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The Olive Percival  
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Children's Books











THE  
TWO COUSINS;  
A  
MORAL STORY.









*Mary Thomson discovered asleep in the Snow by Mrs. Leyster & her Daughter.*

THE  
TWO COUSINS,  
A  
MORAL STORY,  
FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

IN WHICH IS EXEMPLIFIED  
THE NECESSITY OF MODERATION AND JUSTICE  
TO THE ATTAINMENT OF HAPPINESS.

By the AUTHOR of THE BLIND CHILD  
AND  
DRAMATIC DIALOGUES.

---

When man has cast off his ambitious greatness,  
And sunk into the sweetness of himself,  
Not great but good desires his daily servants,  
How quietly he sleeps, how joyfully  
He wakes again, and looks on his possessions!

Smell to this flower,  
Can all the perfumes of the empire pass this?  
The carefullest lady's cheek shew such a colour?  
They are gilded and adulterate vanities,  
And here in poverty lives noble nature!

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for E. NEWBERRY, at the corner of St.  
Paul's Church-yard.

M D C C X C V I I I.

[*Entered at Stationers Hall.*]



A D D R E S S

TO THE

P U B L I C.



**G**RATIFIED as I am by the  
success which has attended my  
two former works, I do not with  
the less diffidence submit this to the  
judgment of the Public. On the  
*execution* of this little work I am  
unable to determine, but upon the  
*intention*

*intention* my heart pronounces an unequivocal sentence. Perhaps then I am not too bold in believing, that a love of virtue, of justice and religion, may be traced in the following pages; and no hope can be sweeter to my heart, than that they may ultimately impress a similar adoration of those great principles on the minds of the rising generation. That author who, in the present age, exerts herself to the utmost of her power against the inroads of luxury, of injustice, of a disregard to the laws  
of

of her country and religion, however slight the effect of her exertions may be, has surely not lived entirely in vain.





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T H E  
T W O C O U S I N S , &c.

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C H A P T E R I.

**A** BOUT a mile from a pretty town in Hampshire, lived Mrs. Leyster, a widow, and still a young woman, with her only daughter Constantia, who was at the time these anecdotes begin near eleven years of age. The house in which they lived was a small white building, with a lawn before, parted from harvest fields by a funk fence, and commanding a fine extent of country. Behind the house, and on the north side, was a

**B**

little

little shrubbery surrounded by a green wire fence, and on the south side the walled kitchen garden; so that the house being open only to the west, was sheltered from the cold winds, and consequently extremely warm and comfortable. A small village was situated at a very short distance from this pleasant residence; it was entirely occupied by industrious poor, who always found a friend in time of necessity at Fair-Lawn, for so Mrs. Leyster's house was called. Constantia was, as the following pages will prove, a little girl of an amiable disposition; she had very good sense, an even temper, and a kind affectionate heart, so that she repaid as far as possible the unremitting care and attention of her mother. I say as far as possible, because it

is

is only by a whole life of duty and virtue that a child can repay a tender mother the debt which it begins to incur at the moment of its birth. The anxiety which fills the heart of a mother while a child is in the state of infancy, her watchful nights, her days of fear and caution, a child cannot even imagine; and when this infant so anxiously guarded becomes older, do the mother's cares lessen?—on the contrary they encrease, the heedlessness of youth continually awakens them, a blow, a fall, an accident of any kind gives to the heart of a mother an exquisite pang. But ah! if she sees, or believes she sees the least tendency towards peevishness, want of feeling or obstinacy, then indeed her uneasiness becomes insupportable; she imagines all her cares

are useless, and the only hope of her life departing from her. Pardon this digression, my young friends, in consideration of its consequence, and think as you read it how carefully you ought to avoid as much as possible giving pain to the hearts of your parents. Constantia indeed knew not the extent of her obligations to her mother, but she knew enough to convince her that she could never repay them; she studied therefore in every thing to be mild, tractable and obliging; she gave all her attention to those lessons her mother wished her to learn, and in general was successful. Mrs. Leyster taught her to read, work and write, and also the first principles of drawing: a dancing master came twice, and a French master three times a week to give her lessons.

lessons. Music made no part of her plan, for as Constantia's fortune would not be large, Mrs. Leyster considered an accomplishment which requires so much time an unnecessary one. Constantia however had a sweet, delicate voice, and a good ear, and Mrs Leyster, who had considerable knowledge of music, took pleasure in directing both, so that before Constantia was ten years old, she could sing several songs pretily and agreeably. In these pleasing and various amusements the days passed on, when one morning in the winter, which completed Constantia's eleventh year, after a heavy fall of snow which remained the depth of some feet on the ground, the sun shone out very bright, and the frost was so hard that Mrs. Leyster imagined a walk in the

shrubbery might not be unpleasant. The trees hanging over had prevented the snow from covering the walks, and Constantia, who had been confined some days by the weather, gladly prepared to accompany her mother. She ran sometimes before her, sometimes in another walk, with all the joy of a young bird who has just learned the use of his wings; while Mrs. Leyster walked quickly on to keep herself warm, and admired the beautiful winter piece which met her view, the snow sparkling in the sun, the long icicles which hung from the trees, the branches covered with frost work, were all agreeable to her eyes. Constantia at last came running to her mother, and taking her by the hand, said, "Now, mama, I will walk with you."

MRS. LEYSTER.

Do so, my dear, if you like it. You have warmed yourself, have you not?

CONSTANCE.

Oh yes, mama!—It is charming to run, how dearly I love to come out of doors!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Especially after being shut up for two or three days!

CONSTANCE.

Yes indeed!—I fancied while I sat by the fire the cold much greater than it is, and let me sit ever so close I could not be warm; but now I am quite in a glow—dear mama, I wish you would run too!

MRS. LEYSTER, (*Laughing.*)

Consider, Constance, I have more weight to carry than you, and of course

the exercise of walking pretty quickly warms me as much as you are warmed by running.

CONSTANCE.

Mama, how glad I shall be when Spring comes, and the flowers!—My bed of Hyacinths will be beautiful!—Oh, I wish they were come, I wish it was Spring!

MRS. LEYSTER.

But then, Constantia, it will be so warm, I shall not suffer you to run; and besides, our charming long evenings, you will lose them!

CONSTANCE.

Ah, our evenings! How sorry I shall be! It is so comfortable to sit by the  
fire



fire with the curtains down and work! And then, mama, you are always so chearful in a winter evening; you read to me such charming stories, and you are so good as to sup an hour sooner, that I may sup with you!—Ah, I shall be sorry when winter is gone!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yet you just now wished for Spring! Thus you see, my child, every season is charming if we are disposed to be pleased with it, and to put ourselves in the way of tasting its charms. Do you suppose your cousin in London enjoys the different seasons as much as you do?

CONSTANCE.

No indeed, mama, for you tell me they have no flowers in London, so she

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cannot

cannot enjoy the Spring as I do.—Ah, but I had forgot, they leave London in the Spring and Summer!

MRS. LEYSTER.

They do so, but are they better situated? They go to the sea-side, not to enjoy the view of the ocean, or the beauties that surround it, but to mingle with the same crowd in which they have lived all the winter, and pass the fine evenings of Summer in crowded rooms, from which the mild twilight and the bright moon are excluded, and their place ill supplied by wax-lights reflected from mirrors and diamonds.

CONSTANCE.

True, mama, but at least in the winter.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

In the Winter they lead the same kind of life; and as in the Summer they faint with heat, so in the Winter they tremble with cold, which all their carpets and furs cannot exclude, since they take no exercise to render them proof against it. I have tried this life, and found how little real pleasure is to be derived from it, so that I willingly exchange it for that I lead at present.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, poor Alicia!—I pity her—don't you think, mama, she would like to come hither in the Summer?

MRS. LEYSTER.

No, my dear, although she is but thirteen, she has been introduced by a

mistaken indulgence into company; she has acquired a relish for dissipation, and lost that desire which young people naturally have for the charms and liberty of the country. But my dear Constantia, I think we shall be able to go under the hedges to the village; 'tis some time since we saw the poor people, and perhaps in this severe weather they may want something.

## CONSTANCE.

Yes, indeed—I want sadly to know how poor Dame Burden's rheumatism is—I am a afraid the cold will make her worse. They then walked on a quick pace, still conversing with great cheerfulness, when they were startled by the howling of a dog, who was concealed by  
the

the winding of the hedge from their eyes—but in a minute, as if at hearing their voices, he came running towards them, wagging his tail and whining in the most expressive manner, seemingly to intreat their assistance.—“ Poor fellow, poor fellow !” said Constantia. The dog then jumped up and again whined, then ran a little way forward, then stood still looking at them, and again whined. “ What does this mean,” said Mrs. Leyster, this dog seems to implore our assistance ; they are very sagacious, let us follow him.”—At that instant they heard the faint cry of an infant, and the dog sprung out of their sight, howling most piteously. “ What is this !” —said Mrs. Leyster, “ I heard the cry of a child—good Heavens, perhaps—Let us hasten.” Constantia

stantia quitting her mother's hand now ran lightly on, while Mrs. Leyster followed, as fast as the snow and her agitation would let her; but before she had turned the corner of the hedge, Constantia out of breath, with her cheeks the colour of crimson, ran back exclaiming—  
“mama, mama!—Make haste, oh, make haste—a woman! a poor little infant!”

