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**Thoughts**

*on the passions, prejudices, and tempers of mankind, drawn from real characters.*

FABLES APPLICABLE TO THE SUBJECTS.

**Various Anecdotes**

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*In Two Hundred and Nine Conversations,*

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*and proper for all families seeking domestic peace and Christian piety:*

*with*

**A Manual of Devotion,**

*comprehending extracts from the scriptures, prayers, hymns, religious poems, &c.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

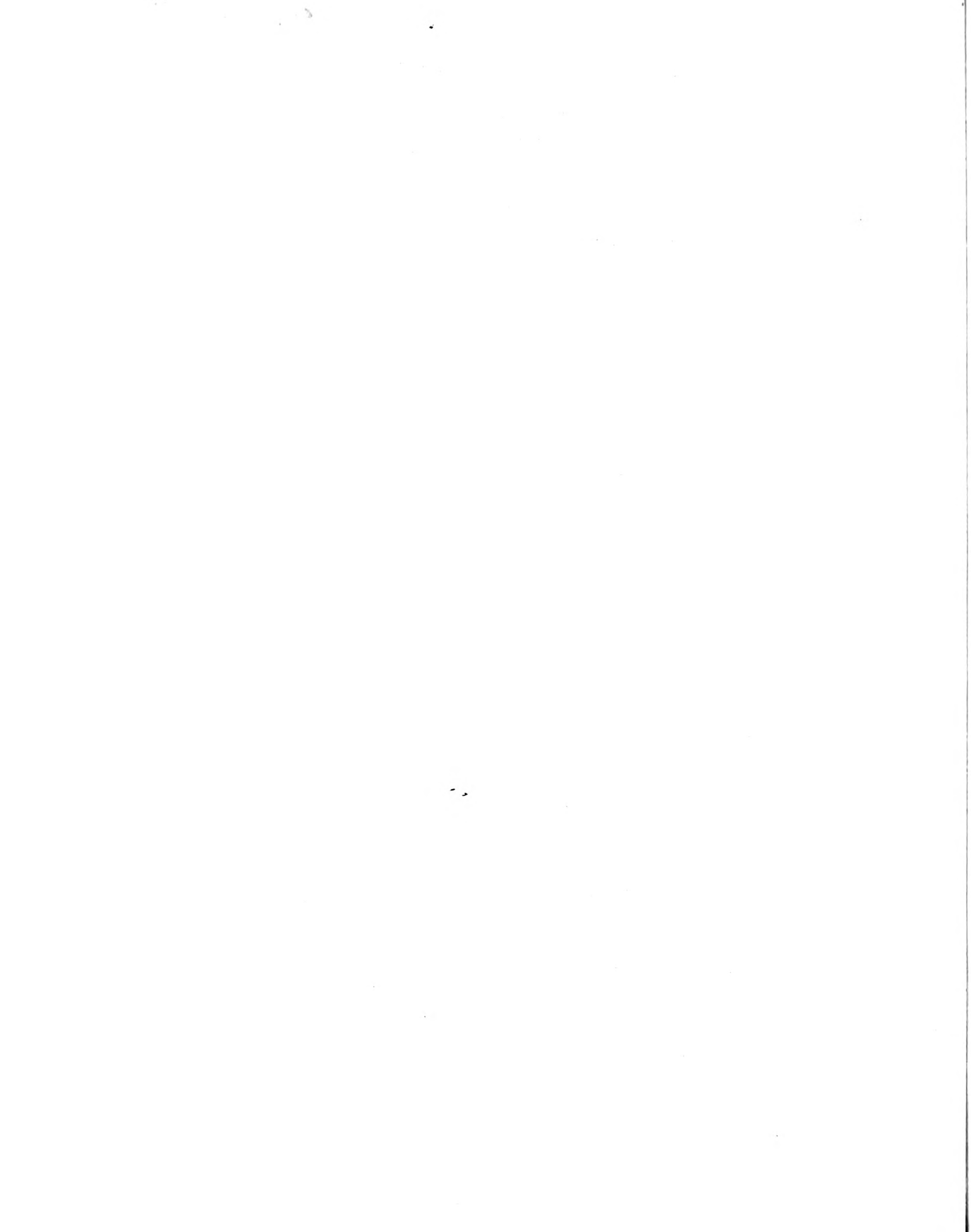
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*The Second Edition, amply corrected, and enlarged an half part.*  
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*By Jonas Hanway, Esq;*  
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L O N D O N :

*Printed for Doddsley, in Pall-Mall; Sewel, near the Royal-Exchange;  
and Bew, in Pater-noster-Row.*

M.DCC.LXXVII.



## C O N T E N T S

O F T H E

## P R I N C I P A L S U B J E C T S

O F T H E

## S E C O N D V O L U M E.

[See I N D E X.]

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(a) While I am writing these heads of Contents, I have the honour to receive from the hands of the intelligent, and most true labourer in the vineyard of Christ, the Right Hon. the Lady *Arbella Denny*, the following account of the death of the Rev. *F. Thompson*, viz.

An Extract from a Sermon on the *Wife of Balcan*, in the 10th verse of the xxiii chapter of the book of *Numbers*, preached by *Dean Bayly*, at the chapel of the Asylum, in *Leeson-street, Dublin*, on *Sunday the 12th of August, 1776*, soon after the death of the Rev. *Mr. Francis Thompson*, and printed at the request of the Right Hon. *Lady Arbella Denny*, Vice-patroness, from her earnest desire of having some public testimony given of the essential services rendered by the deceased, to the charity under her inspection.

"I should here conclude, did not the awful subject of this discourse, and the place in which it is delivered, in some measure, call upon me to take particular notice of a late instance of mortality, by which the charity you so liberally support in this house, has sustained a loss, that will not be easily repaired. I mean, the death of that worthy person, to whose unremitting labours a great part of the uncommon success with which this excellent institution has hitherto been blessed, must in justice be ascribed.

When the *mighty ones* of this world finish their mortal course, long sable cavalcades, with all the pageantry of woe, conduct the noble dust to its hereditary vault; and if the deceased had merited the least degree of public approbation, funeral orations trumpet forth his praise; while he, who has calmly walked in the daily vale of private life, is borne, unnoticed, by a few charitable friends to his silent grave, and *his place knoweth him no more*; and yet perhaps his life, if seriously considered, might afford a theme as just, though not so

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pompous, for the mouth of fame, as that of those who have shined in the most conspicuous and exalted spheres. And such indeed is the present instance; for, if even a primitive simplicity of mind and manners; if candour, sincerity, and gentleness of disposition; if a heart ever ready to *weep with those that weep*, and a hand more willing than able to relieve; if a composed, nay cheerful acquiescence, and resigned submission to the will of heaven, under a complex load of bodily infirmities and pains; if an excellent understanding, cultivated by laborious and well-directed study, and a most assiduous application of these happy talents to the most glorious of all purposes; the instruction of the ignorant, the comfort of the distressed, the reformation of the guilty, and reconciliation of penitents to their offended God; if these, I say, are qualities which with richest perfumes embalm the memory of the dead; few indeed, within the compass of my knowledge, have deserved a more grateful remembrance from the living, than the deceased object of our present thoughts.

The death, therefore, of this truly good man, demands a sigh from every benevolent breast, though in no respect, personally interested in the event; and if so, what must you, my unhappy sisters! (for by that title, as penitents, I readily address you) what, I say, must you feel? you, who are so deeply, so immediately concerned!

For where, alas! is now your condescending instructor? Where now, that careful, trusty guide, who was *eyes to you when ye were blind, and feet when ye were lame*? Where now, that friendly hand which led you from the paths of vice and ruin, to those that terminate in everlasting bliss?

No more shall affectionate reproof, or healing words of comfort issue from his lips; no more shall wretched outcasts from society, disowned by the once loving and beloved companions of their youth, rejected, nay possibly even cursed, by those who gave them birth; behold in him a tender friend, a more than father, pitying their distress, pouring the balm of hope into their wounded spirits, and *speaking, Peace, peace*, where indeed, for years before, *there was no peace*.

However, though for these reasons *sorrow hath now filled your hearts*; yet take good heed that ye *sorrow* (as St. Paul speaks) *after a godly sort*; although ye mourn, and justly mourn, yet *mourn not as those without hope*.

To mourn for him would in truth be inconsistent with every precept he instilled. He now, we humbly trust, enjoys the blessed rewards promised to such as *turn many unto wisdom*; and if the spirits of *just men made perfect*, as well as the *angels which are in heaven rejoice over every sinner that repenteth*, with what triumphant transport may he perhaps, at this very instant, look down on you, his converts! On you, whom through the merits of Christ, and by the aid of God's assisting grace, we hope, he hath raised from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness, and in the end, to everlasting joy.

All I shall add on this occasion is, to warn you against the least distrust of the Almighty's goodness to you; although, for the present, he hath been pleased to *remove this Teacher*, so that you can no longer *see him with your eyes*. On the contrary, lift up your hearts unto the Lord, and let them be filled with a pious confidence, that your heavenly father, who hath thus called you to (what I hope I may properly stile) a state of salvation, will still provide the means of continuing to you the assistances you have hitherto enjoyed, and of consequence, that though he hath permitted this his *servant to depart in peace*, and to *rest from his labours*; yet that his good Providence will select a successor in his charitable office, who, warmed with the like zeal, and animated by his example, shall *strengthen, stablish, settle you*; and thus *perfect in you the good work* which he to happily began.

In the mean time, whilst ye remain, indeed, *as sheep without a shepherd*, let me earnestly beseech you, to *lay up for yourselves, as treasures which neither rust or moth can corrupt*, the remembrance of the daily, nay hourly lessons you received, recollecting as nearly as possible, his every word, and upon every occasion, whether of information or advice, whether of caution or consolation, whether of encouragement or of rebuke. By this means, *though dead yet shall he speak*; by this means, shall ye most effectually do honour to his memory; by this means, in the sincerity of your reformation, shall men still *see his good works*, and of course *glorify your Father which is in heaven*.<sup>2</sup>

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OF COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, WOMEN, CHILDREN, EDUCATION, &c.

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P A R T I.

D I A L O G U E S

O F

THOMAS TRUEMAN a Farmer, and his  
Daughter MARY.

C O N V E R S A T I O N I.

*Set out on a visit to his cousin Robert Goodman. Rural scenes. Soliloquy on the borders of a romantic scene, in contemplation of life, and invoking the mercies of God. Reflexions on a rookery.*

F. **T**HE clouds are dying fast: we shall soon have *broad-day*. The lark is called the messenger of the morning. Hark how she begins her carols! See how she vaults with joyful wings, as if she meant to greet us humble folks. Were we as great as *emperors*, she could do no more.

D. The sun is peeping: I hope we shall be happy in a *fine day*.

F. Considering the inequality of our climate, it is a circumstance of joy to travellers to see the sky serene.

D. *Peer Louisa!* I have been thinking so much of her, and of my own folly, my sleep hath been interrupted.—If she knew what a wretch she hath set her heart upon, her tears would flow apace.—I fear he will turn out a careless profligate!

F. We shall hear more of him on our return: in the mean time, let us *forget* our sorrows!—The earth seems to be covered with plenty. How glorious it is to see this display of the bounty of heaven!—

D. And yet we generally incline to the grumbling side!

F. This nation sees more of its own faults, than of those of other people; and supposes that it hath less virtue, though it pretends to more sense, than the inhabitants of other countries enjoy: but this arises from ignorance or perverseness.

.....

D. What a delightful scene is *this!*—

F. The lake is beautiful, and the rocks that surround it stupendous! I have heard that the land under them, around the lake, encompasses near eighteen miles (a).

D. What a fine wildness and irregularity! The height of the rocks strikes me with awe, though the highest of them are distant.

F. In the evening, the sun being shadowed by the opposite hills, makes a beautiful reflexion on the water. Do you observe the more pleasing part of the prospect; yon cultivated fields, and the hanging woods of oak, affording shade above

(a) Alludes to *Keswick*.

above shade, in a most enchanting magnificence!

*D.* They make one wish earnestly to dwell among them.

*F.* Appearances often deceive; the eye is pleased with objects, only as they stand at a *proper distance*.

*D.* Do you allude to *James*? He is handsome enough, if he had *virtue*. We are all delighted by the eye, whatever the object may be.

*F.* Yes: and long to approach That which pleases: yet we ought to be sorry when we are pleased, if the object is not worthy of our love or esteem. *Here*, as the eye wanders, the more pleasing the scene appears: we fear no evil from it; and as we vary our position, the variety enchants. Do not those *cliffs*, which hang broken over the lake, look nobly?

*D.* Horribly noble!

