."

"After her, then—now or never, tell her."

"Sir, she was in a hackney coach."

Old Reynolds jumped up, and went to the window himself, and, seeing the hackney coachman just turning, beckoned at the window, and Mrs. Petito was set down again, and ushered in by Jack, who announced her as, "the lady, sir." The only lady he had seen in that house.

"My dear Mr. Reynolds, I'm so obliged to you for letting me in," cried Mrs. Petito, adjusting her shawl in the passage, and speaking in a voice and manner well mimicked after her betters. "You are so very good and kind, and I am so much obliged to you."

"You are not obliged to me, and I am neither good nor kind," said old Reynolds.

"You strange man," said Mrs. Petito, advancing graceful in shawl drapery; but she stopped short. "My Lord Colambre and Count O'Halloran, as I hope to be saved!"

"I did not know Mrs. Petito was an acquaintance of yours, gentlemen," said Mr. Reynolds, smiling shrewdly.

Count O'Halloran was too polite to deny his acquaintance with a lady who challenged it by thus naming him; but he had not the slightest recollection of her, though it seems he had met her on the stairs when he visited Lady Dashfort at Killpatrickstown. Lord Colambre was "indeed *undeniably an old acquaintance*:" and as soon as she had recovered from her first natural start and vulgar exclamation, she with very easy familiarity hoped "my Lady Clonbrony, and my Lord, and Miss Nugent, and all her friends in the family, were well;" and said, "she did not know whether she was to congratulate his lordship or not upon Miss Broadhurst, my Lady Berryl's marriage, but she should soon have to hope for his lordship's congratulations for another

ırriage in *her* present family—Lady Isabel to Colonel Heath-
ck, who was come in for a large *portion*, and they are buying
e wedding clothes—sights of clothes—and the di'monds, this
y; and Lady Dashfort and my Lady Isabel sent me especially,
, to you, Mr. Reynolds, and to tell you, sir, before any body
ıe; and to hope the cheese *come* safe up again at last; and to
k whether the Iceland moss agrees with your chocolate, and is
ılatable? it's the most *diluent* thing upon the universal earth,
ıd the most *tonic* and fashionable—the Duchess of Torcaster
kes it always for breakfast, and Lady St. James too is quite a
nvert, and I hear the Duke of V * * * takes it too."

"And the devil may take it too, for any thing that I care,"
id old Reynolds.

"Oh, my dear, dear sir! you are so refractory a patient."

"I am no patient at all, ma'am, and have no patience either:
ım as well as you are, or my Lady Dashfort either, and hope,
ıd willing, long to continue so."

Mrs. Petito smiled aside at Lord Colambre, to mark her per-
ɔtion of the man's strangeness. Then, in a cajoling voice,
lressing herself to the old gentleman, "Long, long, I hope, to
ıtinue so, if Heaven grants my daily and nightly prayers, and
Lady Dashfort's also. So, Mr. Reynolds, if the ladies'
ıyers are of any avail, you ought to be purely, and I suppose
ies' prayers have the precedence in efficacy. But it was not
ɔrayers and death-bed affairs I came commissioned to treat—
of weddings my diplomacy was to speak: and to premise my
ly Dashfort would have come herself in her carriage, but is
ried out of her senses, and my Lady Isabel could not in
per modesty; so they sent me as their *double*, to hope you,
dear Mr. Reynolds, who is one of the family relations, will
ıour the wedding with your presence."

'It would be no honour, and they know that as well as I do,"
l the intractable Mr. Reynolds. "It will be no advantage,
ıer; but that they do not know as well as I do. Mrs. Petito,
ıave you and your lady all trouble about me in future, please
et my Lady Dashfort know that I have just received and
d the certificate of my son Captain Reynolds' marriage with
ss St. Omar. I have acknowledged the marriage. Better
than never; and to-morrow morning, God willing, shall set

out with this young nobleman for Buxton, where I hope to see, and intend publicly to acknowledge, my grand-daughter—provided she will acknowledge me."

"*Crimini!*" exclaimed Mrs. Petito, "what new turns are here? Well, sir, I shall tell my lady of the *metamorphoses* that have taken place, though by what magic I can't guess. But, since it seems annoying and inopportune, I shall make my *finale*, and shall thus leave a verbal P.P.C.—as you are leaving town, it seems, for Buxton so early in the morning. My Lord Colambre, if I see rightly into a millstone, as I hope and believe I do on the present occasion, I have to congratulate your lordship (haven't I?) upon something like a succession, or a windfall, in this *denewment*. And I beg you'll make my humble respects acceptable to the *ci-devant* Miss Grace Nugent that was; and I won't *derrogate* her by any other name in the interregnum, as I am persuaded it will only be a temporary name, scarce worth assuming, except for the honour of the public adoption; and that will, I'm confident, be soon exchanged for a viscount's title, or I have no sagacity or sympathy. I hope I don't (pray don't let me) put you to the blush, my lord."

Lord Colambre would not have let her, if he could have helped it.

"Count O'Halloran, your most obedient! I had the honour of meeting you at Killpatricks-town," said Mrs. Petito, backing to the door, and twitching her shawl. She stumbled, nearly fell down, over the large dog—caught by the door, and recovered herself—Hannibal rose and shook his ears. "Poor fellow! you are of my acquaintance, too." She would have stroked his head; but Hannibal walked off indignant, and so did she.

Thus ended certain hopes: for Mrs. Petito had conceived that her *diplomacy* might be turned to account; that in her character of an ambassadress, as Lady Dashfort's double, by the aid of Iceland moss in chocolate, of flattery properly administered, and of bearing with all her *dear* Mr. Reynolds' *oddnesses* and *roughnesses*, she might in time—that is to say, before he made a new will—become his dear Mrs. Petito; or (for stranger things have happened and do happen every day), his dear Mrs. Reynolds! Mrs. Petito, however, was good at a retreat; and she flattered herself that at least nothing of this underplot had appeared: and

at all events she secured, by her services in this embassy, the long looked-for object of her ambition, Lady Dashfort's scarlet velvet gown—" not yet a thread the worse for the wear!" One cordial look at this comforted her for the loss of her expected *octogenaire;* and she proceeded to discomfit her lady, by repeating the message with which strange old Mr. Reynolds had charged her. So ended all Lady Dashfort's hopes of his fortune.

Since the death of his youngest son, she had been indefatigable in her attentions, and sanguine in her hopes: the disappointment affected both her interest and her pride, as an *intrigante*. It was necessary, however, to keep her feelings to herself; for if Heathcock should hear any thing of the matter before the articles were signed, he might " be off!"—so she put him and Lady Isabel into her coach directly—drove to Rundell and Bridges', to make sure at all events of the jewels.

In the mean time Count O'Halloran and Lord Colambre, delighted with the result of their visit, took leave of Mr. Reynolds, after having arranged the journey, and appointed the hour for setting off the next day. Lord Colambre proposed to call upon Mr. Reynolds in the evening, and introduce his father, Lord Clonbrony; but Mr. Reynolds said, " No, no! I'm not ceremonious. I have given you proofs enough of that, I think, in the short time we've been already acquainted. Time enough to introduce your father to me when we are in a carriage, going our journey: then we can talk, and get acquainted: but merely to come this evening in a hurry, and say, 'Lord Clonbrony, Mr. Reynolds;—Mr. Reynolds, Lord Clonbrony'—and then bob our two heads at one another, and scrape one foot back, and away!—where's the use of that nonsense at my time of life, or at any time of life? No, no! we have enough to do without that, I dare say.——Good morning to you, Count O'Halloran! I thank you heartily. From the first moment I saw you, I liked you: lucky too, that you brought your dog with you! 'Twas Hannibal made me first let you in; I saw him over the top of the blind. Hannibal, my good fellow! I'm more obliged to you than you can guess."

" So are we all," said Lord Colambre.

Hannibal was well patted, and then they parted. In returning home they met Sir James Brooke.

"I told you," said Sir James, "I should be in London almost as soon as you. Have you found old Reynolds?"

"Just come from him."

"How does your business prosper? I hope as well as mine."

A history of all that had passed up to the present moment was given, and hearty congratulations received.

"Where are you going now, Sir James?—cannot you come with us?" said Lord Colambre and the count.

"Impossible," replied Sir James;—"but, perhaps, you can come with me—I'm going to Rundell and Bridges', to give some old family diamonds either to be new set or exchanged. Count O'Halloran, I know you are a judge of these things; pray come and give me your opinion."

"Better consult your bride elect!" said the count.

"No; she knows little of the matter—and cares less," replied Sir James.

"Not so this bride elect, or I mistake her much," said the count, as they passed by the window, at Rundell and Bridges', and saw Lady Isabel, who, with Lady Dashfort, had been holding consultation deep with the jeweller; and Heathcock, playing *personnage muet.*

Lady Dashfort, who had always, as old Reynolds expressed it, "her head upon her shoulders,"—presence of mind where her interests were concerned, ran to the door before the count and Lord Colambre could enter, giving a hand to each—as if they had all parted the best friends in the world.

"How do? how do?—Give you joy! give me joy! and all that. But mind! not a word," said she, laying her finger upon her lips, "not a word before Heathcock of old Reynolds, or of the best part of the old fool—his fortune!"

The gentlemen bowed, in sign of submission to her ladyship's commands; and comprehended that she feared Heathcock might *be off*, if the best part of his bride (her fortune, or her *expectations*) were lowered in value or in prospect.

"How low is she reduced," whispered Lord Colambre, "when such a husband is thought a prize—and to be secured by a manœuvre!" He sighed.

"Spare that generous sigh!" said Sir James Brooke: "it is wasted."

Lady Isabel, as they approached, turned from a mirror, at which she was trying on a diamond crescent. Her face clouded at the sight of Count O'Halloran and Lord Colambre, and grew dark as hatred when she saw Sir James Brooke. She walked away to the farther end of the shop, and asked one of the shopmen the price of a diamond necklace, which lay upon the counter.

The man said he really did not know; it belonged to Lady Oranmore; it had just been new set for one of her ladyship's daughters, "who is going to be married to Sir James Brooke—one of the gentlemen, my lady, who are just come in."

Then, calling to his master, he asked him the price of the necklace: he named the value, which was considerable.

"I really thought Lady Oranmore and her daughters were vastly too philosophical to think of diamonds," said Lady Isabel to her mother, with a sort of sentimental sneer in her voice and countenance. "But it is some comfort to me to find, in these pattern-women, philosophy and love do not so wholly engross the heart, that they

'Feel every vanity in fondness lost.'"

"'Twould be difficult, in some cases," thought many present.

"'Pon honour, di'monds are cursed expensive things, I know!" said Heathcock. "But, be that as it may," whispered he to the lady, though loud enough to be heard by others, "I've laid a damned round wager, that no woman's diamonds married this winter, under a countess, in Lon'on, shall eclipse Lady Isabel Heathcock's! and Mr. Rundell here's to be judge."

Lady Isabel paid for this promise one of her sweetest smiles; one of those smiles which she had formerly bestowed upon Lord Colambre, and which he had once fancied expressed so much sensibility—such discriminative and delicate penetration.

Our hero felt so much contempt, that he never wasted another sigh of pity for her degradation. Lady Dashfort came up to him as he was standing alone; and, whilst the count and Sir James were settling about the diamonds, "My Lord Colambre," said she, in a low voice, "I know your thoughts, and I could moralize as well as you, if I did not prefer laughing—you are right enough; and so am I, and so is Isabel; we are all right.

For look here: women have not always the liberty of choice, and therefore they can't be expected to have always the power of refusal."

The mother, satisfied with her convenient optimism, got into her carriage with her daughter, her daughter's diamonds, and her precious son-in-law, her daughter's companion for life.

"The more I see," said Count O'Halloran to Lord Colambre, as they left the shop, "the more I find reason to congratulate you upon your escape, my dear lord."

"I owe it not to my own wit or wisdom," said Lord Colambre; "but much to love, and much to friendship," added he, turning to Sir James Brooke: "here was the friend who early warned me against the siren's voice; who, before I knew the Lady Isabel, told me what I have since found to be true, that

> 'Two passions alternately govern her fate—
> Her business is love, but her pleasure is hate.' "

"That is dreadfully severe, Sir James," said Count O'Halloran; "but, I am afraid, is just."

"I am sure it is just, or I would not have said it," replied Sir James Brooke. "For the foibles of the sex, I hope, I have as much indulgence as any man, and for the errors of passion as much pity; but I cannot repress the indignation, the abhorrence I feel against women cold and vain, who use their wit and their charms only to make others miserable."

Lord Colambre recollected at this moment Lady Isabel's look and voice, when she declared that she would let her little finger be cut off to purchase the pleasure of inflicting on Lady De Cressy, for one hour, the torture of jealousy.

"Perhaps," continued Sir James Brooke, "now that I am going to marry into an Irish family, I may feel, with peculiar energy, disapprobation of this mother and daughter on another account; but you, Lord Colambre, will do me the justice to recollect, that before I had any personal interest in the country, I expressed, as a general friend to Ireland, antipathy to those who return the hospitality they received from a warm-hearted people, by publicly setting the example of elegant sentimental hypocrisy, or daring disregard of decorum, by privately endeavouring to destroy the domestic peace of families, on which, at

ast, public as well as private virtue and happiness depend. I do rejoice, my dear Lord Colambre, to hear you say that I had any share in saving you from the siren; and now I will never speak of these ladies more. I am sorry you cannot stay in town to see—but why should I be sorry—we shall meet again, I trust, and I shall introduce you; and you, I hope, will introduce me to a very different charmer. Farewell!—you have my warm good wishes, wherever you go."

Sir James turned off quickly to the street in which Lady Oranmore lived, and Lord Colambre had not time to tell him that he knew and admired his intended bride. Count O'Halloran promised to do this for him.

"And now," said the good count, "I am to take leave of you; and I assure you I do it with so much reluctance, that nothing less than positive engagements to stay in town would prevent me from setting off with you to-morrow; but I shall be soon, very soon, at liberty to return to Ireland; and Clonbrony Castle, if you will give me leave, I will see before I see Halloran Castle."

Lord Colambre joyfully thanked his friend for this promise.

"Nay, it is to indulge myself. I long to see you happy—long to behold the choice of such a heart as yours. Pray do not steal a march upon me—let me know in time. I will leave every thing—even my friend the minister's secret expedition—for your wedding. But I trust I shall be in time."

"Assuredly you will, my dear count; if ever that wedding——"

"*If*," repeated the count.

"*If*," repeated Lord Colambre. "Obstacles which, when we last parted, appeared to me invincible, prevented my having ever even attempted to make an impression on the heart of the woman I love: and if you knew her, count, as well as I do, you would know that her love could 'not unsought be won.'"

"Of that I cannot doubt, or she would not be your choice; but when her love is sought, we have every reason to hope," said the count, smiling, "that it may, because it ought to be, won by tried honour and affection. I only require to be left in hope."

"Well, I leave you hope," said Lord Colambre: "Miss

Nugent—Miss Reynolds, I should say, has been in the habit of considering a union with me as impossible; my mother early instilled this idea into her mind. Miss Nugent thought that duty forbad her to think of me; she told me so: I have seen it in all her conduct and manners. The barriers of habit, the ideas of duty, cannot, ought not, to be thrown down, or suddenly changed, in a well-regulated female mind. And you, I am sure, know enough of the best female hearts, to be aware that time——"

"Well, well, let this dear good charmer take her own time, provided there's none given to affectation, or prudery, or coquetry; and from all these, of course, she must be free; and of course I must be content. Adieu."

CHAPTER XVII.

As Lord Colambre was returning home, he was overtaken by Sir Terence O'Fay.

"Well, my lord," cried Sir Terence, out of breath, "you have led me a pretty dance all over the town: here's a letter somewhere down in my safe pocket for you, which has cost me trouble enough. Phoo! where is it now?—it's from Miss Nugent," said he, holding up the letter. The direction to Grosvenor-square, London, had been scratched out; and it had been re-directed by Sir Terence to the Lord Viscount Colambre, at Sir James Brooke's, Bart., Brookwood, Huntingdonshire, or elsewhere, with speed. "But the more haste the worse speed; for away it went to Brookwood, Huntingdonshire, where I knew, if any where, you was to be found; but, as fate and the post would have it, there the letter went coursing after you, while you were running round, and *back*, and forwards, and every where, I understand, to Toddrington and Wrestham, and where not, through all them English places, where there's no cross-post: so I took it for granted that it found its way to the dead-letter office, or was sticking up across a pane in the d—d postmaster's window at Huntingdon, for the whole town to see,

and it a love-letter, and some puppy to claim it, under false pretence; and you all the time without it, and it might breed a coolness betwixt you and Miss Nugent."

"But, my dear Sir Terence, give me the letter now you have me."

"Oh, my dear lord, if you knew what a race I have had, missing you here by five minutes, and there by five seconds—but I have you at last, and you have it—and I'm paid this minute for all I liquidated of my substance, by the pleasure I have in seeing you crack the seal and read it. But take care you don't tumble over the orange-woman—orange barrows are a great nuisance, when one's studying a letter in the streets of London, or the metropolis. But never heed; stick to my arm, and I'll guide you, like a blind man, safe through the thick of them."

Miss Nugent's letter, which Lord Colambre read in spite of the jostling of passengers, and the incessant talking of Sir Terence, was as follows:—

"Let me not be the cause of banishing you from your home and your country, where you would do so much good, and make so many happy. Let me not be the cause of your breaking your promise to your mother; of your disappointing my dear aunt so cruelly, who has complied with all our wishes, and who sacrifices, to oblige us, her favourite tastes. How could she be ever happy in Ireland—how could Clonbrony Castle be a home to her without her son? If you take away all she had of amusement and *pleasure*, as it is called, are not you bound to give her, in their stead, that domestic happiness, which she can enjoy only with you, and by your means? If, instead of living with her, you go into the army, she will be in daily, nightly anxiety and alarm about you; and her son will, instead of being a comfort, be a source of torment to her.

"I will hope that you will do now, as you have always hitherto done, on every occasion where I have seen you act, what is right, and just, and kind. Come here on the day you promised my aunt you would; before that time I shall be in Cambridgeshire, with my friend Lady Berryl; she is so good as to come to Buxton for me—I shall remain with her, instead of

returning to Ireland. I have explained my reasons to my (
aunt——Could I have any concealment from her, to whom, f
my earliest childhood, I owe every thing that kindness
affection could give? She is satisfied—she consents to my li
henceforward with Lady Berryl. Let me have the pleasur
seeing by your conduct, that you approve of mine.

"Your affectionate cousin
"and friend,
"Grace Nugent.

This letter, as may be imagined by those who, like him,
capable of feeling honourable and generous conduct, gave
hero exquisite pleasure. Poor, good-natured Sir Terence O'
enjoyed his lordship's delight; and forgot himself so complet
that he never even inquired whether Lord Colambre had thou
of an affair on which he had spoken to him some time bef
and which materially concerned Sir Terence's interest.
next morning, when the carriage was at the door, and
Terence was just taking leave of his friend Lord Clonbrony,
actually in tears, wishing them all manner of happiness, thc
he said there was none left now in London, or the wide w
even, for him—Lord Colambre went up to him, and said, '
Terence, you have never inquired whether I have done ;
business."

"Oh, my dear, I'm not thinking of that now—time enc
by the post—I can write after you; but my thoughts won't
for me to business now—no matter."

"Your business is done," replied Lord Colambre.

"Then I wonder how you could think of it, with all you
upon your mind and heart. When any thing's upon my h
good morning to my head, it's not worth a lemon. Good-by
you, and thank you kindly, and all happiness attend you."

"Good-bye to you, Sir Terence O'Fay," said Lord Clonbrc
"and, since it's so ordered, I must live without you."

"Oh! you'll live better without me, my lord; I am not a g
liver, I know, nor the best of all companions, for a noblen
young or old; and now you'll be rich, and not put to your sl
and your wits, what would I have to do for you?—Sir Tere
O'Fay, you know, was only *the poor nobleman's friend*,

you'll never want to call upon him again, thanks to your jewel, your Pitt's-diamond of a son there. So we part here, and depend upon it you're better without me—that's all my comfort, or my heart would break. The carriage is waiting this long time, and this young lover's aching to be off. God bless you both!—that's my last word."

They called in Red Lion-square, punctual to the moment, on old Mr. Reynolds, but his window-shutters were shut; he had been seized in the night with a violent fit of the gout, which, as he said, held him fast by the leg. "But here," said he, giving Lord Colambre a letter, "here's what will do your business without me. Take this written acknowledgment I have penned for you, and give my grand-daughter her father's letter to read—it would touch a heart of stone—touched mine—wish I could drag the mother back out of her grave, to do her justice—all one now. You see, at last, I'm not a suspicious rascal, however, for I don't suspect you of palming a false grand-daughter upon me."

"Will you," said Lord Colambre, "give your grand-daughter leave to come up to town to you, sir? You would satisfy yourself, at least, as to what resemblance she may bear to her father: Miss Reynolds will come instantly, and she will nurse you."

"No, no; I won't have her come. If she comes, I won't see her—sha'n't begin by nursing me—not selfish. As soon as I get rid of this gout, I shall be my own man, and young again, and I'll soon be after you across the sea, that sha'n't stop me: I'll come to—what's the name of your place in Ireland?—and see what likeness I can find to her poor father in this grand-daughter of mine, that you puffed so finely yesterday. And let me see whether she will wheedle me as finely as Mrs. Petito would. Don't get ready your marriage settlements, do you hear? till you have seen my will, which I shall sign at—what's the name of your place? Write it down there; there's pen and ink; and leave me, for the twinge is coming, and I shall roar."

"Will you permit me, sir, to leave my own servant with you to take care of you? I can answer for his attention and fidelity."

"Let me see his face, and I'll tell you."

Lord Colambre's servant was summoned.

"Yes, I like his face. God bless you!—Leave me."

Lord Colambre gave his servant a charge to bear with Mr. Reynolds' rough manner and temper, and to pay the poor old gentleman every possible attention. Then our hero proceeded with his father on his journey, and on this journey nothing happened worthy of note. On his first perusal of the letter from Grace, Lord Colambre had feared that she would have left Buxton with Lady Berryl before he could reach it; but, upon recollection, he hoped that the few lines he had written, addressed to his mother *and* Miss Nugent, with the assurance that he should be with them on Wednesday, would be sufficient to show her that some great change had happened, and consequently sufficient to prevent her from quitting her aunt, till she could know whether such a separation would be necessary. He argued wisely, more wisely than Grace had reasoned; for, notwithstanding this note, she would have left Buxton before his arrival, but for Lady Berryl's strength of mind, and positive determination not to set out with her till Lord Colambre should arrive to explain. In the interval, poor Grace was, indeed, in an anxious state of suspense; and her uncertainty, whether she was doing right or wrong, by staying to see Lord Colambre, tormented her most.

"My dear, you cannot help yourself: be quiet," said Lady Berryl: "I will take the whole upon my conscience; and I hope my conscience may never have any thing worse to answer for."

Grace was the first person who, from her window, saw Lord Colambre, the instant the carriage drove to the door. She ran to her friend Lady Berryl's apartment. "He is come!—Now, take me away."

"Not yet, my sweet friend! Lie down upon this sofa, if you please; and keep yourself tranquil, whilst I go and see what you ought to do; and depend upon me for a true friend, in whose mind, as in your own, duty is the first object."

"I depend on you entirely," said Grace, sinking down on the sofa: "and you see I obey you!"

"Many thanks to you for lying down, when you can't stand."

Lady Berryl went to Lord Clonbrony's apartment; she was

met by Sir Arthur. "Come, my love! come quick!—Lord Colambre is arrived."

"I know it; and does he go to Ireland? Speak instantly, that I may tell Grace Nugent."

"You can tell her nothing yet, my love; for we know nothing. Lord Colambre will not say a word till you come; but I know, by his countenance, that he has good and extraordinary news."

They passed rapidly along the passage to Lady Clonbrony's room.

"Oh, my dear, dear Lady Berryl, come! or I shall die with impatience," cried Lady Clonbrony, in a voice and manner between laughing and crying. "There, now you have congratulated, are very happy, and very glad, and all that—now, for mercy's sake, sit down, Lord Clonbrony! for Heaven's sake, sit down—beside me here—or any where! Now, Colambre, begin; and tell us all at once!"

But as nothing is so tedious as a twice told tale, Lord Colambre's narrative need not here be repeated. He began with Count O'Halloran's visit, immediately after Lady Clonbrony had left London; and went through the history of the discovery that Captain Reynolds was the husband of Miss St. Omar, and the father of Grace: the dying acknowledgment of his marriage; the packet delivered by Count O'Halloran to the careless ambassador—how recovered, by the assistance of his executor, Sir James Brooke; the travels from Wrestham to Toddrington, and thence to Red Lion-square; the interview with old Reynolds, and its final result: all was related as succinctly as the impatient curiosity of Lord Colambre's auditors could desire.

"Oh, wonder upon wonder! and joy upon joy!" cried Lady Clonbrony. "So my darling Grace is as legitimate as I am, and an heiress after all. Where is she? where is she? In your room, Lady Berryl?—Oh, Colambre! why wouldn't you let her be by?—Lady Berryl, do you know, he would not let me send for her, though she was the person of all others most concerned!"

"For that very reason, ma'am; and that Lord Colambre was quite right, I am sure you must be sensible, when you recollect, that Grace has no idea that she is not the daughter of Mr. Nugent:

she has no suspicion that the breath of blame ever lighted upon her mother. This part of the story cannot be announced to her with too much caution; and, indeed, her mind has been so much harassed and agitated, and she is at present so far from strong, that great delicacy——"

"True! very true, Lady Berryl," interrupted Lady Clonbrony; "and I'll be as delicate as you please about it afterwards: but, in the first and foremost place, I must tell her the best part of the story—that she's an heiress; that never killed any body!"

So, darting through all opposition, Lady Clonbrony made her way into the room where Grace was lying—"Yes, get up! get up! my own Grace, and be surprised—well you may!—you are an heiress, after all."

"Am I, my dear aunt?" said Grace.

"True, as I'm Lady Clonbrony—and a very great heiress—and no more Colambre's cousin than Lady Berryl here. So now begin and love him as fast as you please—I give my consent—and here he is."

Lady Clonbrony turned to her son, who just appeared at the door.

"Oh, mother! what have you done?"

"What have I done?" cried Lady Clonbrony, following her son's eyes:—"Lord bless me!—Grace fainted dead—Lady Berryl! Oh, what have I done? My dear Lady Berryl, what shall we do?"

Lady Berryl hastened to her friend's assistance.

"There! her colour's coming again," said Lord Clonbrony; "come away, my dear Lady Clonbrony, for the present, and so will I—though I long to talk to the darling girl myself; but she is not equal to it yet."

When Grace came to herself, she first saw Lady Berryl leaning over her, and, raising herself a little, she said, "What has happened?—I don't know yet—I don't know whether I am happy or not.—Explain all this to me, my dear friend; for I am still as if I were in a dream."

With all the delicacy which Lady Clonbrony deemed superfluous, Lady Berryl explained. Nothing could surpass the astonishment of Grace, on first learning that Mr. Nugent was not her father. When she was told of the stigma that had been

cast on her birth; the suspicions, the disgrace, to which her mother had been subjected for so many years—that mother, whom she had so loved and respected; who had, with such care, instilled into the mind of her daughter the principles of virtue and religion; that mother whom Grace had always seen the example of every virtue she taught; on whom her daughter never suspected that the touch of blame, the breath of scandal, could rest —Grace could express her sensations only by repeating, in tones of astonishment, pathos, indignation—" My mother!—my mother!—my mother!"

For some time she was incapable of attending to any other idea, or of feeling any other sensations. When her mind was able to admit the thought, her friend soothed her, by recalling the expressions of Lord Colambre's love—the struggle by which he had been agitated, when he fancied a union with her opposed by an invincible obstacle.

Grace sighed, and acknowledged that, in prudence, it ought to have been an *invincible* obstacle—she admired the firmness of his decision, the honour with which he had acted towards her. One moment she exclaimed, " Then, if I had been the daughter of a mother who had conducted herself ill, he never would have trusted me!" The next moment she recollected, with pleasure, the joy she had just seen in his eyes—the affection, the passion, that spoke in every word and look; then dwelt upon the sober certainty, that all obstacles were removed. " And no duty opposes my loving him!—And my aunt wishes it! my kind aunt! and my dear uncle! should not I go to him?—But he is not my uncle, she is not my aunt. I cannot bring myself to think that they are not my relations, and that I am nothing to them."

"You may be every thing to them, my dear Grace," said Lady Berryl:—" whenever you please, you may be their daughter."

Grace blushed, and smiled, and sighed, and was consoled. But then she recollected her new relation, Mr. Reynolds, her grandfather, whom she had never seen, who had for years disowned her—treated her mother with injustice. She could scarcely think of him with complacency: yet, when his age, his sufferings, his desolate state, were represented, she pitied him;

and, faithful to her strong sense of duty, would have gone instantly to offer him every assistance and attention in her power. Lady Berryl assured her that Mr. Reynolds had positively forbidden her going to him; and that he had assured Lord Colambre he would not see her if she went to him. After such rapid and varied emotions, poor Grace desired repose, and her friend took care that it should be secured to her for the remainder of the day.

In the mean time, Lord Clonbrony had kindly and judiciously employed his lady in a discussion about certain velvet furniture, which Grace had painted for the drawing-room at Clonbrony Castle.

In Lady Clonbrony's mind, as in some bad paintings, there was no *keeping;* all objects, great and small, were upon the same level.

The moment her son entered the room, her ladyship exclaimed, "Every thing pleasant at once! Here's your father tells me, Grace's velvet furniture's all packed: really Soho's the best man in the world of his kind, and the cleverest—and so, after all, my dear Colambre, as I always hoped and prophesied, at last you will marry an heiress."

"And Terry," said Lord Clonbrony, "will win his wager from Mordicai."

"Terry!" repeated Lady Clonbrony, "that odious Terry!—I hope, my lord, that he is not to be one of my comforts in Ireland."

"No, my dear mother; he is much better provided for than we could have expected. One of my father's first objects was to prevent him from being any encumbrance to you. We consulted him as to the means of making him happy; and the knight acknowledged that he had long been casting a sheep's eye at a little snug place, that will soon be open in his native country—the chair of assistant barrister at the sessions. 'Assistant barrister!' said my father; 'but, my dear Terry, you have been all your life evading the laws, and very frequently breaking the peace; do you think this has qualified you peculiarly for being a guardian of the laws?' Sir Terence replied, 'Yes, sure; set a thief to catch a thief is no bad maxim. And did not Mr. Colquhoun, the Scotchman, get himself made a great justice, by his

making all the world as wise as himself, about thieves of all sorts, by land and by wa er, and in the air too, where he detected the mud-larks?—And is not Barrington chief-justice of Botany Bay?'

"My father now began to be seriously alarmed, lest Sir Terence should insist upon his using his interest to make him an assistant barrister. He was not aware that five years' practice at the bar was a necessary accomplishment for this office; when, fortunately for all parties, my good friend, Count O'Halloran, helped us out of the difficulty, by starting an idea full of practical justice. A literary friend of the count's had been for some time promised a lucrative situation under government: but, unfortunately, he was a man of so much merit and ability, that they could not find employment for him at home, and they gave him a commission, I should rather say a contract abroad, for supplying the army with Hungarian horses. Now the gentleman had not the slightest skill in horse-flesh; and, as Sir Terence is a complete *jockey*, the count observed that he would be the best possible deputy for his literary friend. We warranted him to be a thorough going friend; and I do think the coalition will be well for both parties. The count has settled it all, and I left Sir Terence comfortably provided for, out of your way, my dear mother; and as happy as he could be, when parting from my father."

Lord Colambre was assiduous in engaging his mother's attention upon any subject, which could for the present draw her thoughts away from her young friend; but at every pause in the conversation, her ladyship repeated, "So Grace is an heiress after all—so, after all, they know they are not cousins! Well, I prefer Grace, a thousand times over, to any other heiress in England. No obstacle, no objection. They have my consent. I always prophesied Colambre would marry an heiress; but why not marry directly?"

Her ardour and impatience to hurry things forward seemed now likely to retard the accomplishment of her own wishes; and Lord Clonbrony, who understood rather more of the passion of love than his lady ever had felt or understood, saw the agony into which she threw her son, and felt for his darling Grace. With a degree of delicacy and address of which few would have

supposed Lord Clonbrony capable, his lordship co-operated with his son in endeavouring to keep Lady Clonbrony quiet, and to suppress the hourly thanksgivings of Grace's *turning out an heiress.* On one point, however, she vowed she would not be overruled—she would have a splendid wedding at Clonbrony Castle, such as should become an heir and heiress; and the wedding, she hoped, would be immediately on their return to Ireland: she should announce the thing to her friends directly on her arrival at Clonbrony Castle.

"My dear," said Lord Clonbrony, "we must wait, in the first place, the pleasure of old Mr. Reynolds' fit of the gout."

"Why, that's true, because of his will," said her ladyship; "but a will's soon made, is not it? That can't be much delay."

"And then there must be settlements," said Lord Clonbrony; "they take time. Lovers, like all the rest of mankind, must submit to the law's delay. In the mean time, my dear, as these Buxton baths agree with you so well, and as Grace does not seem to be over and above strong for travelling a long journey, and as there are many curious and beautiful scenes of nature here in Derbyshire—Matlock, and the wonders of the Peak, and so on—which the young people would be glad to see together, and may not have another opportunity soon—why not rest ourselves a little? For another reason, too," continued his lordship, bringing together as many arguments as he could—for he had often found, that though Lady Clonbrony was a match for any single argument, her understanding could be easily overpowered by a number, of whatever sort—"besides, my dear, here's Sir Arthur and Lady Berryl come to Buxton on purpose to meet us; and we owe them some compliment, and something more than compliment, I think: so I don't see why we should be in a hurry to leave them, or quit Buxton—a few weeks sooner or later can't signify—and Clonbrony Castle will be getting all the while into better order for us. Burke is gone down there; and if we stay here quietly, there will be time for the velvet furniture to get there before us, and to be unpacked, and up in the drawing-room."

"That's true, my lord," said Lady Clonbrony; "and there is a great deal of reason in all you say—so I second that motion, as Colambre, I see, subscribes to it."

They stayed some time in Derbyshire, and every day Lord Clonbrony proposed some pleasant excursion, and contrived that the young people should be left to themselves, as Mrs. Broadhurst used so strenuously to advise; the recollection of whose authoritative maxims fortunately still operated upon Lady Clonbrony, to the great ease and advantage of the lovers.

Happy as a lover, a friend, a son; happy in the consciousness of having restored a father to respectability, and persuaded a mother to quit the feverish joys of fashion for the pleasures of domestic life; happy in the hope of winning the whole heart of the woman he loved, and whose esteem, he knew, he possessed and deserved; happy in developing every day, every hour, fresh charms in his destined bride—we leave our hero, returning to his native country.

And we leave him with the reasonable expectation that he will support through life the promise of his early character; that his patriotic views will extend with his power to carry wishes into action; that his attachment to his warm-hearted countrymen will still increase upon further acquaintance; and that he will long diffuse happiness through the wide circle, which is peculiarly subject to the influence and example of a great resident Irish proprietor.

LETTER FROM LARRY TO HIS BROTHER, PAT BRADY, AT MR. MORDICAI'S, COACHMAKER, LONDON.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"Yours of the 16th, enclosing the five pound note for my father, came safe to hand Monday last; and with his thanks and blessing to you, he commends it to you herewith enclosed back again, on account of his being in no immediate necessity, nor likelihood to want in future, as you shall hear forthwith; but wants you over with all speed, and the note will answer for travelling charges; for we can't enjoy the luck it has pleased God to give us, without *yees;* put the rest in your pocket, and read it when you've time.

"Old Nick's gone, and St. Dennis along with him, to the place he come from—praise be to God! The *ould* lord has found him out in his tricks; and I helped him to that, through the young lord that I driv, as I informed you in my last, when

he was a Welshman, which was the best turn ever I did, though I did not know it no more than Adam that time. So *Ould* Nick's turned out of the agency clean and clear; and the day after it was known, there was surprising great joy through the whole country; not surprising, either, but just what you might, knowing him, *ra*sonably expect. He (that is, Old Nick and St. Dennis) would have been burnt that night—I *mane*, in *effigy*, through the town of Clonbrony, but that the new man, Mr. Burke, came down that day too soon to stop it, and said, 'it was not becoming to trample on the fallen,' or something that way, that put an end to it; and though it was a great disappointment to many, and to me in particular, I could not but like the jantleman the better for it any how. They say he is a very good jantleman, and as unlike Old Nick or the saint as can be; and takes no duty fowl, nor glove, nor sealing money; nor asks duty work nor duty turf. Well, when I was disappointed of the *effigy*, I comforted myself by making a bonfire of Old Nick's big rick of duty turf, which, by great luck, was out in the road, away from all dwelling-house, or thatch, or yards, to take fire: so no danger in life, or objection. And such another blaze! I wished you'd seed it—and all the men, women, and children, in the town and country, far and near, gathered round it, shouting and dancing like mad!—and it was light as day quite across the bog, as far as Bartley Finnigan's house. And I heard after, they seen it from all parts of the three counties, and they thought it was St. John's Eve in a mistake—or couldn't make out what it was; but all took it in good part, for a good sign, and were in great joy. As for St. Dennis and *Ould* Nick, an attorney had his foot upon 'em with an habere, a latitat, and three executions hanging over 'em: and there's the end of rogues! and a great example in the country. And—no more about it; for I can't be wasting more ink upon them that don't deserve it at my hands, when I want it for them that do, as you shall see. So some weeks past, and there was great cleaning at Clonbrony Castle, and in the town of Clonbrony; and the new agent's smart and clever: and he had the glaziers, and the painters, and the slaters, up and down in the town wherever wanted; and you wouldn't know it again. Thinks I, this is no bad sign! Now, cock up your ears, Pat! for the great news is

coming, and the good. The master's come home, long life to him! and family come home yesterday, all entirely! The *ould* lord and the young lord, (ay, there's the man, Paddy!) and my lady, and Miss Nugent. And I driv Miss Nugent's maid and another; so I had the luck to be in it along *wid* 'em, and see all, from first to last. And first, I must tell you, my young Lord Colambre remembered and noticed me the minute he lit at our inn, and condescended to beckon me out of the yard to him, and axed me—'Friend Larry,' says he, 'did you keep your promise?'——'My oath again the whiskey, is it?' says I. 'My lord, I surely did,' said I; which was true, as all the country knows I never tasted a drop since. 'And I'm proud to see your honour, my lord, as good as your word, too, and back again among us.' So then there was a call for the horses; and no more at that time passed betwix' my young lord and me, but that he pointed me out to the *ould* one, as I went off. I noticed and thanked him for it in my heart, though I did not know all the good was to come of it. Well, no more of myself, for the present.

"Ogh, it's I driv 'em well; and we all got to the great gate of the park before sunset, and as fine an evening as ever you see; with the sun shining on the tops of the trees, as the ladies noticed; the leaves changed, but not dropped, though so late in the season. I believe the leaves knew what they were about, and kept on, on purpose to welcome them; and the birds were singing, and I stopped whistling, that they might hear them; but sorrow bit could they hear when they got to the park gate, for there was such a crowd, and such a shout, as you never see —and they had the horses off every carriage entirely, and drew 'em home, with blessings, through the park. And, God bless 'em! when they got out, they didn't go shut themselves up in the great drawing-room, but went straight out to the *tirrass*, to satisfy the eyes and hearts that followed them. My lady *laning* on my young lord, and Miss Grace Nugent that was, the beautifullest angel that ever you set eyes on, with the finest complexion, and sweetest of smiles, *laning* upon the *ould* lord's arm, who had his hat off, bowing to all, and noticing the old tenants as he passed by name. Oh, there was great gladness and tears in the midst; for joy I could scarce keep from myself.

"After a turn or two upon the *tirrass*, my Lord Colambre *quit* his mother's arm for a minute, and he come to the edge of the slope, and looked down and through all the crowd for some one.

"'Is it the Widow O'Neil, my lord?' says I; 'she's yonder, with the white kerchief, betwixt her son and daughter, as usual.'

"Then my lord beckoned, and they did not know which of the *tree* would stir; and then he gave *tree* beckons with his own finger, and they all *tree* came fast enough to the bottom of the slope forenent my lord: and he went down and helped the widow up, (oh, he's the true jantleman!) and brought 'em all *tree* up on the *tirrass*, to my lady and Miss Nugent; and I was up close after, that I might hear, which wasn't manners, but I couldn't help it. So what he said I don't well know, for I could not get near enough, after all. But I saw my lady smile very kind, and take the Widow O'Neil by the hand, and then my Lord Colambre *'troduced* Grace to Miss Nugent, and there was the word *namesake*, and something about a check curtain; but, whatever it was, they was all greatly pleased: then my Lord Colambre turned and looked for Brian, who had fell back, and took him, with some commendation, to my lord his father. And my lord the master said, which I didn't know till after, that they should have their house and farm at the *ould* rent; and at the surprise, the widow dropped down dead; and there was a cry as for ten *berrings*. 'Be qui'te,' says I, 'she's only kilt for joy;' and I went and lift her up, for her son had no more strength that minute than the child new born; and Grace trembled like a leaf, as white as the sheet, but not long, for the mother came to, and was as well as ever when I brought some water, which Miss Nugent handed to her with her own hand.

"'That was always pretty and good,' said the widow, laying her hand upon Miss Nugent, 'and kind and good to me and mine.'

"That minute there was music from below. The blind harper, O'Neil, with his harp, that struck up 'Gracey Nugent.'

"And that finished, and my Lord Colambre smiling, with the tears standing in his eyes too, and the *ould* lord quite wiping his, I ran to the *tirrass* brink to bid O'Neil play it again; but as I run, I thought I heard a voice call 'Larry!'

"'Who calls Larry?' says I.

"'My Lord Colambre calls you, Larry,' says all at once; and four takes me by the shoulders and spins me round. 'There's my young lord calling you, Larry—run for your life.'

"So I run back for my life, and walked respectful, with my hat in my hand, when I got near.

"'Put on your hat, my father desires it,' says my Lord Colambre. The *ould* lord made a sign to that purpose, but was too full to speak. 'Where's your father?' continues my young lord. 'He's very *ould*, my lord,' says I.—'I didn't *ax* you how *ould* he was,' says he; 'but where is he?'—'He's behind the crowd below, on account of his infirmities; he couldn't walk so fast as the rest, my lord,' says I; 'but his heart is with you, if not his body.'—'I must have his body too: so bring him bodily before us; and this shall be your warrant for so doing,' said my lord, joking: for he knows the *natur* of us, Paddy, and how we love a joke in our hearts, as well as if he had lived all his life in Ireland; and by the same token will, for that *rason*, do what he pleases with us, and more may be than a man twice as good, that never would smile on us.

"But I'm telling you of my father. 'I've a warrant for you, father,' says I; 'and must have you bodily before the justice, and my lord chief justice.' So he changed colour a bit at first; but he saw me smile. 'And I've done no sin,' said he; 'and, Larry, you may lead me now, as you led me all my life.'

"And up the slope he went with me as light as fifteen; and when we got up, my Lord Clonbrony said, 'I am sorry an old tenant, and a good old tenant, as I hear you were, should have been turned out of your farm.'

"'Don't fret, it's no great matter, my lord,' said my father. 'I shall be soon out of the way; but if you would be so kind to speak a word for my boy here, and that I could afford, while the life is in me, to bring my other boy back out of banishment.'

"'Then,' says my Lord Clonbrony, 'I'll give you and your sons three lives, or thirty-one years, from this day, of your former farm. Return to it when you please. And,' added my Lord Clonbrony, 'the flaggers, I hope, will be soon banished.' Oh, how could I thank him—not a word could I proffer—but I know I clasped

my two hands, and prayed for him inwardly. And my father was dropping down on his knees, but the master would not let him; and *obsarved*, that posture should only be for his God. And, sure enough, in that posture, when he was out of sight, we did pray for him that night, and will all our days.

"But, before we quit his presence, he called me back, and bid me write to my brother, and bring you back, if you've no objections, to your own country.

"So come, my dear Pat, and make no delay, for joy's not joy compl*a*te till you're in it—my father sends his blessing, and Peggy her love. The family entirely is to settle for good in Ireland, and there was in the castle yard last night a bonfire made by my lord's orders of the *ould* yellow damask furniture, to plase my lady, my lord says. And the drawing-room, the butler was telling me, is new hung; and the chairs with velvet as white as snow, and shaded over with natural flowers by Miss Nugent. Oh! how I hope what I guess will come true, and I've *rason* to believe it will, for I dreamt in my bed last night it did. But keep yourself to yourself—that Miss Nugent (who is no more Miss Nugent, they say, but Miss Reynolds, and has a new-found grandfather, and is a big heiress, which she did not want in my eyes, nor in my young lord's), I've a notion, will be sometime, and may be sooner than is expected, my Lady Viscountess Colambre — so haste to the wedding. And there's another thing: they say the rich *ould* grandfather's coming over;—and another thing, Pat, you would not be out of the fashion—and you see it's growing the fashion not to be an Absentee.

'Your loving brother,

"LARRY BRADY."

1812.

MADAME DE FLEURY.

CHAPTER I.

"There oft are heard the notes of infant woe,
The short thick sob, loud scream, and shriller squall.
How can you, mothers, vex your infants so?"—POPE.

'ABORD, madame, c'est impossible!—Madame ne descendra
ici[1]?" said François, the footman of Mad. de Fleury, with a
expostulatory, half indignant look, as he let down the step
er carriage at the entrance of a dirty passage, that led to
of the most miserable-looking houses in Paris.

But what can be the cause of the cries which I hear in this
se?" said Mad. de Fleury.

'Tis only some child, who is crying," replied François: and
vould have put up the step, but his lady was not satisfied.

'Tis nothing in the world," continued he, with a look of
eal to the coachman, "it *can* be nothing, but some children,
are locked up there above. The mother, the workwoman
lady wants, is not at home, that's certain."

I must know the cause of these cries; I must see these
dren," said Mad. de Fleury, getting out of her carriage.

'rançois held his arm for his lady as she got out.

Bon!" cried he, with an air of vexation. "Si madame la
t absolument, à la bonne heure!—Mais madame sera abimée.
lame verra que j'ai raison. Madame ne montera jamais ce

In the first place, my lady, it is impossible! Surely my lady will not
out of her carriage here?

vilain escalier. D'ailleurs c'est au cinquième. Mais, madame, c'est impossible [2]."

Notwithstanding the impossibility, Mad. de Fleury proceeded; and bidding her talkative footman wait in the entry, made her way up the dark, dirty, broken staircase, the sound of the cries increasing every instant, till, as she reached the fifth story, she heard the shrieks of one in violent pain. She hastened to the door of the room from which the cries proceeded; the door was fastened, and the noise was so great, that though she knocked as loud as she was able, she could not immediately make herself heard. At last the voice of a child from within answered, "The door is locked—mamma has the key in her pocket, and won't be home till night; and here's Victoire has tumbled from the top of the big press, and it is she that is shrieking so."

Mad. de Fleury ran down the stairs which she had ascended with so much difficulty, called to her footman, who was waiting in the entry, despatched him for a surgeon, and then she returned to obtain from some people who lodged in the house assistance to force open the door of the room in which the children were confined.

On the next floor there was a smith at work, filing so earnestly that he did not hear the screams of the children. When his door was pushed open, and the bright vision of Mad. de Fleury appeared to him, his astonishment was so great that he seemed incapable of comprehending what she said. In a strong provincial accent he repeated, "*Plait-il?*" and stood aghast till she had explained herself three times: then suddenly exclaiming, "Ah! c'est ça!"—he collected his tools precipitately, and followed to obey her orders. The door of the room was at last forced half open, for a press that had been overturned prevented its opening entirely. The horrible smells that issued did not overcome Mad. de Fleury's humanity: she squeezed her way into the room, and behind the fallen press saw three little children: the youngest, almost an infant, ceased roaring, and ran to a corner: the eldest, a boy of about eight years old, whose

[2] To be sure it must be as my lady pleases—but my lady will find it terribly dirty!—my lady will find I was right—my lady will never get up that shocking staircase—it is impossible!

face and clothes were covered with blood, held on his knee a girl younger than himself, whom he was trying to pacify, but who struggled most violently, and screamed incessantly, regardless of Mad. de Fleury, to whose questions she made no answer.

"Where are you hurt, my dear?" repeated Mad. de Fleury in a soothing voice. "Only tell me where you feel pain?"

The boy, showing his sister's arm, said, in a surly tone—"It is this that is hurt—but it was not I did it."

"It was, it *was*," cried the girl as loud as she could vociferate: "it was Maurice threw me down from the top of the press."

"No—it was you that were pushing me, Victoire, and you fell backwards.—Have done screeching, and show your arm to the lady."

"I can't," said the girl.

"She won't," said the boy.

"She *cannot*," said Mad. de Fleury, kneeling down to examine it. "She cannot move it: I am afraid that it is broken."

"Don't touch it! don't touch it!" cried the girl, screaming more violently.

"Ma'am, she screams that way for nothing often," said the boy. "Her arm is no more broke than mine, I'm sure; she'll move it well enough when she's not cross."

"I am afraid," said Mad. de Fleury, "that her arm is broken."

"Is it indeed?" said the boy, with a look of terror.