## C H A P. II.

AT these words Mrs. Leyster redoubled her speed, and in two minutes arrived at the place where the dog stood howling over the apparently dead body of a woman, in whose arms lay a bundle wrapped in a long cloth cloak. As Mrs. Leyster advanced, she discovered that this bundle was a young child, whose faint cries seemed to deplore the loss of that nourishment it could no longer draw from the breast of its mother. "Unhappy woman!" said Mrs. Leyster, "I fear she is frozen to death!—Good Heaven,

ven,

ven, what must she have suffered during the inclemency of last night!

CONSTANCE.

Frozen, mama!—Oh, how dreadful! Poor little baby, how it cries—Hush, poor child!—mama, what shall we do?

MRS. LEYSTER, (*shedding tears.*)

See, Constantia, how carefully the poor creature has wrapped up her infant, so that it seems not to have received the least injury—poor little dear, how nice and clean it is, and the woman is decently dressed—Run, my child, as fast as possible, to the house; send Martha and Thomas up hither, and bid them bring some brandy, some blankets and a chair



chair—Make what haste you can, but be careful not to fall down.

Constantia hastened away, and in about a quarter of an hour returned, followed by the servants with the things Mrs. Leyster had ordered: in the mean time she had not been idle, she had employed all the means she could think of to recover the poor woman, and fancied she could perceive a faint motion of the heart, and other slight signs of life. The poor creature was quickly placed in the chair, and carefully conveyed to the house by the wondering servants, while Mrs. Leyster followed carrying the baby. As soon as they entered the house, they would have carried the poor woman to the fire, under a notion of thawing her  
frozen

frozen limbs, but this Mrs. Leyster forbade.

CONSTANCE.

Not carry her to the fire, mama! Will that not recover her sooner than any thing?

MRS. LEYSTER.

On the contrary, my dear, it will cause her frozen limbs to mortify directly.—I have already rubbed her hands and feet with snow, an application which must be continued.

CONSTANCE.

Rubbed them with snow, mama?—

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yes, that is the safest means of recovering her—My dear Constance, send  
Thomas

Thomas for Mr. Horland the Surgeon, and desire he will come directly.

The woman was then put to bed, and in less than half an hour strong signs of life appeared, which continued to increase till the arrival of the Surgeon, who approved of all that had been done, and used other remedies which had the desired effect, for in a short time she opened her eyes and faintly exclaimed, "Jenny!—Oh, my dear baby!"—This exclamation affected Mrs. Leyster to tears; they flowed some time, and relieved her heart from the agitation which oppressed it since she found this poor creature. The dog who had found his way into the bed-chamber, now jumped up, and licked his mistress's hands; she seemed to recollect

lect him, and said in a low voice, "poor Rover!"—then added, "Jenny, where is my poor Jenny!"—Mrs. Leyster now took the infant from the arms of her servant, where, after being fed, it had fallen into a sweet sleep, and put it into the bed; the poor woman again opened her eyes, looked at the baby, and said, "what, asleep my child?—*You* are not cold—thank God you are alive!"—She then looked wildly about her, exclaiming, "Oh, where am I?—I thought I was in the snow—and so cold—I dreamed it!—But what room is this, who are all these?"—Mrs. Leyster then motioned for every body to keep out of sight, and kneeling by the bed-side, said, "my good woman, be composed, you are with friends, and very safe, you have  
been

been ill, but try to sleep, and you will soon be well again!—"My head," said the poor creature, putting her hand to it, "is so bad, I cannot recollect any thing—But my child is here, and we are not in the snow—poor Rover, *you* are here too!" Mrs Leyster then drew the curtains, and went to the farther end of the room; she sent away every body but Constantia, and sat down with her to watch the event. The poor woman was soon asleep, and the dog laying down by her side slept also. When Mrs. Leyster was convinced that her patient was asleep, she with Constance left the room, and sent Martha to sit there while they dined. The whole of that day the poor woman passed in a sort of dozing insensibility, though she gradually amended, and by the

next

next morning was able to rise for a few hours, and to understand by what means she had been brought thither. Her gratitude to Mrs. Leyster and all her family was unbounded and inexpressible; she could only shed tears, utter broken sentences, and press her child to her bosom, while she lifted up her eyes to Heaven in thankfulness for its preservation, and to call down blessings on her benefactors—then turning them on Mrs. Leyster, she would say—“Oh, Madam!—my child—*you* have saved her!—May God reward you by blessing yours!” The force of this blessing Mrs. Leyster fully felt—none could strike upon her heart with so much power as that which had her daughter for its object! In a few days the woman, whose name was understood

to be Thomson, was perfectly recovered; she eagerly strove to assist the servants in doing every thing they would suffer her to have a hand in, and about the fifth day after that in which she had been found, she sent to beg leave to speak with Mrs. Leyster, a request which was immediately granted, and she came into the parlour with her child in her arms, curtsying and with tears in her eyes. Constantia, who was grown very fond of the child, took it in her arms, while the following dialogue passed.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Come in, Mrs. Thomson, I am told you have something to say to me—Sit down, Mrs. Thomson—Thank you, Madam, I will stand if you please.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

No, no, sit down, you are weak still.

MARY THOMSON.

Ah, Madam, how good you are! I can never thank you as I ought to do!— I dont know how to speak—but my heart (*putting her hand to it with great emotion*) Oh, Madam, my heart is so full I cannot bear it!

MRS. LEYSTER, (*affected.*)

But this is not what you had to say to me!

MARY THOMPSON.

No, Madam, I dont know how to speak it, but I must not burthen you any longer—God knows, " I was a stranger and you took me in!" but I will not encroach



encroach upon your charity; I have no right to do it, I can never repay what you have done for me already!

MRS. LEYSTER.

You have been too ill hitherto to inform me who you are, or whither you were going; will you tell me now?

MARY THOMSON.

Yes, surely, madam, since you are so kind as to ask it:—my name is Mary Thomson, and I am a widow, my husband has been dead only five months!

MRS. LEYSTER.

What employment was he?

MARY THOMSON.

Madam, he was a journeyman carpenter; we had been married four years,

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and

and went on pretty well. I had one child before this you see here, but it died. My husband was very industrious, but though we were poor, we never had occasion to ask any thing of any body; besides, a good lady that I had lived servant with many years stood godmother to my first child, and was very kind to us indeed; but just before my little Jenny was born, this Lady died; she left me five guineas—but alas! madam, just after that my husband fell from a scaffold and broke his arm. Then, madam, we both suffered indeed, he with pain, and I to see him. My five guineas was soon expended, he could not work, and every thing went heavily with us!

MRS. LEYSTER, (*wiping her eyes.*)

Poor creature—you are too much affected

fectcd—I will hear the rest another time.

## MARY THOMSON.

No Ma'am, if you please I will tell you now;—I have thought of these things so often, and shed so many tears, that I don't seem to mind it so much now. —My husband, ma'am, was so weakened by the pain he went through, that being always slight, it threw him into a consumption, of which he died at the end of four months, and left me without money or friends; all my little furniture was gone to keep him in his illness; the parish were forced to bury him, and to allow me something, little enough, but sufficient with my own hard work to keep us alive.

MRS. LEYSTER.

And what caused you to leave this place in which you lived?

MARY THOMSON.

Why, madam, I have a sister at Portsmouth; she wrote me word if I and my child would come to her, she could put me in a little shop with her husband's aunt, who would be glad to have me, as I could write and keep a book; so, madam, I sold what little I had, and came on about twenty miles to a relation's, where my sister was to meet me; but there, madam, instead of my sister, I found a letter, telling me, the person I was to have been in business with had died suddenly, and as my sister had no

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means to provide for me, she advised me to go back to my Parish. I was fain to take her advice, and was going back very sad on foot, when the snow came on just before night; I was bewildered and lost my way, and at last, tired out I sat down, intending to rest a few minutes, and wrapped up my child as warm as I could in my own cloak, when I found myself exceeding cold, and then so very sleepy, that I could not keep awake; so I lay down for a minute, and from that time only remember feeling cold and sleepy till I found myself in this house, and more kindly treated than ever poor creature was before!

MRS. LEYSTER.

We must have been inhuman not to have done what we did.

MARY THOMSON.

Oh, madam, how few people would have done so! To wait on me your own selves, to speak so kindly to me, and to take such care of my poor baby—Oh, I can never, never tell you half I feel!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Well, well, I must have no more of this; your story affects me greatly; do you wish to return to your parish?

MARY THOMSON.

Ah, no, madam, if I could do any thing else: I shall be worse off there than ever, for I have spent almost every farthing in this unlucky journey, and have not a bed nor a chair, so I must go to  
the

the workhouse.—Oh, it is hard indeed!

CONSTANCE, (*with great agitation.*)

Mama!

MRS. LEYSTER.

My child!

CONSTANCE.

Oh, mama, must my poor little Jenny go to the Workhouse?

MRS. LEYSTER.

Perhaps her mother will spare her to you.

MARY THOMSON.

Madam!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Will you leave your child with us?

MARY THOMSON.

My child—Oh, my God!—Oh, madam, can I refuse any thing to *you*?—But my child!—Ah, madam, *you are a mother!*

MRS. LEYSTER.

I am indeed, and know too well a mother's feelings to try yours any longer. Had you consented to such a separation I should not have thought well of you, but as you prove to me you are a tender mother, I will trust you are in all respects a worthy character.—But common prudence requires, that before I  
exert



exert myself in your service, I should be convinced your story is perfectly true.