*F.* The trees which climb up their shaggy sides, increase the grandeur of the view! Do you see a *bird*, which appears hardly bigger than a sparrow? It is an *eagle*; which, from the vast height, must be of the largest size. She delights to soar in the upper region of the air; and where no mortal foot I believe hath ever trod, she builds her nest. Eagles are called the sovereigns of the feathered kind; but they are terrible to their subjects. Besides birds, they kill lambs and other animals, and bear them off in their talons.

*D.* Are not *children* exposed to danger from them?

*F.* I have heard of a *child* being killed by an eagle. Some of the large kind are so strong, as to be formidable to a *man*: but these are not numerous. What adds most to the grandeur of this scene, are those water-falls, tumbling down from rock to rock in vast sheets. You see that many of the cliffs run into the lake, forming bays; as if Nature meant it as a resemblance of the wide ocean, where ships navigate.—Look!—there the land opens; and at a distance new mountains appear, and lead the *fancy* beyond the power of sight.—

*D.* It is great and beautiful, indeed! Superior far to any thing I ever saw!—Have *you* been here before?

*F.* Frequently: at different seasons, and at different times of the day, which makes as different representations, all *pleasing* amidst their horrors. When the *sky* is calm and serene, they seem to be then most delightful. These woods

and water-falls; the cliffs and valleys; the lawns and mountains in one view, constitute a variety, scarce any where to be seen. I once sailed round this lake with my master. During the spring, the lawns look gay: and now the woods appear as clothed in a *deeper green*. When the water is clear and calm, and these vast objects appear inverted in the shadow, the grandeur of them enchants the fancy. Whilst the solemn silence which reigns, strikes the mind with such religious awe, one cannot forbear crying out, “O God! how wonderful are thy works!”—In one of the visits which my master made to this magnificent scene, he said his mind was enraptured beyond any thing he had ever experienced in his life. It was on a summer’s evening, by the moon’s glimmering light, when all was silent as the grave. The gloomy shadow from the lofty cliffs; the stately woods and mountain-tops, raised like the steeples of cathedral churches, gave him all the ideas of religious worship: Here he walked, accompanied only by his *own heart*, which he offered up to *God*.

*D.* You make me think of the great Patriarch, who retired to the mountain to offer up his son.

*F.* My master had no such trial of his faith. It was at That hour, when only the watchful shepherd, listening near his fold, was waking: All else was dead in sleep, locked in the arms of deep repose. No voice, nor any other sound was heard, except the distant falls of water from these lofty cliffs. Here he indulged his meditations.

*D.* What was the subject of them?

*F.* According to what he committed to writing, it ran thus:

Here, in this gloom and silence, do my thoughts—  
Find rest!—No fond officious fancy roves,  
To raise my passions and disturb my breast!  
Here are my senses armed against sin.

Calm in this solemn scene, no airy shape  
Freezes my blood, or terrifies my heart!

No child of fancy plays before my eyes,  
With sad presages of dire ills to come!

What!—Are my thoughts so well approv’d, as  
leave

No spot, nor blemish foul! O grant my soul  
To look with horror on its former guilt,

Nor tamely give consent to wound herself  
With the sharp daggers of iniquity!

I have full cause to clothe my heart in grief,

And

And my offences range in full array  
Yet shall my furrows know their bounds; for  
Thou,

O mighty Lord, art never slow to save!  
Frail as I am, O shew me thy bright paths,  
That I may walk in humble piety!

Let *Hope*, adorn'd with sweet and gentle smiles,  
Bring *Peace* and *Comfort* to my longing breast!

And whilst this *thinking substance* is in heav'n,  
And now again on earth, with earthly thoughts;  
O may it come at last to rest with Thee!—

How strange it is, that Man, possess'd of pow'rs  
So great and noble, should yet seek for bliss,  
In wild *Ambition's* endless hopes and fears!

“ Spying some distant shore, whercon to tread,  
“ And wish for feet as nimble as the eye;”

When the sweet zest of life is in his cup,  
And only asks the appetite to taste!

O sons of earth! let not your babbling tongues  
Talk of your *mighty acts*, and *feats of arms*!

He only is the sovereign Lord of Hosts,  
Whose goodness is the theme of angels' praise!

What is *Ambition*, dazzling the eye  
With mere illusions and deluding hopes?

O could I sympathize with Nature's God,  
And feel the joys of moral rectitude!

The life that's gentle, “ where the elements  
“ So mix, that Nature may stand up and say,

“ *Here is a man!*” This would be happiness  
Worthy the first and greatest son of earth!

Whilst I look forward to my *proper home*,  
I see the tear stand big in the *fair eye*;

Drops precious, issuing from their crystal sluice,  
When they are sanctified with *godly grief*,

But vain and foolish if they run to waste!  
O! had I words to speak thy mighty praise,

My gratitude, O God, would climb to heav'n!  
Through all the various sufferings of my life,

And ev'ry comfort of my passing hours,  
It was my *first*, and *last*, and *sweetest joy*,

That *Thou* wert still most present to my thoughts!  
How doth my mind now *labour* to conceive

The vastness of my debt! How doth it *long*  
To shew, by deeds of pure and grateful love,

My *left* sense of thy great mercies past!—  
O *Father Supreme!*—*Parent of all good!*

Ever *benignant*, *merciful*, and *kind*,  
Beyond all power of language to describe:

Let all creation offer up thy praise!  
“ Ye mists and exhalations that now rise

“ From hill, or steaming lake, dusky, or grey,  
“ Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,

“ In honour to the world's great Author, rise!”  
With joy I think on the *First Cause*, from whence

This animated frame feels vital warmth!  
The life derived from thy great pow'r, O God,

To Thee alone is due! And what shall I  
Return? How shall my soul exert her force,

To shew her true devotion to her God?  
*Angels* and *archangels* offer up their thanks!

Around thy throne, enraptured they stand,  
Chanting celestial songs of praise!

To Thee, O Father! omnipotent God!  
To Thee all creatures cry aloud in heaven:

Shall *man*, endow'd with reason, be remiss?—  
The bright *meridian sun* proclaims thy name;

And the *pale moon* joins in one common voice,  
Thou *First*, thou *Last*, thou *self-existing God*,

Incomprehensible, Original!  
“ O Sun! of this great world both eye and soul,

“ Sound forth his praise, who out of darkness  
“ call'd

“ Up light; air, and ye elements, the eldest birth  
“ Of Nature's womb, that mix and nourish all;

“ Let your *unceasing change* call forth new praise!  
What are thy glorious works, which meet my

eyes?  
What is the frame of this majestic world?

Thy deeds displayed to the mental eye,  
Shine far beyond the hill, or vale, or rock!

Had I an angel's hand, here to engrave  
Thy name, O mighty Sovereign! Lord of all!

And on these *solid piles*, mark characters  
So large, that *hoary Time* should yield his throne

Ere they could lose their deep-indented form.  
How could such efforts reach the glorious heights,

Or give just praises to *Jehovah's* name!—  
In this enchanting scene I view the moon,

Her silver visage shining in this glass,  
To which fond man, in days of ignorance,

As poets feign'd, ascribed *chastity*.  
*Virtue* can see, to guard herself from ill:

Her own firm strength shall serve her as a shield.  
Can this *pure element* purge away my sins?

This was a work accomplished by *blood*!  
Thou, *Christ!* who fittest by th' Almighty's

throne,  
Amidst the glories of celestial bliss;

To Thee this sovereign office was assign'd!—  
O Lord of Nature, shield me with thy pow'r!

By Thee the worlds were made: thy outstretch'd  
hand

Gave first existence to this awful scene!  
Whether refreshed by a gentle breeze,

Or labouring under a fierce burning fun,  
Thy arm can still protect my trembling life!  
Here, at the feet of thy exalted throne,  
I now devote myself! —

*D.* Is it not *pious* and *lofty*? I think it is *musical* also.

*F.* A few of the lines are borrowed from our two greatest poets (*a*). The subject, place, and time made the verse; my master made no pretensions to poetry. When I asked the favour of a copy of these lines, his answer was, "You may read better things than my poor efforts to express the feelings of my own heart."

*D.* Coming from the heart, is the reason, I suppose, which gives it charms to *me*.—I like it wonderfully! You have a good memory, my father.

*F.* When I was a boy, I could repeat, *without book*, an hundred lines, more easily than I can now learn *five*.

*D.* Your master was *religiously* inclined: but had he not some tincture of *enthusiasm*?

*F.* Do you imagine, that there is more in his verses, than the pious thoughts of a sober man, affected by an *awful scene*, where he indulged his devotion? Any person, of a lively fancy, in the same circumstances, contemplating his *being* and his *end*, under this canopy of the heavens, more grand than all earthly temples, might worship God, and express his *sorrow* for the evil of his past life, and resolution of *amendment* for the future.—This *religious act*, he said, made an impression on his mind, which he never forgot to the day of his death.

*D.* Probably it was a happy event to him. If pious *rich men* were to make annual visitations to such places, it might be of service to the *cause*.—

*F.* Do you mean the cause of *devotion*, or *curiosity*?—It might purge off some of the ill humours and pollutions which are contracted in the various bustle of city resort, surrounded by smoke, brick walls, and lighted tapers.—

*D.* Might you not add, *vice* and *folly*? How do things appear here in the *winter*? Now autumn approaches, the fields are clothed in all the variety of colours with which Nature seems desirous to please us at this season.

*F.* Sometimes we find a serene air: and when the sky is clear, the highest mountains shew themselves in full display.—Let the weather

change, and the clouds descend almost to the bottoms of the mountains and rocks, and roll along the vallies. When I have passed this way, I have frequently heard the winds roar among the cliffs and caverns, like repeated claps of *thunder*.—

*D.* That was terrible!—

.....  
This is a different scene from the rocks and lakes we lately passed!

*F.* Here insects and reptiles abound. The croaking of frogs, and the bites of gnats, to people not accustomed to them, resemble an *Egyptian plague*. The inhabitants however bear this noise and scent, like those who lodge in the shops of working-pewterers, cheesemongers, or perfumers, in great cities.

*D.* It is happy that Nature and Providence are so indulgent to us; or how could a great part of mankind *live*?

*F.* These elms are haunted by the cawing rooks, who take their lodging in such abundance, one might almost think this was their *feat* of empire. Here they build their nests, the only castles which *their state* requires; and with united voice you hear them proclaim the praise of their Creator!

*D.* Do you like this noise?

*F.* So far as I consider their cries a kind of appeal to Nature for some want, or the gratification of some pleasure. When one begins, you find others join the concert, as if they were pleased with the sound of their own music.

*D.* Is not this the case of many birds and beasts? Some *men* are never so well pleased as when they are talking!

.....  
We are now on higher ground: here the air diffuses a sweet odour.—Is not the scene on this hill delightful? The valley below, which seemed to be disagreeable as we passed through it, has a beautiful appearance from hence.

*F.* Ay, *Mary*: things often appear, as I told you of the rocks and valleys, very different, at a certain distance, from what they really are.—Do you see a small house on the brow of the hill?—they call it *the hermit's cave*. There lives an old man, of reputation for his piety and good sense.

*D.* Let us make him a visit! We may learn something from him. I suppose he is not afraid of seeing a female face in his cave.—

C O N-

(a) Shakespear and Milton,

## CONVERSATION II.

*A visit to a reclusive old man of sense and virtue. Observation on his life, manners, and reputation. Commendable conduct of a country parochial clergyman. Origin of the custom of painting texts of scripture on the walls in the insides of churches. Conversation between Queen Elizabeth and Dr. Symfon.*

F. **WHAT** think you! They say this person is a gentleman.

D. He talks like one: civility seems natural to him: he expresses himself with a gentle modesty and humanity, which bespeak him a person above the vulgar. I observed that he seemed to chastise his eyes when he looked towards me.

F. I hope, *Mary*, you did not imagine your person had any charms which could attract the eyes of such a man!

D. No, my dear father!—I only thought that some event of his past life, relating to a woman, might occur to his thoughts on seeing me, and induce him to look another way.

F. Do you suppose then that a woman is the cause of his retirement?

D. It must be *man* or *woman*; and though I do not allow myself to suppose any thing, if he has been *crest in love* by *disappointment*, or *treachery*, or his own *weakness* and *folly*, I suppose he is not the first unfortunate man in the world, who has suffered in the same way: though few people give up the *world*; they let the world give up *them*.