"Oh! don't touch it—you'll kill me, you are killing me," screamed the poor girl, whilst Mad. de Fleury with the greatest care endeavoured to join the bones in their proper place, and resolved to hold the arm till the arrival of the surgeon.

From the feminine appearance of this lady, no stranger would have expected such resolution; but with all the natural sensibility and graceful delicacy of her sex, she had none of that weakness or affectation, which incapacitates from being useful in real distress. In most sudden accidents, and in all domestic misfortunes, female resolution and presence of mind are indispensably requisite: safety, health, and life, often depend upon the fortitude of women. Happy they, who, like Mad. de Fleury,

possess strength of mind united with the utmost gentleness of manner and tenderness of disposition!

Soothed by this lady's sweet voice, the child's rage subsided; and no longer struggling, the poor little girl sat quietly on her lap, sometimes writhing and moaning with pain.

The surgeon at length arrived: her arm was set: and he said, "that she had probably been saved much future pain by Mad. de Fleury's presence of mind."

"Sir,—will it soon be well?" said Maurice to the surgeon.

"Oh, yes, very soon, I dare say," said the little girl. "To-morrow, perhaps; for now that it is tied up, it does not hurt me to signify—and after all, I do believe, Maurice, it was not you threw me down."

As she spoke, she held up her face to kiss her brother.—"That is right," said Mad. de Fleury; "there is a good sister."

The little girl put out her lips, offering a second kiss, but the boy turned hastily away to rub the tears from his eyes with the back of his hand.

"I am not cross now: am I, Maurice?" said she.

"No, Victoire, I was cross myself when I said *that.*"

As Victoire was going to speak again, the surgeon imposed silence, observing that she must be put to bed, and should be kept quiet. Mad. de Fleury laid her upon the bed, as soon as Maurice had cleared it of the things with which it was covered; and as they were spreading the ragged blanket over the little girl, she whispered a request to Mad. de Fleury, that she would "stay till her mamma came home, to beg Maurice off from being whipped, if mamma should be angry."

Touched by this instance of goodness, and compassionating the desolate condition of these children, Mad. de Fleury complied with Victoire's request; resolving to remonstrate with their mother for leaving them locked up in this manner. They did not know to what part of the town their mother was gone; they could tell only, "that she was to go to a great many different places to carry back work, and to bring home more; and that she expected to be in by five." It was now half after four.

Whilst Mad. de Fleury waited, she asked the boy to give her a full account of the manner in which the accident had happened.

"Why, ma'am," said Maurice, twisting and untwisting a ragged handkerchief as he spoke, "the first beginning of all the mischief was, we had nothing to do; so we went to the ashes to make dirt pies: but Babet would go so close that she burnt her petticoat, and threw about all our ashes, and plagued us, and we whipped her: but all would not do, she would not be quiet; so to get out of her reach, we climbed up by this chair on the table to the top of the press, and there we were well enough for a little while, till somehow we began to quarrel about the old scissors, and we struggled hard for them till I got this cut."

Here he unwound the handkerchief, and for the first time showed the wound, which he had never mentioned before.

"Then," continued he, "when I got the cut, I shoved Victoire, and she pushed at me again, and I was keeping her off, and her foot slipped, and down she fell; and caught by the press-door, and pulled it and me after her, and that's all I know."

"It is well that you were not both killed," said Mad. de Fleury. "Are you often left locked up in this manner by yourselves, and without any thing to do?"

"Yes, always, when mamma is abroad—except sometimes we are let out upon the stairs, or in the street; but mamma says we get into mischief there."

This dialogue was interrupted by the return of the mother. She came up stairs slowly, much fatigued, and with a heavy bundle under her arm.

"How now! Maurice, how comes my door open? What's all this?" cried she, in an angry voice; but seeing a lady sitting upon her child's bed, she stopped short in great astonishment. Mad. de Fleury related what had happened, and averted her anger from Maurice, by gently expostulating upon the hardship and hazard of leaving her young children in this manner during so many hours of the day.

"Why, my lady," replied the poor woman, wiping her forehead, "every hard-working woman in Paris does the same with her children; and what can I do else? I must earn bread for these helpless ones, and to do that I must be out backwards and forwards, and to the furthest parts of the town, often from morning till night, with those that employ me; and I cannot afford to send the

children to school, or to keep any kind of a servant to look after them; and when I'm away, if I let them run about these stairs and entries, or go into the streets, they do get a little exercise and air to be sure, such as it is; on which account I do let them out sometimes; but then a deal of mischief comes of that, too— they learn all kinds of wickedness, and would grow up to be no better than pickpockets, if they were let often to consort with the little vagabonds they find in the streets. So what to do better for them I don't know."

The poor mother sat down upon the fallen press, looked at Victoire, and wept bitterly. Mad. de Fleury was struck with compassion: but she did not satisfy her feelings merely by words or comfort, or by the easy donation of some money—she resolved to do something more, and something better.

CHAPTER II.

> "Come often, then; for haply in my bow'r
> Amusement, knowledge, wisdom, thou may'st gain:
> If I one soul improve, I have not lived in vain."
>
> BEATTIE.

It is not so easy to do good as those who have never attempted it may imagine; and they who without consideration follow the mere instinct of pity, often by their imprudent generosity create evils more pernicious to society than any which they partially remedy. "Warm Charity, the general friend," may become the general enemy, unless she consults her head as well as her heart. Whilst she pleases herself with the idea that she daily feeds hundreds of the poor, she is perhaps preparing want and famine for thousands. Whilst she delights herself with the anticipation of gratitude for her bounties, she is often exciting only unreasonable expectations, inducing habits of dependence, and submission to slavery.

Those who wish to do good should attend to experience, from whom they may receive lessons upon the largest scale that time and numbers can afford.

Mad. de Fleury was aware that neither a benevolent disposition

nor a large fortune were sufficient to enable her to be of real service, without the constant exercise of her judgment. She had therefore listened with deference to the conversation of well-informed men upon those subjects on which ladies have not always the means or the wish to acquire extensive and accurate knowledge. Though a Parisian belle, she had read with attention some of those books which are generally thought too dry or too deep for her sex. Consequently her benevolence was neither wild in theory, nor precipitate nor ostentatious in practice.

Touched with compassion for a little girl, whose arm had been accidentally broken, and shocked by the discovery of the confinement and the dangers to which numbers of children in Paris were doomed, she did not make a parade of her sensibility. She did not talk of her feelings in fine sentences to a circle of opulent admirers, nor did she project for the relief of the little sufferers some magnificent establishment, which she could not execute or superintend. She was contented with attempting only what she had reasonable hopes of accomplishing.

The gift of education she believed to be more advantageous than the gift of money to the poor; as it ensures the means both of future subsistence and happiness. But the application even of this incontrovertible principle requires caution and judgment. To crowd numbers of children into a place called a school, to abandon them to the management of any person called a schoolmaster or a schoolmistress, is not sufficient to secure the blessings of a good education. Mad. de Fleury was sensible that the greatest care is necessary in the choice of the person to whom young children are to be intrusted: she knew that only a certain number can be properly directed by one superintendent; and that by attempting to do too much, she might do nothing, or worse than nothing. Her school was formed, therefore, on a small scale, which she could enlarge to any extent, if it should be found to succeed. From some of the families of poor people, who in earning their bread are obliged to spend most of the day from home, she selected twelve little girls, of whom Victoire was the eldest, and she was between six and seven.

The person under whose care Mad. de Fleury wished to place these children was a nun of the *Sœurs de la Charité*, with

whose simplicity of character, benevolence, and mild, steady temper, she was thoroughly acquainted. Sister Frances was delighted with the plan. Any scheme that promised to be of service to her fellow-creatures was sure of meeting with her approbation; but this suited her taste peculiarly, because she was extremely fond of children. No young person had ever boarded six months at her convent without becoming attached to good Sister Frances.

The period of which we are writing was some years before convents were abolished; but the strictness of their rules had in many instances been considerably relaxed. Without much difficulty, permission was obtained from the abbess for our nun to devote her time during the day to the care of these poor children, upon condition that she should regularly return to her convent every night before evening prayers. The house which Mad. de Fleury chose for her little school was in an airy part of the town; it did not face the street, but was separated from other buildings at the back of a court, retired from noise and bustle. The two rooms intended for the occupation of the children were neat and clean, but perfectly simple, with whitewashed walls, furnished only with wooden stools and benches, and plain deal tables. The kitchen was well lighted (for light is essential to cleanliness), and it was provided with utensils; and for these appropriate places were allotted, to give the habit and the taste of order. The school-room opened into a garden larger than is usually seen in towns. The nun, who had been accustomed to purchase provisions for her convent, undertook to prepare daily for the children breakfast and dinner; they were to sup and sleep at their respective homes. Their parents were to take them to Sister Frances every morning, when they went out to work, and to call for them upon their return home every evening. By this arrangement, the natural ties of affection and intimacy between the children and their parents would not be loosened; they would be separate only at the time when their absence must be inevitable. Mad. de Fleury thought that any education which estranges children entirely from their parents must be fundamentally erroneous; that such a separation must tend to destroy that sense of filial affection and duty, and those principles of domestic subordination, on which so many of the interests, and much of the virtue

and happiness, of society depend. The parents of these poor children were eager to trust them to her care, and they strenuously endeavoured to promote what they perceived to be entirely to their advantage. They promised to take their daughters to school punctually every morning—a promise which was likely to be kept, as a good breakfast was to be ready at a certain hour, and not to wait for any body. The parents looked forward with pleasure also to the idea of calling for their little girls at the end of their day's labour, and of taking them home to their family supper. During the intermediate hours, the children were constantly to be employed, or in exercise. It was difficult to provide suitable employments for their early age; but even the youngest of those admitted could be taught to wind balls of cotton, thread, and silk, for haberdashers; or they could shell peas and beans, &c. for a neighbouring *traiteur;* or they could weed in a garden. The next in age could learn knitting and plain-work, reading, writing, and arithmetic. As the girls should grow up, they were to be made useful in the care of the house. Sister Frances said she could teach them to wash and iron, and that she would make them as skilful in cookery as she was herself. This last was doubtless a rash promise; for in most of the mysteries of the culinary art, especially in the medical branches of it, in making savoury messes palatable to the sick, few could hope to equal the neat-handed Sister Frances. She had a variety of other accomplishments; but her humility and good sense forbade her, upon the present occasion, to mention these. She said nothing of embroidery, or of painting, or of cutting out paper, or of carving in ivory, though in all these she excelled: her cuttings-out in paper were exquisite as the finest lace; her embroidered housewives, and her painted boxes, and her fan-mounts, and her curiously wrought ivory toys, had obtained for her the highest reputation in the convent, amongst the best judges in the world. Those only who have philosophically studied and thoroughly understand the nature of fame and vanity can justly appreciate the self-denial, or magnanimity, of Sister Frances, in forbearing to enumerate or boast of these things. She alluded to them but once, and in the slightest and most humble manner.

"These little creatures are too young for us to think of teach-

ing them any thing but plain-work at present; but if hereafter any of them should show a superior genius, we can cultivate it properly! Heaven has been pleased to endow me with the means—at least our convent says so."

The actions of Sister Frances showed as much moderation as her words; for though she was strongly tempted to adorn her new dwelling with those specimens of her skill, which had long been the glory of her apartment in the convent, yet she resisted the impulse, and contented herself with hanging over the chimney-piece of her school-room a Madonna of her own painting.

The day arrived when she was to receive her pupils in their new habitation. When the children entered the room for the first time, they paid the Madonna the homage of their unfeigned admiration. Involuntarily the little crowd stopped short at the sight of the picture. Some dormant emotions of human vanity were now awakened—played for a moment about the heart of Sister Frances—and may be forgiven. Her vanity was innocent and transient, her benevolence permanent and useful. Repressing the vain-glory of an artist, as she fixed her eyes upon the Madonna, her thoughts rose to higher objects, and she seized this happy moment to impress upon the minds of her young pupils their first religious ideas and feelings. There was such unaffected piety in her manner, such goodness in her countenance, such persuasion in her voice, and simplicity in her words, that the impression she made was at once serious, pleasing, and not to be effaced. Much depends upon the moment and the manner in which the first notions of religion are communicated to children: if these ideas be connected with terror, and produced when the mind is sullen or in a state of dejection, the future religious feelings are sometimes of a gloomy, dispiriting sort; but if the first impression be made when the heart is expanded by hope or touched by affection, these emotions are happily and permanently associated with religion. This should be particularly attended to by those who undertake the instruction of the children of the poor, who must lead a life of labour, and can seldom have leisure or inclination when arrived at years of discretion, to re-examine the principles early infused into their minds. They cannot in

their riper age conquer by reason those superstitious terrors, or bigoted prejudices, which render their victims miserable or perhaps criminal. To attempt to rectify any errors in the foundation after an edifice has been constructed, is dangerous: the foundation, therefore, should be laid with care. The religious opinions of Sister Frances were strictly united with just rules of morality, strongly enforcing, as the essential means of obtaining present and future happiness, the practice of the social virtues; so that no good or wise persons, however they might differ from her in modes of faith, could doubt the beneficial influence of her general principles, or disapprove of the manner in which they were inculcated.

Detached from every other worldly interest, this benevolent nun devoted all her earthly thoughts to the children of whom she had undertaken the charge. She watched over them with unceasing vigilance, whilst diffidence of her own abilities was happily supported by her high opinion of Mad. de Fleury's judgment. This lady constantly visited her pupils every week; not in the hasty, negligent manner in which fine ladies sometimes visit charitable institutions, imagining that the honour of their presence is to work miracles, and that every thing will go on rightly when they have said, "*Let it be so*," or, "*I must have it so.*" Mad. de Fleury's visits were not of this dictatorial or cursory nature. Not minutes, but hours, she devoted to these children—she who could charm by the grace of her manners, and delight by the elegance of her conversation, the most polished circles[1] and the best-informed societies of Paris, preferred to the glory of being admired the pleasure of being useful:—

> "Her life, as lovely as her face,
> Each duty mark'd with every grace;
> Her native sense improved by reading,
> Her native sweetness by good-breeding."

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[1] It was of this lady that Marmontel said—"She has the art of making the most common thoughts appear new, and the most uncommon simple, by the elegance and clearness of her expressions."

CHAPTER III.

> "Ah me! how much I fear lest pride it be;
> But if that pride it be, which thus inspires,
> Beware, ye dames! with nice discernment see
> Ye quench not too the sparks of nobler fires."
>
> SHENSTONE.

By repeated observation, and by attending to the minute *reports* of Sister Frances, Mad. de Fleury soon became acquainted with the habits and temper of each individual in this little society. The most intelligent and the most amiable of these children was Victoire. Whence her superiority arose, whether her abilities were naturally more vivacious than those of her companions, or whether they had been more early developed by accidental excitation, we cannot pretend to determine, lest we should involve ourselves in the intricate question respecting natural genius—a metaphysical point, which we shall not in this place stop to discuss. Till the world has an accurate philosophical dictionary (a work not to be expected in less than half a dozen centuries), this question will never be decided to general satisfaction. In the mean time, we may proceed with our story.

Deep was the impression made on Victoire's heart by the kindness that Mad. de Fleury showed her at the time her arm was broken; and her gratitude was expressed with all the enthusiastic *fondness* of childhood. Whenever she spoke or heard of Mad. de Fleury, her countenance became interested and animated, in a degree that would have astonished a cool English spectator. Every morning her first question to Sister Frances was—"Will *she* come to-day?"—If Mad. de Fleury was expected, the hours and the minutes were counted, and the sand in the hourglass that stood on the school-room table was frequently shaken. The moment she appeared, Victoire ran to her, and was silent; satisfied with standing close beside her, holding her gown when unperceived, and watching, as she spoke and moved, every turn of her countenance. Delighted by these marks of sensibility, Sister Frances would have praised the child, but was warned by Mad. de Fleury to refrain from injudicious eulogiums, lest she should teach her affectation.

must not praise, you will permit me at least to love
d Sister Frances.
.ffection for Victoire was increased by compassion:
wo months the poor child's arm hung in a sling, so that
.d not venture to play with her companions. At their
' recreation, she used to sit on the school-room steps,
down into the garden at the scene of merriment, in
.e could not partake.
ıose who know how to find it, there is good in every
Sister Frances used to take her seat on the steps, some-
th her work, and sometimes with a book; and Victoire,
being quite idle, listened with eagerness to the stories
ster Frances read, or watched with interest the progress
ork: soon she longed to imitate what she saw done with
. pleasure, and begged to be taught to work and read.
ees she learned her alphabet; and could soon, to the
ent of her schoolfellows, read the names of all the
in Sister Frances' *picture-book*. No matter how trifling
g done, or the knowledge acquired, a great point is
by giving the desire for employment. Children
ly become industrious from impatience of the pains and
of idleness. Count Rumford showed that he under-
.ildish nature perfectly well, when, in his House of
at Munich, he compelled the young children to sit for
ıe idle in a gallery round the hall, where others a little
an themselves were busied at work. During Victoire's
idle convalescence, she acquired the desire to be
d, and she consequently soon became more industrious
r neighbours. Succeeding in her first efforts, she was
-was pleased, and persevered till she became an
of activity to her companions. But Victoire, though
.rly seven years old, was not quite perfect. Naturally,
entally, she was very passionate, and not a little self-

lay being mounted, horsemanlike, with whip in hand,
banister of the flight of stairs leading from the school-
the garden, she called in a tone of triumph to her
ws, desiring them to stand out of the way, and see her
m top to bottom. At this moment Sister Frances came

to the school-room door, and forbade the feat: but Victoire, regardless of all prohibition, slid down instantly, and moreover was going to repeat the glorious operation, when Sister Frances, catching hold of her arm, pointed to a heap of sharp stones that lay on the ground upon the other side of the banisters.

"I am not afraid," said Victoire.

"But if you fall there, you may break your arm again."

"And if I do I can bear it," said Victoire. "Let me go, pray let me go: I must do it."

"No; I forbid you, Victoire, to slide down again!—Babet, and all the little ones, would follow your example, and perhaps break their necks."

The nun, as she spoke, attempted to compel Victoire to dismount: but she was so much of a heroine, that she would do nothing upon compulsion. Clinging fast to the banisters, she resisted with all her might; she kicked and screamed, and screamed and kicked; but at last her feet were taken prisoners; then grasping the railway with one hand, with the other she brandished high the little whip.

"What!" said the mild nun, "would you strike me with that *arm?*"

The arm dropped instantly—Victoire recollected Mad. de Fleury's kindness the day when the arm was broken: dismounting immediately, she threw herself upon her knees in the midst of the crowd of young spectators, and begged pardon of Sister Frances. For the rest of the day she was as gentle as a lamb; nay, some assert that the effects of her contrition were visible during the remainder of the week.

Having thus found the secret of reducing the little rebel to obedience by touching her on the tender point of gratitude, the nun had recourse to this expedient in all perilous cases: but one day, when she was boasting of the infallible operation of her charm, Mad. de Fleury advised her to forbear recurring to it frequently, lest she should wear out the sensibility she so much loved. In consequence of this counsel, Victoire's violence of temper was sometimes reduced by force, and sometimes corrected by reason; but the principle and the feeling of gratitude were not exhausted or weakened in the struggle. The hope of reward operated upon her generous mind more powerfully than the fear

of punishment; and Mad. de Fleury devised rewards with as much ability as some legislators invent punishments.

Victoire's brother Maurice, who was now of an age to earn his own bread, had a strong desire to be bound apprentice to the smith who worked in the house where his mother lodged. This most ardent wish of his soul he had imparted to his sister: and she consulted her benefactress, whom she considered as all-powerful in this, as in every other affair.

"Your brother's wish shall be gratified," replied Mad. de Fleury, "if you can keep your temper one month. If you are never in a passion for a whole month, I will undertake that your brother shall be bound apprentice to his friend the smith. To your companions, to Sister Frances, and above all to yourself, I trust, to make me a just report this day month."

CHAPTER IV.

"You she preferr'd to all the gay resorts,
Where female vanity might wish to shine,
The pomp of cities, and the pride of courts."
LYTTELTON.

At the end of the time prescribed, the judges, including Victoire herself, who was the most severe of them all, agreed she had justly deserved her reward. Maurice obtained his wish; and Victoire's temper never relapsed into its former bad habits—so powerful is the effect of a well-chosen motive!—Perhaps the historian may be blamed for dwelling on such trivial anecdotes; yet a lady, who was accustomed to the conversation of deep philosophers and polished courtiers, listened without disdain to these simple annals. Nothing appeared to her a trifle that could tend to form the habits of temper, truth, honesty, order, and industry;—habits which are to be early induced, not by solemn precepts, but by practical lessons. A few more examples of these shall be recorded, notwithstanding the fear of being tiresome.

One day little Babet, who was now five years old, saw, as she

was coming to school, an old woman, sitting at a corner of the street, beside a large black brazier full of roasted chestnuts. Babet thought that the chestnuts looked and smelled very good; the old woman was talking earnestly to some people, who were on her other side; Babet filled her work-bag with chestnuts, and then ran after her mother and sister, who, having turned the corner of the street, had not seen what passed. When Babet came to the school-room, she opened her bag with triumph, displayed her treasure, and offered to divide it with her companions. "Here, Victoire," said she, "here is the largest chestnut for you."

But Victoire would not take it; for she said that Babet had no money, and that she could not have come honestly by these chestnuts. She spoke so forcibly upon this point, that even those who had the tempting morsel actually at their lips, forbore to bite; those who had bitten laid down their half-eaten prize; and those who had their hands full of chestnuts, rolled them back again towards the bag. Babet cried with vexation.

"I burned my fingers in getting them for you, and now you won't eat them!—And I must not eat them!" said she: then curbing her passion, she added, "But at any rate, I won't be a thief. I am sure I did not think it was being a thief just to take a few chestnuts from an old woman, who had such heaps and heaps: but Victoire says it is wrong, and I would not be a thief for all the chestnuts in the world—I'll throw them all into the fire this minute!"

"No; give them back again to the old woman," said Victoire.

"But, may be, she would scold me for having taken them," said Babet; "or who knows but she might whip me?"

"And if she did, could not you bear it?" said Victoire: "I am sure I would rather bear twenty whippings than be a thief."

"Twenty whippings! that's a great many," said Babet; "and I am so little, consider—and that woman has such a monstrous arm!—Now, if it was Sister Frances, it would be another thing. But come! if you will go with me, Victoire, you shall see how I will behave."

"We will all go with you," said Victoire.

"Yes, all!" said the children; "and Sister Frances, I dare say, would go, if you asked her."

Babet ran and told her, and she readily consented to accompany the little penitent to make restitution. The chestnut woman did not whip Babet, nor even scold her; but said she was sure, that since the child was so honest as to return what she had taken, she would never steal again. This was the most *glorious* day of Babet's life, and the happiest. When the circumstance was told to Mad. de Fleury, she gave the little girl a bag of the best chestnuts the old woman could select, and Babet with great delight shared her reward with her companions.

"But, alas! these chestnuts are not roasted. Oh, if we could but roast them!" said the children.

Sister Frances placed in the middle of the table, on which the chestnuts were spread, a small earthenware furnace—a delightful toy, commonly used by children in Paris to cook their little feasts.

"This can be bought for sixpence," said she: "and if each of you twelve earn one halfpenny a-piece to-day, you can purchase it to-night, and I will put a little fire into it, and you will then be able to roast your chestnuts."

The children ran eagerly to their work—some to wind worsted for a woman who paid them a *liard* for each ball, others to shell peas for a neighbouring *traiteur*—all rejoicing that they were able to earn *something*. The elder girls, under the directions and with the assistance of Sister Frances, completed making, washing, and ironing, half a dozen little caps, to supply a baby-linen warehouse. At the end of the day, when the sum of the produce of their labours was added together, they were surprised to find, that, instead of one, they could purchase two furnaces. They received and enjoyed the reward of their united industry. The success of their first efforts was fixed in their memory: for they were very happy roasting the chestnuts, and they were all (Sister Frances inclusive) unanimous in opinion that no chestnuts ever were so good, or so well roasted. Sister Frances always partook in their little innocent amusements; and it was her great delight to be the dispenser of rewards, which at once conferred present pleasure, and cherished future virtue.

CHAPTER V.

"To virtue wake the pulses of the heart,
And bid the tear of emulation start."—ROGERS.

VICTOIRE, who gave constant exercise to the benevolent feelings of the amiable nun, became every day more dear to her. Far from having the selfishness of a favourite, Victoire loved to bring into public notice the good actions of her companions. "Stoop down your ear to me, Sister Frances," said she, "and I will tell you a secret—I will tell you why my friend Annette is growing so thin—I found it out this morning—she does not eat above half her soup every day. Look, there's her porringer covered up in the corner—she carries it home to her mother, who is sick, and who has not bread to eat."

Mad. de Fleury came in, whilst Sister Frances was yet bending down to hear this secret; it was repeated to her, and she immediately ordered that a certain allowance of bread should be given to Annette every day to carry to her mother during her illness.

"I give it in charge to you, Victoire, to remember this, and I am sure it will never be forgotten. Here is an order for you upon my baker: run and show it to Annette. This is a pleasure you deserve; I am glad that you have chosen for your friend a girl who is so good a daughter. Good daughters make good friends."

By similar instances of goodness Victoire obtained the love and confidence of her companions, notwithstanding her manifest superiority. In their turn, they were eager to proclaim her merits; and, as Sister Frances and Mad. de Fleury administered justice with invariable impartiality, the hateful passions of envy and jealousy were never excited in this little society. No servile sycophant, no malicious detractor, could rob or defraud their little virtues of their due reward.

"Whom shall I trust to take this to Mad. de Fleury?" said Sister Frances, carrying into the garden where the children were playing a pot of fine jonquils, which she had brought from her convent.—"These are the first jonquils I have seen this year, and

finer I never beheld! Whom shall I trust to take them to Mad. de Fleury this evening?—It must be some one who will not stop to stare about on the way, but who will be very, very careful—some one in whom I can place perfect dependence."

"It must be Victoire, then," cried every voice.

"Yes, she deserves it to-day particularly," said Annette, eagerly; "because she was not angry with Babet, when she did what was enough to put any body in a passion. Sister Frances, you know this cherry-tree which you grafted for Victoire last year, and that was yesterday so full of blossoms—now you see, there is not a blossom left!—Babet plucked them all this morning to make a nosegay."

"But she did not know," said Victoire, "that pulling off the blossoms would prevent my having any cherries."

"Oh, I am very sorry I was so foolish," said Babet; "Victoire did not even say a cross word to me."

"Though she was excessively anxious about the cherries," pursued Annette, "because she intended to have given the first she had to Mad. de Fleury."

"Victoire, take the jonquils—it is but just," said Sister Frances. "How I do love to hear them all praise her!—I knew what she would be from the first."

With a joyful heart Victoire took the jonquils, promised to carry them with the utmost care, and not to stop to stare on the way. She set out to Mad. de Fleury's hotel, which was in *La Place de Louis Quinze.* It was late in the evening, the lamps were lighting, and as Victoire crossed the Pont de Louis Seize, she stopped to look at the reflection of the lamps in the water, which appeared in succession, as they were lighted, spreading as if by magic along the river. While Victoire leaned over the battlements of the bridge, watching the rising of these stars of fire, a sudden push from the elbow of some rude passenger precipitated her pot of jonquils into the Seine. The sound it made in the water was thunder to the ear of Victoire; she stood for an instant vainly hoping it would rise again, but the waters had closed over it for ever.

> "Dans cet état affreux, que faire?
> . . . . Mon devoir."

Victoire courageously proceeded to Mad. de Fleury's, and desired to see her.

"D'abord c'est impossible—madame is dressing to go to a concert;" said François. "Cannot you leave your message?"

"Oh, no," said Victoire; "it is of great consequence—I must see *her* myself; and she is so good, and you too, Monsieur François, that I am sure you will not refuse."

"Well, I remember one day you found the seal of my watch which I dropped at your school-room door—one good turn deserves another. If it is possible, it shall be done—I will inquir of madame's woman."—"Follow me up stairs," said he, returnin in a few minutes; "madame will see you."

She followed him up the large staircase, and through a suit of apartments sufficiently grand to intimidate her young ima gination.

"Madame est dans son cabinet. Entrez—mais entrez donc entrez toujours."

Mad. de Fleury was more richly dressed than usual; an her image was reflected in the large looking-glass, so that at th first moment Victoire thought she saw many fine ladies, but no one of them the lady she wanted.

"Well, Victoire, my child, what is the matter?"

"Oh, it is her voice!—I know you now, madame, and I am not afraid—not afraid even to tell you how foolish I have been Sister Frances trusted me to carry for you, madame, a beautif pot of jonquils, and she desired me not to stop on the way t stare; but I did stop to look at the lamps on the bridge, and forgot the jonquils, and somebody brushed by me, and thre them into the river—and I am very sorry I was so foolish."

"And I am very glad that you are so wise as to tell the trutl without attempting to make any paltry excuses. Go home t Sister Frances, and assure her that I am more obliged to her fo making you such an honest girl than I could be for a whole be of jonquils."

Victoire's heart was so full that she could not speak—she kisse Mad. de Fleury's hand in silence, and then seemed to be lost i contemplation of her bracelet.

"Are you thinking, Victoire, that you should be much ha

ɔier, if you had such bracelets as these?—Believe me, you are nistaken if you think so; many people are unhappy, who wear ine bracelets; so, my child, content yourself."

"Myself! Oh, madam, I was not thinking of myself—I was ıot wishing for bracelets, I was only thinking that——"

"That what?"

"That it is a pity you are so very rich; you have every thing n this world that you want, and I can never be of the least use o *you*—all my life I shall never be able to do *you* any good— ınd what," said Victoire, turning away to hide her tears, "what ignifies the gratitude of such a poor little creature as I am?"

"Did you never hear the fable of the lion and the mouse, Victoire?"

"No, madam—never!"

"Then I will tell it to you."

Victoire looked up with eyes of eager expectation—François ɔpened the door to announce that the Marquis de M—— and the Comte de S—— were in the saloon; but Mad. de Fleury stayed to ell Victoire her fable—she would not lose the opportunity of naking an impression upon this child's heart.

It is whilst the mind is warm that the deepest impressions can ɔe made. Seizing the happy moment sometimes decides the character and the fate of a child. In this respect what advan- ages have the rich and great in educating the children of the ɔoor! they have the power which their rank, and all its decora- ions, obtain over the imagination. Their smiles are favours; heir words are listened to as oracular; they are looked up to as ɔeings of a superior order. Their powers of working good are ılmost as great, though not quite so wonderful, as those formerly ıttributed to beneficent fairies.

CHAPTER VI.

> "Knowledge for them unlocks her *useful* page,
> And virtue blossoms for a better age."—BARBAULD.

A FEW days after Mad. de Fleury had told Victoire the fable of he lion and the mouse, she was informed by Sister Frances that

Victoire had put the fable into verse. It was wonderfully well done for a child of nine years old, and Mad. de Fleury was tempted to praise the lines; but, checking the enthusiasm of the moment, she considered whether it would be advantageous to cultivate her pupil's talent for poetry. Excellence in the poetic art cannot be obtained without a degree of application for which a girl in her situation could not have leisure. To encourage her to become a mere rhyming scribbler, without any chance of obtaining celebrity or securing subsistence, would be folly and cruelty. Early prodigies, in the lower ranks of life, are seldom permanently successful; they are cried up one day, and cried down the next. Their productions rarely have that superiority which secures a fair preference in the great literary market. Their performances are, perhaps, said to be—*wonderful, all things considered, &c.* Charitable allowances are made; the books are purchased by associations of complaisant friends or opulent patrons; a kind of forced demand is raised, but this can be only temporary and delusive. In spite of bounties and of all the arts of protection, nothing but what is intrinsically good will long be preferred, when it must be purchased. But granting that positive excellence is attained, there is always danger that for works of fancy the taste of the public may suddenly vary; there is a fashion in these things; and when the mode changes, the mere literary manufacturer is thrown out of employment; he is unable to turn his hand to another trade, or to any but his own peculiar branch of the business. The powers of the mind are often partially cultivated in these self-taught geniuses. We often see that one part of their understanding is nourished to the prejudice of the rest—the imagination, for instance, at the expense of the judgment: so that, whilst they have acquired talents for show, they have none for use. In the affairs of common life, they are utterly ignorant and imbecile—or worse than imbecile. Early called into public notice, probably before their moral habits are formed, they are extolled for some play of fancy or of wit, as Bacon calls it, some *juggler's trick of the intellect;* they immediately take an aversion to plodding labour, they feel raised above their situation; *possessed* by the notion that genius exempts them, not only from labour, but from vulgar rules of prudence, they soon disgrace themselves by their con-

duct, are deserted by their patrons, and sink into despair, or plunge into profligacy[1].

Convinced of these melancholy truths, Mad. de Fleury was determined not to add to the number of those imprudent or ostentatious patrons, who sacrifice to their own amusement and vanity the future happiness of their favourites. Victoire's verses were not handed about in fashionable circles, nor was she called upon to recite them before a brilliant audience, nor was she produced in public as a prodigy; she was educated in private, and by slow and sure degrees, to be a good, useful, and happy member of society. Upon the same principles which decided Mad. de Fleury against encouraging Victoire to be a poetess, she refrained from giving any of her little pupils accomplishments unsuited to their situation. Some had a fine ear for music, others showed powers of dancing; but they were taught neither dancing nor music—talents which in their station were more likely to be dangerous than serviceable. They were not intended for actresses or opera-girls, but for shop-girls, mantua-makers, workwomen, and servants of different sorts; consequently they were instructed in things which would be most necessary and useful to young women in their rank of life. Before they were ten years old, they could do all kinds of plain needlework, they could read and write well, and they were mistresses of the common rules of arithmetic. After this age, they were practised by a writing-master in drawing out bills neatly, keeping accounts, and applying to every-day use their knowledge of arithmetic. Some were taught by a laundress to wash, and *get up* fine linen and lace; others were instructed by a neighbouring *traiteur* in those culinary mysteries with which Sister Frances was unacquainted. In sweetmeats and confectionaries she yielded to no one; and she made her pupils as expert as herself. Those who were intended for ladies' maids were taught mantua-making, and had lessons from Mad. de Fleury's own woman in hairdressing.

Amongst her numerous friends and acquaintances, and amongst the shopkeepers whom she was in the habit of employing, Mad. de Fleury had means of placing and establishing her pupils suit-

[1] To these observations there are honourable exceptions.

ably and advantageously: of this both they and their parents were aware, so that there was a constant and great motive operating continually to induce them to exert themselves, and to behave well. This reasonable hope of reaping the fruits of their education, and of being immediately rewarded for their good conduct; this perception of the connexion between what they are taught and what they are to become, is necessary to make young people assiduous: for want of attending to these principles, many splendid establishments have failed to produce pupils answerable to the expectations which had been formed of them.

During seven years that Mad. de Fleury persevered uniformly on the same plan, only one girl forfeited her protection—a girl of the name of Manon; she was Victoire's cousin, but totally unlike her in character.

When very young, her beautiful eyes and hair caught the fancy of a rich lady, who took her into her family as a sort of humble playfellow for her children. She was taught to dance and to sing: she soon excelled in these accomplishments, and was admired, and produced as a prodigy of talent. The lady of the house gave herself great credit for having discerned, and having *brought forward*, such talents. Manon's moral character was in the mean time neglected. In this house, where there was a constant scene of hurry and dissipation, the child had frequent opportunities and temptations to be dishonest. For some time she was not detected; her caressing manners pleased her patroness, and servile compliance with the humours of the children of the family secured their good-will. Encouraged by daily petty successes in the art of deceit, she became a complete hypocrite. With culpable negligence, her mistress trusted implicitly to appearances; and without examining whether she were really honest, she suffered her to have free access to unlocked drawers and valuable cabinets. Several articles of dress were missed from time to time; but Manon managed so artfully, that she averted from herself all suspicion. Emboldened by this fatal impunity, she at last attempted depredations of more importance. She purloined a valuable snuff-box—was detected in disposing of the broken parts of it at a pawnbroker's, and was immediately discarded in disgrace; but by her tears and vehe-

ment expressions of remorse, she so far worked upon the weakness of the lady of the house, as to prevail upon her to conceal the circumstance that occasioned her dismissal. Some months afterwards Manon, pleading that she was thoroughly reformed, obtained from this lady a recommendation to Mad. de Fleury's school. It is wonderful that people, who in other respects profess and practise integrity, can be so culpably weak as to give good characters to those who do not deserve them: this is really one of the worst species of forgery. Imposed upon by this treacherous recommendation, Mad. de Fleury received into the midst of her innocent young pupils one who might have corrupted their minds secretly and irrecoverably. Fortunately a discovery was made in time of Manon's real disposition. A mere trifle led to the detection of her habits of falsehood. As she could not do any kind of needlework, she was employed in winding cotton; she was negligent, and did not in the course of the week wind the same number of balls as her companions; and to conceal this, she pretended that she had delivered the proper number to the woman, who regularly called at the end of the week for the cotton. The woman persisted in her account; the children in theirs; and Manon would not retract her assertion. The poor woman gave up the point; but she declared that she would the next time send her brother to make up the account, because he was *sharper* than herself, and would not be imposed upon so easily. The ensuing week the brother came, and he proved to be the very pawnbroker to whom Manon formerly offered the stolen box: he knew her immediately; it was in vain that she attempted to puzzle him, and to persuade him that she was not the same person. The man was clear and firm. Sister Frances could scarcely believe what she heard. Struck with horror, the children shrunk back from Manon, and stood in silence. Mad. de Fleury immediately wrote to the lady who had recommended this girl, and inquired into the truth of the pawnbroker's assertions. The lady, who had given Manon a false character, could not deny the facts, and could apologize for herself only by saying, that "she believed the girl to be partly reformed, and that she hoped, under Mad. de Fleury's judicious care, she would become an amiable and respectable woman."

Mad. de Fleury, however, wisely judged, that the haz corrupting all her pupils should not be incurred for the chance of correcting one, whose bad habits were of sucl standing. Manon was expelled from this happy littl munity—even Sister Frances, the most mild of human could never think of the danger to which they had been e without expressing indignation against the lady who mended such a girl as a fit companion for her blamele beloved pupils.

CHAPTER VII.

"Alas! regardless of their doom,
The little victims play:
No sense have they of ills to come,
No care beyond to-day."—GRAY.

GOOD legislators always attend to the habits, and what is the genius, of the people they have to govern. From y age, the taste for whatever is called *une fête* pervades the French nation. Mad. de Fleury availed herself judicio this powerful motive, and connected it with the feeli affection more than with the passion for show. For in when any of her little people had done any thing parti worthy of reward, she gave them leave to invite their par a *fête* prepared for them by their children, assisted l kindness of Sister Frances.

One day—it was a holiday obtained by Victoire's conduct—all the children prepared in their garden a littl for their parents. Sister Frances spread the table bountiful hand, the happy fathers and mothers were upon by their children, and each in their turn heard with from the benevolent nun some instance of their dau improvement. Full of hope for the future, and of gratit the past, these honest people ate and talked, whilst in im tion they saw their children all prosperously and usefully in the world. They blessed Mad. de Fleury in her absenc they wished ardently for her presence.

"The sun is setting, and Mad. de Fleury is not yet come,' cried Victoire; "she said she would be here this evening—What can be the matter?"

"Nothing is the matter, you may be sure," said Babet; "but that she has forgotten us—she has so many things to think of."

"Yes; but I know she never forgets us," said Victoire; "and she loves so much to see us all happy together, that I am sure it must be something very extraordinary that detains her."

Babet laughed at Victoire's fears: but presently even she began to grow impatient; for they waited long after sunset, expecting every moment that Mad. de Fleury would arrive. At last she appeared, but with a dejected countenance, which seemed to justify Victoire's foreboding. When she saw this festive company, each child sitting between her parents, and all at her entrance looking up with affectionate pleasure, a faint smile enlivened her countenance for a moment; but she did not speak to them with her usual ease. Her mind seemed preoccupied by some disagreeable business of importance. It appeared that it had some connexion with them; for as she walked round the table with Sister Frances, she said with a voice and look of great tenderness, "Poor children! how happy they are at this moment!—Heaven only knows how soon they may be rendered, or may render themselves, miserable!"

None of the children could imagine what this meant; but their parents guessed that it had some allusion to the state of public affairs. About this time some of those discontents had broken out, which preceded the terrible days of the Revolution. As yet, most of the common people, who were honestly employed in earning their own living, neither understood what was going on, nor foresaw what was to happen. Many of their superiors were not in such happy ignorance—they had information of the intrigues that were forming; and the more penetration they possessed, the more they feared the consequences of events which they could not control. At the house of a great man, with whom she had dined this day, Mad. de Fleury had heard alarming news. Dreadful public disturbances, she saw, were inevitable; and whilst she trembled for the fate of all who were dear to her, these poor children had a share in her anxiety. She foresaw the temptations, the dangers, to which they must be

exposed, whether they abandoned, or whether they abided by, the principles their education had instilled. She feared that the labour of years would perhaps be lost in an instant, or that her innocent pupils would fall victims even to their virtues.

Many of these young people were now of an age to understand and to govern themselves by reason; and with these she determined to use those preventive measures which reason affords. Without meddling with politics, in which no amiable or sensible woman can wish to interfere, the influence of ladies in the higher ranks of life may always be exerted with perfect propriety, and with essential advantage to the public, in conciliating the inferior classes of society, explaining to them their duties and their interests, and impressing upon the minds of the children of the poor, sentiments of just subordination and honest independence. How happy would it have been for France, if women of fortune and abilities had always exerted their talents and activity in this manner, instead of wasting their powers in futile declamations, or in the intrigues of party!

CHAPTER VIII.

"E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done."
GOLDSMITH.

MADAME DE FLEURY was not disappointed in her pupils. When the public disturbances began, these children were shocked by the horrible actions they saw. Instead of being seduced by bad example, they only showed anxiety to avoid companions of their own age, who were dishonest, idle, or profligate. Victoire's cousin Manon ridiculed these *absurd* principles, as she called them; and endeavoured to persuade Victoire that she would be much happier if she *followed the fashion.*

"What! Victoire, still with your work-bag on your arm, and still going to school with your little sister, though you are but a year younger than I am, I believe!—thirteen last birthday, were not you?—Mon Dieu! Why, how long do you intend to be a child? and why don't you leave that old nun, who keeps you in

ading-strings?—I assure you, nuns, and schoolmistresses, and :hools, and all that sort of thing, are out of fashion now—we ıve abolished all that—we are to live a life of reason now— ıd all soon to be equal, I can tell you; let your Mad. de Fleury ok to that, and look to it yourself; for with all your wisdom, ›u might find yourself in the wrong box by sticking to her, and ıat side of the question.—Disengage yourself from her, I advise ›u, as soon as you can.—My dear Victoire! believe me, you ay spell very well—but you know nothing of the rights of man, · the rights of woman."

"I do not pretend to know any thing of the rights of men, or .e rights of women," cried Victoire; "but this I know, that I ›ver can or will be ungrateful to Mad. de Fleury. Disengage yself from her! I am bound to her for ever, and I will abide r her till the last hour I breathe."

"Well, well! there is no occasion to be in a passion—I only ıeak as a friend, and I have no more time to reason with you; r I must go home, and get ready my dress for the ball to-ght."

"Manon, how can you afford to buy a dress for a ball?"

"As you might, if you had common sense, Victoire—only by ›ing a *good citizen.* I and a party of us *denounced* a milliner ıd a confectioner in our neighbourhood, who were horrible aris-crats; and of their goods forfeited to the nation we had, as was ır just share, such delicious *marangles,* and charming ribands! -Oh, Victoire, believe me, you will never get such things by ›ing to school, or saying your prayers either. You may look ith as much scorn and indignation as you please, but I advise ›u to let it alone, for all that is out of fashion, and may more-ʼer bring you into difficulties. Believe me, my dear Victoire, ›ur head is not deep enough to understand these things—you ıow nothing of politics."

"But I know the difference between right and wrong, Manon: ›litics can never alter that, you know."

"Never alter that!—there you are quite mistaken," said anon: "I cannot stay to convince you now—but this I n tell you, that I know secrets that you don't suspect."

"I do not wish to know any of your secrets, Manon," said ictoire, proudly.

"Your pride may be humbled, Citoyenne Victoire, sooner than you expect," exclaimed Manon, who was now so provoked by her cousin's contempt, that she could not refrain from boasting of her political knowledge. "I can tell you, that your fine friends will in a few days not be able to protect you. The Abbé Tracassier is in love with a dear friend of mine, and I know all the secrets of state from her—and I know what I know. Be as incredulous as you please, but you will see that, before this week is at end, Monsieur de Fleury will be guillotined, and then what will become of you? Good morning, my proud cousin."

Shocked by what she had just heard, Victoire could scarcely believe that Manon was in earnest; she resolved, however, to go immediately and communicate this intelligence, whether true or false, to Mad. de Fleury. It agreed but too well with other circumstances, which alarmed this lady for the safety of her husband. A man of his abilities, integrity, and fortune, could not in such times hope to escape persecution. He was inclined to brave the danger; but his lady represented that it would not be courage, but rashness and folly, to sacrifice his life to the villany of others, without probability or possibility of serving his country by his fall.

M. de Fleury, in consequence of these representations, and of Victoire's intelligence, made his escape from Paris; and the very next day *placards* were put up in every street, offering a price for the head of Citoyen Fleury, *suspected of incivisme.*

Struck with terror and astonishment at the sight of these *placards*, the children read them as they returned in the evening from school; and little Babet in the vehemence of her indignation mounted a lamplighter's ladder, and tore down one of the papers. This imprudent action did not pass unobserved: it was seen by one of the spies of Citoyen Tracassier, a man who, under the pretence of zeal *pour la chose publique*, gratified without scruple his private resentments and his malevolent passions. In his former character of an abbé, and a man of wit, he had gained admittance into Mad. de Fleury's society. There he attempted to dictate both as a literary and religious despot. Accidentally discovering that Mad. de Fleury had a little school for poor children, he thought proper to be offended, because he had not been consulted respecting the regulations, and because

he was not permitted, as he said, to take the charge of this little flock. He made many objections to Sister Frances, as being an improper person to have the spiritual guidance of these young people: but as he was unable to give any just reason for his dislike, Mad. de Fleury persisted in her choice, and was at last obliged to assert, in opposition to the domineering abbé, her right to judge and decide in her own affairs. With seeming politeness, he begged ten thousand pardons for his conscientious interference. No more was said upon the subject; and as he did not totally withdraw from her society till the revolution broke out, she did not suspect that she had any thing to fear from his resentment. His manners and opinions changed suddenly with the times; the mask of religion was thrown off; and now, instead of objecting to Sister Frances as not being sufficiently strict and orthodox in her tenets, he boldly declared, that a nun was not a fit person to be intrusted with the education of any of the young citizens—they should all be *des élèves de la patrie.* The abbé, become a member of the Committee of Public Safety, denounced Mad. de Fleury, in the strange jargon of the day, as "*the fosterer of a swarm of bad citizens, who were nourished in the anticivic prejudices* de l'ancien régime, *and fostered in the most detestable superstitions, in defiance of the law.*" He further observed, that he had good reason to believe that some of these little *enemies to the constitution* had contrived and abetted M. de Fleury's escape. Of their having rejoiced at it in a most indecent manner, he said he could produce irrefragable proof. The boy who saw Babet tear down the *placard* was produced and solemnly examined; and the thoughtless action of this poor little girl was construed into a state crime of the most horrible nature. In a declamatory tone, Tracassier reminded his fellow-citizens, that in the ancient Grecian times of virtuous republicanism (times of which France ought to show herself emulous), an Athenian child was condemned to death for having made a plaything of a fragment of the gilding that had fallen from a public statue. The orator, for the reward of his eloquence, obtained an order to seize every thing in Mad. de Fleury's school-house, and to throw the nun into prison.

CHAPTER IX.

> "Who now will guard bewilder'd youth
> Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage?—
> Such war can Virtue wage?"

At the very moment when this order was going to be put in execution, Mad. de Fleury was sitting in the midst of the children, listening to Babet, who was reading Æsop's fable of *The old man and his sons.* Whilst her sister was reading, Victoire collected a number of twigs from the garden: she had just tied them together; and was going, by Sister Frances' desire, to let her companions try if they could break the bundle, when the attention of the moral of the fable was interrupted by the entrance of an old woman, whose countenance expressed the utmost terror and haste, to tell what she had not breath to utter. To Mad. de Fleury she was a stranger; but the children immediately recollected her to be the *chestnut woman,* to whom Babet had some years ago restored certain purloined chestnuts.

"Fly!" said she, the moment she had breath to speak: "Fly!—they are coming to seize every thing here—carry off what you can—make haste—make haste!—I came through a by-street. A man was eating chestnuts at my stall, and I saw him show one that was with him the order from Citoyen Tracassier. They'll be here in five minutes—quick!—quick!—You, in particular," continued she, turning to the nun, "else you'll be in prison."

At these words, the children, who had clung round Sister Frances, loosed their hold, exclaiming, "Go! go quick: but where? where?—we will go with her."

"No, no!" said Madame de Fleury, "she shall come home with me—my carriage is at the door."

"Ma belle dame!" cried the chestnut woman, "your house is the worst place she can go to—let her come to my cellar—the poorest cellar in these days is safer than the grandest palace."