MARY THOMSON.

Certainly, madam.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Then you will not take it amiss if I should write to the officers of your parish for an account of you?

MARY THOMSON.

No, to be sure, ma'am, you will be quite right to do so.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Well, if my enquiries answer, I have thought of a plan for you, and Constance need not lose her little favourite Jenny; in the mean time you are very welcome to remain here.

MARY THOMSON.

You are all goodness, madam ; I most humbly thank you. I have nothing to fear from any enquiry, and I shall be happy indeed if I should be so fortunate as to be placed near you.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Very well, I am at present quite satisfied with you, and have no doubt I shall be always so.

MARY THOMSON.

Thank you, Madam.

CONSTANCE.

Here, Mrs. Thomson, take your little baby, she is almost asleep.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER, (*smiling.*)

The worst of it is, I am afraid, Mrs. Thomson, if Jenny stays near us, Constance will grow very idle and forget to work.

CONSTANCE.

Oh, no, mama, because I shall have her to work for sometimes.

MARY THOMSON.

You are too good, miss.

She then left the room with the child, and Mrs. Leyster said,—“ I am pleased with this woman; she speaks with great feeling, and she received my notice of sending to the parish officers as she ought to do, without the least appearance of

confusion or displeasure ; she placed herself in my situation ; she saw that what I proposed to do was right ; I will write to these people directly." She did so, and they waited for an answer to this letter before they resolved on any thing.

## C H A P. III.

A FEW days after this, Mrs. Leyster accepted an invitation to dine with a lady at the town which was about a mile from her house: she was desired to bring Constantia with her, as the lady had a daughter about a year younger than she was. They arrived at Mrs. Selwyn's about half an hour before dinner time, but Maria Selwyn did not come in till just as they were sitting down to dinner. Scarcely were they seated, when she said, "mama, I want a piece of pudding." "Hush," said Mrs. Selwyn, "wait till every

every body else is helped, if you please !”

“ Oh, but mama,” said Maria, “ I like to eat my pudding before my meat, and I chuse to have it now.”—“ Well then,” said Mrs. Selwyn, “ ask your papa to cut it for you” —“ Yes, my dear,” said Mr. Selwyn, “ I will cut it for you directly”—which he did, to the great surprize of Constantia, who was quite unaccustomed to see a little girl behave so rudely. Maria Selwyn, however, always did behave so ; she was quite a spoiled child, and suffered to do just as she liked ; so she eat enough for two little girls, and of the most improper things, asking for every thing she wished to have, eating extremely fast, and even putting her knife into the tarts to take out some of the fruit ; she also put her

-knife

knife into her mouth instead of eating with her fork or spoon, and she had so many untidy tricks at table, that a very delicate person would have been made sick by her, and every body must be disgusted; she held her knife and fork so low, that her hand came upon part of the blade: in short, she was more awkward, and behaved worse than any child of five years old, who has been used to eat with decent people. Mrs. Selwyn indeed sometimes checked her with, "don't, Maria, upon my word I will send you from table;" but as this threat was never put in execution, it was perfectly disregarded, and Miss Maria continued to distress every body by her impertinence and voraciousness. After dinner, when the fruit was set upon the  
table,

table, any one would have supposed, that so far from having eaten an amazing dinner, Miss Maria had not had any, for she devoured apples, pears and nuts, together with almonds and raisins and oranges, so as perfectly to astonish the moderate and simple Constantia. Mrs. Selwyn earnestly pressed Miss Leyster to take more fruit than she seemed inclined to do, and turning to Mrs. Leyster, said, "I am sure you will let Miss Constantia eat another orange"—"She is at liberty to do just as she pleases," replied Mrs. Leyster; "I have entirely ceased to restrain her in point of eating for this twelvemonth." Mrs. Selwyn then again begged Constantia to eat another orange, but she declined it. When the table was cleared, Miss Selwyn sat very quietly and seemingly



seemingly half asleep in her place, till Mrs Selwyn told her to take Miss Leyster into her dressing-room, "which," added she, "you have strewed from one end to the other with your playthings, and even with your squirrel's cage, tho' I always tell you I will not have him in my apartment!"—"But, mama," said Miss Selwyn, "may we not have Rose to play with us?"—"Yes" answered her mother, "if you will behave better to her than you generally do. I dare say Miss Leyster would be ashamed to see you use her so ill! Ah, I wish you would take pattern by *her*!" The two children then went away, and Miss Selwyn led her visitor into her mother's dressing-room, which was indeed, as she had said, strewed from one end to the other

other with play things; some whole, some broken, and so various as to afford great amusement to Constantia, who was used to have but few. There were no less than five dolls, tumblers, children flying a kite, horses and hounds, a large box with a very pretty show, a magic lanthorn, and a book of prints; on the sofa a cage with a squirrel, and under it a basket with a cat and three kittens. Constantia very eagerly looked over this extensive collection, but finding the variety distracted her attention, so that she could examine nothing, she left every thing but the show, which amused her very agreeably for some time; in the mean while Miss Selwyn was talking to her about the things, but at last, finding her so much pleased with the show,

show, said, "dear, what do you like that ugly thing!"

CONSTANCE.

Ugly!— I think it is very pretty indeed!

MARIA.

I used to think so, but I am tired of it, I hate it now.

CONSTANCE.

How long have you had it?

MARIA.

Oh, a whole fortnight; I shall pull it to pieces to-morrow.

CONSTANCE.

Pull it to pieces!—Oh, what a pity, it is so amusing!

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh, but I want the box to put my doll's cloaths in.

CONSTANCE.

A common wooden one would do as well for that.

MARIA.

Yes, I have half a dozen of them about, but they are all filled with rubbish. But, la! if you think it is so pretty I will give it to you, I don't care a farthing for it!

CONSTANCE.

Oh, by no means—I beg you will not think of it.

MARIA.

Oh, but you shall have it!—I will make you have it!

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

I cannot indeed. Mama would be very angry with me.

MARIA.

Why?

CONSTANCE.

Because it looks as if I had persuaded you to give it me; I beg you will not think of it.

MARIA.

Oh, such nonsense, I shall indeed, and if you are so nice about taking it from me, I shall ask mama; I'm sure I don't want it, I shall be glad when it is gone. But where is that Rose, I wonder!— Why don't she come when she knows I  
am

am here; how does she think I am to play unless she helps me!

CONSTANCE.

*Help one to play!*—That is very odd!

MARIA.

Dear, why? Can you play by yourself?

CONSTANCE.

Yes, to be sure!

MARIA.

Well, but who picks up your ball or your shuttlecock?

CONSTANCE.

I Myself, certainly, that is half the amusement!

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh, I hate it, it tires one so: I'll ring for this girl; she is kept on purpose to play with me and help mend my cloaths.

She then rang the bell, and while Constantia was looking over the prints, she pulled the cat and her kittens out of the basket, took the kittens in her frock, and then calling the cat, she ran about the room laughing to see the cat's distress at hearing her kittens cry.

CONSTANCE.

Oh don't, Miss Selwyn; poor thing, she thinks you are going to hurt them!

MARIA.

Oh, an old fool!—I would not give a  
farthing

farthing for her if she will not let me play with them. Here, pufs! pufs! here's one of your little squawlers! (*holding up a kitten over her head.*) mew?—See how she runs, I wonder what she thinks I shall do with it!

CONSTANCE.

Indeed she is very uneasy, why will you tease her so?

MARIA.

Oh, it is so droll!

CONSTANCE.

Pardon me, I cannot think it droll to torment any thing.

MARIA.

Dear, what signifies a cat!—I like it, and that's enough.

CONSTANCE.



CONSTANCE.

But supposing you do like it, which I wonder at, do you think you have a right to hurt and tease the poor creatures?

MARIA.

To be sure I do!—What do I keep them for, I wonder!

CONSTANCE.

The only use I know for a cat is to catch mice.

MARIA.

Oh, but we have no mice.

CONSTANCE.

Well then, if I kept a cat only to  
D play

play with her, to be sure I would not hurt her.

MARIA.

Oh, but I will if I like it, and if you are so formal, miss, you won't make me so, I assure you.

CONSTANCE.

I am sorry if you are offended—Come, let us play a little.

MARIA.

What at?—Why don't Rose come, I'll teach her not to come when I ring for her.

She then rang again, and when Rose came, who was a pretty decent girl, miss Selwyn quite scolded her, called her  
names,

names, and at last passionately struck her! while the poor girl dared not so much as answer, and Constantia vainly strove to call off Maria's attention; for as to reasoning, *that* she found was quite useless. At last Maria's passion abated, and they began to play at shuttlecock, but whenever the shuttlecock fell on Maria's side, she made Rose pick it up, while Constantia, light and active, recovered it in an instant, and frequently saved its fall; but Maria, oppressed by the quantity she had eaten at dinner, found the play fatigue her too much, and soon gave it up. They then took the dolls, but here Maria was equally idle; every thing she wanted she made Rose fetch, and if she found any difficulty immediately gave it to Rose to do.

Constantia was heartily tired of this visit, for the instant she began to take a pleasure in any thing, Maria was tired of it, or else by her continual scolding at Rose put an end to the diversion. They were both glad when they were called to tea, and the instant they came into the room, Mrs. Selwyn said, “ my dear child, what is the matter with you, you look as pale as death !”