F. He is not the first, nor the second. He appears now as wishing to see nothing with his mind's eye, but the glories of *benevolence*, *temperance*, and *chastity*, and all the other virtues which he can exercise in his retreat. He might take the more notice of you, for he hardly ever admits any female visitor; and never, unless she comes attended by a *man*; though men often go to consult him upon matters which regard the peace of their mind. He lives constantly in his little retreat on this hill, without a servant, *determined not to be put out of humour by being ill served*. He cooks for himself; and he says his morsel is so much the sweeter. The ground is his own property: and he never wants money. He spends his time in giving advice to those who are troubled in thought, or wish to avoid quar-

rels or contentions. *Reading*, *prayer*, *planting* his grounds, and *gardening*, with the walks he takes about this hill, fill up his hours. You see he has *shade* in *summer*, and protection from the *wind* and *cold* in *winter*. He says nothing of his story; but that he would rather pray for mankind than trust his happiness to their keeping; and would not venture again into the world to be *master of it*.—I agree with you, that some event afflicts his mind; but he rather chuses to let concealment feed on his hoary cheeks, than tell his griefs. He is never observed to sigh, nor heard to complain, except when he is in pain; and then he cries, “O God, when will it be thy pleasure that all my pains shall cease!” You observe that he is awful in his deportment; yet humble: his soul is rich in charity, and gives grace to his words: he strives to refine his spirit from all its dregs, and the impurities of sense. You observe, that he talks with the mildest accent, and with an admirable choice of words: his precepts, with regard to the common practice of the world, are harsh; yet tempered so sweetly with charity, he wins his hearer by *love* and *hope*, rather than by *fear*. He wishes for no more than he *possesses*, which he enjoys; being too much devoted to poverty, to be sought by the indigent; so that he suffers no pain on account of that which he is not able to do for them: yet he has *something* to give; and has been known to prop up the whole family of a virtuous, poor man. When consulted, he administers such advice, as makes those who apply to him rich in *contentment*; and by means of the *industry*, which he constantly recommends, he puts them in a capacity of getting their bread with *cheerfulness*. He is visited by people of condition, as they pass this way: he asks them how they spend their time; and talks to them of the dangers of *affluence*. If they offer him money, he bids them give it to the *poor*; and recommends them

to seek for those who are in real distress for want of work, through sickness, or ill fortune: at the same time he lets them know, by *how little life may be sustained*; and consequently, what dangers they are exposed to, who have the management of *superfluities*; whether it be in the gratification of their vanity, or the indulgence of their appetites; these being not only the most dangerous to morals, but attended with the heaviest expence.

D. He seems to be happy, in the good he enjoys, and the comforts he communicates, though it is to appearance in a whimsical way. Whether he has more understanding, or less virtue than many who live in the world, doing it all the good they can, remains to be proved.

F. Observe this ancient *miss-grown* steeple.— There, I dare say, many an owl has uttered *her complaints*.

D. And I hope many a peasant offered up his prayers!

F. Happy were it, if all the prayers offered by *peasants* or *kings*, were the pure incense of the heart; and as agreeable to the dependent, rational, accountable nature of man, as the hooting of an owl to the nature of this bird.

D. The bell has just done *tolling*:— Suppose we go to *prayers*: we can tie *folly* to this yew.— We are not in the neighbourhood of *horse-stealers*.

F. There are very few such churches as this, where any *service* is performed on a prayer day: and we must not be surprized there was so thin a congregation. If this gentleman had not so much of the true spirit of piety, we should not have seen even the *few aged persons* who were present: his zeal in devotion coming from his heart, like the genial warmth of the sun opening the blossom of a fair fruit tree, affects the hearts of these neighbouring villagers, who receive comfort to their souls by the truly religious manner in which the service is performed. Of this they are better judges than the *great* vulgarly imagine them to be.

D. He must be a very *apostolical* man, to exert himself before such *poor people*.

F. Why so? Do you imagine clergymen are like actors before an audience? He that is affected by his devotion, will *pray with propriety*, were the trees of the forest only to hear him. Yet, I grant that this gentleman may be very *apostolical*. Having so fine a manner, and yet

content himself with living in so obscure a village, is singular. I dare say he thinks the soul of a poor old villager, or a young one, male or female, clothed in meekness and humility, of as much value in the sight of God, as the splendid lord, surrounded with domestics, every one of whom may *look down* on the low estate of such as *we are*.

D. Yet when they rise in the morning, they cannot salute the light with the same hearts of gratitude as the poor, who believe in the power of Him who gives the sun to shine upon *their labours*, in common with the first of mankind.

F. True: they who do not even say, “*Lord, have mercy upon me a sinner!*” can have but little pleasure in *hope*: and what is life, *Mary*? it is little more than *hope*; the *hope* of happiness!

D. It is well if the generality of mankind have so much; for many I believe are stupid, or suffer great pain in the *fear* of what *may come*.

F. The honest villager who is a true servant of *the most high God*, is happy in his *humble state*. The Lord of nature is no respecter of persons; they who are lowly in spirit, and obey his laws, them will he cherish in the bosom of his mercy. Such will the *Saviour of the world* advance to the honours of his kingdom. In those blessed regions, will their splendor shine, a million times more glorious, than the richest mortal can form any idea of from the things of this world.

D. This is the comfort, the praise, and glory of the *poor*.—I never saw a church abound so much in *texts of scripture* upon the walls: yet, to judge from the decay of the letters, they should be very ancient.

F. They present themselves so much to the view of many, who perhaps read but little else, it is a pity they are not *painted afresh*. The *unlettered* villager might learn, even from the inanimate walls. If these inform him that “*God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;*” will he not *believe* and *obey*, and in his obedience be happy?

D. So we hope: obedience is better than sacrifice. All families should have the *New Testament* under their roof.—Will not the lord of the manor, or the squire, be at the expence of a few *painted letters*? The vicar and curate may be too poor to be at the expence. Those who are zealous, and *not poor*, should do this service.

F. If they want zeal, their riches will not avail.



avail. Yet I have known many good things done by those who have abundance, with very little reflexion on *obedience*, or the offering of their wealth to God. Many of the clergy, God knows, are very poor. In finer churches, these scriptural decorations are out of use. The vanity of mankind leads them rather to decorate the temples of God with trophies of deceased men, to whom high merits are ascribed, instead of proclaiming the praises of the *living God*, and the sacred truths contained in his word. Many a pompous character of a *man* has, at a profuse expence, been cemented to the walls of churches! You remember Sir *Thomas Friendly's* reflexions on that subject (*a*). Of the two evils, this is better than crowding churches with legends of imaginary saints, or fictitious miracles, according to the parade of the *Romish* superstition.

D. Is the practice of writing texts of scripture on the walls, of very ancient date?

F. I suppose these writings may be full two hundred years old: We are indebted for them to Queen *Elizabeth*, who succeeded to your cruel namesake. *Elizabeth* treated all popish idolatry with contempt. As a proof of this, they have recorded a remarkable conversation between her majesty and Dr. *Symson*, dean of her chapel. The dean having gotten from a foreigner several fine *cuts* and *pictures*, representing the stories and passions of the saints and martyrs, placed them against the epistles and gospels of their festivals, in a fine Common-Prayer Book. This book he caused to be richly bound, and laid on the cushion for the *Queen's* use, in the place where she commonly sat, intending it for a *New-Year's Gift* to her majesty. He conceived that he should please a lady's fancy; but it had a contrary effect. The *Queen* considered how this decorated book varied from her *proclamations*, against the superstitious use of images in churches; and for taking away all reliques of *popery*. When she came to her seat at chapel, she opened the book, and perused it; and seeing the pictures, frowned and looked angry, and then shut it. Of this, several of her attendants took notice.—The *Queen* then calling the *verger*, commanded him to bring her the *old book*, wherein she was wont to read. It was her custom, after sermon, to get immediately on horseback, or into her chariot; but on this occasion, she went straight to the

vestry, and applying herself to the *Dean*, she said, “Mr. *Dean*, how came it to pass, that a new *service-book* was placed on my cushion?” The *Dean* answered, “May it please your majesty, I caused it to be placed there.” “Then,” said the *Queen*, “wherefore did you so?” The *Dean* replied, “To present your majesty with a *New-Year's gift*.” The *Queen* answered, “You could never present me with a worse.” “*Why so, Madam?*” says the *Dean*. The *Queen* replied, “I have an aversion to *idolatry*, to *images* and *pictures* of this kind.” The *Dean* made answer, “Wherein is the idolatry, may it please your majesty?” The *Queen* said, “In the *cuts* resembling *angels* and *saints*; nay grosser absurdities, pictures resembling the *blessed Trinity*.” The *Dean*, who, you may imagine, began to be a little alarmed, replied, “I meant no harm; nor did I think it would offend your majesty, when I intended it for a *New-Year's Gift*.” The *Queen* made answer, “You must needs be ignorant then. Have you forgotten our *proclamation* against *images*, *pictures*, and *Romish reliques* in the churches? Was it not read in your *deanery*?” The *Dean* replied, “It was read; but be your majesty assured, I meant no harm when I caused the *cuts* to be bound up in the *service-book*.” The *Queen* repeated her words, “You must needs be very ignorant to do this after our *prohibition* of them.” The *Dean* answered, “As it was my ignorance, your majesty may the better pardon me.”

D. The *Queen* was a sensible, spirited woman.

F. It appears that she had no mind to make any further bustle about the affair; for she said, “I am sorry for what you have done; but glad to hear it was your *ignorance*, rather than your *opinion*: and God grant you his spirit, and more wisdom for the future.” “*Amen*, I pray God,” replied the *Dean*. The *Queen* then questioned him further in a *softer tone*. “Pray, Mr. *Dean*, how came you by these pictures; who engraved them?” The *Dean* answered, “I know not who engraved them; I bought them of a *German*.” The *Queen* replied, “It is well it was from a stranger: had it been any of our *subjects*, we should have questioned the matter. Pray let no more mistakes of this kind be committed within the churches of our realm for the future.” The *Dean* answered, “There shall not.”

D. This

D. This was a curious conversation : I dare say it frightened the rest of the *clergy*.

F. Queen Elizabeth was not a princess who would bear to be trifled with. You are right : this matter occasioned all the clergy, particularly in and about *London*, and the churchwardens of each parish, to search their *churches* and *chapels*, and to wash out of the walls all paintings that seemed to be *Romish* and idolatrous, and in the place of them to paint suitable texts, taken out of the Holy Scriptures.

D. To this event you ascribe what we have been seeing : yet many of our Common-Prayer Books and Bibles are now ornamented with prints, notwithstanding the good Elizabeth.

F. Since those days, the art of engraving has been cultivated in imitation of other *European*

nations ; and the fancies of the pious have been gratified in the representations of scriptural historical events. Many now in use, cannot be called superstitious, as they relate so directly to events believed by all the protestant churches : but in truth, I do not comprehend how they administer to piety. Many of our books, in these days, are decorated with a specimen of this curious art of engraving.

D. Let us bait at this little neat house : I dare say the landlord is an industrious, honest man.

F. Every thing looks clean about him : I hope his morals are as pure. I am sure I shall be glad of some of his bread, as Jolly will be of his oats.

C O N V E R S A T I O N III.

*Description of various scenes on the road, particularly of a site of a prison, proposed for the punishment of malefactors by labour and solitude. The means of rendering men useful subjects, and good christians, by teaching them useful arts. Mercy in passing a judgment on those who have forfeited their lives to the laws. The nature of the admonition intended by such humane imprisonment.*

F. IT was as you imagined. You see the fruits of sobriety and industry : these are often allied to piety towards God, and charity to our fellow-creatures. This man's care of his children is remarkable.

D. If children derive their bad inclinations from the example and bad discourse of their parents, they become good also by the means of good example and good discourse.

F. Of all the evil we see in the world, the greatest part arises from parents, from generation to generation.

D. Do you know, my father, that our landlord, who is not rich, gives ten pounds every year towards the support of his aged father and mother, and makes them a visit, though they live at the distance of twenty miles, constantly every quarter ; and that he sits up his house during divine service on the sabbath-day ?

F. The Lord of the sabbath will bless his labours !

D. What a fine eminence this is !—The wood on the brow of the hill, and the river which meanders through the valley, render it a situation fit for a nobleman's seat. The ground is marked out by the poles fixed at distances, as if some large building were really intended.

F. That is the spot on which the gentlemen of the county propose to build a capital county prison. The loftiness of the situation will give air to the prisoners ; and being seen from a distance, strike the wicked with terror far and near.—You see our news papers are full of accounts of robberies, examinations of robberies, pardons, and executions. Things are come to such a pass, neither sufferings by the gallows, nor the mercy shewn to those who escape it, flatter us with any change. House-breaking, robbing on the road, and picking pockets, are not confined to London : they are become so common in other parts of the kingdom, notwithstanding such numbers of young persons are hanged or transported, we must think

of

of some additional punishment, 'or alter our whole plan of penal laws. They say our rulers, in mercy to the innocent, have a mind to try their skill in some new way. If the terror of the laws were spread, so as to operate on the minds of malefactors, it might restore a sense of religion and humanity. This I conceive is the only way to prevent the necessity of such a carriage.