So saying, she seized the nun with honest roughness, and hurried her away. As soon as she was gone, the children ran different ways, each to collect some favourite thing, which they thought they could not leave behind. Victoire alone stood

motionless beside Mad. de Fleury ; her whole thoughts abs by the fear that her benefactress would be imprisoned. " madame ! dear, dear Madame de Fleury, don't stay ! don stay !"

"Oh, children, never mind these things."

"Don't stay, madame, don't stay ! I will stay with them—I will stay—do you go."

The children hearing these words, and recollecting Mad. de Fleury's danger, abandoned all their little property, and instantly obeyed her orders to go home to their parents. Victoire at last saw Mad. de Fleury safe in her carriage. The coachman drove off at a great rate; and a few minutes afterwards Tracassier's myrmidons arrived at the school-house. Great was their surprise, when they found only the poor children's little books, unfinished samplers, and half-hemmed handkerchiefs. They ran into the garden to search for the nun. They were men of brutal habits; yet as they looked at every thing round them, which bespoke peace, innocence, and childish happiness, they could not help thinking it was a pity to destroy what *could do the nation no great harm after all.* They were even glad that the nun had made her escape, since they were not answerable for it; and they returned to their employer, satisfied for once without doing any mischief: but Citizen Tracassier was of too vindictive a temper to suffer the objects of his hatred thus to elude his vengeance. The next day Mad. de Fleury was summoned before his tribunal, and ordered to give up the nun, against whom, as a suspected person, a decree of the law had been obtained.

Mad. de Fleury refused to betray the innocent woman: the gentle firmness of this lady's answers to a brutal interrogatory was termed insolence; she was pronounced a refractory aristocrat, dangerous to the state; and an order was made out to seal up her goods, and to keep her a prisoner in her own house.

CHAPTER X.

> "Alas! full oft on Guilt's victorious car
> The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne,
> While the fair captive, mark'd with many a scar,
> In lone obscurity, oppress'd, forlorn,
> Resigns to tears her angel form."—BEATTIE.

A CLOSE prisoner in her own house, Mad. de Fleury was now guarded by men suddenly become soldiers, and sprung from the dregs of the people; men of brutal manners, ferocious countenances, and more ferocious minds. They seemed to delight in the insolent display of their newly-acquired power. One of these men had formerly been convicted of some horrible crime, and had been sent to the galleys by M. de Fleury. Revenge actuated this wretch under the mask of patriotism, and he rejoiced in seeing the wife of the man he hated a prisoner in his custody. Ignorant of the facts, his associates were ready to believe him in the right, and to join in the senseless cry against all who were their superiors in fortune, birth, and education. This unfortunate lady was forbidden all intercourse with her friends, and it was in vain she attempted to obtain from her jailers intelligence of what was passing in Paris.

"Tu verras—Tout va bien—Ca ira," were the only answers they deigned to make: frequently they continued smoking their pipes in obdurate silence. She occupied the back rooms of her house, because her guards apprehended that she might from the front windows receive intelligence from her friends. One morning she was awakened by an unusual noise in the streets; and upon her inquiring the occasion of it, her guards told her she was welcome to go to the front windows, and satisfy her curiosity. She went, and saw an immense crowd of people surrounding a guillotine, that had been erected the preceding night. Mad. de Fleury started back with horror—her guards burst into an inhuman laugh, and asked whether her curiosity was satisfied. She would have left the room; but it was now their pleasure to detain her, and to force her to continue the whole day in this apartment. When the guillotine began its work, they had even the barbarity to drag her to the window, repeating, "It is there

you ought to be!—It is there your husband ought to be!—You are too happy, that your husband is not there this moment. But he will be there—the law will overtake him—he will be there in time—and you too!"

The mild fortitude of this innocent, benevolent woman made no impression upon these cruel men. When at night they saw her kneeling at her prayers, they taunted her with gross and impious mockery; and when she sunk to sleep, they would waken her by their loud and drunken orgies: if she remonstrated, they answered, "The enemies of the constitution should have no rest."

Mad. de Fleury was not an enemy to any human being; she had never interfered in politics; her life had been passed in domestic pleasures, or employed for the good of her fellow-creatures. Even in this hour of personal danger she thought of others more than of herself: she thought of her husband, an exile in a foreign country, who might be reduced to the utmost distress, now that she was deprived of all means of remitting him money. She thought of her friends, who, she knew, would exert themselves to obtain her liberty, and whose zeal in her cause might involve them and their families in distress. She thought of the good Sister Frances, who had been exposed by her means to the unrelenting persecution of the malignant and powerful Tracassier. She thought of her poor little pupils, now thrown upon the world without a protector. Whilst these ideas were revolving in her mind, one night, as she lay awake, she heard the door of her chamber open softly, and a soldier, one of her guards, with a light in his hand, entered: he came to the foot of her bed; and, as she started up, laid his finger upon his lips.

"Don't make the least noise," said he in a whisper; "those without are drunk, and asleep. Don't you know me?—Don't you remember my face?"

"Not in the least; yet I have some recollection of your voice."

The man took off the bonnet-rouge—still she could not guess who he was.—"You never saw me in an uniform before, nor without a black face."

She looked again, and recollected the smith, to whom

Maurice was bound apprentice, and remembered his *patois* accent.

"I remember you," said he, "at any rate; and your goodness to that poor girl the day her arm was broken, and all your goodness to Maurice—But I've no time for talking of that now—get up, wrap this great coat round you—don't be in a hurry, but make no noise, and follow me."

She followed him; and he led her past the sleeping sentinels, opened a back door into the garden, hurried her, almost carried her, across the garden, to a door at the furthest end of it, which opened into Les Champs Elysées—"La voilà!" cried he, pushing her through the half-opened door. "God be praised!" answered a voice, which Mad. de Fleury knew to be Victoire's, whose arms were thrown round her with a transport of joy.

"Softly; she is not safe yet—wait till we get her home, Victoire," said another voice, which she knew to be that of Maurice. He produced a dark lantern, and guided Mad. de Fleury across the Champs Elysées, and across the bridge, and then through various by-streets, in perfect silence, till they arrived safely at the house where Victoire's mother lodged, and went up those very stairs which she had ascended in such different circumstances several years before. The mother, who was sitting up waiting most anxiously for the return of her children, clasped her hands in an ecstasy, when she saw them return with Mad. de Fleury.

"Welcome, madame! Welcome, dear madame! but who would have thought of seeing you here, in such a way? Let her rest herself—let her rest; she is quite overcome. Here, madame, can you sleep on this poor bed?"

"The very same bed you laid me upon the day my arm was broken," said Victoire.

"Ay, Lord bless her!" said the mother; "and though it's seven good years ago, it seemed but yesterday that I saw her sitting on that bed, beside my poor child, looking like an angel. But let her rest, let her rest—we'll not say a word more, only God bless her; thank Heaven, she's safe with us at last!"

Mad. de Fleury expressed unwillingness to stay with these good people, lest she should expose them to danger; but they

begged most earnestly that she would remain with them without scruple.

"Surely, madame," said the mother, "you must think that we have some remembrance of all you have done for us, and some touch of gratitude."

"And surely, madame, you can trust us, I hope," said Maurice.

"And surely you are not too proud to let us do something for you. The lion was not too proud to be served by the poor little mouse," said Victoire. "As to danger for us," continued she, "there can be none; for Maurice and I have contrived a hiding-place for you, madame, that can never be found out—let them come spying here as often as they please, they will never find her out, will they, Maurice? Look, madame, into this lumber-room—you see it seems to be quite full of wood for firing; well, if you creep in behind, you can hide yourself quite snug in the loft above, and here's a trap-door into the loft that nobody ever would think of—for we have hung these old things from the top of it, and who could guess it was a trap-door? So, you see, dear madame, you may sleep in peace here, and never fear for us."

Though but a girl of fourteen, Victoire showed at this time all the sense and prudence of a woman of thirty. Gratitude seemed at once to develope all the powers of her mind. It was she and Maurice who had prevailed upon the smith to effect Mad. de Fleury's escape from her own house. She had invented, she had foreseen, she had arranged every thing; she had scarcely rested night or day since the imprisonment of her benefactress; and now that her exertions had fully succeeded, her joy seemed to raise her above all feeling of fatigue; she looked as fresh and moved as briskly, her mother said, as if she were preparing to go to a ball.

"Ah! my child," said she, "your cousin Manon, who goes to those balls every night, was never so happy as you are this minute."

But Victoire's happiness was not of long continuance; for the next day they were alarmed by intelligence that Tracassier was enraged beyond measure at Mad. de Fleury's escape, that all his emissaries were at work to discover her present hiding-place,

that the houses of all the parents and relations of her pupils were to be searched, and that the most severe denunciations were issued against all by whom she should be harboured. Manon was the person who gave this intelligence, but not with any benevolent design; she first came to Victoire, to display her own consequence; and to terrify her, she related all she knew from a soldier's wife, who was M. Tracassier's mistress. Victoire had sufficient command over herself to conceal from the inquisitive eyes of Manon the agitation of her heart; she had also the prudence not to let any one of her companions into her secret, though, when she saw their anxiety, she was much tempted to relieve them, by the assurance that Mad. de Fleury was in safety. All the day was passed in apprehension. Mad. de Fleury never stirred from her place of concealment: as the evening and the hour of the domiciliary visits approached, Victoire and Maurice were alarmed by an unforeseen difficulty. Their mother, whose health had been broken by hard work, in vain endeavoured to suppress her terror at the thoughts of this domiciliary visit; she repeated incessantly that she knew they should all be discovered, and that her children would be dragged to the guillotine before her face. She was in such a distracted state, that they dreaded she would, the moment she saw the soldiers, reveal all she knew.

"If they question me, I shall not know what to answer," cried the terrified woman. "What can I say?—What can I do?"

Reasoning, entreaties, all were vain; she was not in a condition to understand, or even to listen to, any thing that was said. In this situation they were, when the domiciliary visitors arrived—they heard the noise of the soldiers' feet on the stairs—the poor woman sprang from the arms of her children; but at the moment the door was opened, and she saw the glittering of the bayonets, she fell at full length in a swoon on the floor—fortunately before she had power to utter a syllable. The people of the house knew, and said, that she was subject to fits on any sudden alarm; so that her being affected in this manner did not appear surprising. They threw her on a bed, whilst they proceeded to search the house: her children stayed with her; and, wholly occupied in attending to her, they were not exposed

ie danger of betraying their anxiety about Mad. de Fleury.
trembled, however, from head to foot, when they heard
of the soldiers swear that all the wood in the lumber-room
be pulled out, and that he would not leave the house till
stick was moved; the sound of each log, as it was thrown
was heard by Victoire: her brother was now summoned to
. How great was his terror, when one of the searchers
d up to the roof, as if expecting to find a trap-door!
ıately, however, he did not discover it. Maurice, who
seized the light, contrived to throw the shadows so as to
ve the eye. The soldiers at length retreated; and with in-
ssible satisfaction Maurice lighted them down stairs, and
hem fairly out of the house. For some minutes after they
in safety, the terrified mother, who had recovered her
s, could scarcely believe that the danger was over. She
aced her children by turns with wild transport; and with
begged Mad. de Fleury to forgive her cowardice, and not
tribute it to ingratitude, or to suspect that she had a bad
. She protested that she was now become so courageous,
she found that she had gone through this trial successfully,
since she was sure that the hiding-place was really so
e, that she should never be alarmed at any domiciliary
in future. Mad. de Fleury, however, did not think it
just or expedient to put her resolution to the trial. She
mined to leave Paris; and, if possible, to make her escape
France. The master of one of the Paris diligences was
er to François, her footman: he was ready to assist her at
zards, and to convey her safely to Bourdeaux, if she could
ise herself properly; and if she could obtain a pass from
riend under a feigned name.

toire—the indefatigable Victoire—recollected that her
l Annette had an aunt, who was nearly of Mad. de Fleury's
ind who had just obtained a pass to go to Bourdeaux, to
some of her relations. The pass was willingly given up to
de Fleury; and upon reading it over it was found to
r tolerably well—the colour of the eyes and hair at least
l do; though the words *un nez gros* were not precisely
ptive of this lady's. Annette's mother, who had always
the provincial dress of Auvergne, furnished the high

cornette, stiff stays, boddice, &c.; and equipped in these, Mad. de Fleury was so admirably well disguised, that even Victoire declared she should scarcely have known her. Money, that most necessary passport in all countries, was still wanting: as seals had been put upon all Mad. de Fleury's effects the day she had been first imprisoned in her own house, she could not save even her jewels. She had, however, one ring on her finger of some value. How to dispose of it without exciting suspicion was the difficulty. Babet, who was resolved to have her share in assisting her benefactress, proposed to carry the ring to a *colporteur*—a pedlar, or sort of travelling jeweller, who had come to lay in a stock of hardware at Paris: he was related to one of Mad. de Fleury's little pupils, and readily disposed of the ring for her: she obtained at least two-thirds of its value—a great deal in those times.

The proofs of integrity, attachment, and gratitude, which she received in these days of peril, from those whom she had obliged in her prosperity, touched her generous heart so much, that she has often since declared she could not regret having been reduced to distress. Before she quitted Paris, she wrote letters to her friends, recommending her pupils to their protection; she left these letters in the care of Victoire, who to the last moment followed her with anxious affection. She would have followed her benefactress into exile, but that she was prevented by duty and affection from leaving her mother, who was in declining health.

Mad. de Fleury successfully made her escape from Paris. Some of the municipal officers in the towns through which she passed on her road were as severe as their ignorance would permit in scrutinizing her passport. It seldom happened that more than one of these petty committees of public safety could read. One usually spelled out the passport as well as he could, whilst the others smoked their pipes, and from time to time held a light up to the lady's face to examine whether it agreed with the description.

"Mais toi! tu n'as pas le nez gros!" said one of her judges to her. "Son nez est assez gros, et c'est moi qui le dit," said another. The question was put to the vote; and the man who had asserted what was contrary to the evidence of his senses was

so vehement in supporting his opinion, that it was carried in spite of all that could be said against it. Mad. de Fleury was suffered to proceed on her journey. She reached Bourdeaux in safety. Her husband's friends—the good have always friends in adversity—her husband's friends exerted themselves for her with the most prudent zeal. She was soon provided with a sum of money sufficient for her support for some time in England; and she safely reached that free and happy country, which has been the refuge of so many illustrious exiles.

CHAPTER XI.

> "Cosi rozzo diamante appena splende
> Dalla rupe natìa quand' esce fuora,
> E a poco a poco lucido se rende
> Sotto l'attenta che lo lavora."

MAD. DE FLEURY joined her husband, who was in London; and they both lived in the most retired and frugal manner. They had too much of the pride of independence to become burthensome to their generous English friends. Notwithstanding the variety of difficulties they had to encounter, and the number of daily privations to which they were forced to submit, yet they were happy—in a tranquil conscience, in their mutual affection, and the attachment of many poor but grateful friends. A few months after she came to England, Mad. de Fleury received, by a private hand, a packet of letters from her little pupils. Each of them, even the youngest, who had but just begun to learn joining-hand, would write a few lines in this packet.

In various hands, of various sizes, the changes were rung upon these simple words:

"MY DEAR MADAME DE FLEURY,

"I love you—I wish you were here again—I will be *very very* good whilst you are away. If you stay away ever so long, I shall never forget you, nor your goodness; but I hope you will

soon be able to come back, and this is what I pray for every night. Sister Frances says I may tell you that I am very good, and Victoire thinks so too."

This was the substance of several of their little letters. Victoire's contained rather more information:—

"You will be glad to *learn* that dear Sister Frances is safe, and that the good chestnut woman, in whose cellar she took refuge, did not get into any difficulty. After you were gone, M. T—— said that he did not think it worth while to pursue her, as it was only you he wanted to humble. Manon, who has, I do not know how, means of knowing, told me this. Sister Frances is now with her abbess, who, as well as every body else that knows her, is very fond of her. What was a convent is no longer a convent: the nuns are turned out of it. Sister Frances' health is not so good as it used to be, though she never complains; I am sure she suffers much; she has never been the same person since that day when we were driven from our happy school-room. It is all destroyed—the garden and every thing. It is now a dismal sight. Your absence also afflicts Sister Frances much, and she is in great anxiety about all of us. She has the six little ones with her every day, in her own apartment, and goes on teaching them as she used to do. We six eldest go to see her as often as we can. I should have begun, my dear Mad. de Fleury, by telling you, that, the day after you left Paris, I went to deliver all the letters you were so very kind to write for us in the midst of your hurry. Your friends have been exceedingly good to us, and have got places for us all. Rose is with Mad. la Grace, your mantua-maker, who says she is more handy and more expert at cutting out than girls she has had these three years. Marianne is in the service of Mad. de V——, who has lost a great part of her large fortune, and cannot afford to keep her former waiting-maid. Mad. de V—— is well pleased with Marianne, and bids me tell you that she thanks you for her. Indeed, Marianne, though she is only fourteen, can do every thing her lady wants. Susanne is with a confectioner; she gave Sister Frances a box of *bonbons* of her own making this morning; and Sister Frances, who is a judge, says they are excellent; she

only wishes you could taste them. Annette and I (thanks to your kindness!) are in the same service, with Mad. Feuillot, the *brodeuse*, to whom you recommended us: she is not discontented with our work, and indeed sent a very civil message yesterday to Sister Frances on this subject; but I believe it is too flattering for me to repeat in this letter. We shall do our best to give her satisfaction. She is glad to find that we can write tolerably, and that we can make out bills and keep accounts; this being particularly convenient to her at present, as the young man she had in the shop is become an *orator*, and good for nothing but *la chose publique*: her son, who could have supplied his place, is ill; and Mad. Feuillot herself, not having had, as she says, the advantage of such a good education as we have been blessed with, writes but badly, and knows nothing of arithmetic. Dear Mad. de Fleury, how much, how very much we are obliged to you! We feel it every day more and more: in these times what would have become of us, if we could do nothing useful? Who *would*, who *could* be burdened with us? Dear madame, we owe every thing to you—and we can do nothing, not the least thing, for you!—My mother is still in bad health, and I fear will never recover: Babet is with her always, and Sister Frances is very good to her. My brother Maurice is now so good a workman that he earns a louis a week. He is very steady to his business, and never goes to the revolutionary meetings, though once he had a great mind to be an orator of the people, but never since the day that you explained to him that he knew nothing about equality and the rights of men, &c. How could I forget to tell you, that his master the smith, who was one of your guards, and who assisted you to escape, has returned without suspicion to his former trade? and he declares that he will never more meddle with public affairs. I gave him the money you left with me for him. He is very kind to my brother—yesterday Maurice mended for Annette's mistress the lock of an English writing-desk, and he mended it so astonishingly well, that an English gentleman, who saw it, could not believe the work was done by a Frenchman; so my brother was sent for, to prove it, and they were forced to believe it. To-day he has more work than he can finish this twelvemonth—all this we owe to you. I shall never forget the day when you promised

that you would grant my brother's wish to be apprenticed to the smith, if I was not in a passion for a month—that cured me of being so passionate.

"Dear Mad. de Fleury, I have written you too long a letter, and not so well as I can write when I am not in a hurry; but I wanted to tell you every thing at once, because, may be, I shall not for a long time have so safe an opportunity of sending a letter to you. "VICTOIRE."

Several months elapsed before Mad. de Fleury received another letter from Victoire: it was short, and evidently written in great distress of mind. It contained an account of her mother's death. She was now left at the early age of sixteen an orphan. Mad. Feuillot, the *brodeuse*, with whom she lived, added a few lines to her letter, penned with difficulty and strangely spelled, but expressive of her being highly pleased with both the girls recommended to her by Mad. de Fleury, especially Victoire, who she said was such a treasure to her, that she would not part with her on any account, and should consider her as a daughter. "I tell her not to grieve so much; for though she has lost one mother, she has gained another for herself, who will always love her: and besides, she is so useful, and in so many ways, with her pen and her needle, in accounts, and every thing that is wanted in a family or a shop, she can never want employment or friends in the worst times; and none can be worse than these, especially for such pretty girls as she is, who have all their heads turned, and are taught to consider nothing a sin that used to be sins. Many gentlemen, who come to our shop, have found out that Victoire is very handsome, and tell her so; but she is so modest and prudent, that I am not afraid for her. I could tell you, madame, a good anecdote on this subject, but my paper will not allow, and besides, my writing is so difficult."

Above a year elapsed before Mad. de Fleury received another letter from Victoire: this was in a parcel, of which an emigrant took charge: it contained a variety of little offerings from her pupils, instances of their ingenuity, their industry, and their affection: the last thing in the packet was a small purse labelled in this manner—

"*Savings from our wages and earnings, for her who taught us all we know.*"

CHAPTER XII.

"Dans sa pompe élégante, admirez Chantilly,
De héros en héros, d'âge en âge, embelli."
DE LILLE.

THE health of the good Sister Frances, which had suffered much from the shock her mind received at the commencement of the revolution, declined so rapidly in the course of the two succeeding years, that she was obliged to leave Paris, and she retired to a little village in the neighbourhood of Chantilly. She chose this situation, because here she was within a morning's walk of Mad. de Fleury's country-seat. The Château de Fleury had not yet been seized as national property, nor had it suffered from the attacks of the mob, though it was in a perilous situation, within view of the high road to Paris. The Parisian populace had not yet extended their outrages to this distance from the city; and the poor people who lived on the estate of Fleury, attached from habit, principle, and gratitude to their lord, were not disposed to take advantage of the disorder of the times, to injure the property of those from whom they had all their lives received favours and protection. A faithful old steward had the care of the castle and the grounds. Sister Frances was impatient to talk to him, and to visit the château, which she had never seen; but for some days after her arrival in the village, she was so much fatigued and so weak, that she could not attempt so long a walk. Victoire had obtained permission from her mistress to accompany the nun for a few days to the country, as Annette undertook to do all the business of the shop during the absence of her companion. Victoire was fully as eager as Sister Frances to see the faithful steward and the Château de Fleury, and the morning was now fixed for their walk: but in the middle of the night they were awakened by the shouts of a mob, who had just entered the village fresh from the destruction of a neighbouring castle. The nun and Victoire listened; but in the midst of the horrid yells of joy, no human voice, no intelligible word, could be distinguished: they looked through a chink in the window-shutter, and they saw the street below

filled with a crowd of men, whose countenances were by turns illuminated by the glare of the torches which they brandished.

"Good Heavens!" whispered the nun to Victoire: "I should know the face of that man who is loading his musket—the very man whom I nursed ten years ago, when he was ill with a jail fever!"

This man, who stood in the midst of the crowd, taller by the head than the others, seemed to be the leader of the party; they were disputing whether they should proceed further, spend the remainder of the night in the village alehouse, or return to Paris. Their leader ordered spirits to be distributed to his associates, and exhorted them in a loud voice to proceed in their glorious work. Tossing his firebrand over his head, he declared that he would never return to Paris till he had razed to the ground the Château de Fleury. At these words, Victoire, forgetful of all personal danger, ran out into the midst of the mob, pressed her way up to the leader of these ruffians, caught him by the arm, exclaiming, "You will not touch a stone in the Château de Fleury—I have my reasons—I say you will not suffer a stone in the Château de Fleury to be touched."

"And why not?" cried the man, turning astonished; "and who are you, that I should listen to you?"

"No matter who I am," said Victoire; "follow me, and I will show you one to whom you will not refuse to listen. Here!—here she is," continued Victoire, pointing to the nun, who had followed her in amazement; "here is one to whom you will listen—yes, look at her well: hold the light to her face."

The nun, in a supplicating attitude, stood in speechless expectation.

"Ay, I see you have gratitude, I know you will have mercy," cried Victoire, watching the workings in the countenance of the man; "you will save the Château de Fleury, for her sake—who saved your life."

"I will," cried this astonished chief of a mob, fired with sudden generosity. "By my faith you are a brave girl, and a fine girl, and know how to speak to the heart, and in the right moment. Friends, citizens! this nun, though she is a nun, is good for something. When I lay ill with a fever, and not a soul else to help me, she came and gave me medicines and food

—in short, I owe my life to her. 'Tis ten years ago, but I remember it well; and now it is our turn to rule, and she shall be paid as she deserves. Not a stone of the Château de Fleury shall be touched!"

With loud acclamations, the mob joined in the generous enthusiasm of the moment, and followed their leader peaceably out of the village. All this passed with such rapidity as scarcely to leave the impression of reality upon the mind. As soon as the sun rose in the morning, Victoire looked out for the turrets of the Château de Fleury, and she saw that they were safe —safe in the midst of the surrounding devastation. Nothing remained of the superb palace of Chantilly but the white arches of its foundation!

CHAPTER XIII.

"When thy last breath, ere Nature sank to rest,
Thy meek submission to thy God express'd;
When thy last look, ere thought and feeling fled,
A mingled gleam of hope and triumph shed;
What to thy soul its glad assurance gave—
Its hope in death, its triumph o'er the grave?
The sweet remembrance of unblemish'd youth,
Th' inspiring voice of innocence and truth!"

ROGERS.

THE good Sister Frances, though she had scarcely recovered from the shock of the preceding night, accompanied Victoire to the Château de Fleury. The gates were opened for them by the old steward and his son Basile, who welcomed them with all the eagerness with which people welcome friends in time of adversity. The old man showed them the place; and through every apartment of the castle went on, talking of former times, and with narrative fondness told anecdotes of his dear master and mistress. Here his lady used to sit and read—here was the table at which she wrote—this was the sofa on which she and the ladies sat the very last day she was at the castle, at the open windows of the hall, whilst all the tenants and people of the village were dancing on the green.

"Ay, those were happy times," said the old man; "but they will never return."

"Never! Oh, do not say so," cried Victoire.

"Never during my life, at least," said the nun in a low voice, and with a look of resignation.

Basile, as he wiped the tears from his eyes, happened to strike his arm against the chord of Mad. de Fleury's harp, and the sound echoed through the room.

"Before this year is at an end," cried Victoire, perhaps that harp will be struck again in this château by Mad. de Fleury herself. Last night we could hardly have hoped to see these walls standing this morning, and yet it is safe—not a stone touched! Oh, we shall all live, I hope, to see better times!"

Sister Frances smiled, for she would not depress Victoire's enthusiastic hope: to please her, the good nun added, that she felt better this morning than she had felt for months, and Victoire was happier than she had been since Mad. de Fleury left France. But, alas! it was only a transient gleam. Sister Frances relapsed, and declined so rapidly, that even Victoire, whose mind was almost always disposed to hope, despaired of her recovery. With placid resignation, or rather with a mild confidence, this innocent and benevolent creature met the approach of death. She seemed attached to earth only by affection for those whom she was to leave in this world. Two of the youngest of the children which had formerly been placed under her care, and who were not yet able to earn their own subsistence, she kept with her, and in the last days of her life she continued her instructions to them with the fond solicitude of a parent. Her father confessor, an excellent man, who never even in these dangerous times shrunk from his duty, came to attend Sister Frances in her last moments, and relieved her mind from all anxiety, by promising to place the two little children with the lady who had been abbess of her convent, who would to the utmost of her power protect and provide for them suitably. Satisfied by this promise, the good Sister Frances smiled upon Victoire, who stood beside her bed, and with that smile upon her countenance expired.——It was some time before the little children seemed to comprehend, or to believe, that Sister Frances was dead: they had never before seen any one die; they

o idea what it was to die, and their first feeling was astonish- : they did not seem to understand why Victoire wept. But ɜxt day when no Sister Frances spoke to them, when every hey missed some accustomed kindness from her,—when pre- they saw the preparations for her funeral,—when they heard he was to be buried in the earth, and that they should never r more,—they could neither play nor eat, but sat in a corner ıg each other's hands, and watching every thing that was for the dead by Victoire.

those times, the funeral of a nun, with a priest attending, l not have been permitted by the populace. It was there- performed as secretly as possible: in the middle of the the coffin was carried to the burial-place of the Fleury y; the old steward, his son Basile, Victoire, and the good confessor, were the only persons present. It is necessary ention this, because the facts were afterwards misrepre- d.

CHAPTER XIV.

> "The character is lost!
> Her head adorn'd with lappets, pinn'd aloft,
> And ribands streaming gay, superbly raised,
> Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand
> For more than half the tresses it sustains."
>
> COWPER.

her return to Paris, Victoire felt melancholy; but she ed herself as much as possible in her usual occupation; ıg that employment and the consciousness of doing her were the best remedies for sorrow.

e day, as she was busy settling Mad. Feuillot's accounts, a nt came into the shop, and inquired for Mademoiselle ire: he presented her a note, which she found rather ılt to decipher. It was signed by her cousin Manon, who ɜd to see Victoire at her hotel. "*Her hotel!*" repeated ire with astonishment. The servant assured her that one e finest hotels in Paris belonged to his lady, and that he ommissioned to show her the way to it. Victoire found her

cousin in a magnificent house, which had formerly belonged to the Prince de Salms. Manon, dressed in the disgusting, indecent extreme of the mode, was seated under a richly-fringed canopy. She burst into a loud laugh as Victoire entered.

"You look just as much astonished as I expected," cried she. "Great changes have happened since I saw you last—I always told you, Victoire, I knew the world better than you did. What has come of all your schooling, and your mighty goodness, and your gratitude truly?—Your patroness is banished and a beggar, and you a drudge in the shop of a *brodeuse*, who makes you work your fingers to the bone, no doubt.—Now you shall see the difference. Let me show you my house; you know it was formerly the hotel of the Prince de Salms, he that was guillotined the other day; but you know nothing, for you have been out of Paris this month, I understand. Then I must tell you, that my friend Villeneuf has acquired an immense fortune! by assignats, made in the course of a fortnight—I say an immense fortune! and has bought this fine house—Now do you begin to understand?"

"I do not clearly know whom you mean by your friend Villeneuf," said Victoire.

"The hairdresser, who lived in our street," said Manon; "he became a great patriot, you know, and orator; and, what with his eloquence and his luck in dealing in assignats, he has made his fortune and mine."

"And yours! then he is your husband!"

"That does not follow—that is not necessary—but do not look so shocked—every body goes on the same way now; besides, I had no other resource—I must have starved—I could not earn my bread as you do. Besides, I was too delicate for hard work of any sort—and besides——but come, let me show you my house—you have no idea how fine it is."

With anxious ostentation, Manon displayed all her riches, to excite Victoire's envy.

"Confess, Victoire," said she at last, "that you think me the happiest person you have ever known.——You do not answer; whom did you ever know that was happier?"

"Sister Frances, who died last week, appeared to be much happier," said Victoire.

"The poor nun!" said Manon, disdainfully. "Well, and whom do you think the next happiest?"

"Madame de Fleury."

"An exile and a beggar!—Oh, you are jesting now, Victoire—or—envious. With that sanctified face, citoyenne—perhaps I should say Mademoiselle Victoire, you would be delighted to change places with me this instant. Come, you shall stay with me a week, to try how you like it."

"Excuse me," said Victoire, firmly; "I cannot stay with you, Manon—you have chosen one way of life, and I another—quite another. I do not repent my choice—may you never repent yours!—Farewell!"

"Bless me! what airs! and with what dignity she looks! Repent of my choice!—a likely thing, truly. Am not I at the top of the wheel?"

"And may not the wheel turn?" said Victoire.

"Perhaps it may," said Manon; "but till it does I will enjoy myself. Since you are of a different humour, return to Mad. Feuillot, and *figure* upon cambric and muslin, and make out bills, and nurse old nuns, all the days of your life. You will never persuade me, however, that you would not change places with me if you could. Stay till you are tried, Mademoiselle Victoire. Who was ever in love with you, or your virtues?—Stay till you are tried."

CHAPTER XV.

> "But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree,
> Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
> Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye
> To save her blossoms, or defend her fruit."
>
> MILTON.

THE trial was nearer than either Manon or Victoire expected. Manon had scarcely pronounced the last words, when the ci-devant hairdresser burst into the room, accompanied by several of his political associates, who met to consult measures for the

good of the nation. Among these patriots was the Abbé Tracassier.

"Who is that pretty girl who is with you, Manon?" whispered he; "a friend of yours, I hope?"

Victoire left the room immediately, but not before the profligate abbé had seen enough to make him wish to see more. The next day he went to Mad. Feuillot's, under pretence of buying some embroidered handkerchiefs; he paid Victoire a profusion of extravagant compliments, which made no impression upon her innocent heart, and which appeared ridiculous to her plain good sense. She did not know who he was, nor did Mad. Feuillot; for though she had often heard of the abbé, yet she had never seen him. Several succeeding days he returned, and addressed himself to Victoire, each time with increasing freedom. Mad. Feuillot, who had the greatest confidence in her, left her entirely to her own discretion. Victoire begged her friend Annette to do the business of the shop, and stayed at work in the back parlour. Tracassier was much disappointed by her absence; but as he thought no great ceremony necessary in his proceedings, he made his name known in a haughty manner to Mad. de Feuillot, and desired that he might be admitted into the back parlour, as he had something of consequence to say to Mlle. Victoire in private. Our readers will not require to have a detailed account of this tête-à-tête; it is sufficient to say, that the disappointed and exasperated abbé left the house muttering imprecations. The next morning a note came to Victoire, apparently from Manon: it was directed by her, but the inside was written by an unknown hand, and contained these words:—

"You are a charming, but incomprehensible girl—since you do not like compliments, you shall not be addressed with empty flattery. It is in the power of the person who dictates this, not only to make you as rich and great as your cousin Manon, but also to restore to fortune and to their country the friends for whom you are most interested. Their fate as well as your own is in your power: if you send a favourable answer to this note, the persons alluded to will, to-morrow, be struck from the list of emigrants, and reinstated in their former possessions. If your answer is decidedly unfavourable, the return of your friends to

France will be thenceforward impracticable, and their château, as well as their house in Paris, will be declared national property, and sold without delay to the highest bidder. To you, who have as much understanding as beauty, it is unnecessary to say more. Consult your heart, charming Victoire! be happy, and make others happy. This moment is decisive of your fate and of theirs, for you have to answer a man of a most decided character."

Victoire's answer was as follows:—

"My friends would not, I am sure, accept of their fortune, or consent to return to their country, upon the conditions proposed; therefore I have no merit in rejecting them."

Victoire had early acquired good principles, and that plain, steady, good sense, which goes straight to its object, without being dazzled or imposed upon by sophistry. She was unacquainted with the refinements of sentiment, but she distinctly knew right from wrong, and had sufficient resolution to abide by the right. Perhaps many romantic heroines might have thought it a generous self-devotion to have become in similar circumstances the mistress of Tracassier; and those who are skilled "to make the worst appear the better cause" might have made such an act of heroism the foundation of an interesting, or at least a fashionable novel. Poor Victoire had not received an education sufficiently refined to enable her to understand these mysteries of sentiment. She was even simple enough to flatter herself that this libertine patriot would not fulfil his threats, and that these had been made only with a view to terrify her into compliance. In this opinion, however, she found herself mistaken. M. Tracassier was indeed a man of the most decided character, if this term may properly be applied to those who act uniformly in consequence of their ruling passion. The Château de Fleury was seized as national property. Victoire heard this bad news from the old steward, who was turned out of the castle, along with his son, the very day after her rejection of the proposed conditions.

"I could not have believed that any human creature could be so wicked!" exclaimed Victoire, glowing with indignation: but indignation gave way to sorrow.

"And the Château de Fleury is really seized?—and you, good old man, are turned out of the place where you were born? —and you too, Basile?—and Mad. de Fleury will never come back again!—and perhaps she may be put into prison in a foreign country, and may die for want——and I might have prevented all this!"

Unable to shed a tear, Victoire stood in silent consternation, whilst Annette explained to the good steward and his son the whole transaction. Basile, who was naturally of an impetuous temper, was so transported with indignation, that he would have gone instantly with the note from Tracassier to *denounce* him before the whole National Convention, if he had not been restrained by his more prudent father. The old steward represented to him, that as the note was neither signed nor written by the hand of Tracassier, no proof could be brought home to him, and the attempt to convict one of so powerful a party would only bring certain destruction upon the accusers. Besides, such was at this time the general depravity of manners, that numbers would keep the guilty in countenance. There was no crime which the mask of patriotism could not cover.

"There is one comfort we have in our misfortunes, which these men can never have," said the old man; "when their downfall comes, and come it will most certainly, they will not feel as we do, INNOCENT. Victoire, look up! and do not give way to despair—all will yet be well."

"At all events, you have done what is right—so do not reproach yourself," said Basile. "Every body—I mean every body who is good for any thing—must respect, admire, and love you, Victoire."

CHAPTER XVI.

> "Ne mal cio che v'annoja,
> Quello e vero gioire
> Che nasce da virtude dopo il soffrire."

BASILE had not seen without emotion the various instances of goodness which Victoire showed during the illness of Sister

'rances. Her conduct towards M. Tracassier increased his steem and attachment; but he forbore to declare his affection, ecause he could not, consistently with prudence, or with ratitude to his father, think of marrying, now that he was not ble to maintain a wife and family. The honest earnings of nany years of service had been wrested from the old steward at he time the Château de Fleury was seized, and he now depended n the industry of his son for the daily support of his age. His lependence was just, and not likely to be disappointed; for he ad given his son an education suitable to his condition in life. Basile was an exact arithmetician, could write an excellent hand, nd was a ready draughtsman and surveyor. To bring these seful talents into action, and to find employment for them, with nen by whom they would be honestly rewarded, was the only lifficulty—a difficulty which Victoire's brother Maurice soon emoved. His reputation as a smith had introduced him, among is many customers, to a gentleman of worth and scientific nowledge, who was at this time employed to make models and lans of all the fortified places in Europe; he was in want of a ood clerk and draughtsman, of whose integrity he could be ecure. Maurice mentioned his friend Basile; and upon inquiry nto his character, and upon trial of his abilities, he was found uited to the place, and was accepted. By his well-earned alary he supported himself and his father; and began, with the anguine hopes of a young man, to flatter himself that he should oon be rich enough to marry, and that then he might declare is attachment to Victoire. Notwithstanding all his boasted rudence, he had betrayed sufficient symptoms of his passion to ave rendered a declaration unnecessary to any clear-sighted bserver: but Victoire was not thinking of conquests; she was wholly occupied with a scheme of earning a certain sum of noney for her benefactress, who was now, as she feared, in want. All Mad. de Fleury's former pupils contributed their share to he common stock; and the mantua-maker, the confectioner, the ervants of different sorts, who had been educated at her school, ad laid by, during the years of her banishment, an annual ortion of their wages and savings: with the sum which Victoire ow added to the fund, it amounted to ten thousand livres. The erson who undertook to carry this money to Mad. de Fleury,

was François, her former footman, who had procured a pass to go to England as a hairdresser. The night before he set out was a happy night for Victoire, as all her companions met, by Mad. Feuillot's invitation, at her house; and after tea they had the pleasure of packing up the little box, in which each, besides the money, sent some token of their gratitude, and some proof of their ingenuity. They would with all their hearts have sent twice as many *souvenirs* as François could carry.

"D'abord c'est impossible!" cried he, when he saw the box that was prepared for him to carry to England: but his good-nature was unable to resist the entreaties of each to have her offering carried, "which would take up no room."

He departed—arrived safe in England—found out Mad. de Fleury, who was in real distress, in obscure lodgings at Richmond. He delivered the money, and all the presents of which he had taken charge: but the person to whom she entrusted a letter, in answer to Victoire, was not so punctual, or was more unlucky; for the letter never reached her, and she and her companions were long uncertain whether their little treasure had been received. They still continued, however, with indefatigable gratitude, to lay by a portion of their earnings for their benefactress; and the pleasure they had in this perseverance made them more than amends for the loss of some little amusements, and for privations to which they submitted in consequence of their resolution.

In the mean time Basile, going on steadily with his employments, advanced every day in the favour of his master, and his salary was increased in proportion to his abilities and industry; so that he thought he could now, without any imprudence, marry. He consulted his father, who approved of his choice; he consulted Maurice as to the probability of his being accepted by Victoire; and encouraged by both his father and his friend, he was upon the eve of addressing himself to Victoire, when he was prevented by a new and unforeseen misfortune. His father was taken up, by an emissary of Tracassier's, and brought before one of their revolutionary committees, where he was accused of various acts of incivisme. Among other things equally criminal, it was proved that one Sunday, when he went to see Le Petit Trianon, then a public-house, he exclaimed,

"C'est ici que la canaille danse, et que les honnêtes gens pleurent!"

Basile was present at this mock examination of his father—he saw him on the point of being dragged to prison—when a hint was given that he might save his father by enlisting immediately, and going with the army out of France. Victoire was full in Basile's recollection—but there was no other means of saving his father. He enlisted, and in twenty-four hours left Paris.

What appear to be the most unfortunate circumstances of life often prove ultimately the most advantageous. Indeed, those who have knowledge, activity, and integrity, can convert the apparent blanks in the lottery of fortune into prizes. Basile was recommended to his commanding officer by the gentleman who had lately employed him as a clerk—his skill in drawing plans, and in taking rapid surveys of the country through which they passed, was extremely useful to his general; and his integrity made it safe to trust him as a secretary. His commanding officer, though a brave man, was illiterate, and a secretary was to him a necessary of life. Basile was not only useful, but agreeable; without any mean arts, or servile adulation, he pleased, by simply showing the desire to oblige, and the ability to serve.

"Diable!" exclaimed the general one day, as he looked at Basile's plan of a town, which the army was besieging. "How comes it that you are able to do all these things? But you have a genius for this sort of work, apparently."

"No, sir," said Basile, "these things were taught to me, when I was a child, by a good friend."

"A good friend he was indeed! he did more for you than if he had given you a fortune; for, in these times, that might have been soon taken from you; but now you have the means of making a fortune for yourself."

This observation of the general's, obvious as it may seem, is deserving of the serious consideration of those who have children of their own to educate, or who have the disposal of money for public charities. In these times, no sensible person will venture to pronounce that a change of fortune and station may not await the highest and the lowest; whether we rise or fall in the scale of society, personal qualities and knowledge will be valuable. Those who fall, cannot be destitute; and those who rise, cannot

be ridiculous or contemptible, if they have been prepared for their fortune by proper education. In shipwreck, those who carry their all in their minds are the most secure.

But to return to Basile. He had sense enough not to make his general jealous of him by any unseasonable display of his talents, or any officious intrusion of advice, even upon subjects which he best understood.

The talents of the warrior and the secretary were in such different lines, that there was no danger of competition; and the general, finding in his secretary the soul of all the arts, good sense, gradually acquired the habit of asking his opinion on every subject that came within his department. It happened that the general received orders from the Directory at Paris, to take a certain town, let it cost what it would, within a given time: in his perplexity, he exclaimed before Basile against the unreasonableness of these orders, and declared his belief that it was impossible he should succeed, and that this was only a scheme of his enemies to prepare his ruin. Basile had attended to the operations of the engineer who acted under the general, and perfectly recollected the model of the mines of this town, which he had seen when he was employed as draughtsman by his Parisian friend. He remembered, that there was formerly an old mine, that had been stopped up somewhere near the place where the engineer was at work; he mentioned *in private* his suspicions to the general, who gave orders in consequence; the old mine was discovered, cleared out, and by these means the town was taken the day before the time appointed. Basile did not arrogate to himself any of the glory of this success—he kept his general's secret and his confidence. Upon their return to Paris, after a fortunate campaign, the general was more grateful than some others have been, perhaps because more room was given by Basile's prudence for the exercise of this virtue.

"My friend," said he to Basile, "you have done me a great service by your counsel, and a greater still by holding your tongue. Speak now, and tell me freely, if there is any thing I can do for you. You see, as a victorious general, I have the upper hand amongst these fellows—Tracassier's scheme to ruin me missed—whatever I ask will at this moment be granted; speak freely, therefore."

Basile asked what he knew Victoire most desired—that M. and Mad. de Fleury should be struck from the list of emigrants, and that their property now in the hands of the nation should be restored to them. The general promised that this should be done. A warm contest ensued upon the subject between him and Tracassier; but the general stood firm; and Tracassier, enraged, forgot his usual cunning, and quarrelling irrevocably with a party now more powerful than his own, he and his adherents were driven from that station in which they had so long tyrannized. From being the rulers of France, they in a few hours became banished men, or, in the phrase of the times, *des déportés*.

We must not omit to mention the wretched end of Manon. The man with whom she lived perished by the guillotine. From his splendid house she went upon the stage—did not succeed—sunk from one degree of profligacy to another; and at last died in an hospital.

In the mean time, the order for the restoration of the Fleury property, and for permission for the Fleury family to return to France, was made out in due form, and Maurice begged to be the messenger of these good tidings:—he set out for England with the order.

Victoire immediately went down to the Château de Fleury, to get every thing in readiness for the reception of the family.

Exiles are expeditious in their return to their native country. Victoire had but just time to complete her preparations, when M. and Mad. de Fleury arrived at Calais. Victoire had assembled all her companions, all Mad. de Fleury's former pupils; and the hour when she was expected home, they with the peasants of the neighbourhood were all in their holiday clothes, and according to the custom of the country singing and dancing. Without music and dancing there is no perfect joy in France. Never was *fête du village* or *fête du Seigneur* more joyful than this.

The old steward opened the gate—the carriage drove in. Mad. de Fleury saw that home which she had little expected evermore to behold; but all other thoughts were lost in the pleasure of meeting her beloved pupils.

"My children!" cried she, as they crowded round her the

moment she got out of her carriage—"My dear *good* children!"

It was all she could say. She leaned on Victoire's arm as she went into the house, and by degrees recovering from the almost painful excess of pleasure, began to enjoy what she yet only confusedly felt.

Several of her pupils were so much grown and altered in their external appearance, that she could scarcely recollect them till they spoke, and then their voices and the expression of their countenances brought their childhood fully to her memory. Victoire, she thought, was changed the least, and at this she rejoiced.

The feeling and intelligent reader will imagine all the pleasure that Mad. de Fleury enjoyed this day; nor was it merely the pleasure of a day. She heard from all her friends, with prolonged satisfaction, repeated accounts of the good conduct of these young people during her absence. She learned with delight how her restoration to her country and her fortune had been effected; and is it necessary to add, that Victoire consented to marry Basile, and that she was suitably portioned, and, what is better still, that she was perfectly happy?—M. de Fleury rewarded the attachment and good conduct of Maurice, by taking him into his service; and making him his manager under the old steward at the Château de Fleury.

On Victoire's wedding-day, Mad. de Fleury produced all the little offerings of gratitude which she had received from her and her companions during her exile. It was now her turn to confer favours, and she knew how to confer them both with grace and judgment.

"No gratitude in human nature! No gratitude in the lower classes of the people!" cried she: "how much those are mistaken who think so! I wish they could know my history and the history of these *my children*, and they would acknowledge their error."

Edgeworthstown, 1805.

EMILIE DE COULANGES.

AM young, I am in good health," said Emilie de Coulanges;
am not to be pitied. But my poor mamma, who has been
d all her life to such luxuries! And now to have only her
ilie to wait upon her! Her Emilie, who is but an awkward
me de chambre! But she will improve, it must be hoped;
l as to the rest, things, which are now always changing, and
ich cannot change for the worse, must soon infallibly change
the better—and mamma will certainly recover all her
perty one of these days. In the mean time (if mamma is
rably well), we shall be perfectly happy in England—that
rming country, which, perhaps, we should never have seen
for this terrible revolution!—Here we shall assuredly find
nds. The English are such good people!—Cold, indeed, at
t—that's their misfortune: but then the English coldness is
manner, not of heart. Time immemorial, they have been
ious for making the best friends in the world; and even to
who are their *natural enemies*, they are generous in our
tress. I have heard innumerable instances of their hospitality
our emigrants; and mamma will certainly not be the first
eption. At her Hotel de Coulanges, she always received
English with distinguished attention; and though our hotel,
h half Paris, has changed its name since those days, the
glish have too good memories to forget it, I am sure."

3y such speeches Emilie endeavoured to revive her mother's
rits. To a most affectionate disposition and a feeling heart
joined all the characteristic and constitutional gaiety of her
ion; a gaiety which, under the pressure of misfortune, merits

the name of philosophy, since it produces all the effects, and is not attended with any of the parade of stoicism.

Emilie de Coulanges was a young French emigrant, of a noble family, and heiress to a large estate; but the property of her family had been confiscated during the revolution. She and her mother, la Comtesse de Coulanges, made their escape to England. Mad. de Coulanges was in feeble health, and much dispirited by the sudden loss of rank and fortune. Mlle. de Coulanges felt the change more for her mother than for herself; she always spoke of her mother's misfortunes, never of her own.

Upon their arrival in London, Emilie, full of life and hope, went to present some of her mother's letters of recommendation. One of them was addressed to Mrs. Somers. Mlle. de Coulanges was particularly delighted by the manner in which she was received by this lady.