MARIA.

Oh mama, I have the head-ach.

MRS. SELWYN.

Poor thing, she always has in an afternoon—Sit down by me, my dear, you have tired yourself with play—Well, and did you amuse yourself very well ?

MARIA.

MARIA.

Oh yes, mama—Miss Leyster liked my show so much, I shall give it to her.

MRS. LEYSTER

What is that, Constantia!—I hope you did not ask for it, or express any wish to have it given to you?

MARIA

No indeed, ma'am, she only said how pretty it was, and so I said I hated it, and should pull it to pieces; and she said it was a pity, and I said she should have it; and then she begged I would not give it her, for fear mama should think she asked for it, and so I told her mama would like her to have it.

MRS. SELWYN.

If Miss Leyster will accept of it, after your having offered it so rudely, I am sure I shall be very glad to have it saved from being destroyed.

CONSTANCE, (*blushing very much.*)

I thank you, ma'am, but indeed, if you please, I had rather not have it.

MRS. SELWYN.

Why, my dear.

CONSTANCE.

Because, ma'am, it looks so much as if I had admired it on purpose to have it given to me.

MRS.

MRS. SELWYN.

My dear, I am pleased with your delicacy, but as a present from *me* I hope your mama will give you leave to accept it. It was bought but a fortnight since, and is really too pretty to be pulled to pieces; which it will be if you do not rescue it,

CONSTANCE.

I am much obliged to you, ma'am, and to miss Selwyn—if mama pleases—

MRS. LEYSTER.

Since Mrs. Selwyn is so kind, my dear, I can have no objection.

MRS. SELWYN:

Very well, then—(*to the footman*)

D 4

John,

John, do you give it Mrs. Leyster's servant when he comes. Rose will bring it down.

During this conversation Maria was eating cake and drinking coffee, till she was really too ill not to be noticed, as she looked dreadfully. Mrs. Selwyn rang for her own maid to wait on Maria, who with a dreadful sick head-ach went away, and was obliged to go to bed immediately. In about an hour afterwards Mrs. Leyster and Constance went home, and as they sat at their simple supper, Constance repeated to her mother the conversation which had passed when she and Maria were alone.



## CHAPTER IV.

MRS. LEYSTER.

YOU see then, Constantia, this is an instance of what I have often told you, that happiness depends far more on ourselves and our own disposition to be contented, than on any outward circumstances. If any body had told you yesterday of a little girl who had every plaything ingenuity could invent, full leisure to amuse herself as she pleased, and even a little girl to play with her and wait on her,—perhaps you would have thought she must have been happy.

D 5

CONSTANCE.

## CONSTANCE.

I believe, indeed, mama, I should have thought so.

## MRS. LEYSTER.

But you see now how little these things constitute felicity. Miss Selwyn has such an endless variety of play-things before her at all hours, that her choice is bewildered, and she becomes tired of all; they cease to give her any amusement, and she is angry to find that nothing diverts her. To you, who see such things very seldom, they are a source of great entertainment; thus you see that by an unlimited use the highest pleasures lose their relish, though, taken in *moderation*, they enliven the spirits and animate the mind.

mind. Miss Selwyn is also so accustomed to be waited upon, that she can do nothing for herself, and has not even activity enough of mind or body to amuse herself. Tell me, Constantia, should you not very much dislike to find that you wanted somebody "to help you play."

CONSTANCE.

Oh, indeed, yes, mama, I was quite astonished to hear Miss Selwyn use such an expression!

MRS. LEYSTER.

As to the poor little girl who waits on her, she is indeed much to be pitied; she is truly a slave to this little feeble tyrant, who is suffered to torment her, without being taught that she is in reality inferior

to the poor girl. Children are really totally dependent on others; if servants did not help them they would be miserably situated; it is true servants are paid for what they do, but children do not pay them, and they are therefore doubly obliged to the kind parent who accommodates them with the assistance they want and cannot do without. I believe my memory will furnish me with the words of a great French author\* on this subject, let me see if you understand them: — “ A considerer l'enfance en elle-meme y-a-t-il au monde un etre plus miserable, plus a la merci de tout ce qui l'environne, qui ait si grand besoin de pitie, d'amour, de protection, qu'un enfant? Ne semble t'il-pas que

\* Rousseau.

c'est

c'est pour cela que les premières voix qui lui sont suggérées par la nature, sont les cris et les plaintes; qu'elle lui a donné une figure si douce et un air si touchant afin que tout ce qui l'approche s'intéresse à sa faiblesse et s'empresse à le secourir? — Qu'y-a-t-il donc de plus choquant, de plus contraire à l'ordre que de voir enfant impérieux et mutin, commander à tout ce qui l'entoure prendre impudemment un ton de maître avec ceux qui n'ont qu'à l'abandonner, pour le faire périr?" — And again: " Les domestiques ont une véritable supériorité sur lui en ce qu'il ne sauroit se passer d'eux tandis qu'il ne leur est bon à rien." Do you understand this, Constantia?

CONSTANCE.

I think I comprehend the meaning of  
the

the sentence, mama, but I do not entirely understand the words, will you be good enough to translate it for me?

MRS. LEYSTER.

“ If we consider infancy in itself, is there in the world a being more feeble, more miserable, more at the mercy of all who surround him, who has so great need of pity, of love, of protection, as a child? Does it not seem as if it were for this reason that the first sounds which nature suggests to him are cries and complaints? That she has given him a figure so engaging, and an air so touching, to the end that all who approach him may be interested by his weakness, and eager to succour him? What then can be more shocking, more contrary to order,

order, than to see a child imperious and mutinous, commanding those who are about him, boldly assuming the tone of a master with those, who have nothing to do but abandon him to cause his destruction? Domesticity have a real superiority over him, in that he cannot do without them, while he is useless to them."

## CONSTANCE

Thank you, my dear mama, what a charming lesson this is, as well to me as all other children! I wish Miss Selwyn could hear it.

## MRS. LEYSTER.

I should be afraid, my dear, that her mind is too much over-clouded to permit

mit reason an truth to make a proper impression upon it!—Another source of unhappiness to her is the unbounded liberty she has of eating whatever she pleases in too large quantities. Mrs. Selwyn undoubtedly mistakes this for one mean of giving her pleasure, and the consequence is, she spoils her appearance, making her person large, heavy, and dull, and what is worse, she injures her health, and of course clogs the activity of her mind.

## CONSTANCE.

But mama, is it possible any one can take pleasure in eating too much?

## MRS. LEYSTER.

Alas! yes, my dear; and unhappily not only children fall into this delusion.

Many



Many people, whose age and good sense ought to teach them better, will persist in eating such things as disagree with them, or too much of those which are proper. As nothing is more degrading than the latter, which reduces human nature to a level with the “brutes which perish,” nay *below* them, for *they* do not eat too much, so is there nothing more absurd or more weak than the former species of folly! What; have we a right to risk our health, our comfort, that of our families and friends, or even perhaps our lives, for the sake of gratifying the taste for a few minutes, a gratification which is so soon forgotten?—Depend upon it, my dear child, from moderation and temperance alone are any lasting pleasures to be derived.

CONSTANCE.

## CONSTANCE.

But I cannot think, mama, how any person can mistake so much as to treat a little girl as Mrs Selwyn treats hers!

## MRS. LEYSTER.

My dear child, there is certainly nothing so tender as the love of a fond mother. It is hard to deny any thing to a child, which seems at the time likely to give it pleasure; but in a mind regulated by *principle*, this passionate fondness is repressed by the consideration, that in the end it will render its object unhappy. A good mother is not *selfish* enough to indulge her own *feelings* by indulging her child, when she knows, as a person accustomed to reason must know,  
that

that a child always indulged is really not so happy as one under proper controul, and that the consequences of unlimited indulgence when this child grows up, will be frightful. The world will not humour her as her mother has done; she must then be often thwarted, if she has good sense; her life will be a constant struggle between her humours and her reason if she has not!—What a character will hers be, at once weak and mischievous—not knowing how to be happy herself, and not suffering any other to be so! The anxiety and trouble in the first, the hatred and misery in the last, might have been spared her, had her mother known how to control her! When a mother considers that these must be the consequences of unbounded indulgence

gence, and that she is accountable to God for the well-being of her child, can she dare to render it wretched and criminal here, and hazard its happiness hereafter!

CONSTANCE.

Oh mama, how sadly are those mistaken who do! But you, you indeed, though you so fondly love me, though you make me so happy, you do not suffer me to do what is wrong; and so good as you are, what must I be if I could wish to do it! If I am wretched and criminal it is my own fault!

MRS. LEYSTER.

God forbid, my dearest, you should ever be either! But we have had a long  
.. conver-

conversation, and it is time to go to bed.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, how I love these nice chats, they make me so happy, and I am always the better for them. When you talk to me as if I was no longer a child, I think I shall be ashamed ever to be childish again!

MRS. LEYSTER.

You will not, I hope often be childish enough to act improperly; and as to the simple manners of childhood, I rather wish than not you should retain them. I dislike extremely a womanly child, who has courage in a large company to ask questions and make pert answers.

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, mama, your Constance is too idle and too playful not to be a child a long time.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I am not sorry for that—but get you gone, prater, 'tis bed-time.

CHAP.