*D.* If what is done has not the good effect proposed, common sense seems to teach us to correct the mode of punishing the wicked.

*F.* Happy it will be, if we accomplish so benevolent a work! that, according to the beautiful language of the Scriptures, *justice* and *mercy* may meet and kiss each other.

*D.* But why will not *common prisons* answer the same end? So large a building will be attended with a large expence.

*F.* *Common prisons*, my child!—We have no prisons fit for such correction, as is now proposed. And as to the expence; this is the common cant of those who think to make prudence a substitute for wisdom in politics, being in effect equally imprudent and impolitic. They are so short-sighted, as not to perceive they shall pay, even in one generation, ten times more than this will cost. Many thousands will contribute to the expence; and tens of thousands receive the advantage of it. Do you consider, that if only seventy men are put to death annually in *London*, and within thirty miles of the metropolis, and three times seventy are transported, the real value of two hundred and eighty such young men, is not less than *fifty-six thousand pounds annually* (*a*); which in twenty years amount to above a million of money (*b*); and the loss of *five thousand six hundred young men*, who in time of danger are invaluable?

*D.* We are also sure, that so many women are deprived of *husbands*, and the land of *husbandmen*.

*F.* Ay; and take the kingdom in general, and see how many more perish for want of due and timely correction. *Our sufferings, for want of discipline, are very great*, and threaten much mischief. There are but two ways of reforming the vicious, and restoring them to their right minds, that they may be good subjects, and serve God. One is *corporal punishment*; the

other, *application to the soul*, by the power of reason and religion: if we find one will not avail, we must try the other; or exert ourselves in both ways. By our present management, neither of these motives has such effects, as our laws suppose them to have. Let offenders be confined in *solitude*: here they will meet their true friend: here contemplation may “plume her feathers, and let grow her wings:” here they may try if their souls can soar above the wretched scene in which they act so vile a part, and by reflexion on their past misdeeds, learn how to correct them for the future. Solitude, *Mary*, is sometimes the best society.

*D.* The very worst company in the world must be, where the most wicked people meet together, many of them being infidels.

*F.* It is well known, that the worst scenes of iniquity are often talked over; and it is generally assented to, that *malefactors* leave our prisons in a more wicked state than they came into them. If they were chastised, and taught to get their bread *honestly*, they might become a *blessing*, instead of a *curse* to society. Were they constantly reminded of the importance of their souls, by the daily attendance of a judicious clergyman, in private; such a conduct would certainly make an impression. *The hopes of heaven*, and *the fears of hell*, are very serious things, *Mary*!—Let us be put in a situation that we cannot but *think of them*, and they *will* make a deep impression on us!—In the mean while, humanity revolts against putting so many people to death, as by our present laws ought to die. *Justice* is often constrained to drop her sword! The blood which is shed at her altars, proves that it is a *false sacrifice*; it is *not pleasing to the Almighty*. The stream is turbid and foul; and we do not trace it to its fountain head, in order to clear away the filth and weeds which choak it up.

*D.* *Strong drink*, and *expensive amusements*, I am assured, are the cause that so many forfeit their lives.

*F.* You may add, *bad women* too. We admit women of ill fame as evidences in capital felonies, against the very men with whom they have cohabited; and I dare say these women have seduced the men.—No sooner has one of these abandoned wretches tempted a young fellow to commit a capital felony, and perhaps

received

(a) 280, at 200*l.* is 56,000*l.*

(b) In 20 years, is 5600 men, or 1,120,000*l.* value, besides their progeny.

received the *stolen goods*, than she hangs him to save herself, or make way for a *new dupe* to her *deadly artifices*.

D. Good God!—Are there really such beings, breathing the common air? This is shameful in a *christian* country! Shameful beyond expression! What! countenance the *devil himself*? Save the *tempter* to traffic in the business of plunging the *tempted* into destruction?

F. It is not impossible, if proper measures were pursued, to prevent such practices. In the mean while, the proverb says, “Set a thief to catch a thief.” Our object should be to give a new turn to the thoughts of the people, and teach them how to enjoy the *fruits of conjugal love*, and the *sober arts of life*, by which men enjoy the highest of all blessings, *liberty*. These wretched men become *slaves*; slaves to their *vices*; slaves to their *fears*; slaves to be bound in *chains of iron* for their *offences*; and being the lawful captives of *justice*, must pay the debt they owe, even *their lives, which they have forfeited*?—Let us teach them how to *live*, that they may teach others *good* instead of *evil*; and whilst we *cure, prevent such calamities*. You have heard how *ignorant* many of these people are in regard to their *religion*: is it wonderful they should yield to the temptations of *sin*; or becoming servants to the prince of *darkness*, receive his wages? They often suffer the punishment due to their ingratitude for deserting *their God*, and making war with *their fellow-creatures*: but the merciful Father of mankind would not that any of his children should perish. The wages of some sins are *temporal death*: the wages of *all sin*, unrepented of, is *eternal death*! And should we not all tremble? Would it not be a glorious thing, *Mary*, to prevent such *dreadful calamities*?

D. My dear father!—Glorious indeed! If this be the design of the intended prison, it is surely worth the *closest attention*. The consideration of the expence *can be no object*!

F. You must not be surprized at the extent of the ground marked out: it is designed to accommodate *two hundred persons*, each to be kept in a separate cell. There is to be a chapel within the court or interior square, to contain *galleries*, in which are to be as many closets for the use of the prisoners at their devotion, as there are *cells* for their confinement in the prison. The prisoners being conducted to church every day of their lives, even the worship of God,

which they have generally set at nought, will become not only a *relief* to their souls, in a religious view, but an agreeable break in their *time*. They will also be glad to labour, in order to fill up the *dreadful void* they will otherwise find, in a solitude to which they are such utter strangers.

D. It certainly will be dreadful to them—at least *for a time*; but *consideration* being so faithful a friend to mankind, it is hardly to be conceived that their hearts will not, by degrees, open to a true sense of their duty to *God* and their fellow-creatures.

F. Mankind more easily discover wherein they are *wrong*, than *mend* their ways: but this method of treating malefactors, will not only alarm their *consciences*, as to the quality of their *guilt*; but by the impossibility of sinning, except in thought, they will be led to *repentance*. It will be the test of their minds.—It will give them fair play.—How can *we* presume to think they are forsaken of God! How many malefactors are now condemned by sentence of the laws, for offences they have been guilty of, through the force of temptations, who are not such wicked and abandoned wretches as is vulgarly imagined, though we cut them off from the face of the earth, as if they were. But God, who knows the heart, sees when we err. If it were not for the *royal clemency*, which softens the rigour of the laws, three times as many would suffer at the gallows.—They often forfeit their lives through an eagerness to gratify some favourite passion or appetite. They have not been taught to submit to the dispensations of Providence, in the condition they are placed, and rush into *destruction*. Alas, my daughter! we are not always able to judge truly of the force of a temptation, and should therefore keep a corner in our hearts for *mercy*. A little reflexion might restore many offenders to a steady *resolution* of walking in the straight path of life. Indeed I apprehend, that the most obstinate sinners may be reduced, by the force of *solitude*, to a more consistent way of thinking, than our present practice is calculated to encourage. The method proposed will prove a *counsellor to advise*; an instructor to teach; and a friend to persuade. It will cherish a belief of what they *are*, and what they *may be*,—*happy or miserable*!

D. They will certainly be put in a condition of being qualified for happiness in both worlds: and

and a glorious design it is : I hope it will be properly carried into execution !

*F.* Prisoners will soon find what uses they may make of their *adversity*, excluded as they will be, from the possibility of frequenting their wicked haunts. The very *walls* will *preach* to them, “ It is for thy crimes, O man, thou sufferest : but look up to heaven, and behold the gracious hand of thy Father and thy God, extended to thy relief : listen to the complaints of thine own heart !—O listen, as if thou heardest a voice from heaven, say, *By this means only couldst thou be preserved from everlasting torments ! Think it a happiness to be alone ; and learn to hold the companions of thy past iniquities in the deepest detestation ! Look forward : act thy part well, now thou art under the rod of affliction ; and behold the prospect brighten before thee. The horrors of a prison will change into the comforts of domestic peace. Joyful days, and the sweet slumbers which accompany an innocent life, may yet be thy lot. Act as becomes a man and a christian, and all will be well again.*”

*D.* I rejoice to think how this method might answer the happy purposes intended ; do honour to our name as a *christian* nation ; and draw down the blessings of heaven. If the prisoner has no communication but with the officer who brings him his food, to preserve his body ; and the *clergy-*

*man* who is to apply medicines to his soul. If the minister is appointed to attend him daily, and discourses with him, he will receive *comfort*. This messenger from heaven may supply him with proper books ; and by spiritual food nourish his soul.

*F.* It is proposed, that the prisoner shall have light, sweet air, books, proper clothing, and proper instruments and materials for labour, with such a degree of warmth as the rigour of the seasons may render necessary, that he may not be deprived of the proper means of preserving life, but in a penitential way enjoy all the advantages his situation will admit of.

*D.* This will be *charitable ! Sweet mercy* will smile !—and *justice* will cease to frown.

*F.* Indeed, *my daughter*, when we consider the nature of most part of the offences committed, and the causes which work on the heart to induce men to trespass, we shall find it, as I have already observed, to arise from *bad company* : and this will induce us to reflect seriously, how we may restore the more perfect harmony between *justice* and *mercy*, that these great attributes of the Almighty, as far as *man* can imitate his *Maker*, may at least be exercised in a less imperfect and inconsistent manner, than is now usually done.

## CONVERSATION IV.

*Ancient practice of the press for those who refused to plead. Trial of the force of solitude on a malefactor. Behaviour of an old offender towards a virtuous father, and a penitent son. Remarkable conduct of a poor honest woman, in bringing a malefactor to justice. Great benefit of solitude in imprisonment. Description of the dimensions and regulations proposed.*

*D.* DO you imagine such confinement will be more terrible than the apprehensions of an *ignominious death* ?

*F.* The ignominy makes very little if any impression on minds much depraved ; and as to others, if we put them to death, we give them no opportunity of amendment. But whether the punishment will be more or less terrible, is not so much the question, as how to *correct* without *destroying* the malefactor ; and what means may be employed to deter others from committing the same crimes ;—or the same person, if released, from returning to his evil courses.—*These* are the objects of this design.

*D.* And very great ones they are.

*F.* You easily discern, that no person can be said to be *corrected*, though he be *removed*. If he is cut off, as having forfeited his life, he is forgotten, and ceases to be an example to those who are in danger of becoming the same sacrifice to justice. Our prisons, in their present state, are confessedly not equal to our wants ; and our ordinary practice is, as if it were meant, that malefactors should poison each others minds, and render the remedy of imprisonment as dangerous as the disease which brought them into it. Is this exercising either *mercy* or *justice*, to him who offends, or to the *community* which is injured ?

D. Certainly not.

F. Can the work of reformation be accomplished by such means?

D. I apprehend it cannot:—but has any experiment been made of the force of *solitude*?

F. Common sense and human nature, as well as the peculiar turn of these people, whose spirits are kept up by companionship, teach us what we may expect from it. I remember a remarkable instance of a notorious malefactor, who would not plead: the *remedy* proposed was, to bring him to the *press*?

D. What is the *press*?

F. It was formerly an especial punishment for one, who being arraigned for *felony*, stood mute, refusing to put himself on the ordinary trial of reason, religion, and national justice; or, as it is termed, the trial by *God* and *his country* (a). The mode of *pressing*, to compel them to plead, or perish under the trial, was after this manner: “The prisoner was returned from the court of justice to the prison whence he came; and being laid in some dungeon or dark room, he was to lie naked on the bare earth, with raiment only about his waste. There he was to lie on his back, with his head covered, one arm being drawn towards one quarter of the room with a cord, and the other arm to another quarter; and his legs in the same manner: then there was laid on his body, iron or stone, as much as he could bear, without immediately expiring. The day following he was to have three morsels of barley bread, without drink; and the second day to have drink three times, as much at each time as he could drink, being of the water next the prison, except it be *running water, without any bread*.” Such was to be his diet, till he died. But this has been long out of use. The ordinary way for many years, was to lay so much weight on the body, that a man must soon expire under it. I have not heard that any man has been *prest* since the year 1720. Our laws are too tender, in general, to countenance *torture*, of which this seems to be one kind.

D. This law could not be good, though it might be meant well; for if the man could be proved guilty, why did they not proceed to sentence, and put him to death in a decent manner; and if he could not be proved guilty, why should he be *tortured*? A dumb man may de-

serve to be hanged, as well as another; therefore a person's being silent, could be no proof of his innocence. We read of the *press-yard* in the great prison in *London*; doth it take its name from this ancient custom?