"No English coldness!—no English reserve!—So warm in her expressions of kindness!—so eager in her offers of service!" Emilie could speak of nothing for the remainder of the day, but "cette charmante Mad. Somers!" The next day, and the next, and the next, she found increasing reasons to think her charming. Mrs. Somers exerted herself, indeed, with the most benevolent activity, to procure for Mad. de Coulanges every thing that could be convenient or agreeable. She prepared apartments in her own house for the mother and daughter, which she absolutely insisted upon their occupying immediately: she assured them that they should not be treated as visitors, but as inmates and friends of the family. She pressed her invitation with such earnestness, and so politely urged her absolute right to show her remembrance of the civilities which she had received at Paris, that there was no possibility of persisting in a refusal. The pride of high birth would have revolted at the idea of becoming dependent, but all such thoughts were precluded by the manner in which Mrs. Somers spoke; and the Comtesse de Coulanges accepted of the invitation, resolving, however, not to prolong her stay, if affairs in her own country should not take a favourable turn. She expected remittances from a Paris banker, with whom she had lodged a considerable sum—all that could be saved in ready money, in jewels, &c. from the wreck of her fortune: with this sum, if she should find all schemes of

returning to France and recovering her property impracticable, she determined to live, in some retired part of England, in the most economical manner possible. But, in the mean time, as economy had never been either her theory or her practice, and as she considered retreat from *the world* as the worst thing, next to death, that could befal a woman, she was glad to put off the evil hour. She acknowledged that ill health made her look some years older than she really was; but she could not think herself yet old enough to become *devout;* and, till that crisis arrived, she, of course, would not willingly be banished from *society*. So that, upon the whole, she was well satisfied to find herself established in Mrs. Somers's excellent house; where, but for the want of three antechambers, and of the Parisian quantity of looking-glass on every side of every apartment, la comtesse might have fancied herself at her own Hotel de Coulanges. Emilie would have been better contented to have been lodged and treated with less magnificence; but she rejoiced to see that her mother was pleased, and that she became freer from her *vapeurs noirs*[1]. Emilie began to love Mrs. Somers for making her mother well and happy—to love her with all the fearless enthusiasm of a young, generous mind, which accepts of obligation without any idea that gratitude may become burdensome. Mrs. Somers excited not only affection—she inspired admiration. Capable of the utmost exertion and of the most noble sacrifices for her friends, the indulgence of her generosity seemed not only to be the greatest pleasure of her soul, but absolutely necessary to her nature. To attempt to restrain her liberality was to provoke her indignation, or to incur her contempt. To refuse her benefits was to forfeit her friendship. She grew extremely fond of her present guests, because, without resistance, they permitted her to load them with favours. According to her custom, she found a thousand perfections in those whom she obliged. She had considered la Comtesse de Coulanges, when she knew her at Paris, as a very well-bred woman, but as nothing more; yet now she discovered that Mad. de Coulanges had a superior understanding and great strength of mind;—and Emilie, who had pleased her when a child, only by the

[1] *Vapeurs noirs*—vulgarly known by the name of *blue devils*.

ingenuous sweetness of her disposition and vivacity of her manners, was now become a complete angel—no angel had ever such a variety of accomplishments—none but an angel could possess such a combination of virtues. Mrs. Somers introduced her charming and noble emigrants to all her numerous and fashionable acquaintance; and she would certainly have quarrelled with any one who did not at least appear to sympathize in her sentiments. Fortunately there was no necessity for quarrelling; these foreigners were well received in every company, and Emilie pleased universally; or, as Mad. de Coulanges expressed it, "Elle avoit des grands *succès* dans la société." The French comtesse herself could hardly give more emphatic importance to the untranslateable word *succès* than Mrs. Somers annexed to it upon this occasion. She was proud of producing Emilie as her protégée; and the approbation of others increased her own enthusiasm: much as she did for her favourite, she longed to do more.—An opportunity soon presented itself.

One evening, after Mad. de Coulanges had actually tired herself with talking to the crowd, which her vivacity, grace, and volubility had attracted about her sofa, she ran to entrench herself in an arm-chair by the fireside, sprinkled the floor round her with *eau de senteur*, drew, with her pretty foot, a line of circumvallation, and then, shaking her tiny fan at the host of assailants, she forbade them, under pain of her sovereign displeasure, to venture within the magic circle, or to torment her by one more question or compliment. It was now absolutely necessary to be serious, and to study the politics of Europe. She called for the French newspapers, which Mrs. Somers had on purpose for her; and, provided with a pinch of snuff, from the ever-ready box of a French abbé, whose arm was permitted to cross the line of demarcation, Mad. de Coulanges began to study. Silence ensued—for novelty always produces silence in the first instant of surprise. An English gentleman wrote on the back of a letter an offer to his neighbour of a wager, that the silence would be first broken by the French countess, and that it could not last above two minutes. The wager was accepted, and watches were produced. Before the two minutes had expired, the pinch of snuff dropped from the countess's fingers, and, clasping her hands together, she exclaimed, "Ah! ciel!"——The surrounding gen-

tlemen, who were full of their wager, and who had heard, from the lady, during the course of the evening, at least a dozen exclamations of nearly equal vehemence about the merest trifles, were more amused than alarmed at this instant: but Emilie, who knew her mother's countenance, and who saw the sudden change in it, pressed through the circle, and just caught her mother in her arms as she fainted. Mrs. Somers, much alarmed, hastened to her assistance. The countess was carried out of the room, and every body was full of pity and of curiosity. When Mad. de Coulanges recovered from her fainting-fit, she was seized with one of her nervous attacks; so that no explanation could be obtained. Emilie and Mrs. Somers looked over the French paper, but could not find any parapragh unusually alarming. At length, more composed, the countess apologized for the disturbance which she had occasioned; thanked Mrs. Somers repeatedly for her kindness; but spoke in a hurried manner, as if she did not well know what she said. She concluded by declaring that she was subject to these nervous attacks, that she should be quite well the next morning, and that she did not wish that any one should sit up with her during the night except Emilie, who was used to her ways. With that true politeness which understands quickly the feelings and wishes of others, Mrs. Somers forbore to make any ill-timed inquiries or officious offers of assistance; but immediately retired, and ordered the attendants to leave the room, that Mad. de Coulanges and her daughter might be at perfect liberty. Early in the morning Mrs. Somers heard somebody knock softly at her door. It was Emilie.

"Mrs. Masham told me that you were awake, madam, or I should not——"

"Come in, come in, my dearest Emilie—I am awake—wide awake. Is your mother better?"

"Alas! no, madam!"

"Sit down, my dear, and do not call me *madam*, so coldly. —I do not deserve it."

"My dear friend! friend of mamma! my dearest friend!" cried Emilie, bursting into tears, and seizing Mrs. Somers' hand; "do not accuse me of coldness to you. I am always afraid that my French expressions should sound exaggerated to

English ears, and that you should think I say too much to be sincere in expressing my gratitude."

"My sweet Emilie, who could doubt your sincerity?—none but a brute or a fool: but do not talk to me of gratitude."

"I must," said Emilie; "for I feel it."

"Prove it to me, then, in the manner I like best—in the only manner I like—by putting it in my power to serve you. I do not intrude upon your mother's confidence—I make no inquiries; but do me the justice to tell me how I can be of use to her—or rather to you. From you I expect frankness. Command my fortune, my time, my credit, my utmost exertions—they are all, they ever have been, they ever shall be, whilst I have life, at the command of my friends. And are not you my friend?"

"Generous lady!—You overpower me with your goodness."

"No praises, no speeches!—Actions for me!—Tell me how I can serve you."

"Alas! *you*, even you, can do us no good in this business."

"That I will never believe, till I know the business."

"The worst of it is," said Emilie, "that we must leave you."

"Leave me! Impossible!" cried Mrs. Somers, starting up.—"You shall not leave me, that I am determined upon. Why cannot you speak out at once, and tell me what is the matter, Emilie? How can I act, unless I am trusted? and who deserves to be trusted by you, if I do not?"

"Assuredly nobody deserves it better; and if it were only my affair, dear Mrs. Somers, you should have known it as soon as I knew it myself; but it is mamma's, more than mine."

"Madame la comtesse, then, does not think me worthy of her confidence," said Mrs. Somers, in a haughty tone, whilst displeasure clouded her whole countenance. "Is that what I am to understand from you, Mlle. de Coulanges?"

"No, no; that is not what you are to understand, dear madam—my dear friend, I should say," cried Emilie, alarmed. "Certainly I have explained myself ill, or you could not suspect mamma for a moment of such injustice. She knows you to be most worthy of her confidence; but on this occasion her reserve, believe me, proceeds solely from motives of delicacy, of which you could not but approve."

"Motives of delicacy, my dear Emilie," said Mrs. Somers,

softening her tone, but still with an air of dissatisfaction— "motives of delicacy, my dear Emilie, are mighty pretty sounding words; and at your age I used to think them mighty grand things; but I have long since found out that *motives of delicacy* are usually the excuse of weak minds for not speaking the plain truth to their friends. People quit the straight path from motives of delicacy, may be, to a worm or a beetle—vulgar souls, observe, I rank only as worms and beetles; they cross our path every instant in life; and those who fear to give them offence must deviate and deviate, till they get into a labyrinth, from which they can never extricate themselves, or be extricated. My Emilie, I am sure, will always keep the straight road—I know her strength of mind. Indeed, I did expect strength of mind from her mother; but, like all who have lived a great deal in the world, she is, I find, a slave to motives of delicacy."

"Mamma's delicacy is of a very different sort from what you describe, and what you dislike," said Emilie. "But, since persisting in her reserve would, as I see, offend one whom she would be most sorry to displease, permit me to go this moment and persuade her to let me tell you the simple truth."

"Go—run, my dear. Now I know my Emilie again. Now I shall be able to do some good."

By the time that Emilie returned, Mrs. Somers was dressed: she had dressed in the greatest hurry imaginable, that she might be ready for action—instantaneous action—if the service of her friends, as she hoped, required it. Emilie brought the newspaper in her hand, which her mother had been reading the preceding night.

"Here is all the mystery," said she, pointing to a paragraph which announced the failure of a Paris banker. "Mamma lodged all the money she had left in this man's hands."

"And is that all?—I really expected something much more terrible."

"It is terrible to mamma; because, depending on this man's punctuality, she has bought in London clothes and trinkets—chiefly for me, indeed—and she has no immediate means of paying these debts; but, if she will only keep her mind tranquil, all will yet be well. You flatter me that I play tolerably on the piano-forte and the harp; you will recommend me, and I

can endeavour to teach music. So that, if mamma will but be well, we shall not be in any great distress—except in leaving you; that is painful, but must be done. Yes, it absolutely must. Mamma knows what is proper, and so do I. We are not people to encroach upon the generosity of our friends. I need not say more; for I am sure that Mrs. Somers, who is herself so well-born and well-educated, must understand and approve of mamma's way of thinking."

Mrs. Somers replied not one word, but rang her bell violently—ordered her carriage.

"Do not you breakfast, madam, before you go out?" said the servant.

"No—no."

"Not a dish of chocolate, ma'am?"

"My carriage, I tell you.——Emilie, you have been up all night: I insist upon your going to bed this minute, and upon your sleeping till I come back again. La comtesse always breakfasts in her own room; so I have no apologies to make for leaving her. I shall be at home before her toilette is finished, and hope she will then permit me to pay my respects to her—you will tell her so, my dear. I must be gone instantly.——Why will they not let me have this carriage?—Where are those gloves of mine?—and the key of my writing-desk?—Ring again for the coach."

Between the acting of a generous thing and the first motion, all the interim was, with Mrs. Somers, a delicious phantasma; and her ideas of time and distance were as extravagant as those of a person in a dream. She very nearly ran over Emilie in her way down stairs, and then said, "Oh! I beg pardon a thousand times, my dear!—I thought you had been in bed an hour ago."

The toilette of Mad. de Coulanges, this morning, went on at the usual rate. Whether in adversity or prosperity, this was to la comtesse an elaborate, but never a tedious work. Long as it had lasted, it was, however, finished; and she had full leisure for a fit and a half of the vapours, before Mrs. Somers returned—she came in with a face radiant with joy.

"Fortunately, most fortunately," cried she, "I have it in my power to repair the loss occasioned by the failure of this good-for-nothing banker! Nay, positively, Mad. de Coulanges, I must not be refused," continued she, in a peremptory manner. "You make an enemy, if you refuse a friend."

She laid a pocket-book on the table, and left the room instantly. The pocket-book contained notes to a very considerable amount, surpassing the sum which Mad. de Coulanges had lost by her banker; and on a scrap of paper was written in pencil "Mad. de Coulanges must never return this sum, for it is utterly useless to Mrs. Somers; as the superfluities it was appropriated to purchase are now in the possession of one who will not sell them."

Astonished equally at the magnitude and the manner of the gift, Mad. de Coulanges repeated, a million of times, that it was "noble! très noble! une belle action!"—that she could not possibly accept of such an obligation—that she could not tell how to refuse it—that Mrs. Somers was the most generous woman upon earth—that Mrs. Somers had thrown her into a terrible embarrassment.

Then la comtesse had recourse to her smelling-bottle, consulted Emilie's eyes, and answered them.

"Child! I have no thoughts of accepting; but I only ask you how I can refuse, after what has been said, without making Mrs. Somers my enemy? You see her humour—English humours must not be trifled with—her humour, you see, is to give. It is a shocking thing for people of our birth to be reduced to receive, but we cannot avoid it without losing Mrs. Somers' friendship entirely; and that is what you would not wish to do, Emilie."

"Oh, no, indeed!"

"Now we must be under obligations to our milliner and jeweller, if we do not pay them immediately; for these sort of people call it a favour to give credit for a length of time: and I really think that it is much better to be indebted to Mrs. Somers than to absolute strangers and to rude tradespeople. It is always best to have to deal with polite persons."

"And with generous persons!" cried Emilie; "and a more generous person than Mrs. Somers, I am sure, cannot exist."

"And then," continued Mad. de Coulanges, "like all these rich English, she can afford to be generous. I am persuaded that this Mrs. Somers is as rich as a Russian princess; yes, as rich as the Russian princess with the superb diadem of diamonds. You remember her at Paris?"

"No, mamma, I forget her," answered Emilie, with a look of absence of mind.

"Bon Dieu! what can you be thinking of?" exclaimed Mad. de Coulanges. "You forget the Russian princess, with the diamond diadem, that was valued at 200,000 livres! She wore it at her presentation—it was the conversation of Paris for a week: you must recollect it, Emilie?"

"Oh, yes: I recollect something about its cutting her forehead."

"Not at all, my dear; how you exaggerate! The princess only complained, by way of something to say, that the weight of the diamonds made her head ache.

"Was that all?"

"That was all. But I will tell you what you are thinking of, Emilie—quite another thing—quite another person—broad Mad. Vanderbenbruggen: her diamonds were not worth looking at; and they were so horribly set, that she deserved all manner of misfortunes, and to be disgraced in public, as she was. For you know the bandeau slipt over her great forehead; and instead of turning to the gentlemen, and ordering some man of sense to arrange her head-dress, she kept holding her stiff neck stock still, like an idiot; she actually sat, with the patience of a martyr, two immense hours, till somebody cried, 'Ah! madame, here is the blood coming!' I see her before me this instant. Is it possible, my dear Emilie, that you do not remember the difference between this *buche* of a Mad. Vanderbenbruggen, and our charming princess? but you are as dull as Mad. Vanderbenbruggen herself, this morning."

The vivacious countess having once seized upon the ideas of Mad. Vanderbenbruggen, the charming princess, and the fine diamonds, it was some time before Emilie could recall her to the order of the day—to the recollection of her banker's failure, and of the necessity of giving an answer to generous Mrs. Somers. The decision of Mad. de Coulanges was probably at last influenced materially by the gay ideas of "stars and dukes, and all their sweeping train," associated with Mad. Vanderbenbruggen's image. The countess observed, that, after the style in which she had been used to live in the first company at Paris,

it would be worse than death to be buried alive in some obscure country town in England; and that she would rather see Emilie guillotined at once, than condemned, with all her grace and talents, to work, like a galley slave, at a tambour frame for her bread all the days of her life.

Emilie assured her mother that she should cheerfully submit to much greater evils than that of working at a tambour frame; and that, as far as her own feelings were concerned, she should infinitely prefer living by labour to becoming dependent. She therefore intreated that her mother might not, from any false tenderness for her Emilie, decide contrary to her own principles or wishes.

Mad. de Coulanges, after looking in the glass, at length determined that it would be best to accept of Mrs. Somers' generous offer; and Emilie, who usually contrived to find something agreeable in all her mother's decisions, rejoiced that by this determination, Mrs. Somers at least would be pleased. Mrs. Somers, indeed, was highly gratified; and her expressions of satisfaction were so warm, that any body would have thought she was the person receiving, instead of conferring, a great favour. She thanked Emilie, in particular, for having vanquished her mother's false delicacy. Emilie blushed at hearing this undeserved praise; and assured Mrs. Somers that all the merit was her mother's.

"What!" cried Mrs. Somers hastily, "was it contrary to your opinion?—Were you treacherous—were you my enemy—Mlle. de Coulanges?"

Emilie replied that she had left the decision to her mother; that she confessed she had felt some reluctance to receive a pecuniary obligation, even from Mrs. Somers; but that she had rather be obliged to her than to any body in the world, except to her mamma.

This explanation was not perfectly satisfactory to Mrs. Somers, and there was a marked coldness in her manner towards Emilie during the remainder of the day. Her affectionate and grateful disposition made her extremely sensible to this change; and, when she retired to her own room at night, she sat down beside her bed, and shed tears for the first time since she had been in England. Mrs. Somers happened to go into Emilie's room to

leave some message for Mad. de Coulanges—she found Emilie in tears—inquired the cause—was touched and flattered by her sensibility—kissed her—blamed herself—confessed she had been extremely unreasonable—acknowledged that her temper was naturally too hasty and susceptible, especially with those she loved—but assured Emilie that this, which had been their first, should be their last quarrel;—a rash promise, considering the circumstances in which they were both placed. Those who receive and those who confer great favours are both in difficult situations; but the part of the benefactor is the most difficult to support with propriety. What a combination of rare qualities is essential for this purpose! Amongst others, sense, delicacy, and temper. Mrs. Somers possessed all but the last; and, unluckily, she was not sensible of the importance of this deficiency. Confident and proud, that, upon all the grand occasions where the human heart is put to the trial, she could display superior generosity, she disdained attention to the minutiæ of kindness. This was inconvenient to her friends; because occasion for a great sacrifice of the heart occurs, perhaps, but once in a life, whilst small sacrifices of temper are requisite every day, and every hour [1].

Mrs. Somers had concealed from Mad. de Coulanges and from Emilie the full extent of their obligation: she told them, that the sum of money which she offered had become useless to her, because it had been destined to the purchase of some superfluities, which were now in the possession of another person. The fact was, that she had been in treaty for two fine

[1] Since this was written, the author has seen the same thoughts so much better expressed in the following lines that she cannot forbear to quote them:

> "Since trifles make the sum of human things,
> And half our mis'ry from our foibles springs;
> Since life's best joys consist in peace and ease,
> And few can save or serve, but all may please:
> Oh! let th' ungentle spirit learn from hence,
> A small unkindness is a great offence.
> Large bounties to bestow we wish in vain;
> But all may shun the guilt of giving pain."
>
> SENSIBILITY. *By Mrs. H. More.*

pictures, a Guido and a Correggio; these pictures might have been hers, but that on the morning, when she heard of the failure of the banker of Mad. de Coulanges, she had hastened to prevent the money from being paid for them. She was extremely fond of paintings, and had long and earnestly desired to possess these celebrated pictures; so that she had really made a great sacrifice of her taste and of her vanity. For some time she was satisfied with her own self-complacent reflections: but presently she began to be displeased that Mad. de Coulanges and Emilie did not see the full extent of her sacrifice. She became provoked by their want of penetration in not discovering all that she studiously concealed; and her mind, going on rapidly from one step to another, decided that this want of penetration arose from a deficiency of sensibility.

One day, some of her visitors, who were admiring the taste with which she had newly furnished a room, inquired for what those two compartments were intended, looking at the compartments which had been prepared for the famous pictures. Mrs. Somers replied that she had not yet determined what she should put there: she glanced her eye upon Mad. de Coulanges and upon Emilie, to observe whether they *felt as they ought to do.* Mad. de Coulanges, imagining that an appeal was made to her taste, decidedly answered, that nothing would have so fine an effect as handsome looking-glasses: "Such," added she, "as we have at Paris. No house is furnished without them—they are absolute necessaries of life. And, no doubt, these places were originally intended for mirrors."

"No," said Mrs. Somers, dryly, and with a look of great displeasure: "No, madame la comtesse, those places were not originally intended for looking-glasses."

The countess secretly despised Mrs. Somers for her want of taste; but, being too well bred to dispute the point, she confessed that she was no judge—that she knew nothing of the matter; and then immediately turned to her abbé, and asked him if he remembered the superb mirrors in Mad. de V——'s charming house on the Boulevards. "It is," said she, "in my opinion one of the very best houses in Paris. There you enter the principal apartments by an antechamber, such as you ought to see in a great house, with real ottomanes, covered with buff

trimmed with black velvet; and then you pass through the spacious salle à manger and the delightful saloon, hung with blue silk, to the *bijou* of a boudoir, that looks out upon the garden, with the windows shaded by the most beautiful flowering shrubs in summer, and in winter adorned with exotics. Then you see, through the plate-glass door of the boudoir, into the gallery of paintings—I call it a gallery, but it is, in fact, a delightful room, not a gallery—where you are not to perish in cold, whilst you admire the magnificence of the place. Not at all: it is warmed by a large stove, and you may examine the fine pictures at your ease, or, as you English would say, in comfort. This gallery must have cost M. de V—— an immense sum. The connoisseurs say that it is really the best collection of Flemish pictures in the possession of any individual in France. By-the-bye, Mrs. Somers, there is, amongst others, an excellent Van Dyck, a portrait of your Charles the First, when a boy, which I wonder that none of you rich English have purchased."

The countenance of Mrs. Somers had clouded over more and more during this speech; but the heedless countess went on, with her usual volubility.

"Yet, no doubt, M. de V—— would not sell this Van Dyck: but he would, I am told, part with his superb collection of prints, which cost him 30,000 of your pounds. He must look for a purchaser amongst those Polish and Russian princes who have nothing to do with their riches—for instance, my friend Lewenhof, who complained that he was not able to spend half his income in Paris; that he could not contrive to give an entertainment that cost him money enough. What can he do better than commence amateur?—then he might throw away money as fast as his heart could wish. M. l'abbé, why do not you, or some man of letters, write directly, and advise him to this, for the good of his country? What a figure those prints would make in Petersburgh!—and how they would polish the Russians! But, as a good Frenchwoman, I ought to wish them to remain at Paris: they certainly cannot be better than where they are."

"True," cried Emilie, "they cannot be better than where they are, in the possession of those generous friends. I used to love to see Mad. de V—— in the midst of all her fine things, of which she thought so little. Her very looks are enough to make one

happy—all radiant with good-humoured benevolence. I am sure one might always salute Mad. de V—— with the Chinese compliment, 'Felicity is painted in your countenance.' "

This was a compliment which could not be paid to Mrs. Somers at the present instant; for her countenance was as little expressive of felicity as could well be imagined. Emilie, who suddenly turned and saw it, was so much struck that she became immediately silent. There was a dead pause in the conversation. Mad. de Coulanges was the only unembarrassed person in company; she was very contentedly arranging her hair upon her forehead opposite to a looking-glass. Mrs. Somers broke the silence by observing, that, in her opinion, there was no occasion for more mirrors in this room; and she added, in a voice of suppressed anger, "I did originally intend to have filled those unfortunate blanks with something more to my taste."

Mad. de Coulanges was too much occupied with her ringlets to hear or heed this speech. Mrs. Somers fixed her indignant eyes upon Emilie, who, perceiving that she was offended, yet not knowing by what, looked embarrassed, and simply answered, "Did you?"

This reply, which seemed as neutral as words could make it, and which was uttered not only with a pacific, but with an intimidated tone, incensed Mrs. Somers beyond measure. It put the finishing stroke to the whole conversation. All that had been said about elegant houses—antechambers—mirrors—pictures—amateurs—throwing away money; and the generous Mad. de V——, *who was always good-humoured*, Mrs. Somers fancied was meant *for her*. She decided that it was absolutely impossible that Emilie could be so stupid as not to have perfectly understood that the compartments had been prepared for the Guido and Correggio, which she had so generously sacrificed; and the total want of feeling—of common civility—evinced by Emilie's reply, was astonishing, was incomprehensible.

The more she reflected upon the words, the more of artifice, of duplicity, of ingratitude, of insult, of meanness she discovered in them. In her cold fits of ill-humour, this lady was prone to degrade, as monsters below the standard of humanity, those whom, in the warmth of her enthusiasm, she had exalted to the

state of angelic perfection. Emilie, though aware that she had unwittingly offended, was not aware how low she had sunk in her friend's opinion: she endeavoured, by playful wit and caresses, to atone for her fault, and to reinstate herself in her favour. But playful wit and caresses were aggravating crimes: they were proofs of obstinacy in deceit, of a callous conscience, and of a heart that was not to be touched by the marked displeasure of a benefactress. Three days and three nights did the displeasure of Mrs. Somers continue in full force, and manifest itself by a variety of signs, which were lost upon Mad. de Coulanges, but which were all intelligible to poor Emilie. She made several attempts to bring on an explanation, by saying, "Are you not well?—Is any thing the matter, dear Mrs. Somers?" But these questions were always coldly answered by, "I am perfectly well, I thank you, Mlle. de Coulanges—why should you imagine that any thing is the matter with me?"

At the end of the third day of reprobation, Emilie, who could no longer endure this state, resolved to take courage and to ask pardon for her unknown offence. That night she went, trembling like a real criminal, into Mrs. Somers' dressing-room, kissed her forehead, and said, "I hope you have not such a headache as I have?"

"Have you the headache?—I am sorry for it," said Mrs. Somers; "but you should take something for it—what will you take?"

"I will take nothing, except—your forgiveness."

"My forgiveness!—you astonish me, Mlle. de Coulanges! I am sure that I ought to ask yours, if I have said a word that could possibly give you reason to imagine I am angry—I really am not conscious of any such thing; but if you will point it out to me——"

"You cannot imagine that I come to accuse you, dear Mrs. Somers; I do not attempt even to justify myself: I am convinced that, if you are displeased, it cannot be without reason."

"But still you do not tell me how I have shown this violent displeasure: I have not, to the best of my recollection, said an angry or a hasty word."

"No; but when we love people, we know when they are

offended, without their saying a hasty word—your manner has been so different towards me these three days past."

"My manner is very unfortunate. It is impossible always to keep a guard over our manners: it is sufficient, I think, to guard our words."

"Pray do not guard either with me," said Emilie; "for I would a thousand times rather that a friend should say or look the most angry things, than that she should conceal from me what she thought; for then, you know, I might displease her continually without knowing it, and perhaps lose her esteem and affection irretrievably, before I was aware of my danger—and with *you*—with you, to whom we owe so much!"

Touched by the feeling manner in which Emilie spoke, and by the artless expression of her countenance, Mrs. Somers' anger vanished, and she exclaimed, "I have been to blame—I ask your pardon, Emilie—I have been much to blame—I have been very unjust—very ill-humoured—I see I was quite wrong—I see that I was quite mistaken in what I imagined."

"And what did you imagine?" said Emilie.

"*That* you must excuse me from telling," said Mrs. Somers; "I am too much ashamed of it—too much ashamed of myself. Besides, it was a sort of thing that I could not well explain, if I were to set about it; in short, it was the silliest trifle in the world: but I assure you that if I had not loved you very much, I should not have been so foolishly angry. You must forgive these little infirmities of temper—you know my heart is as it should be."

Emilie embraced Mrs. Somers affectionately; and, in her joy at this reconciliation, and in the delight she felt at being relieved from the uneasiness which she had suffered for three days, loved her friend the better for this quarrel: she quite forgot the pain in the pleasure of the reconciliation; and thought that, even if Mrs. Somers had been in the wrong, the candour with which she acknowledged it more than made amends for the error.

"You must forgive these little infirmities of temper—you know my heart is as it should be."

Emilie repeated these words, and said to herself, "Forgive them! yes, surely; I should be the most ungrateful of human beings if I did otherwise."

Without being the most ungrateful of human beings, Emilie, however, found it very difficult to keep her resolution.

Almost every day she felt the apprehension or the certainty of having offended her benefactress: and the causes by which she gave offence were sometimes so trifling as to elude her notice; so mysterious, that they could not be discovered; or so various and anomalous, that, even when she was told in what manner she had displeased, she could not form any rule, or draw any inference, for her future conduct. Sometimes she offended by differing, sometimes by agreeing, in taste or opinion with Mrs. Somers. Sometimes she perceived that she was thought positive; at other times, too complying. A word, a look, or even silence—passive silence—was sufficient to affront this susceptible lady. Then she would go on with a string of deductions, or rather of imaginations, to prove that there must be something wrong in Emilie's disposition; and she would insist upon it, that she knew better what was passing, or what would pass, in her mind, than Emilie could know herself. Nothing provoked Mrs. Somers more than the want of success in any of her active attempts to make others happy. She was continually angry with Emilie for not being sufficiently pleased or grateful for things which she had not the vanity to suspect were intended for her gratification, or which were not calculated to contribute to her amusement: this humility, or this difference of taste, was always considered as affectation or perversity. One day, Mrs. Somers was angry with Emilie because she did not thank her for inviting a celebrated singer to her concert; but Emilie had no idea that the singer was invited on her account: of this nothing could convince Mrs. Somers. Another day, she was excessively displeased because Emilie was not so much entertained as she had expected her to be at the installation of a knight of the garter.

"Mad. de Coulanges expressed a wish to see the ceremony of the installation; and, though I hate such things myself, I took prodigious pains to procure tickets, and to have you well placed——"

"Indeed, I was very sensible of it, dear madam."

"May be so, my dear; but you did not look as if you were: you seemed tired to death, and said you were sleepy; and ten

times repeated, 'Ah! qu'il fait chaud!' But this is what I am used to—what I have experienced all my life. The more pains a person takes to please and oblige, the less they can succeed, and the less gratitude they are to expect."

Emilie reproached herself, and resolved that, upon the next similar trial, she would not complain of being sleepy or tired; and that she would take particular care not to say—"Ah! qu'il fait chaud!" A short time afterwards she was in a crowded assembly, at the house of a friend of Mrs. Somers, a *rout*—a species of entertainment of which she had not seen examples in her own country (it appeared to her rather a barbarous mode of amusement, to meet in vast crowds, to squeeze or to be squeezed, without a possibility of enjoying any rational conversation). Emilie was fatigued, and almost fainting, from the heat, but she bore it all with a smiling countenance, and heroic gaiety; for this night she was determined not to displease Mrs. Somers. On their return home, she was rather surprised and disappointed to find this lady in a fit of extreme ill-humour.

"I wanted to get away two hours ago," cried she; "but you would not understand any of my hints, Mlle. de Coulanges; and when I asked you whether you did not find it very hot, you persisted in saying, 'Not in the least—not in the least.'"

Mrs. Somers was the more angry upon this occasion, because she recollected having formerly reproached Emilie, at the installation, for complaining of the heat; and she persuaded herself, that this was an instance of perversity in Emilie's temper, and a sly method of revenging herself for the past. Nothing could be more improbable, from a girl of such a frank, forgiving, sweet disposition; and no one would have been so ready to say so as Mrs. Somers in another mood; but the moment that she was irritated, she judged without common sense—never from general observations, but always from particular instances. It was in vain that Emilie disclaimed the motives attributed to her: she was obliged to wait the return of her friend's reason, and in the mean time to bear her reproaches—which she did with infinite patience. Unfortunately this patience soon became the source of fresh evils. Because Emilie was so gentle, and so ready to acknowledge and to believe herself to be in the wrong, Mrs. Somers became con-

vinced that she herself was in the right in all her complaints; and she fancied that she had great merit in passing over so many defects in one whom she had so much obliged, and who professed so much gratitude. Between the fits of her ill-humour, she would, however, waken to the full sense of Emilie's goodness, and would treat her with particular kindness, as if to make amends for the past. Then, if Emilie could not immediately resume that easy, gay familiarity of manner, which she used to have before experience had taught her the fear of offending, Mrs. Somers grew angry again and decided that Emilie had not sufficient elevation of soul to understand her character, or to forgive the *little infirmities* of the best of friends. When she was under the influence of this suspicion, every thing that Emilie said or looked was confirmation strong. Mrs. Somers was apt in conversation to throw out general reflections that were meant to apply to particular persons; or to speak with one meaning obvious to all the company, and another to be understood only by some individual whom she wished to reproach. This art, which she had often successfully practised upon Emilie, she, for that reason, suspected that Emilie tried upon her. And then the utmost ingenuity was employed to torture words into strange meanings: she would misinterpret the plainest expressions, or attribute to them some double, mysterious signification.

One evening Emilie had been reading a new novel, the merits of which were eagerly discussed by the company. Some said that the heroine was a fool: others, that she was a mad woman; some, that she was not either, but that she acted as if she were both; another party asserted that she was every thing that was great and good, and that it was impossible to paint in truer colours the passion of love. Mrs. Somers declared herself of this opinion; but Emilie, who happened not to be present when this declaration was made, on coming into the room and joining in the conversation, gave a diametrically opposite judgment: she said, that the author had painted the enthusiasm with which the heroine yielded to her passion, instead of the violence of the passion to which she yielded. The French abbé, to whom Emilie made this observation, repeated it triumphantly to Mrs. Somers, who immediately changed colour, and replied in a con-

strained voice, "Certainly that is a very apposite remark, and vastly well expressed; and I give Mlle. de Coulanges infinite credit for it."

Emilie, who knew every inflection of Mrs. Somers' voice, and every turn of her countenance, perceived that these words of praise were accompanied with strong feelings of displeasure. She was much embarrassed, especially as her friend fixed her eyes upon her whilst she blushed; and this made her blush ten times more: she was afraid that the company, who were silent, should take notice of her distress; and therefore she went on talking very fast about the novel, though scarcely knowing what she said. She made sundry blunders in names and characters, which were eagerly corrected by the astonished Mad. de Coulanges, who could not conceive how any body could forget the dramatis personæ of the novel of the day. Mrs. Somers, all the time, preserved silence, as if she dared not trust herself to speak; but her compressed lips showed sufficiently the constraint under which she laboured. Whilst every body else went on talking, and helping themselves to refreshments which the servants were handing about, Mrs. Somers continued leaning on the mantel-piece in a deep reverie, pulling her bracelet round and round upon her wrist, till she was roused by Mad. de Coulanges, who appealed for judgment upon her new method of preparing an orange.

"C'est à la corbeille—Tenez!" cried she, holding it by a slender handle of orange-peel; "Tenez! c'est à la corbeille!"

Mrs. Somers, with a forced smile admired the orange-basket; but said, that, for her part, her hands were not sufficiently dexterous to imitate this fashion: "I," said she, "can only do like the king of Prussia and *other people*—squeeze the orange, and throw the peel away. By-the-bye, how absurd it was of Voltaire to be angry with the king of Prussia for that witty and just apologue!"

"*Just!*" repeated Emilie.

"Just!" reiterated Mrs. Somers, in a harsh voice: "surely you think it so. For my part, I like the king the better for avowing his principles—all the world act as he did, though few avow it."

"What!" said Emilie, in a low voice, "do not you believe in the reality of gratitude?"

"Apparently," cried Mad. de Coulanges, who was still busy with her orange, "apparently, madame is a disciple of our Rochefoucault, and allows of no principle but self-love. In that case, I shall have as bitter quarrels with her as I have with you, mon cher abbé;—for Rochefoucault is a man I detest, or rather, I detest his maxims—the duke himself, they say, was the most amiable man of his day. Only conceive, that such a man should ascribe all our virtues to self-love and vanity!"

"And, perhaps," said the abbé, "it was merely vanity that made him say so—he wished to write a witty satirical book; but I will lay a wager he did not think as ill of human nature as he speaks of it."

"He could hardly speak or think too ill of it," said Mrs. Somers, "if he judged of human nature by such speeches as that of the king of Prussia about his friend and the orange."

"But," said Emilie, in a timid voice, "would it not be doing poor human nature injustice to judge of it by such words as those? I am convinced, with M. l'abbé, that some men, for the sake of appearing witty, speak more malevolently than they feel; and, perhaps, this was the case with the king of Prussia."

"And Mlle. de Coulanges thinks, then," said Mrs. Somers, "that it is quite allowable, for the sake of appearing witty, to speak malevolently?"

"Dear madam! dear Mrs. Somers!—no!" cried Emilie; "you quite misunderstood me."

"Pardon me, I thought you were justifying the king of Prussia," continued Mrs. Somers; "and I do not well see how that can be done withcut allowing—what many people do in practice, though not in theory—that it is right, and becoming, and prudent, to sacrifice a friend for a bon-mot."

The angry emphasis, and pointed manner, in which Mrs. Somers spoke these words, terrified and completely abashed Emilie, who saw that something more was meant than met the ear. In her confusion she ran over a variety of thoughts; but she could not recollect any thing that she had ever said, which merited the name of a bon-mot—and a malevolent

bon-mot! "Surely what I said about that foolish novel cannot have offended Mrs. Somers?—How is it possible!—She cannot be so childish as to be angry with me merely for differing with her in opinion. What I said might be bad criticism, but it could not be malevolent; it referred only to the heroine of a novel. Perhaps the author may be a friend of hers, or some person who is in distress, and whom she has generously taken under her protection. Why did not I think of this before?—I was wrong to give my opinion so decidedly: but then my opinion is of so little consequence; assuredly it can neither do good nor harm to any author. When Mrs. Somers considers this, she will be pacified; and when she is once cool again, she will feel that I could not mean to say any thing ill-natured."

The moment Mrs. Somers saw that Emilie was sensible of her displeasure, she exerted herself to assume, during the remainder of the evening, an extraordinary appearance of gaiety and good-humour. Every body shared her smiles and kindness, except the unfortunate object of her indignation: she behaved towards Mlle. de Coulanges with the most punctilious politeness; but "all the cruel language of the eye" was sufficiently expressive of her real feelings. Emilie bore with this infirmity of temper with resolute patience: she expected that the fit would last only till she could ask for an explanation; and she followed Mrs. Somers, as was her usual custom upon such occasions, to her room at night, in order to assert her innocence. Mrs. Somers walked into her room in a reverie, without perceiving that she was followed by Emilie—threw herself into a chair—and gave a deep sigh.

"What is the matter, my dear friend?" Emilie began; but, on hearing the sound of her voice, Mrs. Somers started up with sudden anger; then, constraining herself, she said, "Pardon me, Mlle. de Coulanges, if I tell you that I really am tired to-night—body and mind—I wish to have rest for both if possible—would you be so very obliging as to pull that bell for Masham?—I wish you a very good night.——I hope Mad. de Coulanges will have her ass's milk at the proper hour to-morrow—I have given particular orders for that purpose."

"Your kindness to mamma, dear Mrs. Somers," said Emilie, "has been invariable, and ——"

"Spare me, I beseech you, Mlle. de Coulanges, all these *grateful speeches*—I really am not prepared to hear them with temper to-night. Were you so good as to ring that bell—or will you give me leave to ring it myself?"

"If you insist upon it," said Emilie, gently withholding the tassel of the bell; "but if you would grant me five minutes—one minute—you might perhaps save yourself and me a sleepless night."

Mrs. Somers, incapable of longer commanding her passion, made no reply, but snatched the bell-rope, and rang violently—Emilie let go the tassel and withdrew. She heard Mrs. Somers say to herself, as she left the room—"This is too much—too much—really too much!—hypocrisy I cannot endure.—Any thing but hypocrisy!"

These words hurt Emilie more than any thing Mrs. Somers had ever said: her own indignation was roused, and she was upon the point of returning to vindicate herself; but gratitude, if not prudence, conquered her resentment: she recollected her promise to bear with the temper of her benefactress; she recollected all Mrs. Somers' kindness to her mother; and quietly retired to her room, determining to wait till morning for a more favourable opportunity to speak.—After passing a restless night, and dreaming the common dream of falling down precipices, and the uncommon circumstance of dragging Mrs. Somers after her by a bell-rope, she wakened to the confused, painful remembrance of all that had passed the preceding evening. She was anxious to obtain admittance to Mrs. Somers as soon as she was dressed; but Masham informed her that her lady had given particular orders that she should "*not be disturbed.*" When Mrs. Somers made her appearance late at breakfast, there was the same forced good-humour in her countenance towards the company in general, and the same punctilious politeness towards Emilie, which had before appeared. She studiously avoided all opportunity of explaining herself; and every attempt of Emilie's towards a reconciliation, either by submissive gentleness or friendly familiarity, was disregarded, or noticed with cold disdain. Yet all this was visible only to her; for every body else observed that Mrs. Somers was in remarkably good spirits, and in the most actively obliging

humour imaginable. After breakfast she proposed and arranged various parties of pleasure: she went with Mad. de Coulanges to pay several visits; a large company dined with her; and at night she went to a concert. In the midst of these apparent amusements, Emilie was made as unhappy as the marked, yet mysterious, displeasure of a benefactress could render a person of real sensibility. As she did not wish to expose herself to a second repulse, she forbore to follow Mrs. Somers to her room at night; but she sent her this note by Mrs. Masham.

"I have done or said something to offend you, dear Mrs. Somers. If you knew how much pain I have felt from your displeasure, I am sure you would explain to me what it can be. Is it possible that my differing in opinion from you about the heroine of the novel can have offended you?—Perhaps the author of the book is a friend of yours, or under your protection. Be assured, that if this be the case, I did not in the least suspect it at the time I made the criticism. Perhaps it was this to which you alluded when you said that the King of Prussia was not the only person who would not hesitate to sacrifice a friend for a bon-mot. What injustice you do me by such an idea! I will not here say one word about my gratitude or my affection, lest you should again reproach me with hypocrisy—any thing else I am able to bear. Pray write, if you will not speak to me.

"EMILIE."

When Emilie was just falling asleep, Masham came into her room with a note in her hand.

"Mademoiselle, I am sorry to waken you; but my mistress thought you would not sleep, unless you read this note to-night."

Emilie started up in her bed, and read the following *note* of four pages.

"Yes, I will write, because I am ashamed to speak to you, my dear Emilie. I beg your pardon for pulling the bell-cord so violently from your hand last night—you must have thought me quite ill-bred; and still more, I reproach myself for what I said about *hypocrisy*.—You have certainly the sweetest and gentlest temper imaginable—would to Heaven I had! But the strength

of my feelings absolutely runs away with me. It is the doom of persons of great sensibility to be both unreasonable and unhappy; and often, alas! to involve in their misery those for whom they have the most enthusiastic affection. You see, my dear Emilie, the price you must pay for being my friend; but you have strength of mind joined to a feeling heart, and you will bear with my defects. Dissimulation is not one of them. In spite of all my efforts, I find it is impossible ever to conceal from you any of even my most unreasonable fancies—your note, which is so characteristically frank and artless, has opened my eyes to my own folly. I must show you that, when I am in my senses, I do you justice. You deserve to be treated with perfect openness; therefore, however humiliating the explanation, I will confess to you the real cause of my displeasure. When you spoke of the heroine of this foolish novel, what you said was so applicable to some part of my own history and character, that I could not help suspecting you had heard the facts from a person with whom you spent some hours lately; and I was much hurt by your alluding to them in such a severe and public manner. You will ask me, how I could conceive you to be capable of such unprovoked malevolence: and my answer is, 'I cannot tell;' I can only say, such is the effect of the unfortunate susceptibility of my heart, or, to speak more candidly, of my temper. I confess I cannot, in these particulars, alter my nature. Blame me as much as I blame myself; be as angry as you please, or as you can, my gentle friend: but at last you must pity and forgive me.

"Now that all this affair is off my mind, I can sleep in peace: and so, I hope, will you, my dear Emilie—Good night! If friends never quarrelled, they would never taste the joys of reconciliation. Believe me,

"Your ever sincere and affectionate

"A. Somers."

No one tasted the joys of reconciliation more than Emilie; but, after reiterated experience, she was inclined to believe that they cannot balance the evils of quarrelling. Mrs. Somers was one of those, who "confess their faults, but never mend;" and who expect, for this gratuitous candour, more applause than

others would claim for the real merit of reformation. So far did this lady carry her admiration of her own candour, that she was actually upon the point of quarrelling with Emilie again, the next morning, because she did not seem sufficiently sensible of the magnanimity with which she had confessed herself to be ill-tempered. These few specimens are sufficient to give an idea of this lady's powers of tormenting; but, to form an adequate notion of their effect upon Emilie's spirits, we must conceive the same sort of provocations to be repeated every day, for several months. Petty torments, incessantly repeated, exhaust the most determined patience.

All this time, Mad. de Coulanges went on very smoothly with Mrs. Somers; for she had not Emilie's sensibility; and, notwithstanding her great quickness, a hundred things might pass, and did pass, before her eyes, without her seeing them. She examined no farther than the surface; and, provided that there was not any deficiency of those *little attentions* to which she had been accustomed, it never occurred to her that a friend could be more or less pleased: she did not understand or study physiognomy; a smile of the lips was, to her, always a sufficient token of approbation; and, whether it were merely conventional, or whether it came from the heart, she never troubled herself to inquire. Provided that she saw at dinner the usual *couverts*, and that she had a sufficient number of people to converse with, or rather to talk to, she was satisfied that every thing was right. All the variations in Mrs. Somers' temper were unmarked by her, or went under the general head, *vapeurs noirs*. This species of ignorance, or confidence, produced the best effects; for as Mrs. Somers could not, without passing the obvious bounds of politeness, make Mad. de Coulanges sensible of her displeasure, and as she had the utmost respect for the countess's opinion of her good breeding, she was, to a certain degree, compelled to command her temper. Mad. de Coulanges often, without knowing it, tried it terribly, by differing from her in taste and judgment, and by supporting her own side of the question with all the enthusiastic volubility of the French language. Sometimes the English and French music were compared—sometimes the English and French painters; and every time the theatre was mentioned, Mad. de Coulanges pronounced

an eulogium on her favourite French actors, and triumphed over the comparison between the elegance of the French, and the *grossièreté* of the English taste for comedy.

"Good Heaven!" said she, "your fashionable comedies would be too absurd to make the lowest of our audiences at the Boulevards laugh; you have excluded sentiment and wit, and what have you in their place? Characters out of drawing and out of nature; grotesque figures, such as you see in a child's magic lantern. Then you talk of English humour—I wish I could understand it; but I cannot be diverted with seeing a tailor turned gentleman pricking his father with a needle, or a man making grimaces over a jug of sour beer."

Mrs. Somers, piqued perhaps by the justice of some of these observations, would dryly answer, that it was impossible for a foreigner to comprehend English humour—that she believed the French, in particular, were destitute of taste for humour.

Mad. de Coulanges insisted upon it, that the French have humour; and Molière furnished her with many admirable illustrations.

Emilie, in support of her mother, read a passage from that elegant writer, M. Suard[1], who has lately attacked, with much

[1] "Il est très-difficile de se faire une idée nette de ce que les Anglais entendent par ce mot; on a tenté plusieurs fois sans succès d'en donner une définition précise. Congreve, qui assurement a mis beaucoup d'*humour* dans ses comédies, dit, que c'est *une manière singulière et inévitable de faire ou de dire quelque chose, qui est naturelle et propre à un homme seul, et qui distingue ses discours et ses actions des discours et des actions de tout autre.*

"Cette définition, que nous traduisons littéralement, n'est pas lumineuse; elle conviendrait également à la manière dont Alexandre parle et agit dans Plutarque, et à celle dont Sancho parle et agit dans Cervantes. Il y a apparence que l'*humour* est comme l'esprit, et que ceux qui en ont le plus ne savent pas trop bien ce que c'est.

"Nous croyons que ce genre de plaisanterie consiste surtout dans des idées ou des tournures originales, qui tiennent plus au caractère qu'à l'esprit, et qui semblent échapper à celui qui les produit.

"L'homme d'*humour* est un plaisant sérieux, qui dit des choses plaisantes sans avoir l'air de vouloir être plaisant. Au reste, une scene de Vanbrugh ou une satire de Swift, feront mieux sentir ce que c'est, que toutes les définitions du monde. Quant à la prétention de quelques Anglais sur la possession exclusive de l'*humour*, nous pensons que si ce qu'ils entendent par ce mot est un genre de plaisanterie qu'on ne trouve ni dans Aristo-

ability, the pretensions of the English to the exclusive possession of humour.

Mrs. Somers then changed her ground, and inveighed against French tragedy, and the unnatural tones and attitudes of the French tragic actors.

"Your heroes on the French stage," said she, "always look over their right shoulders, to express magnanimous disdain; and a lover, whether he be Grecian or Roman, Turk, Israelite, or American, must regularly show his passion by the pompous emphasis with which he pronounces the word MADAME!—a word which must certainly have, for a French audience, some magical charm, incomprehensible to other nations."

What was yet more incomprehensible to Mad. de Coulanges, was the enthusiasm of the English for that bloody-minded barbarian Shakspeare, who is never satisfied till he has strewn the stage with dead bodies; who treats his audience like children, that are to be frightened out of their wits by ghosts of all sorts and sizes in their winding sheets; or by a set of old beggarmen, dressed in women's clothes, armed with broomsticks, and dancing and howling out their nonsensical song round a black kettle.

Mrs. Somers, smiling as in scorn, would only reply, "Madame la comtesse, yours is Voltaire's Shakspeare, not ours.—Have you read Mrs. Montagu's essay upon Shakspeare?"

"No."

"Then positively you must read it before we say one word more upon the subject."