## C H A P. V.

The next morning Mrs Leyster received an answer to her letter respecting Mary Thomson, by which she found that her story was perfectly true; and obtained a confirmation of the good opinion she had formed of her. Mrs. Leyster immediately hastened to set her mind at ease, and to impart the plan she had formed for her future comfort. There was a small house to be let in the village, and Mrs. Leyster proposed that Mary Thomson should take it; that she should keep a little school to teach children to read

read and work, a thing much wanted in the village, and also a little shop for pins, threads, tape, &c. by which she had no doubt of her getting a comfortable living. Mary Thomson received this plan with the utmost gratitude; her only doubt was, whether the owner of the house would trust her without security, and how she should raise a little money to buy a small stock. "I am not rich," said Mrs Leyster, "but I can afford without inconvenience to let you have a few pounds to buy a little furniture and stock, which you may encrease by degrees; if you succeed, you shall repay me at the end of five years; I will be security for your first year's rent I cannot do all I wish for you, but I will do all I can, and you shall be welcome



to it. You shall dine here every Sunday, and Constantia will gladly be kind to her little Jenny.

The poor woman had no words to answer, but with a truly grateful heart withdrew in tears.

## CONSTANCE.

Oh mama! how good you are! how happy you have made her, and me also! I shall see my little Jenny every day, I shall call her my child and teach her every thing!

## MRS. LEYSTER.

I shall be very glad you should take the entire charge of her education. But

E

tell

tell me, my child, what do you intend to teach her?

CONSTANCE.

I will teach her, mama, as soon as she can learn, to read, to spell, and to work, afterwards she shall learn to write, and I will instruct her in drawing and dancing.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Very well—then I suppose you will finish by giving her a good fortune.

CONSTANCE.

Ah, mama, I should be very happy to do so, but you know it is not in my power.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Then my child, when you have given  
her

her the accomplishments you talk of, what is she to do? Will she be fit for any service?

CONSTANCE.

No, mama, I see I am wrong; but tell me then, if you please, what I shall do for her?

MRS. LEYSTER.

My dear, you are not the first who has been mistaken in this matter. Many people have in like manner adopted a child, taken it out of the station in which Providence had placed it, refined its sentiments, taught it various accomplishments, and then, either by accident or neglect, have at their death left it to struggle with a world with which it was

unfit to contend. Luxury and refined ideas have already too much pervaded the lower as well as higher classes of people. The notion of equality is an absurd, an unnatural notion. The necessities of man are never so well obviated, as in societies where distinctions of rank and degree are preserved. Are the savage tribes, where every man hunts, cooks, and builds for himself, so happy as those nations where every man has his distinct occupation? God has made a difference in his gifts, both bodily and mental, to different men; and undoubtedly God has always intended a difference in degree, which these gifts will always preserve. For instance, if five men were in an equal situation placed on a desert shore, the wisest would soon become governor,

vernor, the most courageous would be their guard, their soldier, the strongest would be their wood-cutter, their builder, the most agile would provide their food, the most ingenious (for I distinguish between ingenuity and wisdom) would be their mechanic.—But Constance, I hardly know if you will understand all this speculation; I get a habit of talking to you on all subjects, hardly considering whether or not they are interesting to you, and this, from some ridiculous opinions I have lately heard, has been much upon my mind\*.

CONSTANCE.

I am always happy, mama, when you speak to me; I endeavour to understand

E 3 and

\* It is to be observed Mrs. Leyster is speaking soon after the beginning of the French Revolution.

and to improve from what you say, and I think I comprehend all you have now said.

MRS. LEYSTER:

For common servants, in my opinion it is quite sufficient if they are taught their duty to God and man, and to read it in the Holy Scriptures. For them, especially for women servants, I disapprove of learning to write. My experience has hitherto taught me, that those who are instructed in that branch of learning more frequently become idle scriblers, prying and curious into the affairs of others, than useful and active servants. I speak with diffidence, however, for many wise and good people have thought otherwise. However, as Jenny well never, I hope,

be

be reduced to the condition of a lower servant, I will allow you to teach her to read and spell well, to write, and the three first rules in arithmetic; plain work of every sort, but no curious works. And she shall be instructed by Martha in confectionary and pastry. I will also have her know how to assist in cooking, in cleaning fine linen, and even doing the less laborious work of the house, that if any chance should throw her out of our protection, she may not be a poor helpless creature, a burthen to herself and others. Activity, and the power of providing for herself are great virtues in hers, and indeed in *every* station. And very early I doubt not, my dear Constance, you will teach her the constant use of prayer and the first principles of

religion. And as she will be often with us, there is not, I hope, much reason to fear but her principles and morals will be good. And now tell me how you like my plan?

CONSTANCE.

Oh, mama, 'tis a thousand times better than mine—I long to begin!

MRS. LEYSTER.

We are looking very forward indeed, for little Jenny may not live to require all these cares.

CONSTANCE.

Oh dear mama!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Nay, my child, such an idea is not improbable,



improbable, and I hope if it should be realised my Constantia would be resigned, and console herself that her little adopted child was better provided for. But not to dwell on so sad an idea, I must declare, that I will not at any time suffer the child to be dressed with any degree of *finery*, no ribbons, no ornaments of any kind; her dress shall be neat and clean, but no more; I will never have her taught to forget her origin, or be ashamed of the lowly garb of her mother.

Here the conversation ended, and omitting many trifling occurrences, I shall let a year pass in which nothing very material happened. Constantia grew and improved: little Jenny was to her a constant source of amusement and employ-

ment. She could now talk, and Constantia waited impatiently the end of another year, at which time she hoped to begin teaching her to read. Mary Thomson was placed in the house Mrs. Leyster had promised her, and succeeded extremely well. The spring was now beginning to appear, and Constantia spent much of her time in her little garden. Her flowers were finer than usual; she looked forward to their blooming, and drew from air and exercise a fine healthy bloom, which proved the goodness of her constitution. She was now between twelve and thirteen, tall and well made, with a face not indeed beautiful, but extremely pleasing, because it spoke sweetness of temper, good sense, and an affectionate feeling heart; nor was her appearance

appearance deceitful, for she really possessed all these amiable qualities.

One morning the footman brought Mrs. Leyster a letter; she opened it, saying, "from my sister!"—while Constance went on with her work. "Bless me," said Mrs Leyster, having read it, "what a sad affair is this—I declare I am quite shocked!"—

CONSTANCE.

May I, mama, ask what is the matter?

MRS. LEYSTER.

My dear Constantia, young as you are, I hope and believe I may depend on your prudence. I am a happy mother,

in being able thus early to place a confidence in my child!

CONSTANCE, (*kissing her hands with tears.  
in her eyes.*)

Oh, mama, never, never will I abuse it—my heart promises, and you *may* depend upon that heart, which owes not only the power of keeping a secret, but every thing it owns of goodness to you?

MRS. LEYSTER, (*affected.*)

My dear child.

CONSTANCE.

But mama, I hope—I am not inquisitive, but—you seemed to say you would tell me—

MRS. LEYSTER.

What disturbed me—I will, my dear,  
indeed

indeed I will read to you your aunt's letter.

TO MRS. LEYSTER.

MY DEAR SISTER,

THE system of education against which you have so often argued, I at last find to be erroneous. Alicia has deceived my expectations. She has been imprudent, disingenuous, and unfaithful to her promise. These are harsh expressions, and if I did not hope the error arose rather from habit and want of thought than from her heart, I should be this day a miserable creature; as it is, I am truly unhappy. Lest you should be too much alarmed, I will make haste to disclose the nature of the evil I lament.

When

When Alicia was thirteen, I consented, at her request, to make her a yearly allowance for clothes and pocket money, upon promise that she should never at any time purchase any thing without immediate payment. My allowance rather exceeded what had been before expended for her clothes, because I knew it was in vain to expect exact œconomy from such a girl. For the first quarter she bought many expensive trifles, and was in want of many necessary articles, such as gloves, shoes, threads, &c. I remarked to her this folly, and hoped in the second quarter she had corrected it. Here I allow I was myself guilty of a very great error: I ought to have made her set down every thing she purchased, and have myself examined her accounts: but  
this,

this, depending on her promise not to run in debt, I neglected to do. For this last quarter I have observed her frequently dejected, almost always grave, and was in pain for her health. About a month after I had paid her her last quarter, not having quite cash enough in my purse to pay a bill, I requested her to lend me two guineas. I knew it was not a month since I had paid her four, and as I had not observed she had bought any thing, I concluded she had almost the whole by her: she blushed excessively, and after some hesitation said, she had but one guinea left.—“What,” said I—“three guineas in a month! and what are you to do till your quarter is again due!”—“Oh, I shall not want to buy any thing.” “But,” said I, “what have you

you done with it, you have nothing that I know of?"—She still looked excessively red and confused, and I determined to discover what all this meant. I will not tire you with particulars, but tell you at once; she had been led by the example of the Miss Seymours, who are always in debt, and ridiculed her scruples, to run in debt more than she had even yet paid to her millener, shoemaker and mantua-maker. I represented to her the folly and impropriety of her conduct; she said it had made her excessively uneasy, and after much conversation, I agreed to discharge her debts, which still amounted to some guineas, on two conditions; one, that she should give up half her allowance for the next year, and to break her intimacy with these idle girls,



girls, that she should go into the country for at least half a year. And now, my dear sister, will you exert that affection which I know you feel for me, and take upon yourself for a few months the care of this mistaken girl. If you will, I shall feel myself for ever obliged to you, to whom I shall entrust her with implicit confidence, &c. &c.