F. So I imagine. The experiment made in the case I was about to mention, gave a strong evidence of the event which may be expected. The keeper of the prison finding the man obstinate, insinuated, in a private manner, to the magistrate, that if the court would be pleased to leave the felon to his direction, he would soon bring him to *plead*, without the cruel use of the *press*; “for,” says he, “I will put him in the best room in the prison; but to him it will be the most dreadful, being detached from all communication.” This was approved; and it operated as the keeper imagined; for the malefactor not being accustomed to converse with his own heart, nor to ask himself a single question, *what he was about*, he could not bear the thoughts of life upon terms of confinement, and exclusion from all society; he had no prospect of a *release*, but by *pleading* as the laws then required; and in less than twenty-four hours, he resolved to hold up his hand at the bar, and submit his neck to the halter; for That he knew would be the consequence.—The law is now wisely altered, for the judge and jury, whether the prisoner chuses to speak or not, proceed upon evidence.

D. But how upon the plan proposed, is a prisoner capitally convicted, to be treated? Is he to be sentenced to a *perpetual imprisonment*?

F. I apprehend only for a certain term of years, reserving the comfort of *hope*; for if the most atrocious offender, shews strong marks of repentance; if he is pious and industrious, and gives proof of his deserving mercy, the rigour of his sentence may be softened, by the time being shortened from year to year. For instance, if a malefactor is condemned for twenty-one years, let his behaviour be unexceptionable, and the first year we might lop him off five years; and the second in the same manner, till at length the twenty-one may not exceed four or five; for the man who applies himself so long to the duties of an industrious, religious life, can hardly be supposed to return to idleness and wickedness, so as to hazard being *taken again*, and imprisoned for life.

D. Having

(a) It is rather by *God*, or his country; the first was the *ordeal*, or walking blindfold over hot bars, or being thrown into the water.

D. Having always an object of hope, with respect to this world, he may also have the prospect of immortal happiness in a life to come. The punishment proposed may prevent a bad man from being turned into the world to do mischief, or otherwise be transported, or sent to the gallows.

F. This I understand to be the intention.

D. But what is to be done with prisoners before trial?

F. If we mean to reform such an abandoned profligate race of mortals as now reign amongst us, and stalk about with such gigantic steps, we must prepare prisons with proper accommodations, each person to be separate: let the number be ever so great, I dare say it will decrease after a short time. But to render a malefactor more wicked than he was before, by the means intended to reform him, is amazing! How can a nation pretending to *wisdom* and *humanity*, go on in so *foolish* and *inhuman* a manner, as to put unhappy creatures in a situation of aggravating their misfortunes and their crimes.

D. From this reasoning it seems as if we were accountable for the lives, and even the souls of many who perish.

F. I will tell you of one remarkable event, which happened at a time, when a gentleman of my master's acquaintance visited a prison in *London*, called *Tothilfields-Bridewell*. A boy about thirteen years of age was committed for picking a gentleman's pocket of a watch. The boy's father came to visit him, and with tears streaming down his hoary beard, he implored the Almighty to give his son a due sense of his crime, that he might be intitled to mercy from the king, as well as from the King of kings. Recovering from the agony of his grief, he expostulated calmly. The boy, with tears of contrition, acknowledged his guilt, and promised amendment. This conversation passed in the *common yard*, where the *hardened villain*, at whose instigation the boy had committed the fact, was present. Instead of being stung with remorse, he endeavoured to make the boy ashamed of his *farrow*, by telling him, "If you want courage, my boy, you will never make a *man*!" The desire of being esteemed courageous, has hurried many a youth to hazard his neck; and what is more, to die at the gallows, without any sense of *religion*!

D. *Wretched villain!* Thus to treat the poor

father agonizing with sorrow! Your story is much to the purpose; though I suppose the same may have happened, with a little change of circumstance, a thousand times.

F. I dare say it has: it is not only the corrupting of one another in prison, but the easy access to prisoners, which puts them upon contriving ways and means to corrupt *evidence*, and play a thousand tricks well known to hardened malefactors. This was exemplified in a singular event which happened not many years since. A man, against whom circumstantial evidence amounted to a *proof*, that he had carried his wife, upon pretence of a journey, to *Hounslow Heath*, which is near *London*, and there *murdered* her. When called upon at the bar to make his defence, he lamented in the pretended anguish of his soul, the grossness of the imputation, of having murdered the woman he loved with the utmost tenderness; adding moreover, that he had a witness to prove he was at another place at the time the fact imputed to him was committed. A woman (whose name he had mentioned) was accordingly called for. Misery rendered her appearance as unpromising as the nature of the defence she was supposed to make in behalf of the prisoner. This might naturally prejudice the court against her. She desired, however, to be heard, and then told her story in these terms: "My husband was a prisoner *for debt*, and I used to carry him his dinner. The prisoner *now at the bar*, took an opportunity one day to call me aside, and addressed me in these words: "You seem to be a good sort of person: have you a mind to do an act of *justice* and save an innocent man? I am unjustly accused of murdering my wife; and I have so many enemies, that notwithstanding my innocence, I believe it will *go hard* with me. I will give you *five guineas*, if you will swear I was in such a place, (mentioning the place) at such a time. Here are *three* of them, and you shall have the other *two* when I am acquitted." The woman then, speaking in her own person, said, "I thought, if I did not take the money, somebody else would; and I had no intention to forswear myself. I told him that my memory was bad; and unless he wrote down what he had to say, I should probably forget it; and accordingly he gave me *this paper*, (which she produced in court) and here are the *three guineas* (holding them up in her hands) which I also deliver up. I am poor, *very poor indeed*; but I will not take

the price of *innocent blood*, or screen a murderer from justice."

D. Bravely said! She was courageous as well as honest. It is wonderful she was not *industrious* enough to make a cleanly appearance on the occasion.

F. The court, you may easily imagine, was struck with *astonishment*, and rung with *applause*. The *judges* ordered the *three guineas* to be returned to her; and a handsome collection was also made in the court upon the occasion.

D. Well done on all sides! I suppose the murderer was hanged.

F. We may take it for granted.—Do you know, that in the United Provinces, vulgarly called *Holland*, in certain cases, they compel a prisoner to work, or they will give him nothing to eat (a). In the prison under consideration, it is proposed the diet shall be very spare and mean: but after a time it may be mended to a certain degree, according to the gain of the prisoner by his labour and industry; but nothing to be given to drink but water. It is also proposed to make provision for him, from the produce of his labour, that when he is restored to the world, he may not be tempted to rob for a support, as the most part of the thieves released now are. It is generally concluded, that they will rob when they are released, having no instruction except it be in the arts of villainy, which they learn of each other.

D. Good God!—But what else is to be expected from them!

F. The provision proposed may soften the notion of punishment, but the *confinement* in solitude will still be *barrible*. A proper degree of tenderness in this instance, will produce happy effects in other respects; it will give the *prisoner* a habit of industry, and the strongest evidence, that the life of an *honest man* is more profitable, happy, and secure, than that of a *thief*.

D. They need not go to prison to learn That.

F. Yes: it seems necessary to *such persons*: the fact plainly proves, that they have not learnt this secret elsewhere; and that only through the channel of affliction they can be brought to do their duty. How much happier would such solitary imprisonment prove, than our present plan, which seems to produce no change in the morals of the people! A *civilized christian na-*

*tion*, enjoying liberty in its utmost purity, cannot adopt the custom of foreign lands, where the people are not free: Where malefactors drag about chains, and work in them, whether on shore, or in their *row-gallies*, such disgrace, with us, would not answer the end proposed; for how could they be restored to the world, to get their bread in credit, after so public an ignominy? And who would answer for their not committing the most outrageous violence even in their chains? The method proposed obviates all such difficulties: it is better adapted to the daring temper of our people. The regard shewn them, as fellow-creatures, with respect to their temporal concerns, will be just: the instruction given them, will be a *means of grace*; and this, we may conclude, will afford them a well-grounded hope of happiness here, and of glory hereafter. The news of this intention already operates on the minds of many who have heard of it. The dread of a solitary and long imprisonment, has something in it so repugnant to the genius of our people, they will certainly be more on their guard not to come under the lash of the law. By this method, all schools for rogues will be broken up. No lessons being given, the science of villainy will sink into forgetfulness, and the charter of the fraternity be dissolved.

D. You seem to be very fond of this kind of imprisonment.

F. Do you not perceive, that the most abandoned may, by this means, become *virtuous men*; and when they return into the world, teach their children the fear of God, which they learnt in prison? Is it not obvious, that instead of the arts of villainy, promoted by spirits of darkness come from hell, propagating misery from generation to generation, they may stand forward as evidences to the articles of our faith, "and the dispensation of the laws of *Christ*, that by mercy and truth *iniquity* is purged."

D. What is the time proposed for this new imprisonment?

F. From *one*, to *one-and-twenty* years, the judge having the liberty of softening the punishment from year to year, by shortening the time of the sentence. *Hope* will still spring up in their breast; and in the mean while, the terror of this prison, which will take in a number of the worst kind of malefactors for the space of several years, spreading its influence, the innocent may begin



begin the reign of peace, and pass their lives in security and comfort, particularly about *London*; not live as if an *enemy* were lurking in every hedge, obstructing their *passage* to their houses, by fire and ball; or by *breaking into them, murder sleep*, and commit a violence which spurns at liberty, security of life, and every thing that is sacred in the economy of government. The indigent and friendless are subject at all times to be distressed by the *subtle* arts of knavery; and honest men are sometimes ruined: but highwaymen and robbers, distress us by open violence; and the *rich* are not so safe as the *poor*.

*D.* Whatever tends to put us on securer ground, and restore the morals of the people, is highly deserving attention. The contrivance of the building, as well as the regulation of the prisoners, will require much attention.

*F.* I am told that *Ireland* is shewing us an example: they have a prison for criminals at *Trim*, the county town of *Meath*. It is not very large; but it cost above four thousand pounds. Every prisoner has a separate cell, with a water-pipe, and other necessary and decent accommodations. There is a free circulation of air through the house, by means of two iron gates, one at each end of a large passage or corridor. There is a very large yard, and a walk also on the top of the prison, &c. How they manage their prisoners to prevent all kinds of communication, I have not heard. In this the difficulty will chiefly consist; and the more space will be necessary. There is to be another prison built in the same town for debtors.—And they talk of building a grand prison in *Dublin*, upon the humane principle of separate cells, trusting in the mercies of the Almighty, that by this means the *contagion of vice* may be in a great measure stopped.

*D.* I pray God it may! Whether we learn from the *Irish*, or from any other people, we know that evil communication will corrupt manners, from generation to generation.

*F.* It will be a bad compliment to this nation, to suppose that we want skill, or money, or virtue to execute a design of this kind, in the most proper manner.

*D.* But the great point is the *money*.

*F.* No: the great point is the virtue of the people. The object is of such vast moment, if it were necessary a peculiar tax might be levied, not to exceed a limited time, to raise a sum, to be distributed to counties, cities, or townships, in aid of such prisons and houses of correction as, upon enquiry, should be found most necessary. If the tax comprehended only articles of luxury, it might be the more easily complied with. Wheels of carriages *for pleasure*, would bear an additional tax for two or three years. Houses of certain large dimensions, distinguishing their expensive structure, whether with brick or stone, gardens, and parks of parade, might pay a sum: wigs having any ribbons or bags, not being of military men: cards: wax or spermaceti candles: marble chimney-pieces, of above 20*l.* value: offices and salaries: the rate *per cent.* to rise in proportion, being of the amount, above 200*l.* viz. if this sum paid one in 100, 400*l.* might pay 3 in 100, and increase by gradations till 4000*l.* and upwards, paid 10*l.* *per cent.* Such an effort, in two or three years, might supply a great sum, which distributed properly, and with injunctions how it shall be laid out, we might see the land again restored to *safety* and prosperity; and every contributor, and his generation, become considerably the gainer.

*D.* You are sanguine in your hopes. I suppose every distinct part will be obliged to find its own prison: but who is to support it?

*F.* A tax on all public places of resort for *diversion*.—Be it as it may, I hope the business will not be starved.—

*D.* Who is to be the head governor?

*F.* It is intended the *governor of the prison* shall be a person of character and liberal education, who shall see that no person converses with the prisoners contrary to law: that no correspondence be carried on, or letter written, or received, but such as shall be with the concurrence and consent of two of the clergymen on the spot (*a*).

*D.* If any attempt should be made to escape:

*F.* The prisoner will then be loaded with the heavier

(a) See *Hanway's Defects of Police*, p. 23, where this article is not mentioned; and the question is, if the sole power should be given to the governor of the prison with regard to correspondences. The clergymen present, being persons of discretion, may be more proper counsellors to him than any justice of the peace can be, these not being acquainted with the circumstances, characters, and merits of the prisoners.

heavier irons, and put into a dungeon for a certain time. *Experience* will prove, that in a few months they will grow tractable, and acknowledge the mercy and clemency of their sentence; and that the method which is taken, is the only one to bring them to a right understanding of their religion, and the temporal and eternal happiness which it promises. And shall we not all have reason to rejoice in proportion as these miserable beings are preserved, whilst we hereafter *travel* and *sleep* in safety?