Mad. de Coulanges, though unwilling to give up the pleasure of talking, took the book, which Mrs. Somers pressed upon her, with a promise to read it through some morning; but, unluckily, she chanced to open it towards the end, and happened to see

phane, dans Plaute, et dans Lucien, chez les anciens; ni dans l'Arioste, le Berni, le Pulci, et tant d'autres, chez les Italiens; ni dans Cervantes, chez les Espagnols; ni dans Rabener, chez les Allemands: ni dans le Pantagruel, la satire Ménippée, le Roman comique, les comédies de Molière, de Dufrèny, de Regnard etc., nous ne savons pas ce que c'est, et nous ne prendrons pas la peine de la chercher."—*Suard*, *Mélanges de Littérature*, vol. iv. p. 366.

some animadversions upon Racine, by which she wa
nished and disgusted that she could read no more. S
down the book, defying *any good critic to point out a* ı
line in Racine. "This is a defiance I have heard mad
of letters of the highest reputation in Paris," added la c
"have not you, Mons. l'Abbé?"

The abbé, who was madame's common voucher, acce
this slight emendation—that he had heard numbers defy
of good taste to point out a flat line in *Phædre.*

Mrs. Somers would, perhaps, have acknowledged the
of Phædre, if she had not been piqued by this defia
exaggeration on one side produced injustice on the ot
these disputes about Racine and Shakspeare were co
renewed, and never ended to the satisfaction of eith
Those who will not make allowances for national preju
who do not consider how much all our tastes are influ
early education, example, and the accidental association
may dispute for ever without coming to any conclusion; e
if they avoid stating any distinct proposition; if each of
batants sets up a standard of his own, as the universal st
taste; and if, instead of arguments, both parties have
to wit and ridicule. In these skirmishes, however,
Coulanges, though apparently the most eager for victo
seriously lost her temper—her eagerness was more of ma
of mind; after pleading the cause of Racine, as if it were
of life and death, as if the fate of Europe or the universe c
upon it, she would turn to discuss the merits of a riband w
vehemence, or coolly observe that she was hoarse, and
would quit Racine for a better thing—*de l'eau sucré.* Mrs
on the contrary, took the cause of Shakspeare, or any ot
that she defended, seriously to heart. The wit or
of her adversary, if she affected not to be hurt by i
moment, left a sting in her mind which rankled long an
Though she often failed to refute the arguments brough
her, yet she always rose from the debate precisely of
opinion; and even her silence, which Mad. de Coulang
times mistook for assent or conviction, was only the s
of contemptuous pity—the proof that she deemed the
standing of her opponent beneath all fair competition

own. The understanding of Mad. de Coulanges had, indeed, in the space of a few months, sunk far below the point of mediocrity, in Mrs. Somers' estimation—she had begun by overvaluing, and she ended by underrating it. She at first had taken it for granted that Mad. de Coulanges possessed a "very superior understanding and great strength of mind;" then she discovered that la comtesse was "uncommonly superficial, even for a Frenchwoman;" and at last she decided, that "really Mad. de Coulanges was a very silly woman."

Mrs. Somers now began to be seriously angry with Emilie for always being of her mother's opinion: "It is really, Mlle. de Coulanges, carrying your filial affection too far. We cold-hearted English can scarcely conceive this sort of fervid passion, which French children express about every thing, the merest trifle, that relates to *mamma!*—Well! it is an amiable national prejudice; and one cannot help wishing that it may never, like other amiable enthusiasms, fail in the moment of serious trial."

Emilie, touched to the quick upon a subject nearest her heart, replied with a degree of dignity and spirit which surprised Mrs. Somers, who had never seen in her any thing but the most submissive gentleness. "The affection, whether enthusiastic or not, which we French children profess for our parents, has been of late years put to some strong trials, and has not been found to fail. In many instances it has proved superior to all earthly terrors—to imprisonment—to torture—to death—to Robespierre. Daughters have sacrificed themselves for their parents.——Oh! if *my* life could have saved my father's!"

Emilie clasped her hands, and looked up to heaven with the unaffected expression of filial piety in her countenance. Every body was silent. Mrs. Somers was struck with regret—with remorse—for the taunting manner in which she had spoken.

"My dearest Emilie, forgive me!" cried she; "I am shocked at what I said."

Emilie took Mrs. Somers' hand between hers, and endeavoured to smile. Mrs. Somers resolved that she would keep, henceforward, the strictest guard upon her own temper; and that she would never more be so ungenerous, so barbarous, as to insult one who was so gentle, so grateful, so much in her power, and

so deserving of her affection. These good resolutions, formed in the moment of contrition, were, however, soon forgotten: strong emotions of the heart are transient in their power; habits of the temper permanent in their influence.—Like a child who promises to be always *good*, and forgets its promise in an hour, Mrs. Somers soon grew tired of keeping her temper in subjection. It did not, indeed, break out immediately towards Emilie; but, in her conversations with Mad. de Coulanges, the same feelings of irritation and contempt recurred; and Emilie, who was a clear-sighted bystander, suffered continual uneasiness upon these occasions—uneasiness, which appeared to Mad. de Coulanges perfectly causeless, and at which she frequently expressed her astonishment. Emilie's prescient kindness often, indeed, "felt the coming storm;" while her mother's careless eye saw not, even when the dark cloud was just ready to burst over her head. With all the innocent address of which she was mistress, Emilie tried to turn the course of the conversation whenever it tended towards *dangerous* subjects of discussion; but her mother, far from shunning, would often dare and provoke the war; and she would combat long after both parties were in the dark, even till her adversary quitted the field of battle, exclaiming, "*Let us have peace on any terms, my dear countess!—I give up the point to you, Mad. de Coulanges.*"

This last phrase Emilie particularly dreaded, as the precursor of ill-humour for some succeeding hours. Mrs. Somers at length became so conscious of her own inability to conceal her contempt or to command her temper, that she was almost as desirous as Emilie could be to avoid these arguments; and, the moment the countess prepared for the attack, she would recede, with, "Excuse me, Mad. de Coulanges: we had better not talk upon these subjects—it is of no use—really of no manner of use: let us converse upon other topics—there are subjects enough, I hope, upon which we shall always agree."

Emilie was at first rejoiced at this arrangement, but the constraint was insupportable to her mother: indeed, the circle of proper subjects for conversation contracted daily; for not only the declared offensive topics were to be avoided, but innumerable others, bordering on or allied to them, were to be shunned with equal care—a degree of caution of which the volatile countess

was utterly incapable. One day, at dinner, she asked the gentleman opposite to her, "How long this intolerable rule—of talking only upon subjects where people are of the same opinion —had been the fashion, and what time it would probably last in England?—If it continue much longer, I must fly the country," said she. "I would almost as soon, at this rate, be a prisoner in Paris, as in your land of freedom. You value, above all things, your liberty of the press—now, to me, liberty of the tongue, which is evidently a part, if not the best part, of personal liberty, is infinitely more dear. Bon Dieu!—even in l'Abbaye one might talk of Racine!"

Mad. de Coulanges spoke this half in jest, half in earnest; but Mrs. Somers took it wholly in earnest, and was most seriously offended. Her feelings upon the occasion were strongly expressed in a letter to a friend, to whom she had, from her infancy, been in the habit of confiding all her joys and sorrows —all the histories of her loves and hates—of her quarrels and reconciliations. This friend was an elderly lady, who, besides possessing superior mental endowments which inspired admiration, and a character which commanded high respect, was blessed with an uncommonly placid, benevolent temper. This enabled her to do what no other human being had ever accomplished— to continue in peace and amity, for upwards of thirty years, with Mrs. Somers. The following is one of many hundreds of epistolary complaints or invectives, which, during the course of that time, this "much enduring lady" was doomed to read and answer.

"TO LADY LITTLETON.

"For once, my dear friend, I am secure of your sympathizing in my indignation—my long suppressed, just, virtuous indignation—yes, virtuous; for I do hold indignation to be a part of virtue: it is the natural, proper expression of a warm heart and a strong character against the cold-blooded vices of meanness and ingratitude. Would that those to whom I allude could feel it as a punishment!—but no, this is not the sort of punishment they are formed to feel. Nothing but what comes home to their interests—their paltry interests!—their pleasures—their selfish pleasures!—their amusements—their frivolous amusements! can

touch souls of such a sort. To this half-formed race of *w*
who are scarce endued with a moral sense, the generous
sion of indignation always appears something incompre
—ridiculous; or, in their language, *outré! inouï!* W
beings, therefore, I always am—as much as my nature w
me to be—upon my guard; I keep within what they
bounds of politeness—their dear politeness! What a s
simagrée it is, after all! and how can honest human nat
to be penned up all its days by the Chinese paling of ce
or that French filigree work, *politesse?* English human
cannot endure this, as *yet;* and I am glad of it—heart
of it——Now to the point.

"You guess that I am going to speak of the Coulange
my dear friend, you were quite right in advising me,
first became acquainted with them, not to give way bl
my enthusiasm—not to be too generous, or to expect to
gratitude. Gratitude! why should I ever expect to m
any?—Where I have most deserved, most hoped for it,
been always most disappointed. My life has been a
sacrifices!—thankless and fruitless sacrifices! There is
possible species of sacrifice of interest, pleasure, ha
which I have not been willing to make—which I have n
—for my friends—for my enemies. Early in life, I ga
lover I adored to a friend, who afterwards deserted
married a man I detested to oblige a mother, who
refused to see me on her death-bed. What exertions
for years to win the affection of the husband to whom
only bound in duty! My generosity was thrown aw
him—he died—I became ambitious—I had means of gr
my ambition—a splendid alliance was in my power. A
is a strong passion as well as love—but I sacrificed it
hesitation to my children—I devoted myself to the ed
of my two sons, one of whom has never, in any instanc
he became his own master, shown his mother tender
affection; and who, on some occasions, has scarcely b
towards her with the common forms of respect an
Despairing, utterly despairing of gratitude from my own
and natural friends, I looked abroad, and endeavoured t
friendships with strangers, in hopes of finding more co

rs. I spared nothing to earn attachment—my time, my
ı, my money. I lavished money so, as even, notwith-
ng my large income, to reduce myself frequently to the
straitened and embarrassing circumstances. And by all I
lone, by all I have suffered, what have I gained?—not a
friend—except yourself. You, on whom I have never
red the slightest favour, you are at this instant the only
upon earth by whom I am really beloved. To you, who
my whole history, I may speak of myself as I have done,
n knows! not with vanity, but with deep humiliation and
ıess of heart. The experience of my whole life leaves me
he deplorable conviction that it is impossible to do good,
t is vain to hope even for friendship from those whom we
.

y last disappointment has been cruel, in proportion to the
hopes I had formed. I cannot cure myself of this
ous folly. I did form high expectations of happiness
the society and gratitude of this Mad. and Mlle. de
ıges; but the mother turns out to be a mere frivolous
h comtesse, ignorant, vain, and positive—as all ignorant
are; full of national prejudices, which she supports in
ost absurd and petulant manner. Possessed with the
ty, common to all Parisians, of thinking that Paris is the
world, and that nothing can be good taste, or good sense,
d manners, but what is *à-la-mode de Paris;* through all
asted politeness, you see, even by her mode of praising,
he has a most illiberal contempt for all who are not
ıns—she considers the rest of the world as barbarians. I
give you a thousand instances; but her conversation is
so frivolous, that it is not worth reciting. I bore with it
ter day for several months with a patience for which, I am
you would have given me credit; and I let her go on
lly with absurd observations upon Shakspeare, and
agant nonsense about Racine. To avoid disputing with
gave up every point—I acquiesced in all she said—and
egged to have peace. Still she was not satisfied. You
there are tempers which never can be contented, do what
ll to please them. Mad. de Coulanges actually quarrelled
ne for begging that we might have peace; and that we

might talk upon subjects where we should not be likely to disagree. This will seem to you incredible; but it is the nature of French caprice: and for this I ought to have been prepared. But, indeed, I never could have prepared myself for the strange manner in which this lady thought proper to manifest her anger this day at dinner, before a large company. She spoke absolutely, notwithstanding all her good-breeding, in the most brutally ungrateful manner; and, after all I have done for her, she represented me as being as great a tyrant as Robespierre, and spoke of my house as a more intolerable prison than any in Paris!!! I only state the fact to you, without making any comments—I never yet saw so thoroughly selfish and unfeeling a human being.

"The daughter has as far too much as the mother has too little sensibility. Emilie plagues me to death with her fine feelings and her sentimentality, and all her French parade of affection, and superfluity of endearing expressions, which mean nothing, and disgust English ears. She is always fancying that I am angry or displeased with her or with her mother; and then I am to have tears, and explanations, and apologies: she has not a mind large enough to understand my character: and if I were to explain to eternity, she would be as much in the dark as ever. Yet, after all, there is something so ingenuous and affectionate about this girl that I cannot help loving her, and that is what provokes me; for she does not, and never can, feel for me the affection that I have for her. My little hastiness of temper she has not strength of mind sufficient to bear—I see she is dreadfully afraid of me, and more constrained in my company than in that of any other person. Not a visitor comes, however insignificant, but Mlle. de Coulanges seems more at her ease, and converses more with them than with me—she talks to me only of gratitude, and such stuff. She is one of those feeble persons who, wanting confidence in themselves, are continually afraid that they shall not be grateful enough; and so they reproach and torment themselves, and refine and *sentimentalize*, till gratitude becomes burdensome (as it always does to weak minds), and the very idea of a benefactor odious. Mlle. de Coulanges was originally unwilling to accept of any obligation from me: she knew her own character better than I did. I do

not deny that she has a heart; but she has no soul: I hope you understand and feel the difference. I rejoice, my dear Lady Littleton, that you are coming to town immediately. I am harassed almost to death between want of feeling and fine feeling. I really long to see you and to talk over all these things. Nobody but you, my dear friend, ever understood me. —Farewell!

"Yours affectionately,
"A. SOMERS."

To this long letter, Lady Littleton replied by the following short note.

"I hope to see you the day after to-morrow, my dear friend; in the mean time, do not decide, irrevocably, that Mlle. de Coulanges has no soul.

"Yours affectionately,
"L. LITTLETON."

Mrs. Somers was rather disappointed by the calmness of this note; and she was most impatient to see Lady Littleton, that she might work up her mind to the proper pitch of indignation. She stationed a servant at her ladyship's house to give her notice the moment of her arrival in town. The instant that she was informed of it she ordered her carriage; and the whole of her conversation during this visit was an invective against Emilie and Mad. de Coulanges. The next day, Emilie, who had heard the most enthusiastic eulogiums upon Lady Littleton, expressed much satisfaction on finding that she was come to town; and requested Mrs. Somers' permission to accompany her on her next visit. The request was rather embarrassing; but Mrs. Somers granted it with a sort of constrained civility. It was fortunate for Emilie that she was so unsuspicious; for her manner was consequently frank, natural, and affectionate; and she appeared to the greatest advantage to Lady Littleton. Mrs. Somers threw herself back in the chair and sat silent, whilst Emilie, in hopes of pleasing her, conversed with the utmost freedom with her friend. The conversation, at last, was interrupted by an exclamation from Mrs. Somers, "Good

Heavens! my dear Lady Littleton, how can you endure this smell of paint? It has made my head ache terribly—where does it come from?"

"From my bedchamber," said Lady Littleton. "They have, unluckily, misunderstood my orders; and they have freshly painted every one in my house."

"Then it is impossible that you should sleep here—I will not allow you—it will poison you—it will give you the palsy immediately—it is destruction—it is death. You must come home with me directly—I insist upon it——But, no," said she, checking herself, with a look of sudden disappointment, "no, my dearest friend! I cannot invite you; for I have not a bed to offer you."

"Yes, mine—you forget mine—dear Mrs. Somers," cried Emilie; "you know I can sleep with mamma."

"By no means, Mlle. de Coulanges; you cannot possibly imagine ——"

"I only imagine the truth," said Emilie, "that this arrangement would be infinitely more convenient to mamma; I know she likes to have me in the room with her. Pray, dear Mrs Somers, let it be so."

Mrs. Somers made many ceremonious speeches: but Lady Littleton seemed so well inclined to accept Emilie's offered room, that she was obliged to yield. She was vexed to perceive that Emilie's manners pleased Lady Littleton; and, after they returned home, the activity with which Emilie moved her books, her drawing-box, work, &c., furnished Mrs. Somers with fresh matter for displeasure. At night, when Lady Littleton went to take possession of her apartment, and when she observed how active and obliging Mlle. de Coulanges had been, Mrs. Somers shook her head, and replied, "All this is just a proof to me of what I asserted, Lady Littleton—and what I must irrevocably assert—that Mlle. de Coulanges has no soul. You are a new acquaintance, and I am an old friend. She exerts herself to please you; she does not care what I think or what I feel about the matter. Now this is just what I call having no soul."

"My dear Mrs. Somers," said Lady Littleton, "be reasonable; and you must perceive that Emilie's eagerness to please me arises from her regard and gratitude to you: she has, I make

no doubt, heard that I am your intimate friend, and your praises have disposed her to like me.—Is this a proof that she has no soul?"

"My dear Lady Littleton, we will not dispute about it—I see you are fascinated, as I was at first. Manner is a prodigious advantage—but I own I prefer solid English sincerity. Stay a little: as soon as Mlle. de Coulanges thinks herself secure of you, she will completely abandon me. I make no doubt that she will complain to you of my bad temper and ill usage; and I dare say that she will succeed in prejudicing you against me."

"She will succeed only in prejudicing me against herself, if she attempt to injure you," said Lady Littleton; "but, till I have some plain proof of it, I cannot believe that any person has such a base and ungrateful disposition."

Mrs. Somers spent an hour and a quarter in explaining her causes of complaint against both mother and daughter; and she at last retired much dissatisfied, because her friend was not as angry as she was, but persisted in the resolution to see more before she decided. After passing a few days in the house with Mlle. de Coulanges, Lady Littleton frankly declared to Mrs. Somers that she thought her complaints of Emilie's temper quite unreasonable, and that she was a most amiable and affectionate girl. Respect for Lady Littleton restrained Mrs. Somers from showing the full extent of her vexation; she contented herself with repeating, "Mlle. de Coulanges is certainly a very amiable young woman—I would by no means prejudice you against her —but when you know her as well as I do, you will find that she has no soul."

Mrs. Somers, in the course of four-and-twenty hours, found a multitude of proofs in support of her opinion; but they were none of them absolutely satisfactory to Lady Littleton's judgment. Whilst they were debating about her character, Emilie came into the room to show Mrs. Somers a *French* translation, which she had been making, of a pretty little English poem, called "The Emigrant's Grave." It was impossible to be displeased with the translation, or with the motive from which it was attempted; for it was done at the particular request of Mrs. Somers. This lady's ingenuity, however, did not fail to discover

some cause for dissatisfaction. Mlle. de Coulanges had adapted the words to a French, and not to an English air.

"This is a favourite air of mamma's," said Emilie, "and I thought that she would be pleased by my choosing it."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Somers, in her constrained voice, "I remember that the Countess de Coulanges and her friend—or your friend—M. de Brisac, were charmed with this air, when you sang it the other night. I found fault with it, I believe—but then you had a majority against me; and with some people that is sufficient. Few ask themselves *what constitutes a majority*—numbers or sense. Judgments and tastes may differ in value; but one vote is always as good as another, in the opinion of those who are decided merely by numbers."

"I hope that I shall never be one of those," said Emilie. "Upon the present occasion I assure you, my dear Mrs. Somers, that I was influenced by——"

"Oh! my dear Mlle. de Coulanges," interrupted Mrs. Somers, "you need not give yourself the trouble to explain about such a trifle—the thing is perfectly clear. And nothing is more natural than that you should despise the taste of a friend when put in competition with that of a lover."

"Of a lover!"

"Yes, of a lover. Why should Mlle. de Coulanges think it necessary to look astonished? But young ladies imagine this sort of dissimulation is becoming; and can I hope to meet with an exception, or to find one superior to the *finesse* of her sex? ——I beg your pardon, Mlle. de Coulanges, I really forgot that Lady Littleton was present when this terrible word lover escaped —but I can assure you that frankness is not incompatible with *her* ideas of delicacy."

"You are mistaken, dear Mrs. Somers; indeed you are mistaken," said Emilie; "but you are displeased with me now, and I will take a more favourable moment to set you right. In the mean time, I will go and water the hydrangia, which I forgot, and which I reproached myself for forgetting yesterday."

Emilie left the room.

"Are you convinced now, my dear Lady Littleton," cried Mrs. Somers, "that this girl has no soul—and very little heart?"

"I am convinced only that she has an excellent temper," said Lady Littleton. "I hope you do not think a good temper is incompatible with a heart or a soul."

"I will tell you what I think, and what I am sure of," cried Mrs. Somers, raising her voice; "that Mlle. de Coulanges will be a constant cause of dispute and uneasiness between you and me, Lady Littleton—I foresee the end of this. As a return for all I have done for her and her mother, she will rob me of the affections of one whom I love and esteem, respect and admire—as she well knows—above all other human beings. She will rob me of the affections of one who has been my friend, my best, my only constant friend, for twenty years!——Oh! why am I doomed eternally to be the victim of ingratitude?"

In spite of Lady Littleton's efforts to stop and calm her, Mrs. Somers burst out of the room in an agony of passion. She ran up a back staircase which led to her dressing-room, but suddenly stopped when she came to the landing-place, for she found Emilie watering her plants.

"Look, dear Mrs. Somers, this hydrangia is just going to blow; though I was so careless as to forget to water it yesterday."

"I beg, Mlle. de Coulanges, that you will not trouble yourself," said Mrs. Somers, haughtily. "Surely there are servants enough in this house whose business it is to remember these things."

"Yes," said Emilie, "it is their business, but it is my pleasure. You must not, indeed you must not, take my watering-pot from me!"

"Pardon me, I must, mademoiselle—you are very condescending and polite, and I am very blunt and rude, or whatever you please to think me. But the fact is, that I am not to be flattered by what the French call *des petites attentions:* they are suited to little minds, but not to me. You will never know my character, Mlle. de Coulanges—I am not to be pleased by such means."

"Teach me then better means, my dear friend, and do not bid me despair of ever pleasing you," said Emilie, throwing her arms round Mrs. Somers to detain her.

"Excuse me—I am an Englishwoman, and do not love em-

brassades, which mean nothing," said Mrs. Somers, struggling to disengage herself; and she rushed suddenly forward, without perceiving that Emilie's foot was entangled in her train. Emilie was thrown from the top of the stairs to the bottom. Mrs. Somers screamed—Lady Littleton came out of her room.

"She is dead!—I have killed her!"—cried Mrs. Somers. Lady Littleton raised Emilie from the ground—she was quite stunned by the violence of the fall.

"Oh! speak to me! dearest Emilie, speak once more!" said Mrs. Somers.

As soon as Emilie could speak, she assured Mrs. Somers that she should be quite well in a few minutes. When she attempted, however, to walk, she found she was unable to move, for her ankle was violently sprained: she was carried into Lady Littleton's room, and placed upon a sofa. She exerted herself to bear the pain she felt, that she might not alarm or seem to reproach Mrs. Somers; and she repeatedly blamed herself for the awkwardness with which she had occasioned her own fall. Mrs. Somers, in the greatest bustle and confusion, called every servant in the house about her, sent them different ways for all the remedies she had ever heard of for a sprain; then was sure Emilie's skull was fractured—asked fifty times in five minutes whether she did not feel a certain sickness in her stomach, which was the infallible sign of "*something wrong*"—insisted upon her smelling at salts, vinegar, and various essences; and made her swallow, or at least taste, every variety of drops and cordials. By this time Mad. de Coulanges, who was at her toilet, had heard of the accident, and came running in half dressed; the hurry of Mrs. Somers' manner, the crowd of assistants, the quantity of remedies, the sight of Emilie stretched upon a sofa, and the sound of the word *fracture*, which caught her ear, had such an effect upon the countess, that she was instantly seized with one of her nervous attacks; and Mrs. Somers was astonished to see Emilie spring from the sofa to assist her mother. When Mad. de Coulanges recovered, Emilie used all her powers of persuasion to calm her spirits, laughed at the idea of her skull being fractured, and said, that she had only twisted her ankle, which would merely prevent her from dancing for a few days. The countess pitied herself for having such terribly weak nerves—congratulated

herself upon her daughter's safety—declared that it was a miracle how she could have escaped, in falling down such a narrow staircase—observed, that, though the stairs in London were cleaner and better carpeted, the staircases of Paris were at least four times as broad, and, consequently, a hundred times as safe. She then reminded Emilie of an anecdote mentioned by Mad. de Genlis about a princess of France, who, when she retired to a convent, complained bitterly of the narrowness of the staircase, which, she said, she found a real misfortune to be obliged to descend. "Tell me, Emilie, what was the name of the princess?"

"The Princess Louisa of France, I believe, mamma," replied Emilie.

Mad. de Coulanges repeated, "Ay, the Princess Louisa of France;" and then, well satisfied, returned to finish her toilette.

"You have an excellent memory, Mlle. de Coulanges," said Mrs. Somers, looking with an air of pique at Emilie. "I really am rejoiced to see you so much yourself again—I thought you were seriously hurt."

"I told you that I was not," said Emilie, forcing a smile.

"Yes, but I was such a fool as to be terrified out of my senses by seeing you lie down on the sofa. I might have saved myself and you a great deal of trouble. I must have appeared ridiculously officious. I saw indeed that I was troublesome; and I seem to be too much for you now. I will leave you with Lady Littleton, to explain to her how the accident happened. Pray tell the thing just as it was—do not spare me, I beg. I do not desire that Lady Littleton, or any friend I have upon earth, should think better of me than I deserve. Remember, you have my free leave, Mlle. de Coulanges, to speak of me as you think—so don't spare me!" cried Mrs. Somers, shutting the door with violence as she left the room.

"Lean upon me, my dear," said Lady Littleton, who saw that Emilie turned exceedingly pale, and looked towards a chair, as if she wished to reach it, but could not.

"I thought," said she, in a faint voice, "that this pain would go off, but it is grown more violent." Emilie could say no more; she had borne intense pain as long as she was able: and now, quite overcome, she leaned back, and fainted. Lady Littleton

threw open the window, sprinkled water upon Emilie's face, and gave her assistance in the kindest manner, without calling any of the servants; she knew that the return of Mrs. Somers would do more harm than good. Emilie soon recovered her recollection; and, whilst Lady Littleton was rubbing the sprained ankle with ether, in hopes of lessening the pain, she asked how the accident had happened.—Emilie replied simply, that she had entangled her foot in Mrs. Somers' gown. "I understand, from what Mrs. Somers hinted when she left the room," said Lady Littleton, "that she was somehow in fault in this affair, and that you could blame her if you would; but I see that you will not; and I love you the better for justifying the good opinion that I had formed of you, Emilie.——But I will not talk sentiment to you now—you are in too much pain to relish it."

"Not at all," said Emilie: "I feel more pleasure than pain at this moment; indeed my ankle does not hurt me now that I am quite still—the pleasant cold of the ether has relieved the pain. How kind you are to me, Lady Littleton, and how much I am obliged to you for judging so favourably of my character!"

"You are not obliged to me, my dear, for I do you only justice."

"Justice is sometimes felt as the greatest possible obligation, especially by those who have experienced the reverse.—But," said Emilie, checking herself, "let me not blame Mrs. Somers, or incline you to blame her. I should do very wrong, indeed, if I were, in return for all she has done for us, to cause any jealousies or quarrels between her and her best friend. Oh! that is what I most dread! To prevent it, I would—it is not polite to say so—but I would, my dear Lady Littleton, even withdraw myself from your society. This very day you return to your own house. You were so good as to ask me to go often to see you: forgive me if I do not avail myself of this kind permission. You will know my reasons; and I hope they are such as you will approve of."

A servant came in, to say that her ladyship's carriage was at the door.

"One word more before you go, my dear Lady Littleton," said Emilie, with a supplicating voice and countenance. "Tell me, I beseech you—for you have been her friend from her child-

hood, and must know better than any one living—tell me how I can please Mrs. Somers. I begin to be afraid that I shall at last be weary of my fruitless efforts, and I dread—above all things I dread—that my affection for her should be worn out. How painful it would be to sustain the continual weight of obligation without being able to feel the pleasure of gratitude!"

Lady Littleton was going to reply, but she was prevented by the sudden entrance of Mrs. Somers with her face of wrath.

"So, Lady Littleton, you are actually going, I find!—And I have not had one moment of your conversation. May I be allowed—if Mlle. de Coulanges has finished her mysteries—to say a few words to you?"

"You will give me leave, I am sure, Emilie," said Lady Littleton, "to repeat to Mrs. Somers every word that you have said to me?"

"Yes, every word," said Emilie, blushing, yet speaking with firmness. "I have no mysteries—I do not wish to conceal from Mrs. Somers any thing that I say or think."

Mrs. Somers seized Lady Littleton's arm, and left the room; but when she had entire possession of her friend's ear, she had nothing to say, or nothing that she would say, except half sentences, reproaching her for not staying longer, and insinuating that Emilie would be the cause of their separating for ever.— "Now, as you have her permission, will you favour me with a repetition of her last conversation?"

"Not in your present humour, my dear," said Lady Littleton: "this is not the happy moment to speak reason to you. Adieu! I give you four-and-twenty hours' grace before I declare you a bankrupt in temper. You shall hear from me to-morrow; for, on some subjects, I have always found it better to write than to speak to you."

Mrs. Somers continued during the remainder of the day in a desperate state of ill-humour, which was increased by finding that Mlle. de Coulanges could neither stand nor walk. Mrs. Somers was persuaded that Emilie, if she would have exerted herself, could have done both, but that she preferred exciting the pity of the whole house; and this, all circumstances considered, was a proof of total want of generosity and gratitude.

The next morning, however, she was alarmed by hearing from Mrs. Masham, whom she had sent to attend upon Mlle. de Coulanges, that her ankle was violently swelled and inflamed.—Just when the full tide of her affections was beginning to flow in Emilie's favour, Mrs. Somers received the following letter from Lady Littleton:—

"Enclosed, I have sent you, as well as I can recollect it, every word of the conversation that passed yesterday between Mlle. de Coulanges and me. If I were less anxious for your happiness, and if I had not so high an opinion of the excellence of your disposition, I should wish, my dear friend, to spare both you and myself the pain of speaking and hearing the truth. But I know that I have preserved your affection many years beyond the usual limits of female friendship, by daring to speak to you with perfect sincerity, and by trusting to the justice of your better self. Perhaps you would rather have a compliment to your generosity than to your justice; but in this I shall not indulge you, because I think you already set too high a value upon generosity. It has been the misfortune of your life, my dear friend, to believe that, by making great sacrifices, and conferring great benefits, you could ensure to yourself, in return, affection and gratitude. You mistake both the nature of obligation and the effect which it produces on the human mind. Obligations may command gratitude, but can never ensure love. If the benefit be of a pecuniary nature, it is necessarily attended with a certain sense of humiliation, which destroys the equality of friendship. Of whatever description the favour may be, it becomes burdensome, if gratitude be expected as a tribute, instead of being accepted as the free-will offering of the heart: 'still paying still to owe' is irksome, even to those who have nothing Satanic in their natures. A person who has received a favour is in a defenceless state with respect to a benefactor; and the benefactor who makes an improper use of the power which gratitude gives becomes an oppressor. I know your generous spirit, and I am fully sensible that no one has a more just idea than you have of the delicacy that ought to be used towards those whom you have obliged; but you must permit me to

observe, that your practice is not always conformable to your theory. Temper is doubly necessary to those who love, as you do, to confer favours: it is the duty of a benefactress to command her feelings, and to refrain absolutely from every species of direct or indirect reproach; else her kindness becomes only a source of misery; and even from the benevolence of her disposition she derives the means of giving pain.

"I have said enough; and I know that you will not be offended. The moment your understanding is convinced and your heart touched, all paltry jealousies and petty irritations subside, and you are always capable of acting in a manner worthy of yourself. Adieu!—May you, my dear friend, preserve the affections of one who feels for you, I am convinced, the most sincere gratitude! You will reap a rich harvest, if you do not, with childish impatience, disturb the seeds that you have sown, to examine whether they are growing.

"Your faithful friend,

"L. LITTLETON."

This letter had an immediate and strong effect upon the mind of Mrs. Somers: she went directly with it open in her hand to Emilie. "Here, said she, "is the letter of a noble-minded woman, who dares to speak truth, painful truth, to her best friend. She does me justice in being convinced that I shall not be offended; she does me justice in believing that an appeal to my candour and generosity cannot be in vain, especially when it is made by her voice. Emilie, you shall see that I am worthy to have a sincere friend; you shall see that I can even command my temper, when I have what, to my own feelings and understanding, appears adequate motive. But, my dear, you are in pain—let me look at this ankle—I am absolutely afraid to see it! —Good Heavens! how it is swelled!—And I fancied, all yesterday, that you could have walked upon it!—And I thought you wanted only to excite pity!——My poor child!—I have used you barbarously—most barbarously!" cried Mrs. Somers, kneeling down beside the sofa. "And can you ever forgive me?—Yes! that sweet smile tells me that you can."

"All I ask of you," said Emilie, embracing Mrs. Somers, "is to believe that I am grateful, and to continue to make me love

you as long as I live. This must depend upon you more than upon myself."

"I know it, my dear," said Mrs. Somers. "Be satisfied—I will not wear out your affections. You have dealt fairly with me. I love you for having the courage to speak as you think. —But now that it is all over, I must tell you what it was that displeased me—for I hate half reconciliations: I will tell you all that passed in my mind."

"Pray do," said Emilie; "for then I shall know how to avoid displeasing you another time."

"No danger of that, my dear. You will never make me angry again; for I am sure you will now be as frank towards me as I am towards you. It was not your adapting that little poem to a French rather than to an English air that displeased me—I am not quite so childish as to be offended by such a trifle; but I own I did not like your saying that you chose it merely to comply with your mother's taste.—And you will acknowledge, Emilie, there was a want of sincerity, a want of candour, in your affected look of astonishment, when I mentioned M. de Brisac. I do not claim your confidence as a right—God forbid! —But if the warmest desire for your happiness, the most affectionate sympathy, can merit confidence——But I will not say a word that can imply reproach. On the contrary, I will only assure you, that I have penetration sufficient always to know your wishes, and activity enough to serve you effectually, even without being your confidante. I shall this night see a friend who is in power—I will speak to him about M. de Brisac: I have hopes that his pension from our government may be doubled."

"I wish it may, for his sake," said Emilie; "but certainly not for my own."

"Oh! Mlle. de Coulanges!—But I have no right to extort confidence. I will not, as I said before, utter a syllable that can imply reproach. Let me go on with what I was telling you of my intentions. As soon as the pension is doubled, I will speak to Mad. de Coulanges about M. de Brisac."

"For Heaven's sake, do not!" interrupted Emilie; "for you would do me the greatest possible injury. Mamma would then think it a suitable match, and she would wish me to marry him;

and nothing could make me more unhappy than to be under the necessity of acting contrary to my duty—of disobeying and displeasing her for ever—or else of uniting myself to M. de Brisac, whom I can neither love nor esteem."

"Is it possible," exclaimed Mrs. Somers, with joyful astonishment, "is it possible that I have been under a mistake all this time? My dearest Emilie! now you are every thing I first thought you! Indeed, I could not think with patience of your making such a match; for M. de Brisac is a mere nothing—worse than a mere nothing; a coxcomb, and a peevish coxcomb."

"And how could you suspect me of loving such a man?" said Emilie.

"I never thought you loved him, but I thought you would marry him. French marriages, you know, according to *l'ancien régime*, in which you were brought up, were never supposed to be affairs of the heart, but mere alliances of interest, pride, or convenience."

"Yes—*des mariages de convenance*," said Emilie. "We have suffered terribly by the revolution; but I owe to it one blessing, which, putting what mamma has felt out of the question, I should say has overbalanced all our losses: I have escaped—what must have been my fate in the ancient order of things—*un mariage de convenance*. I must tell you how I escaped by a happy misfortune," continued Emilie, suddenly recovering her vivacity of manner. "The family of M. de Brisac had settled, with mine, that I was to be la Comtesse de Brisac—But we lost our property, and M. le comte his memory. Mamma was provoked and indignant—I rejoiced. When I saw how shabbily he behaved, could I do otherwise than rejoice at having escaped being his wife? M. le Comte de Brisac soon lost his hereditary honours and possessions—Heaven forgive me for not pitying him! I was only glad mamma now agreed with me that we had nothing to regret. I had hoped that we should never have heard more of him: but, lo! here he is again in my way with a commission in your English army and a pension from your generous king, which make him, amongst poor emigrants, a man of consequence. And he has taken it into his

head to sigh for me, because I laugh at him; and he talks of his sentiments!—sentiments!—he who has no principles!——"

"My noble-minded Emilie!" cried Mrs. Somers; "I cannot express to you the delight I feel at this explanation. How could I be such an idiot as not sooner to see the truth! But I was misled by the solicitude that Mad. de Coulanges showed about this M. de Brisac; and I foolishly concluded that you and your mother were one. On the contrary, no two people can be more different, thank Heaven!—I beg your pardon for that thanksgiving—I see it distresses you, my dear Emilie—and believe me, I never was less disposed to give you pain—I have made you suffer too much already, both in mind and body. This terrible ankle——"

"It does not give me any pain," said Emilie, "except when I attempt to walk; and it is no great misfortune to be obliged to be quiet for a few days."

Mrs. Somers' whole soul was now intent upon the means of making her young friend amends for all she had suffered: this last conversation had raised her to the highest point both of favour and esteem. Mrs. Somers was now revolving in her mind a scheme, which she had formed in the first moments of her partiality for Emilie—a scheme of marrying her to her son. She had often quarrelled with this son; but she persuaded herself that Emilie would make him every thing that was amiable and respectable, and that she would form an indissoluble bond of family union and felicity. "Then," said she to herself, "Emilie will certainly be established according to her mother's satisfaction. M. de Brisac cannot possibly stand in the way here; for my son has name and fortune, and every thing that Mad. de Coulanges can desire."

Mrs. Somers wrote immediately to summon her son home. In the mean time, delighted with this new and grand project, and thinking herself sure of success, she neglected, according to her usual custom, the "little courtesies of life;" and all Lady Littleton's excellent observations upon the nature of gratitude, and the effect produced on the mind by obligations, were entirely obliterated from her memory.

Emilie's sprained ankle confined her to the house for some

weeks; both Mad. de Coulanges and Mrs. Somers began by offering in the most eager manner, in competition with each other, to stay at home every evening to keep her company; but she found that she could not accept of the offer of one without offending the other: she knew that her mother would have *les vapeurs noirs*, if she were not in *society;* and as she had reason to apprehend that Mrs. Somers could not, with the best intentions possible, remain three hours alone, with even a dear friend, without finding or making some subject of quarrel, she wisely declined all these kind offers. In fact, these were *trifling sacrifices*, which it would not have suited Mrs. Somers' temper to make: for there was no glory to be gained by them. She regularly came every evening, as soon as she was dressed, to pity Emilie—to repeat her wish that she might be allowed to stay at home—then to step into her carriage, and drive away to spend four hours in company which she professed to hate.

Lady Littleton made no complimentary speeches, but every day she contrived to spend some time with Emilie; and, by a thousand small but kind instances of attention, which asked neither for admiration nor gratitude, she contributed to Emilie's daily happiness.

This ready sympathy, and this promptitude to oblige in trifles, became extremely agreeable to Mlle. de Coulanges: perhaps from the contrast with Mrs. Somers' defects, Lady Littleton's manners pleased her peculiarly. She was under no fear of giving offence, so that she could speak her sentiments or express her feelings without constraint: and, in short, she enjoyed in this lady's society, a degree of tranquillity of mind and freedom to which she had long been a stranger. Lady Littleton had employed her excellent understanding in studying the minute circumstances which tend to make people, of different characters and tempers, agree and live happily together; and she understood and practised so successfully all the *honest* arts of pleasing, that she rendered herself the centre of union to a large circle of relations, many of whom she had converted into friends. This she had accomplished without any violent effort, without making any splendid sacrifices, but with that calm, gentle, persevering kindness of temper, which, when united to good sense, forms the real happiness of domestic life, and the true perfection of

the female character. Those who have not traced the causes of family quarrels would not readily guess from what slight circumstances they often originate: they arise more frequently from small defects in temper than from material faults of character. People who would perhaps sacrifice their fortunes or lives for each other cannot, at certain moments, give up their will, or command their humour in the slightest degree.

Whilst Emilie was confined by her sprained ankle, she employed herself in embroidering and painting various trifles, which she intended to offer as *souvenirs* to her English friends. Amongst these, the prettiest was one which she called *the watch of Flora*[1]. It was a dial plate for a pendule, on which the hours were marked by flowers—by those flowers which open or close their petals at particular times of the day. "Linnæus has enumerated forty-six flowers which possess this kind of sensibility; and has marked," as he says, "their respective hours of rising and setting." From these forty-six Emilie wished to select the most beautiful: she had some difficulty in finding such as would suit her purpose, especially as the observations made in the botanic gardens of Upsal could not exactly agree with our climate. She sometimes applied to Mrs. Somers for assistance; but Mrs. Somers repeatedly forgot to borrow for her the botanical books which she wanted: this was too small a service for her to remember. She was provoked at last by Emilie's reiterated requests, and vexed by her own forgetfulness; so that Mlle. de Coulanges at last determined not to run the risk of offending, and she reluctantly laid aside her dial-plate.

Young people of vivacious and inventive tempers, who know what it is to be eagerly intent upon some favourite little project, will give Emilie due credit for her forbearance. Lady Littleton, though not a young person, could so far sympathize in the pursuits of youth, as to feel for Emilie's disappointment. "No," said she, "you must not lay aside your watch of Flora; perhaps I can help you to what you want." She was indefatigable in the search of books and flowers; and, by assisting her in the pursuit of this slight object, she not only enabled her to spend many happy hours, but was of the most essential service to

[1] See Botanic Garden, canto 2.

Emilie. It happened, that one morning, when Lady Littleton went to Kew Gardens to search in the hot-houses for some of the flowers, and to ascertain their hours of closing, she met with a French botanist, who had just arrived from Paris, who came to examine the arrangement of Kew Gardens, and to compare it with that of the Jardin des Plantes. He paid some deserved compliments to the superiority of Kew Gardens; and, with the ease of a Frenchman, he entered into conversation with Lady Littleton. As he inquired for several French emigrants, she mentioned the name of Mad. de Coulanges, and asked whether he knew to whom the property of her family now belonged. He said, "that it was still in the possession of that *scelerat* of a steward, who had, by his informations, brought his excellent master, le Comte de Coulanges, to the guillotine. But," added the botanist, "if you, madam, are acquainted with any of the family, will you give them notice that this wretch is near his end; that he has, within a few weeks, had two strokes of apoplexy; and that his eldest son by no means resembles him; but is a worthy young man, who, to my certain knowledge, is shocked at his father's crimes, and who might be prevailed upon, by a reasonable consideration, to restore to the family, to whom it originally belonged, the property that has been seized. I have more than once, even in the most dangerous times, heard him (in confidence) express the strongest attachment to the descendant of the good master, who loaded him in his childhood with favours. These sentiments he has been, of course, obliged to dissemble, and to profess directly the contrary principles: it can only be by such means that he can gain possession of the estate, which he wishes to restore to the rightful owners. He passes for as great a scoundrel as his father: this is not the least of his merits. But, madam, you may depend upon the correctness of my information, and of my knowledge of his character. I was once, as a man of science, under obligation to the late Comte de Coulanges, who gave me the use of his library; and most happy should I think myself, if I could by any means be instrumental in restoring his descendants to the possession of that library."

There was such an air of truth and frankness in the countenance and manner of this gentleman, that, notwithstanding the

extraordinary nature of his information, and the still more extraordinary facility with which it was communicated, Lady Littleton could not help believing him. He gave her ladyship his address; told her that he should return to Paris in a few days; and that he should be happy if he could be made, in any manner, useful to Mad. de Coulanges. Impatient to impart all this good news to her friends, Lady Littleton hastened to Mrs. Somers'; but just as she put her hand on the lock of Emilie's door, she recollected Mrs. Somers, and determined to tell her the first, that she might have the pleasure of communicating the joyful tidings. From her knowledge of the temper of her friend, Lady Littleton thought that this would be peculiarly gratifying to her; but, contrary to all rational expectation, Mrs. Somers heard the news with an air of extreme mortification, which soon turned into anger. She got up and walked about the room, whilst Lady Littleton was speaking; and, as soon as she had finished her story, exclaimed, "Was there ever any thing so provoking!"

She continued walking, deep in reverie, whilst Lady Littleton sat looking at her in amazement. Mrs. Somers having once formed the *generous* scheme of enriching Emilie by a marriage with her son, was actually disappointed to find that there was a probability that Mlle. de Coulanges should recover a fortune which would make her more than a suitable match for Mr. Somers. There was another circumstance that was still more provoking—this property was likely to be recovered without the assistance of Mrs. Somers. There are people who would rather that their best friends should miss a piece of good fortune than that they should obtain it without their intervention. Mrs. Somers at length quieted her own mind by the idea that all Lady Littleton had heard might have no foundation in truth.

"I am surprised, my dear friend, that a person of your excellent judgment can, for an instant, believe such a strange story as this," said Mrs. Somers. "I assure you, I do not give the slightest credit to it; and, in my opinion, it would be much better not to say one word about the matter, either to Emilie or Mad. de Coulanges: it will only fill their minds with false and absurd hopes. Mad. de Coulanges will torment herself and me to death with conjectures and exclamations; and we shall

hear of nothing but the Hotel de Coulanges, and the Chateau de Coulanges, from morning till night; and, after all, I am convinced she will never see either of them again."

To this assertion, which Mrs. Somers could support only by repeating that it was her conviction—that it was her unalterable conviction—Lady Littleton simply replied, that it would be improper not to mention what had happened to Mad. de Coulanges, because this would deprive her of an opportunity of judging and acting for herself in her own affairs. "This French gentleman has offered to carry letters, or to do her any service in his power; and we should not be justifiable in concealing this: the information may be false, but of that Mad. de Coulanges should at least have an opportunity of judging; she should see this botanist, and she will recollect whether what he says of the count, and his allowing him the use of his library, be true or false: from these circumstances we may obtain some farther reason to believe or disbelieve him. I should be sorry to excite hopes which must end in disappointment; but the chance of good, in this case, appears to me far greater than the chance of evil."

"Very well, my dear Lady Littleton," interrupted Mrs. Somers, "you will follow your judgment, and I must be allowed to follow mine, though I make no doubt that yours is superior. Manage this business as you please: I will have nothing to do with it. It is your opinion that Mad. de Coulanges and her daughter should hear this wonderfully fine story; therefore I beg you will be the relater—I must be excused—for my part, I can't give any credit to it—no, not the slightest. But your judgment is better than mine, Lady Littleton—you will act as you think proper, and manage the whole business yourself—I am sure I wish you success with all my heart."

Lady Littleton, by a mixture of firmness and gentleness in her manner, so far worked upon the temper of Mrs. Somers, as to prevail upon her to believe that the management of the business was not her object; and she even persuaded Mrs. Somers to be present when the intelligence was communicated to Mad. de Coulanges and Emilie. She could not, however, forbear repeating, that she did not believe the story:—this incredulity afforded her a plausible pretext for not sympathizing in the *general joy*. Mad. de Coulanges was alternately in

ecstasy and in despair, as she listened to Lady Littleton or to Mrs. Somers: her exclamations would have been much less frequent and violent, if Mrs. Somers had not provoked them, by mixing with her hopes a large portion of fear. The next day, when she saw the French gentleman, her hopes were predominant: for she recollected perfectly having seen this gentleman, in former times, at the Hotel de Coulanges; she knew that he was *un savant;* and that he had, before the revolution, the reputation of being a very worthy man. Mad. de Coulanges, by Lady Littleton's advice, determined, however, to be cautious in what she wrote to send to France by this gentleman. Emilie took the letters to Mrs. Somers, and requested her opinion; but she declined giving any.

"I have nothing to do with the business, Mlle. de Coulanges," said she; "you will be guided by the opinion of my Lady Littleton."

Emilie saw that it was in vain to expostulate; she retired in silence, much embarrassed as to the answer which she was to give to her mother, who was waiting to hear the opinion of Mrs. Somers. Mad. de Coulanges, impatient with Emilie, for bringing her only a reference to Lady Littleton's opinion, went herself, with what she thought the most amiable politeness, to solicit the advice of Mrs. Somers; but she was astonished, and absolutely shocked, by the coldness and want of good breeding with which this lady persisted in a refusal to have any thing to do with the business, or even to read the letters which waited for her judgment. The countess opened her large eyes to their utmost orbicular extent; and, after a moment's *silence*, the strongest possible expression that she could give of amazement, she also retired, and returned to Emilie, to demand from her an explanation of what she could not understand. The ill-humour of Mrs. Somers, now that Mad. de Coulanges was wakened to the perception of it, was not, as it had been to poor Emilie, a subject of continual anxiety and pain, but merely matter of astonishment and curiosity. She looked upon Mrs. Somers as an English *oddity*, as a *lusus naturæ;* and she alternately asked Emilie to account for these strange appearances, or shrugged up her shoulders, and submitted to the impossibility of a Frenchwoman's ever understanding such *extravagances.*

"Ah que c'est bizarre! Mais, mon enfant, expliquez moi

donc tout ça—Mais ça ne s'explique point—Certes c'est une Anglaise qui sçait donner, mais qui ne sçait pas vivre.—Voltaire s'y connaissait mieux que moi apparemment—et heureusement."