Mrs Leyster, however unwillingly to be charged with a young person whose education had been so neglected, yet could not refuse a sister, whom, however different from herself, she sincerely loved. She wrote, therefore, a letter of consent, and Constantia one of invitation to her cousin. Constantia, shocked and surpris'd as she was, yet made every excuse

cuse for her cousin candor and good-nature could suggest, and impatiently waited her arrival; not because she expected any great addition to her own happiness from it, for her cousin, she was aware, loved pursuits far different from her own, but because she wished to sooth, by every kind of attention, the distress she imagined Alicia must feel, after having broken her promise and offended her mother.

## CHAPTER VI.

IN about a week's time Alicia arrived. She was in her person a fine shewy girl, in her dress and air fashionable, but her countenance wanted that softness, those smiles and blushes which adorned Constantia's expressive face, and her manner that retiring mildness which Constantia's exhibited. Constantia flew to welcome her, but her salute was coldly, even haughtily returned, and to the graver look of Mrs. Leyster an air of fullen pride was opposed. Alicia seemed to feel herself aggrieved by the obligation to  
visit

visit those she imagined beneath her, to be determined not to find amusement in any thing they could offer her, and to think her fault much too severely punished by the necessity of a residence so unpleasant. Not a word was spoken of the cause of her visit, and Constantia recovering her spirits, which Alicia's coldness had damped, anxiously tried to amuse her. After tea, Constantia asked her cousin how she would like to employ herself.

ALICIA.

It is indifferent to me.

CONSTANCE.

Are you too much tired with your journey to take a stroll in the garden, we shall have yet a light half-hour?

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Yes, it is indeed early to have done tea.

CONSTANCE.

In London, I suppose, you are later?

ALICIA.

Oh, my ~~mother~~ yes—we have never done tea there till between eight and nine.

CONSTANCE.

Then what hour do you sup?

ALICIA, *(coldly.)*

That depends on where we are. My mother is early, we sup before twelve, the Seymours

Seymours never till near one, and if one is at a ball, three or four are usual hours.

CONSTANCE.

But then you must lose half your day in bed!

ALICIA:

Oh, we rise as early as other people; it is of no use to be up before one's friends are stirring.

Constantia, perceiving their opinions were so different that an argument would be endless, again proposed to walk in the garden, which with a sort of indolent indifference Alicia agreed to; but this walk afforded neither any pleasure; Constantia vainly pointed out beauties, of  
which

which Alicia had no idea. The glow of the setting sun, its beams brightened the distant view, over which the various shades of spring were spread, its last rays softened by degrees from rich purple and gold into the mild grey of twilight, afforded to Alicia no pleasure, though Constantia's heart swelled with pleasure at the sight. Alicia, perceiving her pleasure, said with a smile of contempt—

Well, it is vastly fine to be sure, but you have seen it before, I presume ?

CONSTANCE.

Yes, the setting sun, but surely never so brilliant; besides, after the dreary months of winter the view of so fine an evening is attended with a thousand pleasing ideas.

ALICIA,

ALICIA.

Oh yes, I can conceive that—you must have found the winter pretty dull—to be sure the country is rather more tolerable in the summer!—My God! what in the world do you do in the winter?

CONSTANCE, (*with a smile.*)

Oh a thousand things—I am very happy.

ALICIA.

Happy in the country?—Impossible!

CONSTANCE.

No, my dear cousin, not impossible, since my mother is with me. To hope you can be quite happy here without  
yours



yours is absurd, but I flatter myself you will be more so than you expect.

Alicia did not very well know what do say to this speech; she therefore only with a peevish kind of shudder remarked that it was cold, and desired to return to the house.

The next morning the woman servant who had accompanied Miss Woodford from London was to return. She came into the parlour to take a letter from Mrs. Leyster, and then asked of Miss Woodford what message she should carry from her to her mistress; but Alicia, distressed and unhappy, could not answer; the tears which stood in her eyes, her trembling lips and fading colour

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shewed

shewed her uneasiness. Mrs. Leyster, and Constantia retired to the window, that she might speak without restraint; but suddenly exclaiming—"Say—I will write soon," she ran out of the room. Constantia much affected remained below some minutes, and in the mean time Mrs. Woodford's servant got into the carriage and drove away. Constantia then followed her cousin; she found her at the window of her room, looking after the carriage in tears. "Ah!" she exclaimed, before Constance could approach her, "she will again see London and my dear mother!—and I am left in this horrid place!—~~Constantia~~! A720 was it *my* fault!"—She stopped, hearing Constantia's step, and with an angry tone said, "Have I not even the privilege

lege

lege of being alone?—I am not used, Miss Leyster, to be thus intruded upon! Ah, I am indeed very little used to any thing I can expect to meet with *here!*" Constantia, who had been half terrified by her first address, now seeing her in an agony of grief, approached, and clasping her in her arms said, "My dearest cousin, I beg you to pardon me if I am an intruder; I came to see if I could do any thing to comfort you, but if you wish me gone I will leave you. But why should you wish it? Suffer me to be your friend; suffer me, if possible, to make you happy!"—Alicia, softened by her tenderness, now felt the coldness, the contempt with which she had hitherto regarded her was melting fast from about her heart; she returned Constantia's em-

brace, and shed tears of affection and gratitude on her bosom. For some time neither could speak, but at last Alicia said, "You are very good—better than I either expected or deserved. You know I have much to lament—leave me, pray, my dear, I will soon come down." Constantia instantly left her. In about an hour Alicia came down stairs, her manner in a great measure changed. To her aunt she was more respectful and less cold, and to Constance more affectionate. Still she treated her as a child, and as being much inferior to herself; she still seemed to suppose it impossible that a girl educated in the country could have any accomplishments, or be enabled to form a proper judgment on any subject. To read, except the light publications

of

of the hour, she had never been accustomed. Needle-work, and most of the little ingenious resources of women in general, she despised as beneath her attention. The fifth morning after her arrival Constantia's drawing master came. Her port-folio and implements were instantly produced. " Bless me, Miss Leyster," said Alicia, " do you draw?" " A little," replied Constance, " but I am very fond of it."—" So am I," said Alicia, " though I have not practised lately; if you will give me a pencil I will try." " Oh, willingly," said Constance, well pleased that she could find any amusement. They then sat down. Constantia's master gave her a subject, and while she began the design, amused himself with making sketches. Alicia began

a bunch of flowers, and all was silent. In about half an hour Constance asked her master some question, and Alicia, casting her eyes on Constantia's drawing, exclaimed, "Bless me, Constantia, do you design figures?" "Yes," answered Constantia, "why are you so surprised?" "Oh; because, because, you said you drew but a little."—"Miss Leyster is very modest, Ma'am," said the drawing-master, "but the fact is, I have very little more to reach her.—Very well done, indeed; pray Ma'am look at this figure, 'tis Lavinia, from Thomson's Seasons—is not the drapery well done?" "Yes, very well," said Alicia coolly; then rising, she tore her own performance in two, and threw it into the grate. "Dear cousin," said Constantia, "are you

you tired, why have you torn your drawing?" " Because I was not pleased with it," said Alicia gravely.—The drawing time was soon expired; Constantia's performance was greatly advanced, and she was to finish it before her master came again. When he was gone, Mrs. Leyster commended the drawing, and told Constance she had given her great pleasure by her application. " Ah, mama," said Constance, " I have no merit in applying to drawing, because I love it so much, but if it were disagreeable to me, I should be over-paid by your being pleased. In the course of this day Alicia, who fancied her cousin could know nothing because she had been brought up in the country, had the farther mortification of finding she knew

French much better than herself, that she had some knowledge of Italian, and that she danced vastly well. Her conversation also with her mother proved her so well acquainted with all books proper for her age, and to possess so much knowledge in geography, natural history, and the history of her own country, besides a thousand little ingenious works, and that young as she was she assisted a great deal in the family management, that Alicia began to take shame to herself for her. Thus they passed a fortnight, and every day added to Alicia's concealed admiration of her cousin; when she saw how readily Constance employed those hours which *she* found so heavy, how happy she was and how agreeable, she began to wish herself like her. In look-  
ing



ing over some books she found the Tales of the Castle in French, which Constance warmly recommended to her perusal. She took the first volume, because she knew not what to do. The story of Delphine arrested her attention; her heart told her there was some similarity between herself and Delphine, and between Henrietta Steinhausen and her cousin; she blushed as she read, and the tears swelled in her eyes. Mrs. Leyster observed but would not interrupt her: in a few minutes she stole out of the room with the book in her hand, and was not visible again till dinner time; she then appeared to have been weeping, and her manner was grave and dejected. After dinner they walked out. Alicia, who now began to feel real respect and affection,

F 5

affection,

affection, walked with her arm through hers, Mrs. Leyster sometimes with them, sometimes at a little distance gathering mosses and plants which the spring produced; for such a long residence in the country had made her a sort of practical botanist. They called on Mrs. Thomson, who received them with grateful respect, and little Jenny with rapture. She had been confined by a cold, but was to come the next day to pass two or three with Constantia. While Constance was playing with her, Mrs. Leyster said she and Alicia would step in and speak to Dame Burden—"I will follow you in ten minutes, mama," said Constance, and away they went. Dame Burden was a poor old woman, who had been confined many years to her bed with the rheuma-

rheumatism. They found her with every thing about her quite clean, and though in great pain, rejoiced by the visit. "But where," said she, "is my dear young lady—I hope she is not ill—I have not seen her this fortnight, and I don't know when she has staid away so long from her poor old woman.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Constance is very well, she will be here presently, but we have had this young lady, my neice, with us, and my girl has been engaged with her.