*D.* Do you think it will have any influence on the people in general?

*F.* I apprehend it will affect the minds of all ranks and degrees of the people. It will be a *house of repentance*; and in general strike with religious awe. The gentlemen of the county at first opposed the plan on account of the *expence*; but they are now convinced the design will be productive of great good. If perchance the prison should never be filled, the usefulness of it will be proved so much the more, as prevention is better than cure.

*D.* What space is it proposed to give these malefactors?

*F.* A square of two hundred and fifty feet in each front, would accommodate two hundred and eight persons, supposing each cell to be full fourteen feet clear in front, the depth being twenty-five feet, and the height at least fourteen. Four stories of such cells, would constitute a front of

fifty-two cells. If it should be thought proper to make the house but *two stories* high, for the greater convenience of watching and supplying the prisoners with necessaries, the fronts may be extended a fourth part, and the same end be answered: the prisoners must have room to breathe and work (*a*). In the center it is intended to place the chapel, the light to come in chiefly at the top: the communication between the *cells* and the *closets* will obstruct the chief part of the light on the sides. Here the culprits may daily learn from the pulpit, what a noble creature *man* is when he acts *right*; and what his expectations ought in that case to be; and when he acts *wrong*, what misery awaits him. Discourses suited to the circumstances of the prisoners, may be rendered so agreeably proper, as to enforce their attention.

*D.* Is there any prison of this kind in any other part of the world?

*F.* The *Dutch*, as I have said, have *labour* and *imprisonment* mixed, and *some prisoners are kept private*; but they have no *plan* or *design* upon so large and generous a scale as this: They do not stand in need of it. Their government is more arbitrary; and they keep their people more in awe than we do. When this temple of justice is erected, it will stand as a monument from age to age, of our piety, humanity, and good policy! Perhaps *yon old man* may inform us when they are to begin to work.

## CONVERSATION V.

*Humanity and religion essential to a regular police. St. Paul's conduct towards Onesimus, who had robbed Philemon. A remarkable instance of a servant who robbed his former master, after being discharged from prison by the kindness of his benefactor. Imprisonment indispensably necessary. Imprisonment, where malefactors associate with each other, productive of evils without end. Imprisonment in solitude necessary.*

*D.* ACCORDING to this old man's account, the design is too good for the *times*.

*F.* The *times, Mary*, are not so bad, but that *good* is done every day. For my own part, I hope for *good*; and so long as I *hope*, I shall help myself; and if others were wise enough to *hope*

too, they would help themselves, and submit to good laws. Hope maketh things to be present, by the force of belief that That may happen which we wish for. This is my case: and though many more suffer by presumption than by caution, yet where we hazard only a *disappointment*, hope being so much a pleasanter passion than

(a) See *Hanway's Defects of Police*, p. 231, 232, &c.

than fear, I will indulge mine. If it be ill-founded, they may call it a *fool's paradise* if they please; but a *fool's paradise* is better than none.

D. Provided it does not lead into mischief.

F. Do you think that *Christ* came into the world to call *sinners*, or the *righteous*, to repentance?

D. Sinners most certainly.

F. It is beyond all dispute, that *thieves* are *sinners*: may we not, by proper means, reform them? May we not give so much happiness to the world, as the *peace* which will follow it? Would to God we could see such a spirit of religion and humanity reign amongst us, as might accomplish a *greater work*, and stop the contagion of vice.

D. What *greater work* can there be, than to stop the progress of that villainy, which rages with such *violence* amongst us.—Much will depend on the structure of the prison, and choice of the *clergymen* who are appointed for this great work of reformation?

F. Most certainly: and they will enjoy some advantages over others of their profession, who preach to men who are not secluded from this bad world!—The objects of sense, which perverted the hearts of these unhappy men, and turned their eyes from heaven, will be then removed out of their sight. I hope nothing will be wanting on the part of the clergy, or the *governor*, or superintendent: none of them should be men whose hearts are made of flint, to forget the great end of their appointment. They must be *resolute* in the *direction* and *economy* of such a prison, according to the rules prescribed. The *governor* should consider himself as *commander of a fortress*; not only to *repel enemies*, but to hold his garrison under such discipline, that they may be true and faithful soldiers of *Christ*, and when they go into the field, the *world*, they may be “content with their wages, and commit no violence on any man.” He must shew himself occasionally to the prisoners, and remind them of the kindness of Providence in bringing them to a *castle of comfort*, though they be under the *rod of affliction*. He should, for these reasons, be a man of education and liberal sentiments.

D. Would it not be right the prisoners should be informed when any of their *parents* or *brethren* die?

F. If they desire it, they might: and a re-

sponsible officer be also charged with the care of their property (a), if any property perchance should be left them. But the less they know of the *world* the better, as their thoughts may be more attentive to *heavenly* things, and occupied in penitential sorrow for their crimes against God, as well as their offences against the laws, and their fellow-subjects. How many malefactors in foreign lands, experience a severity, which this plan in no part partakes of. I have heard my master say, that he has walked over the confinement of a state prison in *France*, in which some dungeons had no light, nor air, but what came in at a small iron grate, the prisoner being condemned to wear away a miserable existence, not for a few years, with such advantages as we propose, but for his whole life, deprived of every comfort. We ought to thank God for his mercies, in that the frame of our *laws*, and our *natural temper*, are full of *mercy*; and shew that *mercy* is the distinguished character of our *religious* tenets.

D. If it be so, I am sure we must correct our present plan of *imprisonment*, for religion seems to have no share in it. We may rather consider it as intended to destroy religion from its very foundations.

F. Not entirely so; for clergymen are appointed to some of our prisons, for the sabbath-day at least: but what impression can he make in *half an hour*, to counterbalance the discourse of evil companions during the whole week.

D. What is to be done with the objects not fit for the gallows, nor yet ripened for transportation, and such as are not objects for the pillory, nor the rod?

F. We know what should *not* be done with them. Many are condemned to short imprisonments, who associate with the worst of malefactors, and poison their morals incurably: They are initiated into the whole *mystery of villainy*. There should be a separate prison for these, with apartments calculated to bring them to a right sense of their duty: a week or month in solitude, with due instruction, would have the happiest influence on the *lives* of many young persons. It is more easy to *prevent* than to *cure*: he that is curbed in the *infancy* of his transgressions, will be reformed with less difficulty, than he who is suffered to grow to maturity in wickedness. A *man* may be rendered like a *wild beast* of the most ferocious qualities, with  
this

(a) This part is not considered in my *Discourses of Police*.

this peculiar property, that he preys on his own kind. To tame him, and bring him to himself, by the discipline of reflexion, and the exercise of his reason, is surely more practicable, than to make a *horse* lie down, or get up, and stamp with his foot, or leap through a number of hoops, as I have seen. *Man* is the noblest of all animals: but it is his reason which makes him so.—In regard to the repentance of a *thief*, we find one, on very memorable record, for he died with the Saviour of the world. To appeal to a more familiar instance, as applicable to our subject: You remember, that when the great apostle St. Paul was imprisoned at *Rome*, he wrote to *Philemon* the *Colossian*, one of his converts. His letter was carried by *Onesimus*, who had been *Philemon's* servant, or *slave*, and had robbed him. St. Paul providentially meeting *Onesimus* in his confinement, converted him to the *christian faith*, and he administered to the apostle in prison. *Philemon* was one of St. Paul's particular friends, and a person in whom he had the highest confidence, as a man worthy his esteem, as well as a convert to the christian faith; even to tell him, that he had great *joy* and *consolation* in his love, knowing that as a *brother in Christ*, all the converts were countenanced and protected by him. Under such circumstances, it was natural to imagine that *Onesimus* would be accepted on *his* recommendation. The apostle calls this man his *son*: he says, “I have begotten him in my bonds;” I have *have given him a life in Christ*, in a prospect of everlasting glory. He was so perfectly assured of the sincerity and goodness of *Onesimus's* heart, that he ventured to be answerable for him to *Philemon*; and with a tenderness peculiar to christianity says, “Though he was formerly unprofitable to thee, he is now profitable unto thee and to me; therefore receive him that is *mine own bowels*. I would have retained him with me, that in thy stead *he* might have administered unto me in the bonds of the gospel; but *without thy mind* would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of *necessity*, but willingly.” As if he had said, “*Onesimus* is now related to you and me by the most important of all ties of blood or friendship, even That of brotherhood in the great Lord of life, whose servants we all are. And you ought to rejoice in this opportunity of exercising That forgiveness which our great Lord hath so remarkably made a condition of his favour.

*Onesimus's* departure from you has been so managed by the wife and merciful Providence of God, as to afford an opportunity of being instructed in That faith which will save his soul from perdition. An opportunity of forgiveness, is an opportunity to exercise the noblest power of the human soul. I write to *you*, as my friend, and in confidence of your obedience to the great law of our Lord and Master; and as knowing that you will do even more than I desire.” The apostle treats his friend with the politeness of a *gentleman*, as well as the sincerity of a *christian*, and the authority of an *apostle*; for though he reminds him that he owes his own salvation, under God, to the instruction which he had given him, yet he writes in the stile of a petitioner in favour of *Onesimus*, whom he well knew *Philemon* might naturally entertain a jealousy of. However, in confidence that he would act like a christian, St. Paul ventures to send *Onesimus* a long and tedious journey, from *Rome* to *Colosse*, with his commendatory letter.

D. It is not to be imagined, but that coming with so weighty a recommendation, *Philemon* would receive this man with tears of joy.

F. The exercise of the mind in forgiveness, gives strength to the purity of the heart: and were we not to forgive our brother, whom we have seen, and whom we have reason to believe has *repented* of his offences, how are we to expect forgiveness at the hands of God, whose glories no mortal eye hath beheld!

D. But the *christian* religion, I apprehend, does not require evil to be done, that good may come of it.

F. By no means: yet *evil* being done, is it not a happy event when it furnishes an occasion for *good*. If it is the spirit of *christianity* to do good even to our enemies, how much more to an enemy become a friend, by his eyes being opened to a sense of his duty, and his heart inflamed with the love of the God whom he had offended. The true *christian* makes the wants of others so much his own, it is a subject of the highest moment, and the most pleasing gratification to say, *Behold the man who was lost and is found; who lived by rapine, and had now rather die than commit the smallest injury*. Our great Lawgiver and Redeemer says, “*go; and sin no more*.” This is the language of our benevolent religion! This is the gentle spirit which it breathes! This, its love for the race of men, who

who have *all offended*. Many a malefactor in the prison proposed, will doubtless turn from the wickedness of his ways. Many a minister of the gospel of *Christ* will be able to say to the judge, "I have the highest satisfaction in this opportunity of informing your *lordship* that *this person* has behaved, for two years, in the most proper manner, with such diligence in the trade and occupation he has learnt; with such *patience* and *submission* as a *man*, and with such *devotion* as a *christian*; the whole tenor of his discourse with me, has been so proper and consistent for one in his situation, I have received the most convincing proof of his *sincerity*. I perceive no reason to suspect but that he entertains a deep sense of the folly and iniquity of his former conduct; and that he sees, in their full force, the advantages of the religion and laws of his country, with respect to both worlds. He can gain his bread by his trade; and I know that he has relations who will countenance him. I believe that God hath shewn such mercy to him, as may induce your *lordship* to mitigate his sentence." Such a report of good behaviour for a year or two, must give an assurance that in judgment mercy may be remembered towards a *fellow christian*, whose imprisonment may be a means of preserving him from an *ignominious death*.

*D.* O my father, your sentiments warm my heart with the love of my religion.—But is not the royal clemency already extended to a great number of malefactors?

*F.* Yes: and I suppose very properly in many cases to some, because they are *young* in iniquity; to others, that their parents are worthy people: some give tokens of repentance; but in general, how few can be *tried properly*; and what numbers return to their bad courses.—The motive which prevails most potently, for such pardons, is to prevent the carnage of the youth of our land—and our sovereign shews the goodness of his heart: but in our present method, we continually verify the proverbial saying, "Save a thief from the gallows, and he will cut your throat." How few are there, on whom the royal mercy acts with such force, as to render them *good subjects*, or *pious christians*. It might be presumptuous in me to pronounce how many; but this I will venture to say, that in the way we manage, mercy doth not operate as it is intended. Numbers shew a conduct the reverse

of That of *Onesimus*! Some wretched beings are enthralled by a habit of *idleness*, *vice*, and *villainy*. It is not long since a certain man, who had been a domestic servant of a gentleman of fortune, being as I understand, condemned for transportation, by the interest and humanity of his master, obtained a *free pardon*, and was set at liberty. Would you think it possible that the same man, in conjunction with two or three others, should make a journey, in the dead of night, fifteen miles, and rob his former master of a large quantity of a plate?