Content with this easy method of settling things, Mad. de Coulanges sealed and despatched her letters, appealed no more to Mrs. Somers for advice, and, when she saw any extraordinary signs of displeasure, repeated to herself—"Ah que c'est bizarre!" And this phrase was for some time a quieting charm. But as the anxiety of the countess increased, at the time when she expected to receive the decisive answer from her steward's son, she talked with incessant and uncontrollable volubility of her hopes and fears—her conjectures and calculations—and of the Chateau and Hotel de Coulanges; and she could not endure to see that Mrs. Somers heard all this with affected coldness or real impatience.

"How is this possible, Emilie?" said she. "Here is a woman who would give me half her fortune, and who yet seems to wish that I should not recover the whole of mine! Here is a woman who would move heaven and earth to serve me in her own way; but who, nevertheless, will not give me either a word of advice or a look of sympathy, in the most important affair and the most anxious moment of my life! But this is more than *bizarre*—this is intolerably provoking. For my part, I would rather a friend would deny me any thing than sympathy: without sympathy, there is no society—there is no living—there is no talking. I begin to feel my obligations a burden; and, positively, with the first money I receive from my estates, I will relieve myself from my pecuniary debt to this generous but incomprehensible Englishwoman."

Every day Emilie dreaded the arrival of the post, when her mother asked, "Are there any letters from Paris?"—Constantly the answer was—"No."——Mrs. Somers' look was triumphant; and Mad. de Coulanges applied regularly to her smelling-bottle or her snuff-box to conceal her emotion, which Mrs. Somers increased by indirect reflections upon the absurdity of those who listen to idle reports, and build castles in the air. Having set her opinion in opposition to Lady Littleton's, she supported it with a degree of obstinacy, and even acrimony, which made her often transgress the bounds of that politeness

which she had formerly maintained in all her differences with the comtesse.

Mad. de Coulanges could no longer consider her humour as merely *bizarre*, she found it *insupportable;* and Mrs. Somers appeared to her totally changed, and absolutely odious, now that she was roused by her own sufferings to the perception of those evils which Emilie had long borne with all the firmness of principle, and all the philosophy of gratitude. Not a day passed without her complaining to Emilie of some *grossièreté* from Mrs. Somers. Mad. de Coulanges suffered so much from irritation and anxiety, that her *vapeurs noirs* returned with tenfold violence. Emilie had loved Mrs. Somers, even when most unreasonable towards herself, as long as she behaved with kindness to her mother; but now that, instead of a source of pleasure, she became the hourly cause of pain to Mad. de Coulanges, Emilie's affection could no farther go; and she really began to dislike this lady—to dread to see her come into the room—and to tremble at hearing her voice. Emilie could judge only by what she saw; and she could not divine that Mrs. Somers was occupied, all this time, with the generous scheme of marrying her to her son and heir, and of settling upon her a large fortune; nor could she guess, that all the ill-humour in Mrs. Somers originated in the fear that her friends should be made either rich or happy without her assistance. Her son's delaying to return home, according to her mandate, had disappointed and vexed her extremely. Every day, when the post came in, she inquired for letters with almost as much eagerness as Mad. de Coulanges. At length a letter came from Mr. Somers, to inform his impatient mother that he should certainly be in town the beginning of the ensuing week. Delighted by this news, she could not refrain from the temptation of opening her whole mind to Emilie; though she had previously resolved not to give the slightest intimation of her scheme to any one, not even to Lady Littleton, till a definitive answer had been received from Paris, respecting the fortune of Mad. de Coulanges. Often, when Mrs. Somers was full of some magnanimous design, the merest trifle that interrupted the full display of her generosity threw her into a passion, even with those whom she was going to serve. So it happened in the present instance. She went, with her open letter in her hand, to

the countess's apartment, where unluckily she found M. de Brisac, who was going to read the French newspapers to madame. Mrs. Somers sat down beside Emilie, who was painting the last flower of her watch of Flora. Mrs. Somers wrote on a slip of paper, "Don't ask M. de Brisac to read the papers, for I want to speak to you." She threw down the note before Emilie, who was so intent upon what she was about, that she did not immediately see it—Mrs. Somers touched her elbow—Emilie started, and let fall her brush, which made a blot upon her dial-plate.

"Oh! what a pity!—Just as I had finished my work," cried Emilie, "I have spoiled it!"

M. de Brisac laid down the newspaper to pour forth compliments of condolence.—Mrs. Somers tore the piece of paper as he approached the table, and said, with some asperity, "One would think this was a matter of life and death, by the terms in which it is deplored."

M. de Brisac, who stood so that Mrs. Somers could not see him, shrugged his shoulders, and looked at Mad. de Coulanges, who answered him by another look, that plainly said, "This is English politeness!"

Emilie, who saw that her mother was displeased, endeavoured to change the course of her thoughts, by begging M. de Brisac to go on with what he was reading from the French papers. This was a fresh provocation to Mrs. Somers, who forgot that Emilie had not read the words on the slip of paper which had been torn; and consequently could not know all Mrs. Somers' impatience for his departure. M. de Brisac read, in what this lady called his *unemphatic French tone*, paragraph after paragraph, and column after column, whilst her anxiety to have him go every moment increased. She moulded her son's letter into all manner of shapes as she sat in penance. To complete her misfortunes, something in the paper put Mad. de Coulanges in mind of former times; and she began a long history of the destruction of some fine old tapestry hangings in the Chateau de Coulanges, at the beginning of the Revolution: this led to endless melancholy reflections; and at length tears began to flow from the fine eyes of the countess.

Just at this instant a butterfly flew into the room, and passed by Mad. de Coulanges, who was sitting near the open window.

"Oh! the beautiful butterfly!" cried she, starting up to catch it. "Did you ever see such a charming creature? Catch it, M. de Brisac!—Catch it, Emilie!—Catch it, Mrs. Somers!"

With the tears yet upon her cheeks, Mad. de Coulanges began the chase, and M. de Brisac followed, beating the air with his perfumed handkerchief, and the butterfly fluttered round the table at which Emilie was standing.

"Eh! M. de Brisac, catch it!—Catch it, Emilie!" repeated her mother.—"Catch it, Mrs. Somers, for the love of Heaven!"

"*For the love of Heaven!*" repeated Mrs. Somers, who, immovably grave, and sullenly indignant, kept aloof during this chase.

"Ah! pour le coup, papillon, je te tiens!" cried la comtesse, and with eager joy she covered it with a glass, as it lighted on the table.

"Mlle. de Coulanges," cried Mrs. Somers, "I acknowledge, now, that I was wrong in my criticism of Caroline de Lichteld. I blamed the author for representing Caroline, at fifteen, or just when she is going to be married, as running after butterflies. I said that, at that age, it was too frivolous—out of drawing—out of nature. But I should have said only, that it was out of *English nature.*—I stand corrected."

Mad. de Coulanges and M. de Brisac again interchanged looks, which expressed "*Est-il possible!*" And la comtesse then, with an unusual degree of deliberation and dignity in her manner, walked out of the room. Emilie, who saw that her mother was extremely offended, was much embarrassed—she went on washing the blot out of her drawing. M. de Brisac stood silently looking over her, and Mrs. Somers opposite to him, wishing him fairly at the antipodes. M. de Brisac, to break the silence, which seemed to him as if it never would be broken, asked Mlle. de Coulanges if she had ever seen the stadtholder's fine collection of butterflies, and if she did not admire them extremely? No, she never had; but she said that she admired extremely the generosity the stadtholder had shown in sacrificing, not only his fine collection of butterflies, but his most valuable pictures, to save the lives of the poor French emigrants, who were under his protection.

At the sound of the word generosity, Mrs. Somers became

attentive; and Emilie was in hopes that she would recover her temper, and apologize to her mother: but at this moment a servant came to tell Mlle. de Coulanges that la comtesse wished to speak to her immediately. She found her mother in no humour to receive any apology, even if it had been offered: nothing could have hurt Mad. de Coulanges more than the imputation of being frivolous.

"Frivole!—frivole!—moi frivole!" she repeated, as soon as Emilie entered the room. "My dear Emilie! I would not live with this Mrs. Somers for the rest of my days, were she to offer me the Pitt diamond, or the whole mines of Golconda!——Bon Dieu!—neither money nor diamonds, after all, can pay for the want of kindness and politeness!—There is Lady Littleton, who has never done us any favour, but that of showing us attention and sympathy; I protest I love her a million of times better than I can love Mrs. Somers, to whom we owe so much. It is in vain, Emilie, to remind me that she is our benefactress. I have said that over and over to myself, till I am tired, and till I have absolutely lost all sense of the meaning of the word. Bitterly do I repent having accepted of such obligations from this strange woman; for, as to the idea of regaining our estate, and paying my debt to her, I have given up all hopes of it. You see that we have no letters from France. I am quite tired out. I am convinced that we shall never have any good news from Paris. And I cannot, I will not, remain longer in this house. Would you have me submit to be treated with disrespect? Mrs. Somers has affronted me before M. de Brisac, in a manner that I cannot, that I ought not, to endure—that you, Emilie, ought not to wish me to endure. I positively will not live upon the bounty of Mrs. Somers. There is but one way of extricating ourselves. M. de Brisac—Why do you turn pale, child?—M. de Brisac has this morning made me a proposal for you, and the best thing we can possibly do is to accept of it."

"The best!—Pray don't say the best!" cried Emilie. "Ah! dear mamma, for me the worst! Let me beseech you not to sacrifice my happiness for ever by such a marriage!"

"And what other can you expect, Emilie, in your present circumstances?"

"None," said Emilie.

"And here is an establishment—at least an independence for you—and you call it sacrificing your happiness for ever to accept of it!"

"Yes," said Emilie; "because it is offered to me by one whom I can neither love nor esteem. Dearest mamma! can you forget all his former meanness of conduct?"

"His present behaviour makes amends for the past," said Mad. de Coulanges, "and entitles him to my esteem and to yours, and that is sufficient. As to love—well educated girls do not marry for love."

"But they ought not to marry without feeling love, should they?" said Emilie.

"Emilie! Emilie!" said her mother, "these are strange ideas that have come into the heads of young women since the Revolution. If you had remained safe in your convent, I should have heard none of this nonsense."

"Perhaps not, mamma," said Emilie, with a deep sigh. "But should I have been happier?"

"A fine question, truly!—How can I tell? But this I can ask you—How can any girl expect to be happy, who abandons the principles in which she was bred up, and forgets her duty to the mother by whom she has been educated—the mother, whose pride, whose delight, whose darling, she has ever been? Oh, Emilie! this is to me worse than all I have ever suffered!"

Mad. de Coulanges burst into a passion of tears, and Emilie stood looking at her in silent despair.

"Emilie, you cannot deceive me," cried her mother; "you cannot pretend that it is simply your want of esteem for M. de Brisac which renders you thus obstinately averse to the match. You are in love with another person."

"Not in love," said Emilie, in a faltering voice.

"You cannot deceive me, Emilie—remember all you said to me about the stranger who was our fellow prisoner at the Abbaye. You cannot deny this, Emilie."

"Nor do I, dear mamma," said Emilie. "I *cannot* deceive you, indeed I *would* not; and the best proof that I do not wish to deceive you—that I never attempted it—is, that I told you all I thought and felt about that stranger. I told you that his honourable, brave, and generous conduct towards us, when we

were in distress, made an impression upon my heart—that I preferred him to any person I had ever seen—and I told you, my dear mamma, that——"

"You told me too much," interrupted Mad. de Coulanges; "more than I wished to hear—more than I will have repeated, Emilie. This is romance and nonsense. The man, whoever he was—and Heaven knows who he was!—behaved very well, and was a very agreeable person: but what then? are you ever likely to see him again? Do you even know his birth—his name—his country—or any thing about him, but that he was brave and generous?—So are fifty other men, five hundred, five thousand, five million, I hope. But is this any reason that you should refuse to marry M. de Brisac? Henry the Fourth was brave and generous two hundred years ago. That is as much to the purpose. You have as much chance of establishing yourself, if you wait for Henry the Fourth to come to life again, as if you wait for this nameless nobody of a hero—who is perhaps married, after all—who knows!—Really, Emilie, this is too absurd!"

"But, dear mamma, I cannot marry one man and love another——love I did not quite mean to say. But whilst I prefer another, I cannot, in honour, marry M. de Brisac."

"Honour!—Love!—But in France, in my time, who ever heard of a young lady's being in love before she was married? You astonish, you frighten, you shock me, child! Recollect yourself, Emilie! Misfortune may have deprived you of the vast possessions to which you are heiress; but do not, therefore, degrade yourself and me by forgetting your principles, and all that the representative of the house of Coulanges ought to remember. And as for myself—have I no claim upon your affections, Emilie?—have not I been a fond mother?"

"Oh, yes!" said Emilie, melting into tears. "Of your kindness I think more than of any thing else!—more than of the whole house of Coulanges!"

"Do not let me see you in tears, child!" said Mad. de Coulanges, moved by Emilie's grief. "Your tears hurt my nerves more even than Mrs. Somers' *grossièreté*. You must blame Mrs. Somers, not me, for all this—her temper drives me to it—I cannot live with her. We have no alternative. Emilie, my

sweet child! make me happy!—I am miserable in this house. Hitherto you have ever been the best of daughters, and you shall find me the most indulgent of mothers. One whole month I will give you to change your mind, and recollect your duty. At the end of that time, I must see you Mad. de Brisac, and in a house of your own.—In the house of Mrs. Somers I will not, I cannot longer remain."

Poor Emilie was glad of the reprieve of one month. She retired from her mother's presence in silent anguish, and hastened to her own apartment, that she might give way to her grief. There she found Mrs. Somers waiting for her, seated in an arm-chair, with an open letter in her hand.

"Why do you start, Emilie? You look as if you were sorry to find me here," cried Mrs. Somers—"IF THAT be the case, Mlle. de Coulanges——"

"Oh, Mrs. Somers! do not begin to quarrel with me at this moment, for I shall not be able to bear it—I am sufficiently unhappy already!" said Emilie.

"I am extremely sorry that any thing should make you unhappy, Emilie," said Mrs. Somers; "but I think that you had never less reason than at this moment to suspect me of an intention of quarrelling with you—I came here with a very different design. May I know the cause of your distress?"

Emilie hesitated, for she did not know how to explain the cause without imputing blame either to Mrs. Somers or to her mother—she could only say—"*M. de Brisac*——"

"What!" cried Mrs. Somers, "your mother wants you to marry him?"

"Yes."

"Immediately?"

"In one month."

"And you have consented?"

"No—But—"

"*But*—Good Heavens! Emilie, what weakness of mind there is in that *but*——"

"Is it weakness of mind to fear to disobey my mother—to dread to offend her for ever—to render her unhappy—and to deprive her, perhaps, even of the means of subsistence?"

"*The means of subsistence!* my dear. This phrase, you know,

can only be a figure of rhetoric," said Mrs. Somers. "Your refusing M. de Brisac cannot deprive your mother of the means of subsistence. In the first place, she expects to recover her property in France."

"No," said Emilie; "she has given up these hopes—you have persuaded her that they are vain."

"Indeed I think them so. But still you must know, my dear, that your mother can never be in want of the means of subsistence, nor any of the conveniences, and, I may add, luxuries of life, whilst I am alive."

Emilie sighed; and when Mrs. Somers urged her more closely, she said, "Mamma has not, till lately, been accustomed to live on the bounty of others; the sense of dependence produces many painful feelings, and renders people more susceptible than perhaps they would be, were they on terms of equality."

"To what does all this tend, my dear?" interrupted Mrs. Somers. "Is Mad. de Coulanges offended with me?—Is she tired of living with me?—Does she wish to quit my house?—And where does she intend to go?—Oh! that is a question that I need not ask!—Yes, yes—I have long foreseen it—you have arranged it admirably—you go to Lady Littleton, I presume?"

"Oh, no!"

"To M. de Brisac?"

"Mamma wishes to go——"

"Then to M. de Brisac, for Heaven's sake, let her go," cried Mrs. Somers, bursting into a fit of laughter, which astonished Emilie beyond measure. "To M. de Brisac let her go—'tis the best thing she can possibly do, my dear; and seriously to tell you the truth, I have always thought it would be an excellent match. Since she is so much prepossessed in his favour, can she do better than marry him? and, as he is so much attached to the house of Coulanges, when he cannot have the daughter, can he do better than marry the mother?—Your mother does not look too old for him, when she is well rouged; and I am sure, if she heard me say so, she would forgive me all the rest—butterfly, frivolity, and all inclusive. Permit me, Emilie, to laugh."

"I cannot permit any body to laugh at mamma," said Emilie; "and Mrs. Somers is the last person whom I should have

supposed would have been inclined to laugh, when I told her that I was really unhappy."

"My dear Emilie, I forgive you for being angry, because I never saw you angry before; and that is more than you can say for me. You do me justice, however, by supposing that I should be the last person to laugh when you are in woe, unless I thought—unless I was sure—that I could remove the cause, and make you completely happy."

"That, I fear, is impossible," said Emilie: "for mamma's pride and her feelings have been so much hurt, that I do not think any apology would now calm her mind."

"Apology!—I am not in the least inclined to make any. Can I tell Mad. de Coulanges that I do not think her frivolous?—Impossible, indeed, my dear! I will do any thing else to oblige you. But I have as much pride, and as much feeling, in my own way, as any of the house of Coulanges: and if, after all I have done, madame can quarrel with me about a butterfly, I must say, not only that she is the most frivolous, but the most ungrateful woman upon earth; and, as she desires to quit my house, far from attempting to detain her, I can only wish that she may accomplish her purpose as soon as possible—as soon as it may suit her own convenience. As for you, Emilie, I do not suspect you of the ingratitude of wishing to leave me—I can make distinctions, even when I have most reason to be angry. I do not blame you, my dear—I do not even ask you to blame your mother. I respect your filial piety—I am sure you must think her to blame, but I do not desire you to say so. Could any thing be more barbarously selfish than the plan of marrying *you* to this M. de Brisac, that *she* might have an establishment more to her taste than my house has been able to afford?"

Emilie attempted, but in vain, to say a few words for her mother. Mrs. Somers ran on with her own thoughts.

"And at what a time, at what a cruel time for me, did Mad. de Coulanges choose to express her desire to leave my house—at the moment when my whole soul was intent upon a scheme for the happiness of her daughter! Yes, Emilie, for your happiness!—and, my dear, your mother's conduct shall change nothing in my views. You I have always found uniformly kind, gentle, grateful—I will say no more—I have found in you,

Emilie, real magnanimity. I have tried your temper much—sometimes too much—but I have always found you proof against these petty trials. Your character is suited to mine. I love you, as if you were my daughter, and I wish you to be my daughter.——Now you know my whole mind, Emilie. My son —my *eldest* son, I should with emphasis say, if I were speaking to Mad. de Coulanges—will be here in a few days: read this letter. How happy I shall be if you find him—or if you will make him—such as you can entirely approve and love! You will have power over him—your influence will do what his mother's never could accomplish. But whatever reasons I may have to complain of him, this is not the time to state them—you will connect him with me. At all events, he is a man of honour and a gentleman; and as he is not, thank Heaven! under the debasing necessity of considering fortune in the choice of a wife, he is, at least in this respect, worthy of my dear and high-minded Emilie."

Mrs. Somers paused, and fixed her eyes eagerly on Emilie, impatient for her answer, and already half provoked by not seeing the sudden transition of countenance which she had pictured in her imagination. With a mixture of dignity and affectionate gratitude in her manner, Emilie was beginning to thank Mrs. Somers for the generous kindness of her intention; but this susceptible lady interrupted her, and exclaimed, "Spare me your thanks, Mlle. de Coulanges, and tell me at once what is passing in your mind; for something very extraordinary is certainly passing there, which I cannot comprehend. Surely you cannot for a moment imagine that your mother will insist upon your now accepting of M. de Brisac; or, if she does, surely you would not have the weakness to yield. I must have some proof of strength of mind from my friends. You must judge for yourself, Emilie, or you are not the person I take you for. You will have full opportunity of judging in a few days. Will you promise me that you will decide entirely for yourself, and that you will keep your mind unbiassed? Will you promise me this? And will you speak, at all events, my dear, that I may understand you?"

Emilie, who saw that even before she spoke Mrs. Somers was on the brink of anger, trembled at the idea of confessing the

truth—that her heart was already biassed in favour of another: she had, however, the courage to explain to her all that passed in her mind. Mrs. Somers heard her with inexpressible disappointment. She was silent for some minutes. At last she said, in a voice of constrained passion, "Mlle. de Coulanges, I have only one question to ask of you—you will reflect before you answer it, because on your reply depends the continuance or utter dissolution of our friendship—do you, or do you not, think proper to refuse my son before you have seen him?"

"Before I have seen Mr. Somers, it surely can be no affront to you or to him," said Emilie, "to decline an offer that I cannot accept, especially when I give as my reason, that my mind is prepossessed in favour of another. With that prepossession, I cannot unite myself to your son: I can only express to you my gratitude—my most sincere gratitude—for your kind and generous intentions, and my hopes that he will find, amongst his own countrywomen, one more suited to him than I can be. His fortune is far above——"

"Say no more, I beg, Mlle. de Coulanges—I asked only for a simple answer to a plain question. You refuse my son—you refuse to be my daughter. I am satisfied—perfectly satisfied. I suppose you have arranged to go to Lady Littleton's. I heartily hope that she may be able to make her house more agreeable to you than I could render mine. Shake hands, Mlle. de Coulanges. You have my best wishes for your health and happiness.—Here we part."

"Oh! do not let us part in anger!" said Emilie.

"In anger!—not in the least—I never was cooler in my life. You have completely cooled me—you have shown me the folly of that warmth of friendship which can meet with no return."

"Would it be a suitable return for your warm friendship to deceive your son?" said Emilie.

"To deceive me, I think still less suitable!" cried Mrs. Somers.

"And how have I deceived you?"

"You know best. Why was I kept in ignorance till the last moment? Why did you never confide your thoughts to me, Emilie? Why did you never till now say one word to me of this strange attachment?"

"There was no necessity for speaking till now," said Emilie. "It is a subject I never named to any one except to mamma—a subject on which I did not think it right to speak to any one but to a parent."

"Your notions of right and wrong, ma'am, differ widely from mine—we are not fit to live together. I have no idea of a friend's concealing any thing from me: without entire confidence, there is no friendship—at least no friendship with me. Pray no tears. I am not fond of *scenes*. Nobody ever is that feels much.—Adieu!—Adieu!"

Mrs. Somers hurried out of the room, repeating, "I'll write directly—this instant—to Lady Littleton. Mad. de Coulanges shall not be kept prisoner in *my* house." Emilie stood motionless.

In a few minutes Mrs. Somers returned with an unfolded letter, which she put into Emilie's passive hand. "Read it, ma'am, I beg—read it. I do every thing openly—every thing handsomely, I hope—whatever may be my faults."

The letter was written with a rapid hand, which was scarcely legible, especially to a foreigner. Emilie, with her eyes full of tears, had no chance of deciphering it.

"Do not hurry yourself, ma'am," said Mrs. Somers. "I will leave you my letter to show to madame la comtesse, and then you will be so good as to despatch it.—Mlle. de Coulanges," cried Mrs. Somers, "you will be so obliging as to refrain from mentioning to the countess the foolish offer that I made you in my son's name this morning. There is no necessity for mortifying my pride any farther—a refusal from you is quite decisive—so pray let there be no consultations. As to the rest, the blame of our disagreement will of course be thrown upon me."

As Emilie moved towards the door, Mrs. Somers said, "Mlle. de Coulanges, I beg pardon for calling you back: but should you ever think of this business or of me, hereafter, you will do me the justice to remember that I made the proposal to you at a time when I was under the firm belief that you would never recover an inch of your estates in France."

"And you, dear Mrs. Somers, if you should ever think of me hereafter," said Emilie, "will, I hope, remember that my answer was given under the same belief."

With a look which seemed to refuse assent, Mrs. Somers continued, "I am as well aware, ma'am, as you, or Mad. de Coulanges, can be, that if you should recover your hereditary property, the heiress of the house of Coulanges would be a person to whom my son should not presume to aspire."

"Oh, Mrs. Somers! Is not this cruel mockery—undeserved by me—unworthy of you?"

"Mockery!—Ma'am, it is not three days since your mother was so positive in her expectations of being in the Hotel de Coulanges before next winter, that she was almost in fits because I ventured to differ on this point from her and Lady Littleton—Lady Littleton's judgment is much better than mine, and has, of course, had its weight—very justly——But I insist upon your understanding clearly that it had no weight with me in this affair. Whatever you may imagine, I never thought of the Coulanges estate."

"Believe me, I never could have imagined that you did. If *I* could suspect Mrs. Somers of interested motives," said Emilie, with emotion so great that she could scarcely articulate the words, "I must be an unfeeling—an ungrateful idiot!"

"No, not an idiot, Mlle. de Coulanges—nobody can mistake you for an idiot: but, as I was going to say, if you inquire, Lady Littleton can tell you that I was absolutely provoked when I first heard you had a chance of recovering your property—you may smile, ma'am, but it is perfectly true. I own I might have been more prudent; but prudence, in affairs of the heart, is not one of my virtues: I own, however, it would have been more prudent to have refrained from making this proposal, till you had received a positive answer from France."

"And why?" said Emilie. "Whatever that answer might have been, surely you must be certain that it would not have made any alteration in my conduct.—You are silent, Mrs. Somers!—You wound me to the heart!——Oh! do me justice! —Justice is all I ask."

"I think that I do you justice—full justice—Mlle. de Coulanges; and if it wounds you to the heart, I am sorry for it; but that is not my fault."

Emilie's countenance suddenly changed from the expression of supplicating tenderness to haughty indignation. "You doubt

my integrity!" she exclaimed: "then, indeed, Mrs. Somers, it is best that we should part!"

Mlle. de Coulanges disappeared, and Mrs. Somers shut herself up in her room, where she walked backwards and forwards for above an hour, then threw herself upon a sofa, and remained nearly another hour, till Mrs. Masham came to say that it was time to dress for dinner. She then started up, saying aloud, "I will think no more of these ungrateful people."

"They are gone, ma'am," said Mrs. Masham—"gone, and gave no vails!—which I don't think *on*, upon my own account, God knows! for if millions were offered me, in pocket-pieces, I would not touch one from any soul that comes to the house, having enough, and more than enough, from my own generous lady, who is the only person I stoop to receive from with pleasure. But there are others in the house who are accustomed to vails, and, after staying so long, it was a little ungenteel to go without so much as offering any one any thing—and to go in such a hurry and huff—taking only a French leave, after all! I must acknowledge with you, ma'am, that they are the ungratefullest people that ever were seen in England. Why, ma'am, I went backwards and forwards often enough into their apartments, to try to make out the cause of the packings and messages to the washer-woman, that I might inform you, but nothing transpired; yet I am certain, in their hearts, they are more black and ungrateful than any that ever were born; for there!—at the last moment, when even, for old acquaintance sake, the tears stood in my eyes, there was Miss Emilie, sitting as composedly as a judge, painting a butterfly's wing on some of her Frenchifications! Her eyes were red, to do her justice; but whether with painting or crying, I can't pretend to be certain. But as to Mad. de Coulanges, I can answer for her that the sole thing in nature she thought of, in leaving this house, was the bad step of the hackney-coach."

"Hackney-coach!" cried Mrs. Somers, with surprise. "Did they go away in a hackney-coach?"

"Yes, ma'am, much against the countess' stomach, I am sure: I only wish you had seen the face she made when the glass would not come up."

"But why did not they take my carriage, or wait for Lady

Littleton's? They were, it seems, in a violent hurry to be gone," said Mrs. Somers.

"So it seems, indeed, ma'am—no better proof of their being the most ungratefullest people in the universe: but so it is, by all accounts, with all of their nation—the French having no constant hearts for any thing but singing, and dancing, and dressing, and making merry-andrews of themselves. Indeed, I own, till to-day, I thought Miss Emilie had less of the merry-andrew nature than any of her country; but the butterfly has satisfied me that there is no striving against climate and natural character, which conquer gratitude and every thing else."

Mrs. Somers sighed, and told Masham that she had said enough upon this disagreeable subject. At dinner the subject was renewed by many visitors, who, as soon as they found that Mad. and Mlle. de Coulanges had left Mrs. Somers, began to find innumerable faults with the French in general, and with the countess and her daughter in particular. On the chapter of gratitude they were most severe; and Mrs. Somers was universally pitied for having so much generosity, and blamed for having had so much patience. Every body declared that they foresaw how she would be treated; and the exclamations of wonder at Lady Littleton's inviting to her house those who had behaved so ill to her friend were unceasing. Mrs. Somers all the time denied that she had any cause of complaint against either Mad. de Coulanges or her daughter; but the company judiciously trusted more to her looks than her words. Every thing was said or hinted that could exasperate her against her former favourites: for Mad. de Coulanges had made many enemies by engrossing an unreasonable share in the conversation; and Emilie by attracting too great a portion of attention by her beauty and engaging manners. Malice often overshoots the mark: Mrs. Somers was at first glad to hear the objects of her indignation abused; but at last she began to think the profusion of blame greater than was merited, and when she retired to rest at night, and when Masham began with "Oh, ma'am! do you know that Mlle. de Coulanges ——" Mrs. Somers interrupted her, and said, "Masham, I desire to hear nothing more about Mlle. de Coulanges: I have heard her and her mother abused, without ceasing, these two hours, and that is enough."

"Lord! ma'am, I was not going to abuse them—God forbid! I was just going to tell you," cried Masham, "that never was any thing so mistaken as all I said before dinner. Just now, ma'am, when I went into the little dressing-room, within Mad. de Coulanges' room, and happened to open the wardrobe, I was quite struck back with shame at my own unjustice: there, ma'am, poor Miss Emilie left something—and out of her best things!—to every maid-servant in the house; all directed in her own hand, and with a good word for each; and this ring for me, which she is kind enough to say is of no value but to put me in mind of all the attentions I have shown her and her mother—which, I am sure, were scarcely worth noticing, especially at such a time when she had enough to do, and her heart full, no doubt, poor soul!—There are her little paintings and embroideries, and pretty things, that she did when she was confined with her sprain, all laid out in order—'tis my astonishment how she found time!—and directed to her friends in London, as keepsakes:—and the very butterfly that I was so angry with her for staying to finish, is on something for you, ma'am; and here's a packet that was with it, and that nobody saw till this minute."

"Give it me!" cried Mrs. Somers. She tore it open, and found, in the first place, the pocketbook, full of bank notes, which she had given Mad. de Coulanges, with a few polite but haughty lines from the countess, saying that only twenty guineas had been used, which she hoped, at some future period, to be able to repay. Then came a note from Emilie, in which Mrs. Somers found her own letter to Lady Littleton. Emilie expressed herself as follows.

"Many thanks for the enclosed, but we have determined not to go to Lady Littleton's: at least we will take care not to be the cause of quarrel between friends to whom we are so much obliged.—No, dear Mrs. Somers! we do not part in anger. Excuse me, if the last words I said to you were hasty—they were forced from me by a moment of passion—but it is past: all your generosity, all your kindness, the recollection of all that you have done, all that you have wished for my happiness, rush upon my mind; and every other thought, and every other feeling, is forgotten. Would to Heaven that I could express to you my gratitude by actions!

—but words, alas! are all that I have in my power—and where shall I find words that can reach your heart? I had better be silent, and trust to time and to you. I know your generous temper—you will soon blame yourself for having judged too severely of Emilie. But do not reproach yourself—do not let this give you a moment's uneasiness: the clouds pass away, and the blue sky remains. Think only—as I ever shall—of your goodness to mamma and to me. Adieu!

"EMILIE DE COULANGES."

Mrs. Somers was much affected by this letter, and by the information that Emilie and her mother had declined taking refuge with Lady Littleton, lest they should occasion jealousies between her and her friend. Generous people are, of all others, the most touched by generosity of sentiment or of action. Mrs. Somers went to bed, enraged against herself—but it was now too late.

In the mean time, Emilie and her mother were in an obscure lodging, at a haberdasher's near Golden Square. The pride of Mad. de Coulanges, at first, supported her even beyond her daughter's expectations; she uttered no complaints, but frequently repeated, "Mais nous sommes bien ici, très bien—we cannot expect to have things as well as at the Hotel de Coulanges." In a short time she was threatened with fits of her *vapeurs noirs;* but Emilie, with the assistance of her whole store of French songs, a bird-organ, a lap-dog, and a squirrel, belonging to the girl of the house, contrived to avert the danger for the present—as to the future, she trembled to think of it. M. de Brisac seemed to be continually in her mother's thoughts; and whatever occurred, or whatever was the subject of conversation, Mad. de Coulanges always found means to end with "*à propos de M. de Brisac.*" Faithful to her promise, however, which Emilie, with the utmost delicacy, recalled to her mind, she declared that she would not give M. de Brisac an answer till the end of the month, which she had allowed her daughter for reflection, and that, till that period, she would not even let him know where they were to be found. Emilie thought that the time went very fast, and her mother evidently rejoiced at the idea that the month would soon be at an end. Emilie endea-

voured, with all her skill, to demonstrate to her mother that it would be possible to support themselves, by her industry and ingenuity, without this marriage; and to this, Mad. de Coulanges at first replied, "Try, and you will soon be tired, child." Emilie's spirits rose on receiving this permission: she began by copying music for a music-shop in the neighbourhood; and her mother saw, with astonishment, that she persevered in her design, and that no fatigue or discouraging circumstances could vanquish her resolution.

"Good Heavens! my child," said she, "you will wear yourself to a skeleton with copying music, and with painting, and embroidery, besides stooping so many hours over that tambour frame. My dear, how can you bear all this?"

"How!—Oh! dear mamma!" said Emilie, "there is no great difficulty in all this to me—the difficulty, the impossibility would be, to live happily with a man I despise."

"I wish," cried Mad. de Coulanges, "I wish to all the saints, that that hero of yours, that fellow-prisoner of ours at the Abbaye, with his humanity, and his generosity, and his courage, and all his fine qualities, had kept out of your way, Emilie: I wish he were fairly at the bottom of the Black Sea."

"But you forget that he was the means of obtaining your liberty, mamma."

"I wish I could forget it—I am always doomed to be obliged to those whom I cannot love. But, after all, you might as well think of the khan of Tartary as of this man, whom we shall never hear of more. Marry M. de Brisac, like a reasonable creature, and do not let me see you bending, as you do, for ever, over a tambour frame, wasting your fine eyes and spoiling your charming shape."

"But, mamma," said Emilie, "would it not be much worse to marry one man, and like another?"

"For mercy's sake! say something new to me, Emilie; at all events, I have heard this a hundred times."

"The simple truth, alas!" said Emilie, "must always be the same: I wish I could put it in any new light that would please you, dear mamma."

"It never can please me, child," cried Mad. de Coulanges, angrily; "nor can you please me, either, as you are going on.

Fine heroism, truly!—you will sacrifice your duty and your mother to your obstinacy in an idle fancy. But, remember, the last days of the month are at hand—longer I will not listen to such provoking nonsense—it has half killed me already."

Neither lap-dog, squirrel, bird-organ, nor Emilie's whole stock of French songs, could longer support the vivacity of Mad. de Coulanges; for some days she had passed the time in watching and listening to the London cries, as she sat at her window: the figures and sounds in this busy part of the town were quite new to her; and, whilst the novelty lasted, she was, like a child, good-humoured and full of exclamations. The want of some one to listen to these exclamations was an insupportable evil; she complained terribly of her daughter's silence, whilst she was attending to her different employments. This want of conversation, and of all the luxuries she enjoyed at the house of Mrs. Somers, her anger against that lady, her loss of all hope of hearing from France, and her fear that Emilie would at last absolutely refuse to obey and marry M. de Brisac, all together operated so powerfully upon Mad. de Coulanges, that she really felt sick, and kept her bed. Emilie now confined herself to her mother's room, and attended her with the most affectionate care, and with a degree of anxiety, which those only can comprehend who have believed themselves to be the cause of the illness of a friend—of a parent. Mad. de Coulanges would sometimes reply, when her daughter asked her if such or such a thing had done her good, "No, my child, nothing will do me good but your obedience, which you refuse me—perhaps on my deathbed."

Though Emilie did not apprehend that her mother was in any immediate danger, yet these continual fits of low spirits and nervous attacks excited much alarm. Emilie's reflections on her own helpless situation contributed to magnify her fears: she considered that she was a stranger, a foreigner, without friends, without credit, almost without money, and deprived, by the necessary attendance on her sick mother, of all power to earn any by her own exertions. The bodily fatigue that she endured, even without any mental anxiety, would have been sufficient to wear out the spirits of a more robust person than Emilie. She had no human being to assist her but a young girl, a servant-maid belonging to the house, who, fortunately, was active and

;ood-natured; but her mistress was excessively cross, vulgar, ınd avaricious; avarice, indeed, often seemed to conquer in her he common feelings of humanity. Once, whilst Mad. de Couanges was extremely ill, she forced her way into her bedchamer, to insist upon changing the counterpane upon the bed, which she said was too good to be stained with coffee: another lay, when she was angry with Mlle. de Coulanges, for having racked a basin by heating some soup for her mother, she leclared, in the least ceremonious terms possible, that she hated o have any of the French *refugees* and emigrants in the house, or that she was not accustomed to let her lodgings to folk that ıobody ever came near to visit, and that lived only upon soups ınd salads, and such low stuff; "and who, when they were ill, ıever so much as called in a physician, or even a nurse, but nust take up the time of people that were not bound to wait ıpon them."

Mlle. de Coulanges bore all this patiently rather than run the ıazard of removing to other lodgings whilst her mother was so ll. The countess had a prejudice against English physicians, ıs she affirmed that it was impossible that they could understand French constitutions, especially hers, which was different from hat of any other human being, and which, as she said, only one nedical man in France rightly understood. At last, however, he yielded to the persuasions of her daughter, and permitted Emilie to send for a physician. When she inquired what he hought of her mother, he said, that she was in a nervous fever, ınd that unless her mind was kept free from anxiety he could ıot answer for her recovery. Mad. de Coulanges looked full at ıer daughter, who was standing at the foot of her bed; a mist ame before Emilie's eyes, a cold dew covered her forehead, and he was forced to hold by the bed-post to support herself.

At this instant the door opened, and Lady Littleton appeared. Emilie sprang forward, and threw herself into her arms—Mad. e Coulanges started up in her bed, exclaiming "Ah Ciel!" and hen all were silent—except the mistress of the house, who went n making apologies about the dirt of her stairs, and its being Friday night. But as she at length perceived that not a soul in he room knew a word she was saying, she retreated. The hysician took leave—and, when they were thus left at liberty,

Lady Littleton seated herself in the broken arm-chair beside the bed, and told Mad. de Coulanges that Mrs. Somers had been very unhappy, in consequence of their quarrel; and that she had been indefatigable in her inquiries and endeavours to find out the place of their retreat; that she had at last given up the search in despair. "But," continued Lady Littleton, "it has been my good fortune to discover you by means of this flower of Emilie's painting"—(she produced a little hand-screen, which Emilie had lately made, and which she had sent to be disposed of at the Repository for Ingenious Works). "I knew it to be yours, my dear, because it is an exact resemblance of one upon your watch of Flora, which was drawn from the flower I brought you from Kew Gardens. Now you must not be angry with me for finding you out, nor for begging of you to be reconciled to poor Mrs. Somers, who has suffered much in your absence—much from the idea of what you would endure—and more from her self-reproaches. She has, indeed, an unfortunate susceptibility of temper, which makes her sometimes forget both politeness and justice: but, as you well know, her heart is excellent. Come, you must promise me to meet her at my house, as soon as you are able to go out, my dear Mad. de Coulanges."

"I do not know when that will be," replied Mad. de Coulanges, in a sick voice: "I was never so ill in my life—and so the physician says. But I am revived by seeing Lady Littleton —she is, and ever has been, all goodness and politeness to us. I am ashamed that she should see us in such a miserable place. Emilie, give me my other night-riband, and the wretched little looking-glass."

Mad. de Coulanges sat up and arranged her head-dress. At this moment, Lady Littleton took Emilie aside, and put into her hand a letter from France!—"I would not speak of it suddenly to your mother, my dear," said she; "but you will find the proper time. I hope it contains good news—at present I will have patience. You shall see me again soon; and you must, at all events, let me take you from this miserable place. Mrs. Somers has been punished enough.—Adieu!—I long to know the news from France."

The news from France was such as made the looking-glass drop from the hand of Mad. de Coulanges. It was a letter from

the son of her old steward, to tell her that his father was dead—that he was now in possession of all the family fortune, which he was impatient to restore to the wife and daughter of his former master and friend.

"Heaven be praised!" exclaimed Mad. de Coulanges, in an ecstasy of joy—"Heaven be praised! we shall once more see dear Paris, and the Hotel de Coulanges!"

"Heaven be praised!" cried Emilie, "I shall never more see M. de Brisac. My mother, I am sure, will no longer wish me to marry him."

"No, in truth," said the countess, "it would now be a most unequal match, and one to which he is by no means entitled. How fortunate it is that I had not given him my promise!—After all, your aversion to him, child, was quite providential. Now you may form the most splendid alliance that your heart can desire."

"My heart," said Emilie, sighing, "desires no splendid alliance. But had you not better lie down, dear mamma?—You will certainly catch cold—and remember, your mind must be kept quiet."

It was impossible to keep her mind quiet; she ran on from one subject to another with extravagant volubility; and Emilie was afraid that she would, the next day, be quite exhausted; but, on the contrary, after talking above half the night, she fell into a sound sleep; and when she wakened, after having slept fourteen hours, she declared that she would no longer be kept a prisoner in bed. The renovating effects of joy and the influence of the imagination were never more strongly displayed. "Le malheur passé n'est bon qu'à être oublié," was la comtesse's favourite maxim—and to do her justice, she was as ready to forget past quarrels as past misfortunes. She readily complied with Emilie's request that she would, as soon as she was able to go out, accompany her to Lady Littleton's, that they might meet and be reconciled to Mrs. Somers.

"She has the most tormenting temper imaginable," said the countess; "and I would not live with her for the universe—Mais d'ailleurs c'est la meilleure femme du monde."

If, instead of being the best woman in the world, Mrs. Somers had been the worst, and if, instead of being a bene-

factress, she had been an enemy, it would have been all the same thing to the countess; for, in this moment, she was, as usual, like a child, a *friend* to every creature of every kind.

Her volubility was interrupted by the arrival of Lady Littleton, who came to carry Mad. de Coulanges and Emilie to her house, where, as her ladyship said, Mrs. Somers was impatiently waiting for them. Lady Littleton had prevented her from coming to this poor lodging-house, because she knew that the being seen there would mortify the pride of some of the house of Coulanges.

Mrs. Somers was indeed waiting for them with inexpressible impatience. The moment she heard their voices in the hall at Lady Littleton's, she ran down stairs to meet them; and as she embraced Emilie she could not refrain from bursting into tears.

"Tears of joy, these must be," cried Mad. de Coulanges: "we are all happy now—perfectly happy—Are not we?—Embrace me, Mrs. Somers—Emilie shall not have all your heart—I have some gratitude as well as my daughter; and I should have none if I did not love you—especially at this moment."

Mad. de Coulanges was, by this time, at the head of the stairs; a servant opened the drawing-room door; but something was amiss with the strings of her sandals—she would stay to adjust them—and said to Emilie, "Allez, allez—entrez."

Emilie obeyed. An instant afterwards Mad. de Coulanges thought she heard a sudden cry, either of joy or grief, from Emilie—she hurried into the drawing-room.

"Bon Dieu! c'est notre homme de l'Abbaye!" cried she, starting back at the sight of a gentleman who had been kneeling at Emilie's feet, and who arose as she entered.

"My son!" said Mrs. Somers, eagerly presenting him to Mad. de Coulanges—"my son! whom it is in your power to make the happiest or the most miserable of men!"

"In my power!—in Emilie's, you mean, I suppose," said the countess, smiling. "She is so good a girl that I cannot make her miserable; and as for you, Mrs. Somers, the honour of your alliance—and our obligations —— But then I shall be miserable myself if she does not go back with me to the Hotel de Coulanges—Ah! Ciel!—And then poor M. de Brisac, he will be

miserable, unless, to comfort him, I marry him myself."——Half laughing, half crying, Mad. de Coulanges scarcely knew what she said or did.

It was some time before she was sufficiently composed to understand clearly what was said to her by any person in the room, though she asked, half a dozen times, at least, from every one present, an explanation of all that had happened.

Lady Littleton was the only person who could give an explanation. She had contrived this meeting, and even Mrs. Somers had not foreseen the event—she never suspected that her own son was the very person to whom Emilie was attached, and that it was for Emilie's sake her son had hitherto refused to comply with her earnest desire that he should marry and settle in the world. He had no hopes that she would consent to his marrying a French girl without fortune, because she formerly quarrelled with him for refusing to marry a rich lady of quality, who happened to be, at that time, high in her favour. Upon the summons home that he received from her, he was alarmed by the apprehension that she had some new alliance in view for him, and he resolved, before he saw his mother, to trust his secret to Lady Littleton, who had always been a mediatrix and peace-maker. He declined telling the name of the object of his affections; but, from his description, and from many concomitant dates and circumstances, Lady Littleton was led to suspect that it might be Emilie de Coulanges. She consequently contrived an interview, which she knew must be decisive.

Mad. de Coulanges, whose imagination was now at Paris, felt rather disappointed at the idea of her daughter's marrying an Englishman, who was neither a count, a marquis, nor even a baron; but Lady Littleton at length obtained that consent which she knew would be necessary to render Emilie happy, even in following the dictates of her heart, or her reason.

Some conversation passed between Lady Littleton and Mrs. Somers about a dormant title in the Somers' family, which might be revived. This made a wonderful impression on the countess. She yielded, as she did every thing else, with a good grace.

History does not say, whether she did or did not console M. de Brisac: we are only informed that, immediately after

her daughter's marriage, she returned to Paris, and g
splendid ball at her Hotel de Coulanges. We are fu
assured that Mrs. Somers never quarrelled with Emilie fro
day of her marriage till the day of her death—but that is i
dible.

1803.

THE

MODERN GRISELDA.

A TALE.

" And since in man right reason bears the sway,
Let that frail thing, weak woman, have her way."

POPE.

THE
MODERN GRISELDA.

CHAPTER I.

> "Blest as th' immortal gods is he,
> The youth who fondly sits by thee,
> Who sees and hears thee all the while,
> Softly speak and sweetly smile."

"Is not this ode set to music, my dear Griselda?" said the happy bridegroom to his bride.

"Yes, surely, my dear: did you never hear it?"

"Never; and I am glad of it, for I shall have the pleasure of hearing it for the first time from you, my love: will you be so kind as to play it for me?"

"Most willingly," said Griselda, with an enchanting smile; "but I am afraid that I shall not be able to do it justice," added she, as she sat down to her harp, and threw her white arm across the chords.

"Charming! Thank you, my love," said the bridegroom, who had listened with enthusiastic devotion.—"Will you let me hear it once more?"

The complaisant bride repeated the strain.

"Thank you, my dear love," repeated her husband. This time he omitted the word "*charming*"—she missed it, and, pouting prettily, said,

"I never can play any thing so well the second time as the first."—She paused: but as no compliment ensued, she continued,

in a more pettish tone, "And for that reason, I do hate to be made to play any thing twice over."

"I did not know that, my dearest love, or I would not have asked you to do it; but I am the more obliged to you for your ready compliance."

"Obliged!—Oh, my dear, I am sure you could not be the least obliged to me, for I know I played it horridly: I hate flattery."

"I am convinced of that, my dear, and therefore I never flatter: you know I did not say that you played as well the last time as the first, did I?"

"No, I did not say you did," cried Griselda, and her colour rose as she spoke: she tuned her harp with some precipitation ——"This harp is terribly out of tune."

"Is it? I did not perceive it."

"Did not you, indeed? I am sorry for that."

"Why so, my dear?"

"Because, my dear, I own that I would rather have had the blame thrown on my harp than upon myself."

"Blame? my love!—But I threw no blame either on you or your harp. I cannot recollect saying even a syllable that implied blame."

"No, my dear, you did not say a syllable; but in some cases the silence of those we love is the worst, the most mortifying species of blame."

The tears came into Griselda's beautiful eyes.

"My sweet love," said he, "how can you let such a trifle affect you so much?"

"Nothing is a trifle to me which concerns those I love," said Griselda.——Her husband kissed away the pearly drops which rolled over her vermeil-tinctured cheeks. "My love," said he, "this is having too much sensibility."

"Yes, I own I have too much sensibility," said she, "too much—a great deal too much, for my own happiness.—Nothing ever can be a trifle to me which marks the decline of the affection of those who are most dear to me."

The tenderest protestations of undiminished and unalterable affection could not for some time reassure this timid sensibility: but at length the lady suffered herself to be comforted, and with

a languid smile said, that she hoped she was mistaken—that her fears were perhaps unreasonable—that she prayed to Heaven they might in future prove groundless.

A few weeks afterwards her husband unexpectedly met with Mr. Granby, a friend, of whose company he was particularly fond: he invited him home to dinner, and was talking over past times in all the gaiety and innocence of his heart, when suddenly his wife rose and left the room.—As her absence appeared to him long, and as he had begged his friend to postpone *an excellent story* till her return, he went to her apartment and called "Griselda!—Griselda, my love!"——No Griselda answered.—He searched for her in vain in every room in the house: at last, in an alcove in the garden, he found the fair dissolved in tears.