DAME BURDEN.

To be sure, Madam—I am afraid her goodnefs will make me encroaching at last, and yet I try not to be, but the

sight of my young lady does me good,  
and I do so miss her when she stays away.

MRS. LEYSTER.

But how are you now—are you in less  
pain?

DAME BURDEN.

No Madam, I cannot say I am—I  
don't hope I ever shall be—but I try to  
be patient, and when I cannot sleep I  
think, and I know I shall not have to  
suffer long.

ALICIA.

But have you been so ill a long time?

DAME BURDEN.

Oh dear Miss, yes, these seven years;  
Madam

Madam has tried every thing, and sent to a great Doctor—but they cannot cure me; so I am content as 'tis the will of God, and thank him that he has raised me up such good friends, for you know, Miss, I might have been left to perish quite—but, Madam, your aunt there is so good—Oh, I am bound to pray for her and my dear young lady.

MRS. LEYSTER:

Has Mrs. Thomson been to visit you?

DAME BURDEN.

O yes, Madam, she comes every now and then and reads a chapter to me—for now, Miss, my eyes fail me so sadly I can neither read nor work, but my  
 young

young lady is often so good, she comes and reads to me her own self, with her sweet voice—'tis like hearing the finest clergyman, she reads so well; and then so good-natured withal, so courteous, for all she is such a fine scholar. Ah, God will bless her, for she "is meek and lowly in heart!"

MRS. LEYSTER.

You see, my dear Alicia, it is not only by giving money one can do good; Constantia is so happy as to be serviceable to Dame Burden at a very small expence to herself.

DAME BURDEN.

Ah, Madam, she is good to me every way; she brings me large pieces of flannel

nel

nel to wrap myself in; she makes white-wine whey for me with her own hands, because my girl is not handy. Under God she has been the means of prolonging my life, and what is better, of preparing me to die.

Mrs. Leyster, affected with these artless praises of her child, wiped her eyes, and Alicia was equally moved and astonished. Constantia then came in, and after talking a quarter of an hour with her old woman, who was delighted to see her, they all returned home, Alicia's heart filled with soft emotions and real admiration of her cousin.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE next morning Alicia, whose studies and observations the day before had left upon her mind a sort of painful pleasure, who felt unsettled and dissatisfied with herself, uneasy between her newly acquired consciousness of being wrong and her pride, again went to the book-case. The volume she had been reading was up stairs; she was too indolent to fetch it; she therefore took down two *new-looking books*, and read two or three *Dramatic Dialogues*\*. At last she

\* By the Author of this work.

turned



turned to the little Country Visitor, and there she found confirmation that she had been wrong; there she saw a character in many respects like her own, placed in a ridiculous and striking point of view. She was vexed and disturbed: still she read on, and when she had finished, she struggled with her tears till she could no longer restrain them, and bursting into a fit of crying, she was leaving the room: but Constance, who was reading also, ran to her, exclaiming, "My dear cousin, what is the matter?" "Nothing, nothing," sobbed out Alicia. "Nothing!" replied Constantia, "and yet you cry so!—Oh, Alicia, that cannot be!"—Mrs. Leyster then approaching embraced Alicia and said, "My dear child compose yourself, and do not strive  
to

to suppress an emotion which does you so much credit! You have been affected by the book you were reading, is it not so?

ALICIA.

Oh yes, Ma'am—It is so like—I have been so absurd!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Since you feel that, my dear girl, you sufficiently prove that your heart was not wrong; you were full of prejudices.—You saw us with a determination not to love us—we love you, and you cannot help returning our affection. You fancied in the country we could not be happy, or possess any information; you found yourself mistaken, and your pride  
was

was hurt; a book, the best teacher of a willing heart, has brought conviction to yours. Own your conviction, my dear Alicia, and you will have gained a great victory over your pride and prejudice, for which you are not so blameable as your education and companions.

ALICIA.

Ah, Madam, you are very good, you read my heart, I believe, and I am afraid your despise me; you must, for my cousin is so good!

CONSTANCE.

Dear, dear Alicia, I am sure mama loves you.

MRS. LEYSTER.

To own an error is the greatest proof  
of

of a good heart and a natural love of virtue. I have not the least doubt but Alicia having done so, if she will continue thus open to affection and conviction, will soon be a very charming character.

ALICIA, (*kissing her hand.*)

How good you are to encourage me! Yes, if you can forgive and love me still, I shall, I believe, be happier than I have ever yet been.

MRS. LEYSTER.

We cannot be happy with a sense of an error in the heart, however stifled by pride. Let us sit down, and then I will tell my dear niece in what respect I think she has hitherto been most blameable.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

I shall be willing to hear, and I hope to amend.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I have avoided hitherto, my dear, speaking to you on the cause of your coming hither: till I could obtain your confidence, till Constance could gain your love, we would not enter on the subject; hereafter I hope she will be your sister, and I shall be your maternal friend.

ALICIA.

Ah, if you will but permit me!

CONSTANCE, (*embracing her.*)

Permit you?—Oh my dear cousin, what joy you give me!

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Henceforth I hope we shall be happy in each other. Permit me then, my dear girl, to tell you, you have never seemed to me sufficiently sensible of the fault which brought you hither.

ALICIA, (*embarrassed.*)

In reality, Ma'am—

MRS. LEYSTER.

You do not think it a great one? You did no more than other young people—you always intended to pay your debts, so where was the great harm? Is it not thus *you* argue?

ALICIA, (*confused!*)

But—you think—nay, perhaps—

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Hear me, my dear child—In the first place, the allowance your mother made you was really an ample one; even if it had not been, *she* thought it so; she was perfectly aware what your expences ought to be. She had by many years experience learned in what manner it was proper a young woman should dress. Believe me, my dear, if with sixteen guineas a year you could not keep out of debt, you would have been involved if you had had twenty or thirty. To be happy, we must learn to live within our income, be it what it may. Not only justice requires this, but our own comfort, for nothing can be so harrassing as a consciousness of owing what we have not to pay.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Oh, I am well aware of that—But I knew I should be able to pay at some time or other.

MRS. LEYSTER

Yes, my dear, but consider, if every body acted thus, those you employ would have no ready money to pay those who work for them, and though the great shopkeepers may not be materially hurt, yet those who must have their money from day to day would starve if they were not paid. Add to this, you pay more than you ought to do for every article, and you are entirely precluded giving any thing in charity.

ALICIA.





others; who if they please may expose us to every body, as a person who wants justice so much as to contract debts they cannot pay!

CONSTANCE.

Oh, Mama!

ALICIA.

Nay, I deserve it all—I feel that I do!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Believe me, my dear Alicia, that my earnest manner arises only from my sincere wish to convince you of your error. That you were not worse than your companions does not *justify* you, thought it *condemns* them. But to enforce what I say, suffer me to tell you a  
little

little story of which I know the truth. When I was in London, just after my marriage, a young friend and myself were passing through a narrow street in my carriage, when a little boy ran directly under the horses feet; providentially I saw him time enough, by pulling the check, to save him from being much hurt. I instantly jumped out, and enquired of two or three people the accident had drawn together whose child he was; they pointed out a mean looking house where they said his parents lived, and my young friend and I went in, followed by the footman carrying the child, who though meanly dressed was clean and pretty. A young sickly looking woman, who was rocking a cradle with her foot, while her hands were busily

employed in making a gown, rose with surprise to receive us, but she was sadly alarmed when she saw the child pale and disordered. We soon composed her mind, and she thanked us in terms above her station. I promised to call again the next day to enquire after the child, and after slipping a guinea into his little hand, we went away. The next day I did not fail to call, and found the child quite recovered. The young woman's thanks and manner of speaking were modest and interesting; there was an air of cleanly poverty about them, and she seemed sickly. I made a few enquires about her way of life, and as she was communicative, I easily learned the following particulars. She had been brought up genteelly, but was reduced by her father's death

death to the necessity of getting her own bread. A relation had apprenticed her to a mantua-maker, and when her time was out she set up for herself, and soon obtained sufficient business to support her, especially by the employment of two very young ladies of quality, whose mother at that time superintended their cloaths. She soon after married a young man who was journeyman to a great silk-mercery, and they went on very well till after the birth of their first child; then these two young ladies I spoke of before having obtained an *allowance* from their mother; began not to be so punctual in their payments. Still Mrs. Martin worked for them. She was frequently ordered to buy linings and trimmings of various sorts, for which she paid, but was

not paid again. The person who employed her husband failed, and went off some pounds in his debt, and as she had now a long bill on her fashionable customers, she ventured the next time they ordered something, to hint she should be glad of a little money. Promises were the reply, promises which were never kept. Her affairs began to get deranged, as her husband was out of employment, and was afflicted with a consumptive complaint which prevented his getting any. At this unfortunate time poor Mrs. Martin lay in of her second child, and their little stock of money was consequently all expended. She knew the sum her two principle customers owed her would support them till she could get again to work, she ventured  
there-

therefore to send a note by her husband to entreat the payment of it. But her husband returned with the sad intelligence that only one servant was left in the house, and the whole family was gone to Spa for a twelvemonth! This was a terrible stroke! They were slightly indebted to their landady, and a few other persons, these debts they had no means of discharging but by selling some of their furniture. The woman with whom they lodged took alarm, and at last informed them she had let her apartments to "people who would not be obliged to sell their furniture to pay her!" They were therefore under the necessity of removing to the poor house where I found them, and where it was too much trouble to some of her fine

customers to come.—“A mantua-maker in such a vulgar place!—They were sorry for her, but henceforth they should employ Madame A——r, Mademoiselle B——, who lived in such a square or street!” The poor young woman, harassed and hardly recovered from her lying in, could now scarcely get work enough to find them necessaries.—I am afraid, my dear, I tire you with my long story.