*D.* Good Heaven! What will not villainy accomplish? I hope they were taken.

*F.* Ay; in a very few days: and it is remarkable, that when their *chief* found his companions were apprehended, he had not the power of leaving his haunts in *London*. He walked several times into the fields to get out of the way of those who were hunting after him. But seeming *forsaken* by Providence, he returned again into the town. Being apprehended, the assizes so fell out, that he was tried within a day or two, condemned, and ordered to execution *within two days*. When the judge passed the sentence on him, he was very calm, and said, "The day of my death will be the happiest I have ever known."

*D.* Was this from a sense of religion?

*F.* No: he seemed to know very little about religion. His indifference proceeded from an opinion, that it would be better *not to be*, than to be so wretched, as he had long felt himself in a *wicked course*. A man of this turn, one would imagine capable of being awakened to a sense of his condition, and to become a *christian* in the best sense, were proper means used: he certainly fell a sacrifice to evil habits: he had received no instruction. After the transgression for which he was first imprisoned, he was in no habit of labour, nor in any way of getting his bread honestly.

*D.* This I can readily conceive; but unless better care is taken to keep malefactors from the society of each other, *before* they are brought to their trial, as well as to punish them by *solitary* imprisonment afterwards, if found guilty, I have no conception how the work of reformation can be accomplished, though we were to put ten times as many to death, for their evil deeds.

*F.* Well observed: all prisons should be considered

considered as *temples* dedicated, not only to *justice* and *mercy*, but also to *piety* and *penitential sorrow*. Many are punished for their *imprudence*, as well as their *guilt*, or we should not see such numbers of wretched beings imprisoned for debt.

*D.* We have beguiled much time upon the subject of prisons; and a very interesting one it is. Let us alight, and sit a while under this fine oak.

C O N V E R S A T I O N VI.

*View of agreeable scenes. The folly of exhausting a man's fortune in building a house for his use which he cannot possibly live in. Reflexions on the vanity of human life, and how it may be used to advantage.*

*F.* WHAT a charming view! How rich the valley on this side the hill; and how pleasing the *ascent*! The church on the highest ground, and these lofty elms on this eminence, look magnificently venerable (*a*). I have often surveyed this church from various spots, and at various distances, with longing eyes, for many a summer's-day, this being the first time of coming to it.

*D.* I think there is something more awful in a church upon a hill, than in one hid in a valley: it looks as if it were *nearer* heaven.

*F.* This object is *new* to me: it will strike your fancy the more; for it is the novelty of objects in our youth, which gives them the greatest part of their charms.

.....  
 Look, *Mary*!—Here you may receive a new pleasure:—yet, were you to know the whole secret, your delight would be mixed with pain. Those who build houses, are friends to mankind: good habitations are the greatest riches of a country, next to a fertile soil: the folly is when men *ruin* themselves in building; and particularly houses of little or no use. On this spot, where you now see a house fit only for a *gentleman's family*, a few years since stood a most *sumptuous palace*. The owner of it was a private gentleman of large fortune, who married an heiress in this neighbourhood; and being a favourite at court, and enjoying a lucrative office, he was, near the beginning of this century, created a *duke*. The poor man, exalted in his own conceit, resolved to build so *large*, and so *rich a mansion*, as should be the wonder of the people! —And so indeed it was, as a monument of

earth-born pride and egregious folly. It was too much for any subject. When he died, his heirs thought it advisable to pull it down, and sell the materials: the leaden pipes found under ground, have produced as much money, as the house which you see, cost in the building.

*D.* Folly indeed! Pride and folly sometimes mean the same thing. If he had been as *good* as he affected to be *great*, you would have mentioned him in more honourable terms.

*F.* A tenth part of the money laid out *judiciously*, in proper buildings for tradesmen and farmers, or gentlemen's houses, with a view to the welfare of the people, to whom he was obliged for his *riches*, might have handed down his name to posterity, in a very respectable manner. It is but a small part of mankind who think so much of captivating the *hearts* of their fellow-creatures, as of dazzling their *eyes*. They gratify their own vanity, rather than exercise their understanding; and they are laughed at or despised for their pains: But still the bubble *joy* gives a relish to the cup, of which *folly* is so fond.

*D.* However true this may be, we must thank those who do us good; and compassionate *their* follies, that they may do the same of *ours*.

*F.* You may suppose that he who makes the *raree-show*, as well as him that sees it, does not carry his thoughts much beyond the present. If all our actions were done for the *honour of God*, and the substantial welfare of mankind, there could be no such thing as misery in the world.

*D.* You have told me more than once, there must be a portion of *magnificence*.

*F.* Most certainly: this is necessary to distinguish

(a) Alludes to Harrow on the Hill.

guish the different ranks and conditions of men. If this nobleman had built a house, such as himself and his successors might have lived in, taking care at the same time, of the welfare of the people, granting that vanity might still reign in his heart, his memory would be venerated, *in his neighbourhood at least*. The people would say, *here lived the good Duke of —, who made so many thousands happy.*

D. And what would he be the better for it in regard to *this world*?

F. No man can be the better for this world, when he is dead, except for the part he acted in it. *Virtue* doth not always purchase *fame*, but the moderate desire of it is an excitement to virtue, not the least in the minds of the *great*, who are candidates for *worldly glory*. Happy it is for us all, that the desire of *doing good*, is so generally blended with *religion*, as to make the honour of God, and the good of mankind, a common motive.

D. What *changes* there are in the fortunes of the *great*!

F. How many a wretched man, whose pride, blown up like a bladder full of wind, pricked with a thorn by *fortune's* finger, shrinks into *nothing*! How many have I seen outliving their wealth, “viewing with hollow eyes and wrinkled brows, a miserable age of poverty!” Granting that all depends on the providence of God, whose ruling hand we cannot see, it is a good or bad judgment, a good or bad heart, which attends our *enjoyments*, or our *sufferings*. In both events, we often trace the

inward qualities of the mind. We must always be contented under the chastizing hand of *adversity*; for we are *so far* sure to be the *gainer*; and be it little or much which is taken from us, it is generally an alleviation of our calamity to resign it *quietly*. He that arms his soul with *contentment*, though in poverty, his very *rags* will keep him *warm*. The last thing that we resign is *life*; and if this most choice of all blessings, is held by so precarious a tenure, as we possess life, let us pray for *such riches*, as are better than *life itself*, which contending winds and billows cannot sink, nor fire nor sword destroy. We, *Mary*, steer our little bark, guided by friendly stars, into this winding creek. Hence we view the storm which beats about the larger vessel, forced to keep out at sea, and buffet the elements, left by lowering her sails, she be driven on shore, and perish. It is the misfortune of many, not to bear *high fortune* nor low. Death balances accounts: *wisdom* and *folly* sink alike into the grave. Let us be *wise*, and look forward to a *life to come*.— We have employed so much time in our *visits* and our *prayers*, our provision for the *body*, and the *soul*, we shall not be able to reach our cousin's to-night in any decent time. I do not chuse to come in late any where; but in a friend's house, when his people are tired, and fit only for sleep, it is inhospitable to disturb them. On this road, within a short mile of us, is a small inn, kept by a very honest young man, who was once my *fellow-servant*: I long to see him. His name is *Welldone*: he lives at the sign of the *setting-sun*.

## CONVERSATION VII.

### On the Road.

*They lodge at the setting-sun. Amiable characters of the inn-keeper and his wife. Their strict piety. Parental love and filial duty in humble life. Speech of an old man to his daughter.*

F. WHAT do you think of my fellow-servant *Thomas Welldone*?

D. His salutation was singular—“*Bless me, good Heaven!—What! my father! I am more glad to see you, than I should be, were I honoured with a visit from the first duke in the land.*” What did he mean by *father*?

F. This salutation is not so singular as you

may at the first thought imagine. *Tom*, at the time my master took him into his service, was an orphan in distress; and a giddy sort of boy he was: but he had a good heart, and tender affections. I strove to give him just impressions of both worlds; and he was so sensible of my kindness, that he gave me the honourable name of *father*; and I loved the boy for his gratitude.

My

My master, near the time of his death, asked me my opinion of him; and I made such a report, with regard to the probability of the lad's turning out well, that he left him an *hundred pounds*.

*D.* An hundred pounds!

*F.* Tom being grown a little older, grew wiser; he now thought how he might be made a man for ever. Being rich, he became cautious. He had sense enough to discover, that if he continued in *London*, in the capacity of a footman, he might have been tempted, not only to squander his money, but in the issue have less virtue, than if his master had not left him a farthing. He therefore wisely determined to come into the country to an honest farmer, who had married his sister, and work with him, in seeing the wholesome earth turned up, rather than growing giddy by the whirling of wheels on a stoney pavement. After living some time in this manner, he married a sober young woman, recommended to him by his brother-in-law, as a girl whose parents had educated her in the fear of God. He then took a small farm, and to help out, set up the *little inn* we have just left. He carries on the farming business; and by industry and care, is now in a thriving way. You perceive by his talk, that my advice to him, when he was a boy, has not been lost upon him. I am told, that himself, and *his whole house*, frequent the public worship constantly, never neglecting the *supper of our Lord*, or omitting their prayers at home, morning and night. If he has any *guests*, when the hour comes, he asks them civilly, *if it will be agreeable to them to pray with his family for six or eight minutes, according to the custom of his house, and the genuine practice of believers in Christ*. I taught him to read; and having a good ear, he repeats properly, and prays truly in earnest, understanding the words he utters. The novelty of the thing strikes some people, and the piety of it, *others*. Tom is sincere; he is not in the least tinctured with *hypocrisy*: you must not wonder he should get the name of the *pious inn-keeper*. You may imagine few will shun his house on this account; but many go to it in the assurance of the integrity of their landlord. When he was yet a *boy*, my master used to remind him of his name, *Welldone*, bidding him recollect those memorable words, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*" He has often confessed to me, that the little incident of his

name, and the respect due to his master's advice, made a deep impression on his mind.

*D.* Every one is of the family of the *Welldoes*, who *does well*. Not to be faithful to a master or mistress, and discharge the duty of an honest and zealous domestic, is to be criminal. But those who do not consider what they owe to their great Lord and Master, the Saviour of the world, I am afraid are not exact in their obedience in their *worldly* station.

*F.* True, *Mary*: there must be a *principle*; and this must shew itself by *fidelity and obedience*, or we can with no propriety say that a servant *does well*. It is a free and willing service which makes the difference between a *freeman* and a *slave*; and I will add too, that the same *willing* service makes a happy man, as the contrary creates a miserable being, discontented and murmuring at his condition; complaining that he is in no higher station; and by complaints and ingratitude to Heaven, giving proof he deserves not to be so high. I dare say Mr. *Welldone* and his children will prosper. No man is the worse in any respect for being a good christian, since all the relative and social duties of life are improved, and rendered more pleasing by the bright unclouded thoughts, and pleasing hopes, which religion inspires.

*D.* It was a very sincere pleasure to me to hear Mrs. *Welldone* talk so rationally and cheerfully; and I beheld with joy, how her eyes sparkled at the answers which I made to some of her questions, concerning the great doctrine of *a life to come*. She said, "I have been lately *very ill*, and thought I should die. I am yet young, and not tired of life: on the contrary, I love my husband, and my children: I enjoy the comforts of my being, and have hopes in the life to come. As our daughters grow up, *Thomas* and I intend either to get them out to some of our relations, whom we can depend on, or else to drop our *inn* and follow *farming only*. Girls, madam, must not be exposed to *strangers*. I can assure you, so far from being distressed with the belief that I might die, my thoughts were not in the least entertained with the gloomy mansions of the grave; they were rather enraptured in the consideration, that I should be no longer in *danger of offending God*; and that I should be inexpressibly happy in That state, which is promised to his faithful servants; a happiness, which eye hath not seen, which ear

bath



hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive how glorious it is ! How is it possible, in our mortal state, surrounded as we are by so many objects of sense, we should form any just notion of That glory, which will one day be revealed to us !” — Thus she spoke : and indeed, my father, as Mr. *Welldone* calls you *father*, I can with much pleasure call his wife my *sister*. The unaffected simplicity with which she delivered her sentiments, at once gave proof of the purity of her heart, and the strength of her understanding. She said, “ I lament the carelessness of some of our neighbours ; but still I hope in the mercies of God, that he will be pleased to give them such trials as his wisdom shall direct, that they may be brought to a true sense of their guilt, and repent.”