"Good Heavens! my dear Griselda, what can be the matter?"

A melancholy, not to say sullen, silence was maintained by his dear Griselda, till this question had been reiterated in all the possible tones of fond solicitude and alarm: at last, in broken sentences, she replied that she saw he did not love her—never had loved her; that she had now but too much reason to be convinced that all her fears were real, not imaginary; that her presentiments, alas! never deceived her; that she was the most miserable woman on earth.

Her husband's unfeigned astonishment she seemed to consider as an aggravation of her woes, and it was an additional insult to plead ignorance of his offence.

If he did not understand her feelings, it was impossible, it was needless, to explain them. He must have lost all sympathy with her, all tenderness for her, if he did not know what had passed in her mind.

The man stood in stupid innocence. Provoked to speak more plainly, the lady exclaimed, "Unfeeling, cruel, barbarous man! —Have not you this whole day been trying your utmost skill to torment me to death? and, proud of your success, now you come to enjoy your triumph."

"Success!—triumph!"

"Yes, triumph!—I see it in your eyes—it is in vain to deny it. All this I owe to your friend Mr. Granby. Why he should be my enemy!—I who never injured him, or any body living, in thought, word, or deed—why he should be my enemy!"——

"Enemy!—My love, this is the strangest fancy! Why should you imagine that he is your enemy?"

"He *is* my enemy—nobody shall ever convince me of the contrary; he has wounded me in the tenderest point, and in the basest manner: has not he done his utmost, in the most artful, insidious way,—even before my face,—to persuade you that you were a thousand times happier when you were a bachelor than you are now—than you ever have been since you married me?"

"Oh, my dear Griselda, you totally misunderstand him: such a thought never entered his mind."

"Pardon me, I know him better than you do."

"But I have known him ever since I was a child."

"That is the very reason you cannot judge of him as well as I can: how could you judge of character when you were a child?"

"But now that I am a man ——"

"Now that you are a man you are prejudiced in his favour by all the associations of your childhood—all those associations," continued the fair one, renewing her tears, "all those early associations, which are stronger than every other species of affection—all those associations which I never *can* have in your mind, which ever must act against me, and which no merit—if I had any merit—no tenderness, no fidelity, no fondness of mine, can ever hope to balance in the heart of the man I love."

"My dearest Griselda! be reasonable, and do not torment yourself and me for no earthly purpose about these associations: really it is ridiculous. Come, dry these useless tears, let me beseech you, my love. You do not know how much pain they give me, unreasonable as they are."

At these words they flowed more bitterly.

"Nay, my love, I conjure you to compose yourself, and return to the company: you do not know how long you have been away, and I too. We shall be missed; we shall make ourselves ridiculous."

"If it be ridiculous to love, I shall be ridiculous all my life. I am sorry you think me so; I knew it would come to this; I must bear it if I can," said Griselda; "only be so kind to excuse me from returning to the company to-night—indeed I am not fit, I am not able: say that I am not well; indeed, my love, you

ay say so with truth.—Tell your friend that I have a terrible ead-ache, and that I am gone to bed—but not to rest," added ie, in a lower and more plaintive tone, as she drew her hand om her husband's, and in spite of all his entreaties retired to er room with an air of heart-broken resignation.

Whoever has had the felicity to be beloved by such a wife as ur Griselda, must have felt how much the charms of beauty are eightened by the anguish of sensibility. Even in the moment vhen a husband is most tormented by her caprices, he feels that here is something so amiable, so flattering to his vanity in their ource, that he cannot complain of the killing pleasure. On the ontrary, he grows fonder of his dear tormentor; he folds closer o him this pleasing bosom ill.

Griselda perceived the effects, and felt the whole extent of the ower of sensibility; she had too much prudence, however, at nce to wear out the excitability of a husband's heart; she knew hat the influence of tears, potent as it is, might in time cease to e irresistible, unless aided by the magic of smiles; she knew he power of contrast even in charms; she believed the poets, vho certainly understand these things, and who assure us that he very existence of love depends on this blest vicissitude. Convinced, or seemingly convinced, of the folly of that fond nelancholy in which she persisted for a week, she next appeared ll radiant with joy; and she had reason to be delighted by the ffect which this produced. Her husband, who had not yet een long enough her husband to cease to be her lover, had uffered much from the obstinacy of her sorrow; his spirits ad sunk, he had become silent, he had been even seen to stand notionless with his arms folded; he was in this attitude when he approached and smiled upon him in all her glory. He reathed, he lived, he moved, he spoke.—Not the influence of the un on the statue of Memnon was ever more exhilarating.

Let any candid female say, or, if she will not say, imagine, vhat she should have felt at that moment in Griselda's place.—How intoxicating to human vanity, to be possessed of such powers f enchantment!—How difficult to refrain from their exercise!—How impossible to believe in their finite duration!

CHAPTER II.

"*Some* hope a lover by their faults to win,
As spots on ermine beautify the skin."

When Griselda thought that her husband had long enough enjoyed his new existence, and that there was danger of his forgetting the taste of sorrow, she changed her tone.—One day, when he had not returned home exactly at the appointed minute, she received him with a frown,—such as would have made even Mars himself recoil, if Mars could have beheld such a frown upon the brow of his Venus.

"Dinner has been kept waiting for you this hour, my dear."

"I am very sorry for it; but why did you wait, my dear? I am really very sorry I am so late, but (looking at his watch) it is only half past six by me."

"It is seven by me."

They presented their watches to each other; he, in an apologetical, she, in a reproachful attitude.

"I rather think you are too fast, my dear," said the gentleman.

"I am very sure you are too slow, my dear," said the lady.

"My watch never loses a minute in the four-and-twenty hours," said he.

"Nor mine a second," said she.

"I have reason to believe I am right, my love," said the husband, mildly.

"Reason!" exclaimed the wife, astonished; "what reason can you possibly have to believe you are right, when I tell you I am morally certain you are wrong, my love?"

"My only reason is, that I set my watch by the sun to-day."

"The sun must be wrong, then," cried the lady, hastily.—"You need not laugh; for I know what I am saying—the variation, the declination, must be allowed for in computing it with the clock. Now you know perfectly well what I mean, though you will not explain it for me, because you are conscious I am in the right."

"Well, my dear, if *you* are conscious of it, that is sufficient.

We will not dispute any more about such a trifle.—Are they bringing up dinner?"

"If they know that you are come in; but I am sure I cannot tell whether they do or not.—Pray, my dear Mrs. Nettleby," cried the lady, turning to a female friend, and still holding her watch in her hand, "what o'clock is it by you? There is nobody in the world hates disputing about trifles as much as I do; but I own I do love to convince people that I am in the right."

Mrs. Nettleby's watch had stopped. How provoking!—Vexed at having no immediate means of convincing people that she was in the right, our heroine consoled herself by proceeding to criminate her husband, not in this particular instance, where he pleaded guilty, but upon the general charge of being always late for dinner, which he strenuously denied.

There is something in the species of reproach, which advances thus triumphantly from particulars to generals, peculiarly offensive to every reasonable and susceptible mind: and there is something in the general charge of being always late for dinner, which the punctuality of man's nature cannot easily endure, especially if he be hungry. We should humbly advise our female friends to forbear exposing a husband's patience to this trial, or at least to temper it with much fondness, else mischief will infallibly ensue. For the first time Griselda saw her husband angry; but she recovered him by saying, in a softened tone, "My love, you must be sensible that I can have but one reason for being so impatient for your return home.—If I liked your company less, I should not complain so much of your want of punctuality."

Finding that this speech had the desired effect, it was afterwards repeated with variations whenever her husband stayed from home to enjoy any species of amusement, or to gratify any of his friends. When he betrayed symptoms of impatience under this constraint, the expostulations became more urgent, if not more forcible.

"Indeed, my dear, I take it rather unkindly of you that you pay so little attention to my feelings——"

"I see I am of no consequence to you *now;* I find every body's society is preferred to mine: it was not always so.—Well! it is what I might have expected——"

"Heigho!——Heigho!——"

Griselda's sighs were still persuasive, and her husband, notwithstanding that he felt the restraints which daily multiplied upon his time and upon his personal liberty becoming irksome, had not the barbarity to give pain to the woman by whom he was so tenderly beloved. He did not consider that in this case, as well as in many others, apparent mercy is real cruelty. The more this monopolizing humour of his wife's was indulged, the more insatiable it became. Every person, every thing but herself, was to be excluded from his heart; and when this sole patent for pleasure was granted to her, she became rather careless in its exercise, as those are apt to be who fear no competitors. In proportion as her endeavours to please abated, her expectations of being adored increased: the slightest word of blame, the most remote hint that any thing in her conduct, manners, or even dress, could be altered for the better, was the signal for battle or for tears.

One night she wept for an hour, and debated for two, about an alteration in her head-dress, which her husband unluckily happened to say made it more becoming. *More becoming!* implied that it was before unbecoming. She recollected the time when every thing she wore was becoming in his eyes—but that time, alas! was completely past; and she only wished that she could forget that it had ever been.

"To have been happy is additional misery."

This misery may appear comic to some people, but it certainly was not so to our heroine's unfortunate husband. It was in vain that, in mitigation of his offence, he pleaded total want of knowledge in the arcana of the toilette, absolute inferiority of taste, and a willing submission to the decrees of fashion.

This submission was called indifference—this calmness construed into contempt. He stood convicted of having said that the lady's dress was unbecoming—she was certain that he thought more than he said, and that every thing about her was grown disagreeable to him.

It was in vain he represented that his affection had not been created, and could not be annihilated, by such trifles; that it rested on the solid basis of esteem.

"Esteem!" cried his wife—"that is the unkindest stroke of

all! When a man begins to talk of esteem, there is an end of love."

To illustrate this position, the fair one, as well as the disorder of her mind would permit, entered into a refined disquisition, full of all the metaphysics of gallantry, which proved that love —genuine love—is an æthereal essence, a union of souls, regulated by none of those formal principles, and founded upon none of those vulgar moral qualities on which friendship, and the other connexions of society, depend. Far, far above the jurisdiction of reason, true love creates perfect sympathy in taste, and an absolute identity of opinion upon all subjects, physical, metaphysical, moral, political, and economic. After having thus established her theory, her practice was wonderfully consistent, and she reasonably expected from her husband the most exact conformity to her principles—of course, his five senses and his understanding were to be identified with hers. If he saw, heard, felt, or understood differently from her, he did not, could not, love her. Once she was offended by his liking white better than black; at another time she was angry with him for loving the taste of mushrooms. One winter she quarrelled with him for not admiring the touch of satin, and one summer she was jealous of him for listening to the song of a blackbird. Then because he could not prefer to all other odours the smell of jessamine, she was ready "to die of a rose in aromatic pain." The domain of taste, in the more enlarged sense of the word, became a glorious field of battle, and afforded subjects of inextinguishable war. Our heroine was accomplished, and knew how to make all her accomplishments and her knowledge of use. As she was mistress not only of the pencil, but of all "the cant of criticism," she had infinite advantages in the wordy war. From the *beau ideal* to the choice of a snuffer-dish, all came within her province, and was to be submitted, without appeal, to her instinctive sense of moral order.—Happy fruits of knowledge!—Happy those who can thus enlarge their intellectual dominion, and can vary eternally the dear delight of giving pain. The range of opinion was still more ample than the province of taste, affording scope for all the joys of assertion and declamation—for the opposing of learned and unlearned authorities—for the quoting the opinions of friends—counting voices instead of

arguments—wondering at the absurdity of those who can be of a different way of thinking—appealing to the judgment of the whole world—or resting perfectly satisfied with her own. Sometimes the most important, sometimes the most trivial, and seemingly uninteresting subjects, gave exercise to Griselda's powers; and in all cases being entirely of her opinion was the only satisfactory proof of love.

Our heroine knew how, with able generalship, to take advantage of time and situation.—Just before the birth of their child, which, by-the-bye, was born dead, a dispute arose between the husband and wife concerning public and private education, which, from its vehemence, alarmed the gentleman into a perfect conviction that he was in the wrong. Scarcely had Griselda gained this point, when a question arose at the tea-table respecting the Chinese method of making tea. It was doubted by some of the company whether it was made in a tea-pot or a tea-cup. Griselda gave her opinion loudly for the tea-pot—her lord and master inclined to the tea-cup; and as neither of them had been in China, they could debate without fear of coming to a conclusion. The subject seemed at first insignificant; but the lady's method of managing it supplied all deficiencies, and roused all the passions of human nature on the one side or the other. Victory hung doubtful; but our heroine won the day by taking time into the account.—Her adversary was in a hurry to go to meet some person on business, and quitted the field of battle.

CHAPTER III.

> "Self-valuing Fancy, highly-crested Pride,
> Strong sovereign Will, and some desire to chide."

"There are," says Dr. Johnson, "a thousand familiar disputes which reason can never decide; questions that elude investigation, and make logic ridiculous—cases where something must be done, and where little can be said.—Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness who should be doomed to adjust by reason every morning all the detail of a domestic day."

Our heroine made a double advantage of this passage: for she egularly reasoned where logic was ridiculous, and could not e prevailed upon to listen to reason when it might have been seful.—She substituted her *will* most frequently for arguments, nd often opposed it to her husband's, in order to give him the nerit of sacrificing his wishes. When he wanted to read, she uddenly wished to walk; when he wished to walk, she was nmersed in her studies. When he was busy, she was talkative; rhen he was eager to hear her converse, she was inclined to be ilent. The company that he liked, she disliked; the public musements that she most frequented were those of which he east approved. This species of wilfulness was the strongest roof of her solicitude about his good opinion.—She could not ear, she said, that he should consider her as a child, who was iot able to govern herself. She could not believe that a man had onfidence in her unless he proved it by leaving her at liberty o decide and act for herself.

Sometimes she receded, sometimes she advanced in her laims; but without marking the daily ebbs and flows of her iumour, it is sufficient to observe, that it continually encroached ipon her husband's indulgence. She soon insisted upon being *onsulted*, that is, obeyed, in affairs which did not immediately ome under the cognizance of her sex—politics inclusive. This ipparently exorbitant love of power was veiled under the most iffectionate humility.

"Oh, my love! I know you despise my abilities; you think hese things above the comprehension of poor women. I know am but your plaything after all: you cannot consider me for a noment as your equal or your friend—I see that!—You talk of hese things to your friend Mr. Granby—I am not worthy to hear hem.—Well, I am sure I have no ambition, except to possess he confidence of the man I love."

The lady forgot that she had, upon a former occasion, consilered a profession of esteem from her husband as an insult, and hat, according to her definition of true love, esteem was incom-patible with its existence.

Tacitus remarks, that it is common with princes to will con-radictories; in this characteristic they have the honour to esemble some of the fair sex, as well as all spoiled children.

Having every feasible wish gratified, they are obliged to wish for what is impossible, for want of something to desire or to do: they are compelled to cry for the moon, or for new worlds to conquer.—Our heroine having now attained the summit of human glory and happiness, and feeling almost as much ennui as was expressed by the conqueror of the world, yawned one morning, as she sat tête-à-tête with her husband, and said—

"I wish I knew what was the matter with me this morning.—Why do you keep the newspaper all to yourself, my dear?"

"Here it is for you, my dear: I have finished it."

"I humbly thank you for giving it to me when you have done with it—I hate stale news.—Is there any thing in the paper? for I cannot be at the trouble of hunting it."

"Yes, my dear, there are the marriages of two of our friends——"

"Who? Who?"

"Your friend the Widow Nettleby, to her cousin John Nettleby."

"Mrs. Nettleby! Lord! but why did you tell me?"

"Because you asked me, my dear."

"Oh! but it is a hundred times pleasanter to read the paragraph one's self: one loses all the pleasure of the surprise by being told.—Well! whose was the other marriage?"

"Oh! my dear, I will not tell you—I will leave you the pleasure of the surprise."

"But you see I cannot guess it.—How provoking you are, my dear! Do pray tell it me."

"Our friend Mr. Granby."

"Mr. Granby!—Dear! Why did not you make me guess? I should have guessed him directly: but why do you call him our friend? I am sure he is no friend of mine, nor ever was; I took an aversion to him, as you may remember, the very first day I saw him: I am sure he is no friend of mine."

"I am sorry for it, my dear; but I hope you will go and see Mrs. Granby?"

"Not I, indeed, my dear.—Who was she?"

"Miss Cooke."

"Cooke!—but there are so many Cookes.——Can't you distinguish her any way?—Has she no Christian name?"

"Emma, I think—yes, Emma."

"Emma Cooke!—No; it cannot be my friend Emma Cooke—for I am sure she was cut out for an old maid."

"This lady seems to me to be cut out for a good wife."

"May be so—I am sure I'll never go to see her—Pray, my dear, how came you to see so much of her?"

"I have seen very little of her, my dear: I only saw her two or three times before she was married."

"Then, my dear, how could you decide that she is cut out for a good wife?—I am sure you could not judge of her by seeing her only two or three times, and before she was married."

"Indeed, my love, that is a very just observation."

"I understand that compliment perfectly, and thank you for it, my dear.—I must own I can bear any thing better than irony."

"Irony! my dear; I was perfectly in earnest."

"Yes, yes; in earnest—so I perceive—I may naturally be dull of apprehension, but my feelings are quick enough: I comprehend you too well. Yes—it is impossible to judge of a woman before marriage, or to guess what sort of a wife she will make. I presume you speak from experience; you have been disappointed yourself, and repent your choice."

"My dear, what did I say that was like this? Upon my word I meant no such thing; I really was not thinking of you in the least."

"No—you never think of me now: I can easily believe that you were not thinking of me in the least."

"But I said that only to prove to you that I could not be thinking ill of you, my dear."

"But I would rather that you thought ill of me than that you did not think of me at all."

"Well, my dear," said her husband, laughing, "I will even think ill of you, if that will please you."

"Do you laugh at me?" cried she, bursting into tears. "When it comes to this, I am wretched indeed! Never man laughed at the woman he loved! As long as you had the slightest remains of love for me, you could not make me an object of derision: ridicule and love are incompatible, absolutely incompatible. Well, I have done my best, my very best, to make you happy,

but in vain. I see I am not *cut out* to be a good wife. Happy, happy Mrs. Granby!"

"Happy I hope sincerely that she will be with my friend; but my happiness must depend on you, my love; so, for my sake, if not for your own, be composed, and do not torment yourself with such fancies."

"I do wonder," cried our heroine, starting from her seat, "whether this Mrs. Granby is really that Miss Emma Cooke. I'll go and see her directly; see her I must."

"I am heartily glad of it, my dear; for I am sure a visit to his wife will give my friend Granby real pleasure."

"I promise you, my dear, I do not go to give him pleasure, or you either; but to satisfy my own—*curiosity.*"

The rudeness of this speech would have been intolerable to her husband if it had not been for a certain hesitation in the emphasis with which she pronounced the word curiosity, which left him in doubt as to her real motive.

Jealousy is sometimes thought to be a proof of love; and, in this point of view, must not all its caprices, absurdities, and extravagances, be graceful, amiable, and gratifying?

A few days after Griselda had satisfied her curiosity, she thus, in the presence of her husband, began to vent her spleen:

"For Heaven's sake, dear Mrs. Nettleby," cried she, addressing herself to the new-married widow, who came to return her wedding visit—"for pity's sake, dear Mrs. Nettleby, can you or any body else tell me what possessed Mr. Granby to marry Emma Cooke?"

"I am sure I cannot tell, for I have not seen her yet."

"You will be less able to tell after you have seen her, and still less after you have heard her."

"What, then, she is neither a wit nor a beauty! I'm quite surprised at that; for I thought, to be sure, Mr. Granby, who is such a judge and such a critic, and so nice about female manners, would not have been content without something very extraordinary."

"Nothing can be more ordinary."

"Astonishing! but I am quite tired of being astonished at marriages! One sees such strange matches every day, I am resolved never to be surprised at any thing: who *can*, that lives

n the world? But really now I am surprised at Mr. Granby. What! is she nothing?"

"Nothing—absolutely nothing; a cipher; a nonentity."

"Now really? you do not tell me so," said Mrs. Nettleby. 'Well, I am so disappointed; for I always resolved to take xample by Mr. Granby's wife."

"I would rather that she should take warning by me," said Griselda, laughing. "But to be candid, I must tell you that to ome people's taste she is a pattern wife—a perfect Grizzle. She and I should have changed names—or characters. Which, ny dear?" cried she, appealing to her husband.

"Not names, my dear," answered he.

The conversation might here have ended happily, but unuckily our heroine could not be easily satisfied before Mrs. Nettleby, to whom she was proud of showing her conjugal scendancy.

"My dear," said she to her husband, "a-propos to pattern vives: you have read Chaucer's Tales. Do you seriously like or dislike the real, original, old Griselda?"

"It is so long since I have seen her that I cannot tell," replied he.

"Then, my dear, you must read the story over again, and tell ne without evasion."

"And if he could read it before Mrs. Granby and me, what a ompliment that would be to one bride," added the malicious Mrs. Nettleby, "and what a lesson for another!"

"Oh, it must be so! it must be so!" cried Griselda. "I will sk her here on purpose to a reading party; and you, my dear Mrs. Nettleby, will come for your lesson. You, my love, who ead so well—and who, I am sure, will be delighted to pay a ompliment to your favourite, Mrs. Granby—you will read, and will—weep. On what day shall it be? Let me see: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, I'm ngaged: but Sunday is only a party at home; I can put that ff:—then Sunday let it be."

"Sunday, I am unluckily engaged, my dear," said her husband.

"Engaged? Oh, nonsense! You have no engagements of ny consequence: and when I put off *my* party on purpose to

have the pleasure of hearing you read, oblige me, my love, for once."

"My love, to oblige you, I will do any thing."

Griselda cast a triumphant glance at Mrs. Nettleby, which said as plainly as a look could say, "You see how I rule him!"

CHAPTER IV.

"Feels every vanity in fondness lost,
And asks no power but that of pleasing most."

On Sunday evening a large company assembled at our heroine's summons. They were all seated in due form: the reader with his book open, and waiting for the arrival of the bride, for whom a conspicuous place was destined, where the spectators, and especially Mrs. Nettleby and our Griselda, could enjoy a full view of her countenance.

"Lord bless me! it is getting late: I am afraid—I am really afraid Mrs. Granby will not come."

The ladies had time to discuss who and what she was: as she had lived in the country, few of them had seen, or could tell any thing about her; but our heroine circulated her opinion in whispers, and every one was prepared to laugh at *the pattern wife, the original Griselda revived*, as Mrs. Nettleby sarcastically called her.

Mrs. Granby was announced. The buzz was hushed and the titter suppressed; affected gravity appeared in every countenance, and all eyes turned with malicious curiosity upon the bride as she entered.—The timidity of Emma's first appearance was so free both from awkwardness and affectation, that it interested at least every gentleman present in her favour. Surrounded by strangers, but quite unsuspicious that they were prepared to consider her as an object of ridicule or satire, she won her way to the lady of the house, to whom she addressed herself as to a friend.

"Is not she quite a different person from what you had expected?" whispered one of the ladies to her neighbour, as Emma

passed. Her manner seemed to solicit indulgence rather than to provoke envy. She was very sorry to find that the company had been waiting for her; she had been detained by the sudden illness of Mr. Granby's mother.

Whilst Emma was making this apology, some of the audience observed that she had a remarkably sweet voice; others discovered that there was something extremely feminine in her person. A gentleman, who saw that she was distressed at the idea of being seated in the conspicuous place to which she was destined by the lady of the house, got up, and offered his seat, which she most thankfully accepted.

"Oh, my dear Mrs. Granby, I cannot possibly allow you to sit there," cried the lady of the house. "You must have the honours of the day," added she, seizing Emma's hand to conduct her to the *place of honour*.

"Pray excuse me," said Mrs. Granby, "honours are so little suited to me: I am perfectly well here."

"But with that window *at your back*, my dear madam!" said Mrs. Nettleby.

"I do not feel the slightest breath of air. But perhaps I crowd these ladies."

"Not in the least, not in the least," said the ladies, who were on each side of her: they were won by the irresistible gentleness of Emma's manner. Our heroine was vexed to be obliged to give up her point; and relinquishing Mrs. Granby's hand, returned to her own seat, and said in a harsh tone to her husband,

"Well! my dear, if we are to have any reading to-night, you had better begin."

The reading began; and Emma was so completely absorbed, that she did not perceive that most of the audience were intent upon her. Those who act any part may be ridiculous in the playing it, but those are safe from the utmost malignity of criticism who are perfectly unconscious that they have any part to perform. Emma had been abashed at her first appearance in an assembly of strangers, and concerned by the idea that she had kept them waiting; but as soon as this embarrassment passed over, her manners resumed their natural ease—a degree of ease which surprised her judges, and which arose from the persuasion that she was not of sufficient consequence to attract attention.

Our heroine was provoked by the sight of this insolent tranquillity, and was determined that it should not long continue. The reader came to the promise which Gualtherus exacts from his bride :—

> "Swear that with ready will, and honest heart,
> Like or dislike, without regret or art,
> In presence or alone, by night or day,
> All that I will, you fail not to obey;
> All I intend to forward, that you seek,
> Nor ever once object to what I speak.
> Nor yet in part alone my wish fulfil;
> Nor though you do it, do it with ill-will;
> Nor with a forced compliance half refuse;
> And acting duty, all the merit lose.
> To strict obedience add a willing grace,
> And let your soul be painted in your face;
> No reasons given, and no pretences sought,
> To swerve in deed or word, in look or thought."

"Well, ladies!" cried the modern Griselda, "what do you think of this?"

Shrill exclamations of various vehemence expressed with one accord the sentiments, or rather feelings, of almost all the married ladies who were present.

"Abominable! Intolerable! Insufferable! Horrible! I would rather have seen the man perish at my feet; I would rather have died: I would have remained unmarried all my life rather than have submitted to such terms."

A few young unmarried ladies who had not spoken, or who had not been heard to speak in the din of tongues, were appealed to by the gentlemen next them. They could not be prevailed upon to pronounce any distinct opinion: they qualified, and hesitated, and softened, and equivocated, and "were not positively able to judge, for really they had never thought upon the subject."

Upon the whole, however, it was evident that they did not betray that natural horror which pervaded the more experienced matrons. All agreed that the terms were "hard terms," and ill expressed: some added, that only love could persuade a woman to submit to them: and some still more sentimental maidens, in a lower voice, were understood to say, that as nothing is impossible to Cupid, they might be induced to such submission;

but that it must be by a degree of love which they solemnly declared they had never felt or could imagine as yet.

"For my part," cried the modern Griselda, "I would sooner have lived an old maid to the days of Methusalem than have been so mean as to have married any man on earth upon such terms. But I know there are people who can never think 'marriage dear-bought.' My dear Mrs. Granby, we have not yet heard your opinion, and we should have had yours first, as bride."

"I forgot that I was bride," said Emma.

"Forgot! Is it possible?" cried Mrs. Nettleby: "now this is an excess of modesty of which I have no notion."

"But for which Mr. Granby," continued our heroine, turning to Mr. Granby, who at this moment entered the room, "ought to make his best bow. Here is your lady, sir, who has just assured us that she forgot she was a bride: bow to this exquisite humility."

"Exquisite vanity!" cried Mr. Granby; "she knows

'How much the wife is dearer than the bride.'"

"She will be a singularly happy woman if she knows *that* this time twelvemonth," replied our heroine, darting a reproachful look at her silent husband. "In the mean time, do let us hear Mrs. Granby speak for herself; I must have her opinion of Griselda's promise to obey her lord, right or wrong, in all things, no reasons given, to submit in deed, and word, and look, and thought. If Mrs. Granby tells us that is her theory, we must all reform our practice."

Every eye was fixed upon Emma, and every ear was impatient for her answer.

"I should never have imagined," said she, smiling, "that any person's practice could be influenced by my theory, especially as I have no theory."

"No more humility, my dear; if you have no theory, you have an opinion of your own, I hope, and we must have a distinct answer to this simple question: Would you have made the promise that was required from Griselda?"

"No," answered Emma; "distinctly no; for I could never have loved or esteemed the man who required such a promise."

Disconcerted by this answer, which was the very reverse of

what she expected; amazed at the modest self-possession with which the timid Emma spoke, and vexed by the symptoms of approbation which Emma's words and voice excited, our heroine called upon her husband, in a more than usually authoritative tone, and bid him—read on.

He obeyed. Emma became again absorbed in the story, and her countenance showed how much she felt all its beauties, and all its pathos. Emma did all she could to repress her feelings; and our heroine all she could to make her and them ridiculous. But in this attempt she was unsuccessful; for many of the spectators, who at her instigation began by watching Emma's countenance to find subject for ridicule, ended by sympathizing with her unaffected sensibility.

When the tale was ended, the modern Griselda, who was determined to oppose as strongly as possible the charms of spirit to those of sensibility, burst furiously forth into an invective against the meanness of her namesake, and the tyranny of the odious Gualtherus.

"*Could* you have forgiven him, Mrs. Granby? could you have forgiven the monster?"

"He repented," said Emma; "and does not a penitent cease to be a monster?"

"Oh, I never, never would have forgiven him, penitent or not penitent; I would not have forgiven him such sins."

"I would not have put it into his power to commit them," said Emma.

"I confess the story never touched me in the least," cried our heroine.

"Perhaps for the same reason that Petrarch's friend said that he read it unmoved," replied Mrs. Granby: "because he could not believe that such a woman as Griselda ever existed."

"No, no, not for that reason: I believe many such poor, meek, mean-spirited creatures exist."

Emma was at length wakened to the perception of her friend's envy and jealousy; but—

> "She mild forgave the failing of her sex."

"I cannot admire the original Griselda, or any of her imitators," continued our heroine.

"There is no great danger of her finding imitators in these days," said Mr. Granby. "Had Chaucer lived in our enlightened times, he would doubtless have drawn a very different character."

The modern Griselda looked "fierce as ten furies." Emma softened her husband's observation by adding, "that allowance should certainly be made for poor Chaucer, if we consider the times in which he wrote. The situation and understandings of women have been so much improved since his days. Women were then slaves, now they are free. My dear," whispered she to her husband, "your mother is not well; shall we go home?"

Emma left the room; and even Mrs. Nettleby, after she was gone, said, "Really she is not ugly when she blushes."

"No woman is ugly when she blushes," replied our heroine; "but, unluckily, a woman cannot *always* blush."

Finding that her attempt to make Emma ridiculous had failed, and that it had really placed Mrs. Granby's understanding, manners, and temper in a most advantageous and amiable light, Griselda was mortified beyond measure. She could scarcely bear to hear Emma's name mentioned.

CHAPTER V.

> "She that can please, is certain to persuade,
> To-day is lov'd, to-morrow is obey'd."

A FEW days after the reading party, Griselda was invited to spend an evening at Mrs. Granby's.

"I shall not go," said she, throwing down the card with an air of disdain.

"I shall go," said her husband, calmly.

"You will go, my dear!" cried she, amazed. "You will go without *me?*"

"Not without you, if you will be so kind as to go with me, my love," said he.

"It is quite out of my power," said she: "I am engaged to my friend, Mrs. Nettleby."

"Very well, my dear," said he; "do as you please."

"Certainly I shall. And I am surprised, my dear, that you do not go to see Mr. John Nettleby."

"I have no desire to see him, my dear. He is, as I have often heard you say, an obstinate fool. He is a man I dislike particularly."

"Very possibly; but you ought to go to see him notwithstanding."

"Why so, my dear?"

"Because he is married to a woman I like. If you had any regard for me, your own feelings would have saved you the trouble of asking that question."

"But, my dear, should not your regard for me also suggest to you the propriety of keeping up an acquaintance with Mrs. Granby, who is married to a man I like, and who is not herself an obstinate fool?"

"I shall not enter into any discussion upon the subject," replied our heroine; for this was one of the cases where she made it a rule never to reason. "I can only say that I have my own opinion, and that I beg to be excused from keeping up any acquaintance whatever with Mrs. Granby."

"And I beg to be excused from keeping up any acquaintance whatever with Mr. Nettleby," replied her husband.

"Good Heavens!" cried she, raising herself upon the sofa, on which she had been reclining, and fixing her eyes upon her husband, with unfeigned astonishment: "I do not know you this morning, my dear."

"Possibly not, my dear," replied he; "for hitherto you have seen only your lover; now you see your husband."

Never did metamorphosis excite more astonishment. The lady was utterly unconscious that she had had any part in producing it—that she had herself dissolved the spell. She raged, she raved, she reasoned, in vain. Her point she could not compass. Her cruel husband persisted in his determination not to go to see Mr. John Nettleby. Absolutely astounded, she was silent. There was a truce for some hours. She renewed the attack in the evening, and ceased not hostilities for three succeeding days and nights, in reasonable hopes of wearying the enemy, still without success.

The morning rose, the great, the important day, which was to decide the fate of the visit. The contending parties met as usual at breakfast; they seemed mutually afraid of each other, and stood at bay. There was a forced calm in the gentleman's demeanour—treacherous smiles played upon the lady's countenance. He seemed cautious to prolong the suspension of hostilities—she fond to anticipate the victory. The name of Mrs. Granby, or of Mr. John Nettleby, was not uttered by either party, nor did either inquire where the other was to spend the evening. At dinner they met again, and preserved on this delicate subject a truly diplomatic silence; whilst on the topics foreign to their thoughts, they talked with admirable fluency: actuated by as sincere desire as ever was felt by negotiating politicians to establish peace on the broadest basis, they were, *with the most perfect consideration*, each other's devoted, and most obedient humble servants. Candour, however, obliges us to confess, that though the deference on the part of the gentleman was the most unqualified and praiseworthy, the lady was superior in her inimitable air of frank cordiality. The *volto sciolto* was in her favour, the *pensieri stretti* in his. Any one but an ambassador would have been deceived by the husband; any one but a woman would have been duped by the wife.

So stood affairs when, after dinner, the high and mighty powers separated. The lady retired to her toilette. The gentleman remained with his bottle. He drank a glass of wine extraordinary. She stayed half an hour more than usual at her mirror. Arrayed for battle, our heroine repaired to the drawing-room, which she expected to find unoccupied;—the enemy had taken the field.

"Dressed, my dear?" said he.

"Ready, my love!" said she.

"Shall I ring the bell for your carriage, my dear?" said the husband.

"If you please. You go with me, my dear?" said the wife.

"I do not know where you are going, my love."

"To Mrs. Nettleby's of course,—and you?"

"To Mrs. Granby's."

The lightning flashed from Griselda's eyes, ere he had half pronounced the words. The lightning flashed without effect.

"To Mrs. Granby's!" cried she, in a thundering tone. "' Mrs. Granby's!" echoed he. She fell back on the sofa, anc shower of tears ensued. Her husband walked up and down t room, rang again for the carriage, ordered it in the tone a master. Then hummed a tune. The fair one sobbed: continued to sing, but was out in the time. The lady's so grew alarming, and threatened hysterics. He threw open tl window, and approached the sofa on which she lay. She, h recovering, unclasped one bracelet; in haste to get the other o he broke it. The footman came in to announce that the carria was at the door. She relapsed, and seemed in danger of suff cation from her pearl necklace, which she made a faint effort loosen from her neck.

"Send your lady's woman instantly," cried Griselda's husba to the footman.

Our heroine made another attempt to untie her necklace, a looked up towards her husband with supplicating eyes. H hands trembled; he entangled the strings. It would have bee all over with him if the maid had not at this instant come to h assistance. To her he resigned his perilous post; retreated pr cipitately; and before the enemy's forces could rally, gained h carriage, and carried his point.

"To Mr. Granby's!" cried he, triumphantly. Arrived ther he hurried to Mr. Granby's room.

"Another such victory," cried he, throwing himself into a arm-chair, "another such victory, and I am undone."

He related all that had just passed between him and his wife

"Another such combat," said his friend, "and you are peace for life."

We hope that our readers will not, from this speech, be induce to consider Mr. Granby as an instigator of quarrels between ma and wife; or, according to the plebeian but expressive apopl thegm, one who would come between the bark and the tre On the contrary, he was most desirous to secure his friend domestic happiness; and, if possible, to prevent the bad effec which were likely to ensue from excessive indulgence, and ino dinate love of dominion. He had a high respect for ou heroine's powers, and thought that they wanted only to be we managed. The same force which, ill-directed, bursts the engine

and scatters destruction, obedient to the master-hand, answers a thousand useful purposes, and works with easy, smooth, and graceful regularity. Griselda's husband, or, as he now deserves to have his name mentioned, Mr. Bolingbroke, roused by his friend's representations, and perhaps by a sense of approaching danger, resolved to assume the guidance of his wife, or at least of himself. In opposition to his sovereign lady's will, he actually spent this evening as he pleased.

CHAPTER VI.

" E sol quei giorni io mi vidi contenta,
Ch'averla compiaciuto mi trovai."

"You are a great deal more courageous than I am, my dear," said Emma to her husband, after Mr. Bolingbroke had left them. "I should be very much afraid of interfering between your friend and his wife."

"What is friendship," said Mr. Granby, "if it will run no risks? I must run the hazard of being called a mischief-maker."

"That is not the danger of which I was thinking," said Emma; "though I confess that I should be weak enough to fear that a little: but what I meant to express was an apprehension of our doing harm where we most wish to do good."

"Do you, my dear Emma, think Griselda incorrigible?"

"No, indeed," cried Emma, with anxious emphasis; "far from it. But without thinking a person incorrigible, may we not dislike the idea of inflicting correction? I should be very sorry to be the means of giving Griselda any pain; she was my friend when we were children; I have a real regard for her, and if she does not now seem disposed to love me, that must be my fault, not hers: or if it is not my fault, call it my misfortune. At all events, I have no right to force myself upon her acquaintance. She prefers Mrs. Nettleby; I have not the false humility to say, that I think Mrs. Nettleby will prove as safe or as good a friend as I hope I should be. But of this Mrs. Bolingbroke has a right to judge. And I am sure, far from resenting her resolution to

avoid my acquaintance, my only feeling about it, at this instant, is the dread that it should continue to be a matter of dispute between her and her husband."

"If Mr. Bolingbroke insisted, or if I advised him to insist upon his wife's coming here, when she does not like it," said Mr. Granby, "I should act absurdly, and he would act unjustly; but all that he requires is equality of rights, and the liberty of going where *he* pleases. She refuses to come to see you: he refuses to go to see Mr. John Nettleby. Which has the best of the battle?"

Emma thought it would be best if there were no battle; and observed, that refusals and reprisals would only irritate the parties, whose interest and happiness it was to be pacified and to agree. She said, that if Mr. Bolingbroke, instead of opposing his will to that of his wife, which, in fact, was only conquering force by force, would speak reasonably to her, probably she might be induced to yield, or to command her temper. Mrs. Granby suggested, that a compromise, founded on an offer of mutual sacrifice and mutual compliance, might be obtained. That Mr. Bolingbroke might promise to give up some of his time to the man he disliked, upon condition that Griselda should submit to the society of a woman to whom she had an aversion.

"If she consented to this," said Emma, "I would do my best to make her like me; or at least to make her time pass agreeably at our house: her liking me is a matter of no manner of consequence."

Emma was capable of putting herself entirely out of the question, when the interest of others was at stake; her whole desire was to conciliate, and all her thoughts were intent upon making her friends happy. She seemed to live in them more than in herself, and from sympathy arose the greatest pleasure and pain of her existence. Her sympathy was not of that useless kind which is called forth only by the elegant fictitious sorrows of a heroine of romance; hers was ready for all the occasions of real life; nor was it to be easily checked by the imperfections of those to whom she could be of service. At this moment, when she perceived that her húsband was disgusted by Griselda's caprice, she said all she could think of in her favour:

he recollected every anecdote of Griselda's childhood, which showed an amiable disposition; and argued, that it was not probable her temper should have entirely changed in a few years. Emma's quick-sighted good-nature could discern the least portion of merit, where others could find only faults; as certain experienced eyes can discover grains of gold in the sands, which the ignorant have searched, and abandoned as useless. In consequence of Emma's advice—for who would reject good advice, offered with so much gentleness?—Mr. Granby wrote a note to Mr. Bolingbroke, to recommend the compromise which she had suggested. Upon his return home, Mr. Bolingbroke was informed that his lady had gone to bed much indisposed; he spent a restless night, notwithstanding all his newly-acquired magnanimity. He was much relieved in the morning by his friend's note, and blessed Emma for proposing the compromise.

CHAPTER VII.

"Each widow to her secret friend alone
Whisper'd;—thus treated, he had had his own."

Mr. Bolingbroke waited with impatience for Griselda's appearance the next morning; but he waited in vain: the lady breakfasted in her own apartment, and for two hours afterwards remained in close consultation with Mrs. Nettleby, whom she had summoned the preceding night by the following note:

"I have been prevented from spending this evening with you, my dearest Mrs. Nettleby, by the strangest conduct imaginable: I am sure you will not believe it when I tell it to you. Come to me, I conjure you, as early to-morrow as you possibly can, that I may explain to you all that has passed, and consult as to the future. My dearest friend, I never was so much in want of an adviser. Ever yours,

"Griselda."

At this consultation, Mrs. Nettleby expressed the utmost

astonishment at Mr. Bolingbroke's strange conduct, and assured Griselda, that if she did not exert herself, all was lost, and she must give up the hope of ever having her own way again as long as she lived.

"My dear," said she, "I have had some experience in these things; a wife must be either a tyrant or a slave: make your choice; now is your time."

"But I never knew him say or do any thing unkind before," said Griselda.

"Then the first offence should be properly resented. If he finds you forgiving, he will become encroaching; 'tis the nature of man, depend upon it."

"He always yielded to me till now," said Griselda; "but even when I was ready to go into fits, he left me, and what could I do then?"

"You astonish me beyond expression! you who have every advantage—youth, wit, accomplishments, beauty! My dear, if *you* cannot keep a husband's heart, who can ever hope to succeed?"

"Oh! as to his heart, I have no doubts of his heart, to do him justice," said Griselda; "I know he loves me—passionately loves me."

"And yet you cannot manage him! And you expect me to pity you? Bless me, if I had half your advantages, what I would make of them! But if you like to be a tame wife, my dear—if you are resolved upon it, tell me so at once, and I will hold my tongue."

"I do not know well what I am resolved upon," said Griselda, leaning her head in a melancholy posture upon her hand: "I am vexed, out of spirits, and out of sorts."

"Out of sorts! I am not surprised at that: but out of spirits! My dear creature, you who have every thing to put you in spirits. I am never so much *myself* as when I have a quarrel to fight out."

"I cannot say that is the case with me, unless where I am sure of the victory."

"And it is your own fault if you are not always sure of it."

"I thought so till last night; but I assure you last night he showed such a spirit!"

"Break that spirit, my dear, break it, or else it will break your heart."

"The alternative is terrible," said Griselda, "and more terrible perhaps than you could imagine, or I either till now: for would you believe it, I never loved him in my life half so well as I did last night in the midst of my anger, and when he was doing every thing to provoke me?"

"Very natural, my dear; because you saw him behave with spirit, and you love spirit; so does every woman; so does every body; show him that you have spirit too, and he will be as angry as you were, and love you as well in the midst of his anger, whilst you are doing every thing to provoke him."

Griselda appeared determined to take this good advice one moment, and the next hesitated.

"But, my dear Mrs. Nettleby, did you always find this succeed yourself?"

"Yes, always."

This lady had the reputation indeed of having broken the heart of her first husband; how she would manage her second was yet to be seen, as her honeymoon was but just over. The pure love of mischief was not her only motive in the advice which she gave to our heroine; she had, like most people, mixed motives for her conduct. She disliked Mr. Bolingbroke, because he disliked her; yet she wished that an acquaintance should be kept up between him and her husband, because Mr. Bolingbroke was a man of fortune and fashion.

Griselda promised that she would behave with that proper spirit, which was to make her at once amiable and victorious; and the friends parted.

CHAPTER VIII.

> "With patient, meek, submissive mind,
> To her hard fate resign'd."
>
> POTTER'S ÆSCHYLUS.

LEFT to her own good genius, Griselda reflected that novelty has the most powerful effect upon the heart of man. In all the

variations of her humour, her husband had never yet seen her in the sullen mood; and in this she now sat prepared to receive him. He came with an earnest desire to speak to her in the kindest and most reasonable manner. He began by saying how much it had cost him to give her one moment's uneasiness:— his voice, his look, were those of truth and love.

Unmoved, Griselda, without raising her leaden eyes, answered in a cold voice, "I am very sorry that you should have felt *any* concern upon my account."

"*Any!* my love; you do not know how *much* I have felt this night."

She looked upon him with civil disbelief; and replied, "that she was sure she ought to be much obliged to him."

This frigid politeness repressed his affection: he was silent for some moments.

"My dear Griselda," said he, "this is not the way in which we should live together; we who have every thing that can make us contented: do not let us throw away our happiness for trifles not worth thinking of."

"If we are not happy, it is not my fault," said Griselda.

"We will not inquire whose fault it is, my dear; let the blame rest upon me: let the past be forgotten; let us look towards the future. In future, let us avoid childish altercations, and live like reasonable creatures. I have the highest opinion of your sex in general, and of you in particular; I wish to live with my wife as my equal, my friend; I do not desire that my will should govern: where our inclinations differ, let reason decide between us; or where it is a matter not worth reasoning about, let us alternately yield to one another." He paused.

"I do not desire or expect that you should ever henceforward yield to my wishes either in trifles or in matters of consequence," replied Griselda, with provoking meekness; "you have taught me my duty: the duty of a wife is to submit; and submit I hope I shall in future, without reply or reasoning, to your sovereign will and pleasure."

"Nay, my dear," said he, "do not treat me as a brutal tyrant, when I wish to do every thing in my power to make you happy. Use your own excellent understanding, and I shall always, I hope, be inclined to yield to your reasons."

"I shall never trouble you with my reasons; I shall never use my own understanding in the least: I know that men cannot bear understanding in women; I shall always, as it is my duty, submit to your better judgment."

"But, my love, I do not require duty from you; this sort of blind submission would be mortifying, instead of gratifying to me, from a wife."

"I do not know what a wife can do to satisfy a husband, if submitting in every thing be not sufficient."

"I say it would be too much for me, my dearest love!"

"I can do nothing but submit," repeated the perverse Griselda, with a most provoking immoveable aspect of humility.

"Why *will* you not understand me, my dear?" cried her husband.

"It is not my fault if I cannot understand you, my dear: I do not pretend to have your understanding," said the fair politician, affecting weakness to gain her point; like those artful candidates for papal dominion, who used to affect decrepitude and imbecility, till they secured at once absolute power and infallibility.

"I know my abilities are quite inferior to yours, my dear," said Griselda; "but I thought it was sufficient for a woman to know how to obey; I can do no more."

Fretted beyond his patience, her husband walked up and down the room greatly agitated, whilst she sat content and secure in tranquil obstinacy.

"You are enough to provoke the patience of Job, my dear," cried her husband; "you'll break my heart."

"I am sorry for it, my dear; but if you will only tell me what I can do more to please you, I will do it."

"Then, my love," cried he, taking hold of her white hand, which hung in a lifeless attitude over the arm of the couch, "be happy, I conjure you! all I ask of you is to be happy."

"That is out of my power," said she, mildly, suffering her husband to keep her hand, as if it was an act of duty to submit to his caresses. He resigned her hand; her countenance never varied; if she had been slave to the most despotic sultan of the East, she could not have shown more utter submission than she displayed to this most indulgent European "husband lover."

Unable to command his temper, or to conceal how much he was hurt, he rose and said, "I will leave you for the present, my dear; some time when you are better disposed to converse with me, I will return."

"Whenever you please, sir; all times are alike to me: whenever you are at leisure, I can have no choice."

CHAPTER IX.

"And acting duty all the merit lose."

Some hours afterwards, hoping to find his sultana in a better humour, Mr. Bolingbroke returned; but no sooner did he approach the sofa on which she was still seated, than she again seemed to turn into stone, like the Princess Rhezzia, in the Persian Tales; who was blooming and charming, except when her husband entered the room. The unfortunate Princess Rhezzia loved her husband tenderly, but was doomed to this fate by a vile enchanter. If she was more to be pitied for being subject to involuntary metamorphosis, our heroine is surely more to be admired, for the constancy with which she endured a self-inflicted penance; a penance calculated to render her odious in the eyes of her husband.

"My dear," said this most patient of men, "I am sorry to renew any ideas that will be disagreeable to you; I will mention the subject but once more, and then let it be forgotten for ever —our foolish dispute about Mr. Nettleby. Let us compromise the matter. I will bear Mr. John Nettleby for your sake, if you will bear Mrs. Granby for mine. I will go to see Mr. Nettleby to-morrow, if you will come the day afterwards with me to Mr. Granby's. Where husband and wife do not agree in their wishes, it is reasonable that each should yield a little of their will to the other. I hope this compromise will satisfy you, my dear."

"It does not become a wife to enter into any compromise with her husband; she has nothing to do but to obey, as soon as he signifies his pleasure. I shall go to Mr. Granby's on Tuesday, as you command."

"Command! my love."

"As you——whatever you please to call it."

"But are you satisfied with this arrangement, my dear?"

"It is no manner of consequence whether I am or not."

"To me, you know, it is of the greatest: you must be sensible that my sincere wish is to make you happy: I give you some proof of it by consenting to keep up an acquaintance with a man whose company I dislike."