CONSTANCE.

O no, mama, indeed!

ALICIA, (*sighing.*)

No, it does not *tire* me!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Her husband was now in hopes of getting  
ing



ting a place in an eminent silk-mercant's shop. I enquired the name of the ladies who had gone away in their debt, and found I had a slight acquaintance with their family. I then, after making enquiries which confirmed the truth of their story, and the good opinion I entertained of them, drove to Mr. — the silk-mercant's, with whom I had laid out a considerable sum on my marriage. I did not leave him till I had obtained his promise to employ poor Martin with a comfortable salary. I afterwards wrote in my own name to one of the young ladies at Spa, and after severely censuring their unjust conduct, I told them if the money was not remitted within a certain time, I should write an account of their behaviour to their mother. The money

was almost immediately remitted to me, with a civil letter, and many attempts at excuses. With this sum I advised Mrs. Martin to remove to a genteel part of the town: I gave her my own custom, and recommended her to many others: I had the pleasure of seeing my endeavours succeed, and with very little expence or trouble to myself, I had the happiness of rescuing these poor people from misery, and seeing them in a flourishing way. Poor Martin's health was recovered, and they were both till their deaths, which happened soon after each other within these four years, the most grateful, industrious creatures I ever knew. The boy is now in the sea service, and the girl with a milliner in Bond-street, and both likely to do well.

I see,

I see, my dear Alicia, I need not impress this strongly on your mind. You feel how unjust must be that conduct, which may so easily involve a whole family in ruin. Besides, if this unhappy propensity to living beyond your income grow up with you, when you are your own mistress and perhaps have the care of a family, the mischief will become more extended: inevitable ruin to yourself and your family must ensue, for no income can equal the profuseness of an extravagant, careless woman. Besides, by your necessarily large dealings you involve numbers in your ruin. A large tradesman stops payment, because his customers do not pay him, and instantly half a dozen small families are reduced to absolute want; they again draw in

others, and there is no saying where the mischief will end.

ALICIA.

Ah, Madam, I am indeed fully convinced. I will immediately write to my mother and tell her so! Yet had she—had she but inspected my accounts—

MRS. LEYSTER.

There she herself allows she was wrong—but Alicia consider—It was her *dependence* on *your promise* made her thus secure!

ALICIA (*starting up.*)

I will write to her this instant—I will entreat her to pardon me—I will own that I am struck to the heart—that my  
punish-

punishment is just—for though I submitted, I never thought it so before!— But why do I say punishment—I am convinced this visit, which I thought such a misfortune, will prove the happiest event of my life.

CONSTANCE.

I am sure it is of mine, since instead of a cousin whom I had never seen, I hope I have now a friend whom I shall always love.

ALICIA, (*looking at Mrs. Leyster.*)

Am I worthy to be her friend?

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yes, my dear girl; you have an excellent heart, and that is the great security for all.

ALICIA.

ALICIA.

Ah then, embrace me, my dear cousin, my friend, my sister!—Now, for the first time in my life, I know what friendship is!

MRS. LEYSTER, (*wiping her eyes.*)

It is true. Virtue alone is the sure basis of friendship. Without it we may form intimacies, connections, and even unworthy confidences, but friendship can only subsist between those who love virtue!

Alicia then withdrew to write to her mother, which she did in the tenderest and most penitent terms. She shed many tears over her letter, but they were not tears of resentment and vexation,  
they

they flowed from a heart convinced of its errors, and tasting for the first time all the sweetness of candor and ingenuousness, and as such they at once purified and gratified her feelings.

After this tranquillity was restored at Fair Lawn, and Constantia and Alicia became inseparable companions. The more Alicia knew of her cousin, the more she discovered that far from being her superior, she was really greatly below Constance in every desirable acquirement. After having received an answer from her mother full of pardon and affection, she wrote again, begging permission to take lessons of drawing with Constantia, which was readily granted, and she set about improving in it with  
the

the more alacrity, because she was really fond of the art. Instead of contemptuously declining, she now endeavoured to find pleasure in the simple but natural and useful pursuits of her cousin; and though her mind could not all at once gain that energy which made them so delightful to Constantia, yet by degrees they became agreeable to her. As she became more acquainted with books, and particularly the poems of Thomson and Cowper\*, a thousand natural beauties she had before overlooked, now charmed her eyes and gratified her heart: and learning to be charitable from those she was with, she found that to sacrifice an expensive ornament or piece of millinery, by giving the money they would have

\* See Thomson's Seasons and Cowper's Talk.



cost to the poor, gave her more pleasure than she could have received from wearing them. Her person improved by exercise and the new virtues of her mind, her manners acquired a softness and modesty, and in three months time she would scarcely have been known. Mrs. Leyster, however, observed, that she had not lost, and that Constance had acquired one of Alicia's bad habits; she waited for a proper opportunity to rebuke her for it, and it occurred. They sat at work one morning; Constantia rising hastily tore her gown (which was confined by Alicia's chair) and instantly exclaimed—"Oh my God, cousin, you have torn my gown!"

MRS. LEYSTER.

Constantia!

CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE.

Mama!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Did I hear you right?

CONSTANCE.

What, mama!—I don't know what you mean!

MRS. LEYSTER.

Is it possible that a habit so lately acquired can have gained upon you so much, that you are not sensible when you do it?

CONSTANCE.

No, mama, I know now what you mean.

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

Yes, Constantia.—Without any inducement, affected by a moment's surprize, by a thing of no sort of consequence, you call eargerly upon that great, that supreme Being, whose name ought never to be invoked but with sensations of awe and respect, who has expressly forbidden you “to take his name in vain,” or even without cause to swear “by the Heaven which is his throne, or the earth which is his footstool!” Do you not blush, Constantia, at using on such an occasion a name so sacred?

(CONSTANCE, *with emotion.*)

Mama—I was not aware—I hope I shall never do it again

MRS.

MRS. LEYSTER.

I hope you never will. Even if it were not extremely wicked, which it is, there is something so bold, so unfeminine in a woman's using such expressions, that I never can bear to hear it. My dear Alicia blushes and looks abashed. I own, my dear, I have observed this ill habit in you with great pain, and only waited a favourable moment to tell you of it. Constantia has learned it of you, you I suppose learned it of your London friends. I know too many young women think nothing of such appeals to the Deity, nor of other improper exclamations. They think, I believe, that it gives them an air of fashion, whereas in reality the lowest of the people are the  
greatest

greatest offenders in this way. These young ladies alledge that they mean nothing by it; but what then, can they not express their surprise by more decent exclamations, and without breaking an absolute *commandment*? Some of them, I am afraid, seldom hear the name of God, except when it "is taken in vain." For them I feel extreme pity, for their instructors utter indignation. But for religious young women, those who know and reverence the "Father of all," to use such expressions, is really shocking. And if for every idle word we shall be called to account, as the Scripture assures us, how will those answer who wantonly and wilfully are perpetually taking the name of "God in vain?" Correct both of you, I entreat you, this terrible custom,

custom, and let me never more have occasion to reprove you on this subject.

Lectures like this on many errors Alicia frequently received, but delivered with such sweetness of manner, such strength of reasoning, she could not be displeased with them; they every day became less and less necessary, and by the end of the six months which she had promised to spend in the country, she was every thing that could be wished. Mrs. Woodford came at the end of that time to see her sister and niece, and to fetch home her daughter; but Alicia, no longer presuming, conscious of her former deficiencies, and fearful of losing what she had acquired, begged to remain another half year in the country,

at

at the expiration of which Mrs. Leyster and Constance promised to return with her to London, To this Mrs. Woodford readily agreed, and delighted with the improvement of her daughter and the goodness of Constantia, whom she had not seen for many years, she staid a month with them and then returned to London. Constance had now the pleasure of seeing her little Jenny old enough to profit by her lessons, and the child grew and improved as much as she could desire. When Alicia returned to London, Mrs. and Miss Leyster went with her. They remained some weeks in Town, enjoying in moderation the pleasures it affords. They then went back, leaving the grateful Alicia with her happy mother, with whom she still remains, tho' a fre-

a frequent interchange of visits is kept up between the inhabitants of Fair-Lawn and Mrs. and Miss Woodford. The latter is become one of the most amiable young women of the age; she and Constantia are universally beloved in the circle of their acquaintance; and both gratefully and constantly allow, that they owe all their happiness to the kind instructions of Mrs. Leyster, and a residence in the country, which has taught them that justice and moderation are the securest means of obtaining true happiness.

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