"I am much obliged to you, my dear; but as to your going to see Mr. John Nettleby, it is a matter of perfect indifference to me; I only just mentioned it as a thing of course; I beg you will not do it on my account: I hope you will do whatever you think best and what pleases yourself, upon this and every other occasion. I shall never more presume to offer my advice."

Nothing more could be obtained from the submissive wife; she went to Mr. Granby's; she was all duty, for she knew the show of it was the most provoking thing upon earth to a husband, at least to such a husband as hers. She therefore persisted in this line of conduct, till she made her victim at last exclaim—

> "I love thee and hate thee, but if I can tell
> The cause of my love and my hate, may I die.
> I can feel it, alas! I can feel it too well,
> That I love thee and hate thee, but cannot tell why."

His fair one was much flattered by this confession; she triumphed in having excited "this contrariety of feelings;" nor did she foresee the possibility of her husband's recollecting that stanza which the school-boy, more philosophical than the poet, applies to his tyrant.

Whilst our heroine was thus acting to perfection the part of a dutiful wife, Mrs. Nettleby was seconding her to the best of her abilities, and announcing her amongst all their acquaintance, in the interesting character of—"a woman that is very much to be pitied."

"Poor Mrs. Bolingbroke!—Don't you think, ma'am, she is very much changed since her marriage?—Quite fallen away!—and all her fine spirits, what are become of them?—It really grieves my heart to see her.—Oh, she is a very unhappy woman! really to be pitied, if you knew but all."

Then a significant nod, or a melancholy mysterious look, set the imagination of the company at work; or, if this did not succeed, a whisper in plain terms pronounced Mr. Bolingbroke "a sad sort of husband, a very odd-tempered man, and, in short, a terrible tyrant; though nobody would guess it, who only saw him in company: but men are such deceivers!"

Mr. Bolingbroke soon found that all his wishes were thwarted, and all his hopes of happiness crossed, by the straws which this evil-minded dame contrived to throw in his way. Her influence over his wife he saw increased every hour: though they visited each other every day, these ladies could never meet without having some important secrets to impart, and conspiracies were to be performed in private, at which a husband could not be permitted to assist. Then notes without number were to pass continually, and these were to be thrown hastily into the fire at the approach of the enemy. Mr. Bolingbroke determined to break this league, which seemed to be more a league of hatred than of amity.—— The London winter was now over, and, taking advantage of the continuance of his wife's perverse fit of duty and unqualified submission, he one day requested her to accompany him into the country, to spend a few weeks with his friend Mr. Granby, at his charming place in Devonshire. The part of a wife was to obey, and Griselda was bound to support her character. She resolved, however, to make her obedience cost her lord as dear as possible, and she promised herself that this party of pleasure should become a party of pain. She and her lord were to travel in the same carriage with Mr. and Mrs. Granby. Griselda had only time, before she set off, to write a hasty billet to Mrs. Nettleby, to inform her of these intentions, and to bid her adieu till better times. Mrs. Nettleby sincerely regretted this interruption of their hourly correspondence; for she was deprived not only of the pleasure of hearing, but of making matrimonial complaints. She had now been married two months; and her fool began to grow restive; no animal on earth is more restive than a fool: but, confident that Mrs. Nettleby will hold the bridle with a strong hand, we leave her to pull against his hard mouth.

CHAPTER X.

" Playzir ne l'est qu'autant qu'on le partage."

WE pass over the infinite variety of petty torments, which our heroine contrived to inflict upon her fellow-travellers during her journey down to Devonshire. Inns, food, beds, carriage, horses, baggage, roads, prospect, hill, dale, sun, wind, dust, rain, earth, air, fire, and water, all afforded her matter of complaint. It was astonishing that Emma discovered none of these inconveniences; but, as fast as they were complained of, she amused herself in trying to obviate them.

Lord Kames has observed, that a power to recall at will pleasing objects would be a more valuable gift to any mortal than ever was bestowed in a fairy tale. With this power Emma was endowed in the highest perfection; and as fast as our heroine recollected some evil that had happened, or was likely to happen, Emma raised the opposite idea of some good, past, present, or future; so that it was scarcely possible even for the spirit of contradiction personified to resist the magic of her good-humour. No sooner did she arrive at her own house, than she contrived a variety of ways of showing attention and kindness to her guest; and when all this was received with sullen indifference, or merely as tributes due to superiority, Emma was not discouraged in her benevolence, but, instead of being offended, seemed to pity her friend for "having had her temper so unhappily spoiled."

"Griselda is so handsome," said Mrs. Granby one day, in her defence, "she has such talents—she has been so much admired, worshipped, and indulged—that it would be wonderful if she were not a little spoiled. I dare say that, if I had been in her place, my brain would never have stood the intoxication. Who can measure their strength, or their weakness, till they are tried? Another thing should be considered; Griselda excites envy, and though she may not have more faults than her neighbours, they are more noticed, because they are in the full light of prosperity. What a number of motes swarm in a single ray of light, coming through the shutter of a darkened room! There are not more motes in that spot than in any other part of

the room, but the sun-beams show them more distinctly. The dust that lives in snug obscurity should consider this, and have mercy upon its fellow dust."

In Emma's kindness there was none of the parade of goodness; she seemed to follow her natural disposition; and, as Griselda once said of her, to be good because she could not help it. She required neither praise nor thanks for any thing that she did; and, provided her friends were happy, she was satisfied, without ever wishing to be admired as the cause of that happiness. Her powers of pleasing were chiefly remarkable for lasting longer than others, and the secret of their permanence was not easily guessed, because it was so simple. It depended merely on the equability of her humour. It is said, that there is nothing marvellous in the colours of those Egyptian monuments which have been the admiration of ages; the secret of their duration is supposed to depend simply on the fineness of the climate and invariability of the temperature.—But

"Griselda will admit no wandering muse."

Mrs. Bolingbroke was by this time tired of continuing in one mood, even though it was the sullen; and her genius was cramped by the constraint of affected submission. She recovered her charming spirits soon after she came into the country, and for a short time no mortal mixture of earth's mould could be more agreeable. She called forth every charm; she was all gaiety, wit, and smiles; she poured light and life upon conversation.

As the Marquis de Chastellux said of some fascinating fair one—"She had no expression without grace, and no grace without expression." It was delightful to our heroine to hear it said, "How charming Mrs. Bolingbroke can be when she pleases; when she wishes to captivate, how irresistible!—Who can equal Mrs. Bolingbroke when she is in one of her *good days?*"

The triumph of eclipsing Mrs. Granby would have been delightful, but that Emma seemed to feel no mortification from being thrown into the shade; she seemed to enjoy her friend's success so sincerely, that it was impossible to consider her as a rival. She had so carefully avoided noticing any little disagree-

ment or coolness between Mr. and Mrs. Bolingbroke, that it might have been doubted whether she attended to their mutual conduct; but the obvious delight she took in seeing them again on good terms with each other proved that she was not deficient in penetration. She appeared to see only what others desired that she should see, upon these delicate occasions, where voluntary blindness is not artifice, but prudence. Mr. Bolingbroke was now enchanted with Griselda, and ready to exclaim every instant, "Be ever thus!"

Her husband thought he had found a mine of happiness; he began to breathe, and to bless his kind stars. He had indeed lighted unexpectedly upon a rich vein, but it was soon exhausted, and all his farther progress was impeded by certain vapours, dangerous to approach. Fatal sweets! which lure the ignorant to destruction, but from which the more experienced fly with precipitation.——Our heroine was now fully prepared to kill her husband with kindness; she was afraid, if he rode, that his horse would throw him; if he walked, that he would tire himself; if he sat still, that he must want exercise; if he went out, that he would catch cold; if he stayed at home, that he was kept a prisoner; if he did not eat, that he was sick; if he did eat, that he would be sick;—&c. &c. &c. &c. There was no end to these fond fears: he felt that there was something ridiculous in submitting to them; and yet to resist in the least was deemed the height of unkindness and ingratitude. One night she fell into a fit of melancholy, upon his laughing at her fears, that he should kill himself, by standing for an instant at an open window, on a fine night, to look at a beautiful rising moon. When he endeavoured to recover her from her melancholy, it was suddenly converted into anger, and, after tears, came a storm of reproaches. Her husband, in consideration of the kindness of her original intention, passed over her anger, and even for some days refrained from objecting to any regimen she prescribed for his health and happiness. But his forbearance failed him at length, and he presumed to eat some salad, which his wife "knew would disagree with him." She was provoked afterwards, because she could not make him allow that it had made him ill. She termed this extreme obstinacy; he pleaded that it was simple truth. Truth upon some occasions is the most

offensive thing that can be spoken: the lady was enraged, anc after saying every thing provoking that matrimonial spleen coul suggest, when he in his turn grew warm, she cooled, and saic "You must be sensible, my dear, that all I say and do arises froi affection."

"Oh! my love," said he, recovering his good-humour, "th never-failing opiate soothes my vanity, and lulls my anger; the you may govern me as you please. Torment me to death,— cannot oppose you."

"I suppose," said she, "you think me like the vampire-ba who fans his victim to sleep with its wings, whilst she sucks it life-blood."

"Yes, exactly," said he, smiling: "thank you for the ap allusion."

"Very apt, indeed," said she; and a thick gloom oversprea her countenance. She persisted in taking his assent in sobe earnest. "Yes," said she, "I find you think all my kindness i treacherous. I will show you no more, and then you cannc accuse me of treachery."

It was in vain that he protested he had been only in jest; sh was convinced that he was in earnest; she was suddenly afflicte with an absolute incapacity of distinguishing jest from earnest She recurred to the idea of the vampire-bat, whenever it wa convenient to her to suppose that her husband thought strang things of her, which never entered his brain. This bat provec to him a bird of ill omen, which preceded a train of misfortunes that no mortal foresight could reach, and no human prudence avert. His goddess was not to be appeased by any propitiatory or expiatory sacrifice.

CHAPTER XI.

> "Short is the period of insulting power,
> Offended Cupid finds his vengeful hour."

FINDING it impossible to regain his fair one's favour, Mr. Bolingbroke absented himself from her presence. He amused himself

for some days with his friend Mr. Granby, in attending to a plantation which he was laying out in his grounds. Griselda was vexed to perceive that her husband could find any amusement independent of her; and she never failed, upon his return, to mark her displeasure.

One morning the gentlemen had been so much occupied with their plantation, that they did not attend the breakfast-table precisely in due time: the contrast in the looks of the two ladies when their husbands entered the room was striking. Griselda was provoked with Mrs. Granby for being so good-humoured.

"Lord bless me! Mrs. Granby, how you spoil these men," cried she.

All the time the gentlemen were at breakfast, Mrs. Bolingbroke played with her tea-spoon, and did not deign to utter a syllable; and when the gentlemen left the breakfast-table, and returned to their business, Griselda, who was, as our readers may have observed, one of the fashionable lollers by profession, established herself upon a couch, and began an attack upon Emma, for spoiling her husband in such a sad manner. Emma defended herself in a playful way, by answering that she could not venture to give unnecessary pain, because she was not so sure as some of her friends might be of their power of giving pleasure. Mrs. Bolingbroke proceeded to descant upon the difference between friendship and love: with some vanity, and some malice, she touched upon the difference between the *sorts of sentiments* which different women excited. Passion, she argued, could be kept alive only by a certain happy mixture of caprice and grace, coldness and ill-humour. She confessed that, for her part, she never could be content with the friendship of a husband. Emma, without claiming or disclaiming her pretensions to love, quoted the saying of a French gentleman:

"L'Amitié est l'Amour sans ailes."

"Friendship is Love deprived of his wings."

Griselda had no apprehension that love could ever fly from her, and she declared she could not endure him without his wings.

Our heroine did not imagine that any of the little vexations

which she habitually inflicted upon her husband could
diminish his regard. She never had calculated the pro
effects which can be produced by petty causes constantly
Indeed this is a consideration, to which the pride or
sightedness of human nature is not prone.

Who in contemplating one of Raphael's finest pictures
from the master's hand, ever bestowed a thought up
wretched little worm which works its destruction? Wh
beholds the gilded vessel gliding in gallant trim—"youth
prow, and pleasure at the helm;" ever at that instant tl
of——barnacles? The imagination is disgusted by th
climax; and of all species of the bathos, the sinking
visionary happiness to sober reality is that from which
nature is most averse. The wings of the imagination, accu
to ascend, resist the downward flight.

Confident of her charms, heedless of danger, accusto
think her empire absolute and eternal; our heroine, to
herself, and to display her power to Emma, persisted
practice of tormenting. The ingenuity with which she
her tortures was certainly admirable. After exhausting ol
she invented new; and when the new lost their effica
recurred to the old. She had often observed, that the
method of contradicting, which some bosom friends pra
conversation, is of sovereign power to provoke; and this
quently, though unpolite, she disdained not to imitate.
the greater effect, as it was in diametrical opposition to th
of Mrs. Granby's conversation; who, in discussions wi
husband, or her intimate friends, was peculiarly and hab
attentive to politeness.

CHAPTER XII.

"Ella biasmandol sempre, e dispregiando
Se gli venia piu sempre inimicando."

By her judicious and kind interposition, Emma often pre
the disagreeable consequences that threatened to ensue
Griselda's disputatious habits; but one night it was pa

utmost skill to avert a violent storm, which arose about the pronunciation of a word. It began about eleven o'clock. Just as the family were sitting down to supper, seemingly in perfect harmony of spirits, Mr. Bolingbroke chanced to say, "I think the wind is rising." (He pronounced the word *wĭnd, short.*)

"*Wĭnd!* my dear," cried his wife, echoing his pronunciation; "do, for heaven's sake, call it wīnd."

The lady sounded this word long.

"Wīnd! my love," repeated he after her: "I doubt whether that be the right pronunciation."

"I am surprised you can doubt it," said she, "for I never heard any body call it *wĭnd* but yourself."

"Did not you, my love? that is very extraordinary: many people, I believe, call it *wĭnd.*"

"Vulgarians, perhaps!"

"Vulgarians! No, indeed, my dear; very polite, well-informed people."

Griselda, with a look of unutterable contempt, reiterated the word *polite.*

"Yes, my dear, *polite,*" persisted Mr. Bolingbroke, who was now come to such a pass, that he would defend his opinion in opposition to hers, stoutly and warmly. "Yes; *polite*, my dear, I maintain it; the most *polite* people pronounce it as I do."

"You may maintain what you please, my dear," said the lady, coolly; "but I maintain the contrary."

"Assertion is no proof on either side, I acknowledge," said Mr. Bolingbroke, recollecting himself.

"No, in truth," said Mrs. Bolingbroke, "especially such an absurd assertion as yours, my dear. Now I will go no farther than Mrs. Granby:—Mrs. Granby, did you ever hear any person, who knew how to speak, pronounce wīnd—*wĭnd?*"

"Mrs. Granby, have not you heard it called *wĭnd* in good company?"

The disputants eagerly approached her at the same instant, and looked as if their fortunes or lives depended upon the decision.

"I think I have heard the word pronounced both ways, by well-bred and well-informed people," said Mrs. Granby.

"That is saying nothing, my dear," said Mrs. Bolingbroke, pettishly.

"This is saying all I want," said Mr. Bolingbroke, satisfied.

"I would lay any wager, however, that Mr. * * * *, if he were here, would give it in my favour; and I suppose you will not dispute his authority."

"I will not dispute the authority of Sheridan's Dictionary," cried Mr. Bolingbroke, taking it down from the book-case, and turning over the leaves hastily.—"Sheridan gives it for me, my dear," said he, with exultation.

"You need not speak with such triumph, my dear, for I do not submit to Sheridan."

"No! Will you submit to Kenrick, then?"

"Let us see what he says, and I will then tell you," said the lady. "No—Kenrick was not of her opinion, and he was no authority." Walker was produced; and this battle of the pronouncing dictionaries seemed likely to have no end. Mrs. Granby, when she could be heard, remarked that it was difficult to settle any dispute about pronunciation, because in fact no reasons could be produced, and no standard appealed to but custom, which is perpetually changing; and, as Johnson says, "whilst our language is variable with the caprice of all who use it, words can no more be ascertained in a dictionary, than a grove in the agitation of a storm can be accurately delineated from its picture in the water."

The combatants would scarcely allow Emma time to finish this allusion, and certainly did not give themselves time to understand it; but continued to fight about the word custom, the only word that they had heard.

"Yes, custom! custom!" cried they at once, "custom must decide, to be sure." Then came *my* custom and *your* custom; the custom of the stage, the custom of the best company, the custom of the best poets; and all these were opposed to one another with increasing rapidity. "Good heavens, my dear! did you ever hear Kemble say, 'Rage on, ye *wīnds!*'—Ridiculous!"

"I grant you on the stage it may be wīnds; but in common conversation it is allowable to pronounce it as I do, my dear."

"I appeal to the best poets, Mr. Bolingbroke: nothing can be more absurd than your way of——"

"Listen, lively lordlings all!" interrupted Emma, pressing with playful vehemence between the disputants; "I must be heard, for I have not spoken this half hour, and thus I pronounce—You both are right, and both are wrong.

"And now, my good friends, had not we better go to rest?" said she; "for it is past midnight."

As they took their candles, and went up stairs, the parties continued the battle: Mrs. Bolingbroke brought quotations innumerable to her aid, and in a shrill tone repeated,

> " 'Hé might not let even the winds of heaven
> Visit her face too roughly.'
>
> ———— " 'pass by me as the idle wind,
> Which I respect not.'
>
> " 'And let her down the wind to prey at fortune.'
>
> " 'Blow, thou winter's wind,
> Thou art not so unkind.'
>
> " 'Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks; rage, blow.' "

Her voice was raised to the highest pitch: it was in vain that her husband repeated that he acknowledged the word should be called as she pronounced it in poetry; she reiterated her quotations and her assertions till at last she knew not what she said; her sense failed the more her anger increased. At length Mr. Bolingbroke yielded. Noise conquers sometimes where art fails.

"Thus," said he, "the hawk that could not be hoodwinked, was at last tamed, by being exposed to the din of a blacksmith's hammer."

Griselda was incensed by this remark, and still more by the allusion, which she called the second edition of the vampire-bat. Both husband and wife went to sleep mutually displeased, and more disgusted with each other than they had ever been since their marriage: and all this for the pronunciation of a word!

Early in the morning they were wakened by a messenger, who brought an express, informing Mr. Bolingbroke that his uncle was not expected to live, and that he wished to see him immediately. Mr. Bolingbroke rose instantly; all the time that he was dressing, and preparing in the greatest hurry for his

journey, Griselda tormented him by disputing about the propriety of his going, and ended with, "Promise me to write every post, my dear; positively you must."

CHAPTER XIII.

"He sighs for freedom, she for power."

Mr. Bolingbroke did not comply with his wife's request, or rather with her injunction, to write *every post:* and when he did write, Griselda always found some fault with his letters. They were too short, too stiff, or too cold, and "very different indeed," she said, "from what he used to write before he was married." This was certainly true; and absence was not at the present crisis the most advantageous thing possible to our heroine. Absence is said to extinguish a weak flame, and to increase a strong one. Mr. Bolingbroke's passion for his Griselda had, by some means, been of late diminished. He parted from her with the disagreeable impression of a dispute upon his mind. As he went farther from her he perceived that instead of dragging a lengthened chain, his chain grew lighter. His uncle recovered: he found agreeable society in the neighbourhood; he was persuaded to prolong his stay: his mind, which had been continually harassed, now enjoyed some tranquillity. On an unlucky evening, he recollected Martial's famous epigram and his wife, in one and the same instant:

"My mind still hovering round about you,
I thought I could not live without you;
But now we have lived three weeks asunder,
How I lived with you is the wonder."

In the mean time, our heroine's chief amusement, in her husband's absence, was writing to complain of him to Mrs. Nettleby. This lady's answers were now filled with a reciprocity of conjugal abuse; she had found, to her cost, that it is the most desperate imprudence to marry a fool, in the hopes of governing him. All her powers of tormenting were lost upon her

blessed helpmate. He was not to be moved by wit or sarcasm, eloquence or noise, tears or caresses, reason, jealousy, or the opinion of the world.

What did he care what the world thought, he would do as he pleased himself; he would be master in his own house : it did not signify talking or crying, or being in the right; right or wrong, he would be obeyed; a wife should never govern him; he had no notion of letting a woman rule, for his part; women were born to obey, and promised it in church. As to jealousy, let his wife look to that; if she did not choose to behave properly, he knew his remedy, and would as soon be divorced as not: "Rule a wife and have a wife," was the burden of his song.

It was in vain to goad his insensible nature, in hopes of obtaining any good: vain as the art said to be possessed by Linnæus, of producing pearls by pricking oysters. Mrs. Nettleby, the witty, the spirited Widow Nettleby, was now in the most hopeless and abject condition; tyrannized over by a dunce,—and who could pity her? not even her dear Griselda.

One day Mrs. Bolingbroke received an epistle of seven pages from *poor* Mrs. Nettleby, giving a full and true account of Mr. Nettleby's extraordinary obstinacy about "the awning of a pleasure-boat, which he would not suffer to be made according to her directions, and which consequently caused the oversetting of the boat, and *very nearly* the deaths of all the party." Tired with the long history, and with the notes upon the history of this adventure, in Mrs. Nettleby's declamatory style, our heroine walked out to refresh herself. She followed a pleasant path in a field near the house, and came to a shady lane, where she heard Mr. and Mrs. Granby's voices. She went towards the place. There was a turn in the lane, and a thick hedge of hawthorn prevented them from being immediately seen. As she approached, she heard Mr. Granby saying to Emma, in the fondest tone of affection, "My dear Emma, pray let it be done the way that you like best."

They were looking at a cottage which they were building. The masons had, by mistake, followed the plan which Mr. Granby proposed, instead of that which Emma had suggested. The wall

was half built; but Mr. Granby desired that it might be pulled down and altered to suit Emma's taste.

"Bless me!" cried Griselda, with great surprise, "are you really going to have it pulled down, Mr. Granby?"

"Certainly," replied he; "and what is more, I am going to help to pull it down."

He ran to assist the masons, and worked with a degree of zeal, which increased Mrs. Bolingbroke's astonishment.

"Good Heavens!—He could not do more for you if you were his mistress."

"He never did so much for me, till I was his wife," said Emma.

"That's strange!—Very unlike other men. But, my dear," said Mrs. Bolingbroke, taking Mrs. Granby's arm, and drawing her aside, "how did you acquire such surprising power over your husband?"

"By not desiring it, I believe," replied Emma, smiling; "I have never used any other art."

CHAPTER XIV.

> "Et cependant avec toute sa diablerie,
> Il faut que je l'appelle et mon cœur et ma mie."

Our heroine was still meditating upon the extraordinary method by which Emma had acquired power over her husband, when a carriage drove down the lane, and Mr. Bolingbroke's head appeared looking out of the chaise window. His face did not express so much joy as she thought it ought to display at the sight of her, after three weeks' absence. She was vexed, and received him coldly. He turned to Mr. and Mrs. Granby, and was not miserable. Griselda did not speak one word during their walk home; still her husband continued in good spirits: she was more and more out of humour, and took no pains to conceal her displeasure. He bore it well, but then he seemed to feel it so little, that she was exasperated beyond measure; she seized the first convenient opportunity, when she found him alone, of beginning a direct attack.

"This is not the way in which you *used* to meet me, after an absence ever so short." He replied, that he was really very glad to see her, but that she, on the contrary, seemed sorry to see him.

"Because you are quite altered now," continued she, in a querulous tone. "I always prophesied, that you would cease to love me."

"Take care, my dear," said he, smiling; "some prophecies are the cause of their own accomplishment,—the sole cause. Come, my Griselda," continued he, in a serious tone, "do not let us begin to quarrel the moment we meet." He offered to embrace her, but she drew back haughtily. "What! do you confess that you no longer love me?" cried she.

"Far from it: but it is in your own power," said he, hesitating, "to diminish or increase my love."

"Then it is no love, if it can be either increased or diminished," cried she; "it is no love worth having. I remember the day when you swore to me, that your affection could not be increased or diminished."

"I was *in* love in those days, my dear, and did not know what I swore," said Mr. Bolingbroke, endeavouring to turn the conversation: "never reproach a man, when he is sober, with what he said when he was drunk."

"Then you are sober now, are you?" cried she angrily.

"It is to be hoped I am," said he, laughing.

"Cruel, barbarous man!" cried she.

"For being sober?" said he: "have not you been doing all you could to sober me these eighteen months, my dear? and now do not be angry if you have in some degree succeeded."

"Succeeded!—Oh, wretched woman! this is thy lot!" exclaimed Griselda, clasping her hands in an agony of passion. "Oh, that my whole unfortunate sex could *see* me,—could *hear* you at this instant! Never, never did the love of man endure one twelvemonth after marriage. False, treacherous, callous, perjured tyrant! leave me! leave me!"

He obeyed; she called him back, with a voice half suffocated with rage, but he returned not.

Never was departing love recalled by the voice of reproach. It is not, as the poet fables, at the sight of human ties, that

Cupid is frightened, for he is blind; but he has the most delicate ears imaginable: scared at the sound of female objurgation, Love claps his wings and urges his irrevocable flight.

Griselda remained for some time in her apartment to indulge her ill-humour; she had leisure for this indulgence; she was not now, as formerly, disturbed by the fond interruptions of a husband. Longer had her angry fit lasted, but for a circumstance, which may to many of our readers appear unnatural: our heroine became hungry. The passions are more under the control of the hours of meals[1] than any one, who has not observed human life out of novels, can easily believe. Dinner-time came, and Mrs. Bolingbroke appeared at dinner as usual. In the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Granby pride compelled Griselda to command herself, and no one could guess what had passed between her and her husband: but no sooner was she again tête-à-tête with him, than her reproaches recommenced with fresh violence.—"Will you only do me the justice to tell me, Mr. Bolingbroke," cried she, "what reason you have to love me less?"

"Reason, my dear," said he; "you know love is independent of reason, according to your own definition: love is involuntary, you cannot therefore blame me for its caprices."

"Insulting casuistry!" said she, weeping; "sophistical nonsense! Have you any rational complaint to make against me, Bolingbroke?"

"I make no complaints, rational or irrational, my dear; they are all on your side."

"And well they may be," cried Griselda, "when you treat me in such a barbarous manner: but I do not complain; the world shall be my judge; the world will do me justice, if you will not. I appeal to every body who knows me, have I ever given you the slightest cause for ill-usage? Can you accuse me of any extravagance, of any imprudence, sir?"

"I accuse you of neither, Mrs. Bolingbroke."

"No, because you cannot, sir; my character, my fidelity is unimpeached, unimpeachable: the world will do me justice."

Griselda contrived to make even her virtues causes of torment.

[1] De Retz' Memoirs.

Upon the strength of this unimpeachable fidelity, she thought she might be as ill-humoured as she pleased; she seemed now to think that she had acquired an indefeasible right to reproach her husband, since she had extorted from him the confession that he loved her less, and that he had no crime to lay to her charge. Ten days passed on in this manner; the lady becoming every hour more irritable, the gentleman every hour more indifferent.

To have revived or killed affection *secundem artem*, the fair practitioner should now have thrown in a little jealousy: but, unluckily, she was so situated that this was impossible. No object any way fit for the purpose was at hand; nothing was to be found within ten miles of her but honest country squires; and,

> "With all the powers of nature and of art,
> She could not break one stubborn country heart."

CHAPTER XV.

> "To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
> As one who loves and some unkindness meets,
> With sweet austere composure thus replies."

Many privileges are, and ought to be, allowed to the virgin majesty of the sex; and even when the modern fair one does not reply with all the sweet austere composure of Eve, her anger may have charms for a lover. There is a certain susceptibility of temper, that sometimes accompanies the pride of virtue, which indicates a quick sense of shame, and warm feelings of affection; in whatsoever manner this may be shown, it appears amiable and graceful. And if this sensibility degenerate into irritability, a lover pardons it in his mistress; it is her prerogative to be haughty; and if he be dexterous to seize "the moment of returning love," it is often his interest to promote quarrels, for the sake of the pleasures of reconciliation. The jealous doubts, the alternate hopes and fears, attendant on the passion of love, are dear to the lover whilst his passion lasts; but when that subsides—as subside it must—his taste for alter-

cation ceases. The proverb which favours the quarrels of lovers may prove fatal to the happiness of husbands; and woe be to the wife who puts her faith in it! There are, however, people who would extend that dangerous maxim even to the commerce of friendship; and it must be allowed (for morality, neither in small matters nor great, can gain any thing by suppressing the truth), it must be allowed that in the commencement of an intimacy the quarrels of friends may tend to increase their mutual regard, by affording to one or both of them opportunities of displaying qualities superior even to good humour; such as truth, fidelity, honour, or generosity. But whatever may be the sum total of their merit, when upon long acquaintance it comes to be fully known and justly appreciated, the most splendid virtues or talents can seldom compensate in domestic life for the want of temper. The fallacy of a maxim, like the absurdity of an argument, is sometimes best proved by pushing it as far as it can go, by observing all its consequences. Our heroine, in the present instance, illustrates this truth to admiration: her life and her husband's had now become a perpetual scene of disputes and reproaches; every day the quarrels grew more bitter, and the reconciliations less sweet.

One morning, Griselda and her husband were present whilst Emma was busy showing some poor children how to plait straw for hats.

"Next summer, my dear, when we are settled at home, I hope you will encourage some manufacture of this kind amongst the children of our tenants," said Mr. Bolingbroke to his lady.

"I have no genius for teaching manufactures of this sort," replied Mrs. Bolingbroke, scornfully.

Her husband urged the matter no farther. A few minutes afterwards, he drew out a straw from a bundle, which one of the children held.

"This is a fine straw!" said he, carelessly.

"Fine straw!" cried Mrs. Bolingbroke: "no—that is very coarse. This," continued she, pulling one from another bundle; "this is a fine straw, if you please."

"I think mine is the finest," said Mr. Bolingbroke.

"Then you must be blind, Mr. Bolingbroke," cried the lady, eagerly comparing them.

"Well, my dear," said he, laughing, "we will not dispute about straws."

"No, indeed," said she; "but I observe whenever you know you are in the wrong, Mr. Bolingbroke, you say, *we will not dispute, my dear:* now pray look at these straws, Mrs. Granby, you that have eyes—which is the finest?"

"I will draw lots," said Emma, taking one playfully from Mrs. Bolingbroke; "for it seems to me, that there is little or no difference between them."

"No difference? Oh, my dear Emma!" said Mrs. Bolingbroke.

"My dear Griselda," cried her husband, taking the other straw from her and blowing it away; "indeed it is not worth disputing about: this is too childish."

"Childish!" repeated she, looking after the straw, as it floated down the wind; "I see nothing childish in being in the right: your raising your voice in that manner never convinces me. Jupiter is always in the wrong, you know, when he has recourse to his thunder."

"Thunder, my dear Griselda, about a straw! Well, when women are determined to dispute, it is wonderful how ingenious they are in finding subjects. I give you joy, my dear, of having attained the perfection of the art: you can now literally dispute about straws."

Emma insisted at this instant upon having an opinion about the shape of a hat, which she had just tied under the chin of a rosy little girl of six years old; upon whose smiling countenance she fixed the attention of the angry lady.

All might now have been well; but Griselda had a pernicious habit of recurring to any slight words of blame which had been used by her friends. Her husband had congratulated her upon having attained the perfection of the art of disputing, since she could cavil about straws. This reproach rankled in her mind. There are certain diseased states of the body, in which the slightest wound festers, and becomes incurable. It is the same with the mind; and our heroine's was in this dangerous predicament.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Que suis je?—qu'ai je fait? Que dois-je faire encore?
Quel transport me saisit? Quel chagrin me dévore?"

Some hours after the quarrel about the straws, when her husband had entirely forgotten it, and was sitting very quietly in his own apartment writing a letter, Griselda entered the room with a countenance prepared for great exploits.

"Mr. Bolingbroke," she began in an awful tone of voice, "if you are at leisure to attend to me, I wish to speak to you upon a subject of some importance."

"I am quite at leisure, my dear; pray sit down: what is the matter? you really alarm me!"

"It is not my intention to alarm you, Mr. Bolingbroke," continued she in a still more solemn tone; "the time is past when what I have to say could have alarmed: I am persuaded that you will now hear it without emotion, or with an emotion of pleasure."

She paused; he laid down his pen, and looked all expectation.

"I am come to announce to you a fixed, unalterable resolution—To part from you, Mr. Bolingbroke."

"Are you serious, my dear?"

"Perfectly serious, sir."

These words did not produce the revolution in her husband's countenance which Griselda had expected. She trembled with a mixed indescribable emotion of grief and rage when she heard him calmly reply, "Let us part, then, Griselda, if that be your wish; but let me be sure that it is your wish: I must have it repeated from your lips when you are perfectly calm."

With a voice inarticulate from passion, Griselda began to assure him that she was perfectly calm; but he stopped her, and mildly said, "Take four-and-twenty hours to consider of what you are about, Griselda; I will be here at this time to-morrow to learn your final determination."

Mr. Bolingbroke left the room.

Mrs. Bolingbroke was incapable of thinking: she could only feel. Conflicting passions assailed her heart. All the woman *rushed* upon her soul; she loved her husband more at this instant

than she had ever loved him before. His firmness excited at once her anger and her admiration. She could not believe that she had heard his *words rightly*. She sat down to recall minutely every circumstance of what had just passed, every word, every look; she finished by persuading herself, that his calmness was affected, that the best method she could possibly take was by a show of resistance to bully him out of his indifference. She little knew what she hazarded; when the danger of losing her husband's love was imaginary, and solely of her own creating, it affected her in the most violent manner; but now that the peril was real and imminent, she was insensible to its existence.

A celebrated traveller in the Alps advises people to imagine themselves walking amidst precipices, when they are safe upon smooth ground; and he assures them that by this practice they may inure themselves so to the idea of danger, as to prevent all sense of it in the most perilous situations.

The four-and-twenty hours passed; and at the appointed moment our heroine and her husband met. As she entered the room, she observed that he held a book in his hand, but was not reading: he put it down, rose deliberately, and placed a chair for her, in silence.

"I thank you, I would rather stand," said she: he put aside the chair, and walked to a door at the other end of the room, to examine whether there was any one in the adjoining apartment.

"It is not necessary that what we have to say should be overheard by servants," said he.

"I have no objection to being overheard," said Griselda: "I have nothing to say of which I am ashamed; and all the world must know it soon."

As Mr. Bolingbroke returned towards her, she examined his countenance with an inquisitive eye. It was expressive of concern; grave, but calm.

Whoever has seen a balloon—the reader, however impatient, must listen to this allusion—whoever has seen a balloon, may have observed that in its flaccid state it can be folded and unfolded with the greatest ease, and it is manageable even by a child; but when once filled, the force of multitudes cannot restrain, nor the art of man direct its course. Such is the human mind—so tractable before, so ungovernable after it fills with passion. By

slow degrees, unnoticed by our heroine, the balloon had been filling. It was full; but yet it was held down by strong cords: it remained with her to cut or not to cut them.

"Reflect before you speak, my dear Griselda," said her husband; "consider that on the words which you are going to pronounce depend your fate and mine."

"I have reflected sufficiently," said she, "and decide, Mr. Bolingbroke—to part."

"Be it so!" cried he; fire flashed from his eyes; he grew red and pale in an instant. "Be it so," repeated he, in an irrevocable voice—"We part for ever!"

He vanished before Griselda could speak or think. She was breathless; her limbs trembled; she could not support herself; she sunk she knew not where. She certainly loved her husband better than any thing upon earth, except power. When she came to her senses, and perceived that she was alone, she felt as if she was abandoned by all the world. The dreadful words "for ever," still sounded in her ears. She was tempted to yield her humour to her affection. It was but a momentary struggle; the love of sway prevailed. When she came more fully to herself, she recurred to the belief that her husband could not be in earnest, or at least that he would never persist, if she had but the courage to dare him to the utmost.

CHAPTER XVII.

"L'ai-je vu se troubler, et me plaindre un moment?
En ai-je pu tirer un seul gémissement?"

Ashamed of her late weakness, our heroine rallied all her spirits, and resolved to meet her husband at supper with an undaunted countenance. Her provoking composure was admirably prepared: but it was thrown away, for Mr. Bolingbroke did not appear at supper. When Griselda retired to rest, she found a note from him on her dressing-table; she tore it open with a triumphant hand, certain that it came to offer terms of reconciliation.

"You will appoint whatever friend you think proper to settle the terms of our separation. The time I desire to be as soon as possible. I have not mentioned what has passed to Mr. or Mrs. Granby; you will mention it to them or not, as you think fit. On this point, as on all others, you will henceforward follow your own discretion.

"T. BOLINGBROKE."

"Twelve o'clock;
"Saturday, Aug. 10th."

Mrs. Bolingbroke read and re-read this note, weighed every word, examined every letter, and at last exclaimed aloud, "He will not, cannot, part from me."

"He cannot be in earnest," thought she. "Either he is acting a part or he is in a passion. Perhaps he is instigated by Mr. Granby:—no, that cannot be, because he says he has not mentioned it to Mr. or Mrs. Granby, and he always speaks the truth. If Emma had known it, she would have prevented him from writing such a harsh note, for she is such a good creature. I have a great mind to consult her; she is so indulgent, so soothing. But what does Mr. Bolingbroke say about her? He leaves me to my own discretion, to mention what has passed or not. That means, mention it, speak to Mrs. Granby, that she may advise you to submit. I will not say a word to her; I will out-general him yet. He cannot leave me when it comes to the trial."

She sat down, and wrote instantly this answer to her husband's note:

"I agree with you entirely, that the sooner we part the better. I shall write to-morrow to my friend Mrs. Nettleby, with whom I choose to reside. Mr. John Nettleby is the person I fix upon to settle the terms of our separation. In three days I shall have Mrs. Nettleby's answer. This is Saturday: on Tuesday, then, we part—for ever.

"GRISELDA BOLINGBROKE."

Mrs. Bolingbroke summoned her maid. "Deliver this note," said she, "with your own hand; do not send Le Grand with it to his master."

Griselda waited impatiently for her maid's return.

"No answer, madam."

"No answer! are you certain?"

"Certain, ma'am: my master only said, 'Very well.'"

"And why did not you ask him if there was any answer?"

"I did, ma'am. I said, 'Is there no answer for my lady?' 'No answer,' said he."

"Was he up?"

"No, ma'am: he was in bed."

"Was he asleep when you went in?"

"I cannot say positively, ma'am: he undrew the curtain as I went in, and asked, 'Who's there?'"

"Did you go in on tiptoe?"

"I forget, really, ma'am."

"You forget really! Idiot!"

"But, ma'am, I recollect he turned his head to go to sleep as I closed the curtain."

"You need not wait," said Mrs. Bolingbroke.

Provoked beyond the power of sleep, Mrs. Bolingbroke gave free expression to her feelings, in an eloquent letter to Mrs. Nettleby; but even after this relief, Griselda could not rest; so much was she disturbed by the repose that her husband enjoyed, or was reputed to enjoy. In the morning she placed her letter in full view upon the mantel-piece in the drawing-room, in hopes that it would strike terror into the heart of her husband. To her great mortification, she saw Mr. Bolingbroke, with an unchanged countenance, give it to the servant, who came to ask for "letters for the post." She had now three days of grace, before Mrs. Nettleby's answer could arrive; but of these she disdained to take advantage: she never mentioned what had passed to Mrs. Granby, but persisted in the same haughty conduct towards her husband, persuaded that she should conquer at last.

The third day came, and brought an answer from Mrs. Nettleby. After a prodigious parade of professions, a decent display of astonishment at Mr. Bolingbroke's strange conduct, and pity for her dear Griselda, Mrs. Nettleby came to the point, and was sorry to say, that Mr. Nettleby was in one of his obstinate fits, and could not be brought to listen to the scheme

so near her heart: "He would have nothing to do, he said, with settling the terms of Mr. and Mrs. Bolingbroke's separation, not he!—He absolutely refuses to meddle between man and wife; and calls it meddling," continued Mrs. Nettleby, "to receive you as an inmate, after you have parted from your husband. Mr. Bolingbroke, he says, has always been very civil to him, and came to see him in town; therefore he will not encourage Mrs. Bolingbroke in her tantarums. I represented to him, that Mr. B. desires the thing, and leaves the choice of a residence to yourself: but Mr. Nettleby replied, in his brutal way, that you might choose a residence where you would, except in his house; that his house was his castle, and should never be turned into an asylum for runagate wives; that he would not set such an example to his own wife, &c. But," continued Mrs. Nettleby, "you can imagine all the foolish things he said, and I need not repeat them, to vex you and myself. I know that he refuses to receive you, my dear Mrs. Bolingbroke, on purpose to provoke me. But what can one do or say to such a man?—Adieu, my dear. Pray write when you are at leisure, and tell me how things are settled, or rather what is settled upon you; which, to be sure, is now the only thing that you have to consider.

"Ever yours, affectionately,

"R. H. Nettleby.

"P.S. Before you leave Devonshire, do, my dear, get me some of the fine Devonshire lace; three or four dozen yards will do. I trust implictly to your taste. You know I do not mind the price; only let it be broad, for narrow lace is my aversion."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Lost is the dear delight of giving pain!"

Mortified by her dear friend's affectionate letter and postscript, Griselda was the more determined to persist in her resolution to defy her husband to the utmost. The catastrophe, she thought, would always be in her own power; she recollected various

separation scenes in novels and plays, where the lady, after having tormented her husband or lover by every species of ill conduct, reforms in an instant, and a reconciliation is effected by some miraculous means. Our heroine had seen Lady Townley admirably well acted, and doubted not that she could now perform her part victoriously. With this hope, or rather in this confidence, she went in search of Mr. Bolingbroke. He was not in the house; he had gone out to take a solitary walk. Griselda hoped that she was the object of his reflections, during his lonely ramble.

"Yes," said she to herself, "my power is not exhausted: I shall make his heart ache yet; and when he yields, how I will revenge myself!"

She rang for her woman, and gave orders to have every thing immediately prepared for her departure. "As soon as the trunks are packed, let them be corded, and placed in the great hall," said she.

Our heroine, who had a happy memory, full well recollected the effect which the sight of the corded trunks produced in the "Simple Story," and she thought the stroke so good that it would bear repetition. With malice prepense, she therefore prepared the blow, which she flattered herself could not fail to astound her victim. Her pride still revolted from the idea of consulting Mrs. Granby; but some apology was requisite for thus abruptly quitting her house. Mrs. Bolingbroke began in a tone that seemed intended to preclude all discussion.

"Mrs. Granby, do you know that Mr. Bolingbroke and I have come to a resolution to be happy the rest of our lives; and, for this purpose, we find it expedient to separate. Do not start or look so shocked, my dear. This word separation may sound terrible to some people, but I have, thank Heaven! sufficient strength of mind to hear it with perfect composure. When a couple who are chained together pull different ways, the sooner they break their chain the better. I shall set out immediately for Weymouth. You will excuse me, my dear Mrs. Granby; you see the necessity of the case."

Mrs. Granby, with the most delicate kindness, began to expostulate; but Griselda declared that she was incapable of using a friend so ill as to pretend to listen to advice, when her mind

was determined irrevocably. Emma had no intention, she said, of obtruding her advice, but she wished that Mrs. Bolingbroke would give her own excellent understanding time to act, and that she would not throw away the happiness of her life in a fit of passion. Mrs. Bolingbroke protested that she never was freer from passion of every sort than she was at this moment. With an unusually placid countenance, she turned from Mrs. Granby and sat down to the piano-forte. "We shall not agree if I talk any more upon this subject," continued she, "therefore I had better sing. I believe my music is better than my logic: at all events I prefer music."

In a fine *bravura* style Griselda then began to sing—

> "What have I to do with thee,
> Dull, unjoyous constancy?" &c.

And afterwards she played all her gayest airs to convince Mrs. Granby that her heart was quite at ease. She continued playing for an unconscionable time, with the most provoking perseverance.

Emma stood at the window, watching for Mr. Bolingbroke's return. "Here comes Mr. Bolingbroke!—How melancholy he looks!—Oh, my dear Griselda," cried she, stopping Mrs. Bolingbroke's hand as it ran gaily over the keys, "this is no time for mirth or bravado: let me conjure you——"

"I hate to be conjured," interrupted Griselda, breaking from her; "I am not a child, to be coaxed and kissed and sugar-plummed into being good, and behaving prettily. Do me the favour to let Mr. Bolingbroke know that I am in the study, and desire to speak to him for one minute."

No power could detain the peremptory lady: she took her way to the study, and rejoiced as she crossed the hall, to see the trunks placed as she had ordered. It was impossible that her husband could avoid seeing them the moment he should enter the house.—What a satisfaction!——Griselda seated herself at ease in an arm-chair in the study, and took up a book which lay open on the table. Mr. Bolingbroke's pencil-case was in it, and the following passage was marked:

"Il y a un lieu sur la terre où les joies pures sont inconnues; d'où la politesse est exilée et fait place à l'égoïsme, à la contra-

diction, aux injures à demivoilées; le remords et l'inquiétude, furies infatigables, y tourmentent les habitans. Ce lieu est la maison de deux époux qui ne peuvent ni s'estimer, ni s'aimer.

"Il y a un lieu sur la terre où le vice ne s'introduit pas, où les passions tristes n'ont jamais d'empire, où le plaisir et l'innocence habitent toujours ensemble, où les soins sont chers, où les travaux sont doux, où les peines s'oublient dans les entretiens, où l'on jouit du passé, du présent, de l'avenir; et c'est la maison de deux époux qui s'aiment[1]."

A pang of remorse seized Griselda, as she read these words; they seemed to have been written on purpose for her. Struck with the sense of her own folly, she paused—she doubted;—but then she thought that she had gone too far to recede. Her pride could not bear the idea of acknowledging that she had been wrong, or of seeking reconcilement.

"I could live very happily with this man; but then to yield the victory to him!—and to reform!——No, no—all reformed heroines are stupid and odious."

CHAPTER XIX.

"And, vanquish'd, quit victoriously the field."

Griselda flung the book from her as her husband entered the room.

"You have had an answer, madam, from your friend, Mrs. Nettleby, I perceive," said he, calmly.

"I have, sir. Family reasons prevent her from receiving me at present; therefore I have determined upon going to Weymouth; where, indeed, I always wished to spend this summer."

Mr. Bolingbroke evinced no surprise, and made not the slightest opposition. Mrs. Bolingbroke was so much vexed, that she could scarcely command her countenance: she bit her lip violently.

"With respect to any arrangements that are to be made, I am

[1] M. de Saint Lambert, Œuvres Philosophiques, tome ii.

to understand that you wish me to address myself to Mr. J. Nettleby," said her husband.

"No, to myself, if you please; I am prepared to listen, sir, to whatever you may have to propose."

"These things are always settled best in writing," replied Mr. Bolingbroke. "Be so obliging as to leave me your direction, and you shall hear from me, or from Mrs. Granby, in a few days."

Mrs. Bolingbroke hastily wrote a direction upon a card, and put it into her husband's hand, with as much unconcern as she could maintain. Mr. Bolingbroke continued, precisely in the same tone: "If you have any thing to suggest, that may contribute to your future convenience, madam, you will be so good as to leave a memorandum with me, to which I shall attend."

He placed a sheet of paper before Mrs. Bolingbroke, and put a pen into her hand. She made an effort to write, but her hand trembled so that she could not form a letter. Her husband took up Saint Lambert, and read, or seemed to read.——"Open the window, Mr. Bolingbroke," said she. He obeyed, but did not, as formerly, "hang over her enamoured." He had been so often duped by her fainting-fits and hysterics, that now, when she suffered in earnest, he suspected her of artifice. He took up his book again, and marked a page with his pencil. She wrote a line with a hurried hand, then starting up, flung her pen from her, and exclaimed—"I need not, will not write; I have no request to make to you, Mr. Bolingbroke; do what you will; I have no wishes, no wish upon earth——but to leave you."

"That wish will be soon accomplished, madam," replied he, unmoved.

She pulled the bell till it broke.—A servant appeared.

"My carriage to the door directly, if you please, sir," cried she.

A pause ensued. Griselda sat swelling with unutterable rage. —"Heavens! have you no feeling left?" exclaimed she, snatching the book from his hand; "have you no feeling left, Mr. Bolingbroke, for any thing?"

"You have left me none for some things, Mrs. Bolingbroke, and I thank you. All this would have broken my heart six months ago."

"You have no heart to break," cried she.—The carriage drove to the door.

"One word more, before I leave you for ever, Mr. Bolingbroke," continued she.—"Blame yourself, not me, for all this. —When we were first married, you humoured, you spoiled me; no temper could bear it.—Take the consequences of your own weak indulgence.——Farewell."

He made no effort to retain her, and she left the room.

> ———————— "Thus it shall befall
> Him who to worth in woman overtrusting
> Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
> And left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
> She first his *weak indulgence* will accuse."

A confused recollection of this warning of Adam's was in Mr. Bolingbroke's head at this moment.

Mrs. Bolingbroke's carriage drove by the window, and she kissed her hand to him as she passed. He had not sufficient presence of mind to return the compliment. Our heroine enjoyed this last triumph of superior temper.

Whether the victory was worth the winning, whether the modern Griselda persisted in her spirited sacrifice of happiness, whether she was ever reconciled to her husband, or whether the fear of "reforming and growing stupid" prevailed, are questions which we leave to the sagacity or the curiosity of her fair contemporaries.

> "He that knows better how to tame a shrew,
> Let him now speak, 'tis charity to shew."

THE END.