*F.* What you say is flattering to me, in regard to her husband ; whether the wife be instrumental to the piety of her husband, or the husband to the religious conduct of his wife, you may easily comprehend how each may be the better for the other ; and that this is one of the great advantages of the married state, as agreeable to the designs of Heaven, in the social intercourse of rational beings.—When *Tom* first set up an *inn*, he desired my opinion what his *sign* should be. The turn of his thoughts led him to the glory of the *sun* : but That he thought was too common. Whether he learnt it from my master, who had many peculiarities, or that it was native in his own mind ; but *Tom* was also a little whimsical.

*D.* You have told me often, that all persons who are really religious, are deemed whimsical ; this at least is the *unhappy temper* of the times.

*F.* So it appears indeed : as he objected to a *common sun*, I proposed to him the *rising sun* ; observing, that this glorious ruler of the morning, as he looks on the earth, provides us with *food* and *raiment*. Our corn is warmed into *gold*, and our lambs cherished, till they give us clothing. To this he objected ; as it might be deemed *presumptuous*, not knowing, whether Providence had designed he should *rise* or *fall* ; that there seemed to be more sense for an *inn*, in order to invite travellers, to remind them that they should think of a retreat under an hospitable roof, when the sun was *descending swift*, and would leave them in darkness : he there-

fore resolved to have the *setting-sun*, with this line under it,

*Think of your safety ; for the sun declines.*

Under this admonition he meant to cover something deeper ; as when men are past the meridian of life, the *darkness of sin* should appear with a double horror, and make them the more anxious to retreat from it.

*D.* That was very sentimental indeed : I apprehend but few of his customers carry their thoughts so far ; or that he would derive any advantage from it, was he to make an open profession of this meaning of his *sign* : and yet there is solid sense, in taking advantage of every circumstance.

*F.* *Fear God*, is written on the heart : happy were it, if mankind would read it.—

*D.* I dare say *Thomas* is a happy man ; and that his head never aches from the upbraidings of his wife ; nor his digestion disturbed by unquiet meals. No moody melancholy distracts his recreations. The comforts of so happy a wedlock, must render all his paths smooth, and his rest refreshing. Mrs. *Welldone* tells me, that *her* father is a very *old man* ; and that she often makes him a visit. “ He has been,” says she, “ very temperate ; and now that his blood seems to be almost frozen up, and his *sight* and *bearing* gone from him ; yet his wasting lamp still glimmers with light. He spoke to me the other day, as if it were preparatory to a last farewell. ‘ My dear *Sarah*, said he, I am glad to *see* thee ; and never so happy as when I *hear* thou walkest in the path which thy dear mother and myself so early recommended to thee ! Continue steadfast, my child, and thou wilt be happy. Enjoy the bliss this world affords ; and whatever thy lot may be deficient in, make it up to thyself in the *hope* of That which is prepared for thee in the *life to come*. Though young, thou wert lately near the gates of death. Who knows to whom they will be first opened ! Be assured, that those, not advanced in years as I am, have constantly complained, that scarcely have they found the *key of life*, when death’s wide gates were unfolded to their mind’s eye : and only with this eye, *Sarah*, can we behold what death doth truly mean. Can’st thou, my child, trust to any *future hour*, or cease a moment to *prepare*, to render the entrance

entrance into another life happy, no matter when it shall be. If thou shouldst live as long as I have done, still life will appear to thee but *short*. Fools only wish to keep life beyond the stage which *nature* hath appointed; and that which happens to those who use no violence of mind or body, is surely *the appointment of nature*. When we meet death in pursuit of *virtue*, we obtain the *prize* for which we ran, and should resign ourselves to his arms with joy. Think, my child, of the *despair* that waits on *guilt*; and of the comforts of *innocence*. Thou wilt then avoid evil, as the *poisonous* damps of night, nor wantonly expose thyself to danger, as it were under the sun's scorching rays, beyond the measure that thy strength can bear. Thy husband is a *good young man*; and I think he will take all decent care of thee: but whether thy life shall be long or short, more or less happy, whilst thou art *good*, thou shalt have *my blessing*; and if thou cease to be good, *when I am gone*, my blessing can be but as words to the wind!" "Thus doth my good old father talk. I expect his death soon; and I shall mourn with a daughter's true love and reverence. I owe him *myself*; not as the instrument of my temporal life only, but as an instructor, under God, to prepare the way to everlasting life in bliss and glory. I tell you this, madam, with the more pleasure, from having heard my husband talk, by the swift running hour, of his great obligations to your father, when he had lost his own; and he has told me also, what a happy young woman you are, in the care and attention of your father. It is a great addition to my happiness, to have had the pleasure of seeing you: I hope we shall consider ourselves as related, not only as *fellow-christians*, but as *acquaintance* and *friends*. I shall feel great joy in hearing of your welfare; and will think of you in my prayers. I trust it will please the Almighty, through your father's means, to give you as good a husband, as he has been instrumental in making mine. A bad man cannot be a good husband: his riches will but make him the worse."

F. Well, *Mary*, is not this Mrs. *Welldone* most worthy of your friendship? Her respect for her father, is a circumstance, among others, which I am sure will bind her to your heart.

D. Indeed it will. It is natural to love virtue in the persons of those who profess it most eminently.

F. This grateful man would not let me pay him any thing for our rest and entertainment: but as his friend, I begged to know how he charges; for there is something very capricious in our inn-keepers in *England*.—Every inn ought to set a price on the use of the bed, according to the *room*, at least as far as two or three prices.—My master used to complain, that some inn-keepers would ask nothing for a bed. This distressed him the more, as he never would submit to the custom of asking for meat and drink which he could not, consistently with the preservation of his health, make any use of. Under such circumstances, he often paid half-a-crown to the master who would make no charge, and give at least as much to the servants, though the value he had eaten or drank, could not be reckoned as so many pence. *Welldone* lets his guests know they are at their full liberty, for that he charges for his beds; and will have no wine in his house, but such as he pays for as unadulterated, and is bought of the most reputable merchants.

D. This is by no means the general custom. I believe the article of wine is an article of villainy. They often sell for wine, what has no juice of the grape in it. Do you not think, my father, that Mrs. *Welldone* is judicious in her determination with respect to her daughters, should it please the Almighty to preserve them till they grow up, to send them into any service, rather than keep them in an inn?

F. I fancy that our good friends, with their turn of thought, will drop their inn, and apply all their strength to their farming business; for notwithstanding their piety and good intentions of keeping a *christian inn*, to relieve the rich or poor traveller, I fear some heathen practices will creep in.

D. So I imagine: but *inns* are necessary; and the keepers of them, and those who frequent them, are *christians*.

F. When they please to be so.

I wish you joy!—The house at the end of this serpentine avenue, half way up the hill, is my cousin's.—Behold! I see some of his sons and daughters, walking this way.

D. Probably to meet us.—That is a good sign of a *welcome*.

## CONVERSATION VIII.

*At the House of their Cousin Robert.*

*Reflexions on Virtue in Humble Life. Fable of the bee and the spider. Candid remarks on Virtue in Humble Life, by the Monthly and Critical Reviewers. The observations of the Rev. F. Thompson, of Dublin. The sentiments of a woman of fortune in the country, in commendation of the design, as equally amusing and instructive, and calculated to correct the manners of the people.*

F. **H**OW do you like your reception? Is not my old cousin a humane, benevolent man?

D. I am quite charmed with his behaviour, and astonished to find my cousins so humble and communicative. These young women know a vast deal more about *books* than I can pretend to: it is more in the way of their education; but they never laugh at me, or insult me when I discover how much less I have read than they have; but wish to know *my* thoughts: they are never overbearing in argument, as some of our neighbours, who know not a tenth part so much as they do. So far from appearing to *despise* what I say, they surprize me by their *attention* to it, informing me of what *they* know, in the manner I can best comprehend. Indeed they are so *obliging*, they win my heart.

F. They are *well taught*, and understand that all of us are not equal in strength of mind, much less in the advantages of instruction.—Should you be angry if the globe of my eyes being flattened by time, I should not see to read as you can; and if perchance I had been born blind, would you insult my imperfection? Yet so it is with many who do not consider what are the defects of their neighbour's head, or heart; nor how it happens that he is become perverse for want of instruction. To compassionate the *defects* of others, and supply them as well as possible, is in effect giving them relief under *affliction*.

D. Upon your principles, more than half the conversation of the world would be destroyed; not but that I think it is far better to be *dumb* than *cruel*.

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F. You see these girls are taught to consider *good manners* as an exercise of humanity: it is in effect *charity*, and an essential part of our religion. They are well taught, I say; and for the same reason, they will bring rich dowries to the men who may have the good fortune to marry them.

D. I enquired if they had read our favourite book, *Virtue in Humble Life*; but I find they are not yet acquainted with it. They begged me to inform them what kind of book it is; and I told them, it suited *your circumstances and mine* so well, and warmed our hearts so much with the love of virtue, we valued it, next to the *Bible*; and when we had leisure we read it, not for *instruction* only, but as finding great *pleasure and amusement* in it.

F. You might say this with great truth. You may also acquaint them that the plan of the book is formed on this great principle, That the whole *sem* and amount of life consists in the exercise of piety and humanity; or in other words, *the love of God, and the love of man*. If *every thing* is to be done to the honour of *God*, it must follow, that all our labour, and all our rest, ought to be dedicated to him. This is the great end of living; and without it, life is but a *childish amusement*, a mere *rattle for children*. You may tell these girls, that the author of this book, was a great favourite of my master, to whom I was under such high obligations; and that during many years, he spent his hours, not employed in the duties of his occupation, in meditating and arranging proposals for the moral and religious conduct of our fellow-subjects, with a view to the better regulation of their *lives*,

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lives; the promotion of their *industry*; and the preservation of their souls from eternal death; observing, that “the advantage of living does not consist in *length of days*, but in the *right improvement of them*: for as many days as we pass without doing *some good*, are so many entirely lost:” and he considered that these who labour for the useful purposes of life, with the fear of God before their eyes, are continually *combating evil*, or *doing good*. You remember, *Mary*, that this gentleman observes, that some authors write to gratify their *vanity*, by acquiring *fame*; others have a view to *gain*; and the smaller number to *do good*; but that he had hardly found any person of the least genius, not being a clergyman, in the way of *divinity*, who would bend himself to the standard of the *peasant and domestic*, the *good and useful tradesman*, or the *farmer*: he therefore took this part, and wrote a *large volume*, consisting of a vast variety of matter, with a system of moral and religious instruction, particularly for such people as you and I.

*D.* I told them so; and that we found ourselves much the better for the good and agreeable advice it contains.

*F.* A very ingenious divine (*a*) of my master’s acquaintance, made this report of *Virtue in Humble Life*. “I could not give you my opinion of it with judgment and candour, without a deliberate perusal of it. I wished also to have the sentiments of others; nay, I proceeded with still greater caution; for I waited to have an experimental proof on the minds of the several young persons under my care. The result of all is, that the oftener I have read, and heard others speak of this work, the more I liked it. The principles of it are well founded and excellent; the *arguments* conclusive; the *historical* part is entertaining; and the *devotional*, rational, warm, and exalted: it is calculated to do more extensive good, than any *human production I ever read*. I introduced it in the most solemn, and at the same time the most engaging manner I could: I attended to the reading of the whole of it; applying occasionally the instructions and observations to their several dispositions and tempers; and I have the pleasure to assure you, they listened to it with great eagerness; and that it hath produced a manifest improvement in their conversation and manners. I have taught them

to consider the reading of this book, as an indulgence and reward for good behaviour. It is my *clear opinion*, and most *earnest wish*, that this treasure of instruction and entertainment, should be circulated, as much as possible, for the benefit of the rising generation; to which I will contribute my utmost endeavours, hoping, when it is properly revised (*b*), it will be recommended to the clergy, as a *circulating library* for their parishioners. In short, I think every parent, and every master, who wishes to have good children, and good servants, ought to enjoin the regular reading of it in their families: at the same time I will not hesitate to say, it is highly worthy of the attentive perusal of the learned and great.”

*D.* This was saying much in its praise: he seems to keep his eye on the good purpose for which it was intended.

*F.* The reverend gentleman went on in his remarks, by saying, “This book lies constantly on my table, with some modern productions; which contain strong doses of delicious poison: I think of them as of *Cato’s bane* and antidote, which I do not scruple to observe to my reading visitors; adding, that if people of education will peruse books of such a dangerous tendency, they ought also to read *Virtue in Humble Life*, as a *mithridate*.”

*D.* What did he mean by *Cato’s bane* and *antidote*?

*F.* The famous *Roman* patriot *Cato*, is represented in a play, written by Mr. *Addison*, leaning on a table, on which are placed a *dagger*, and *Plato’s* book on the immortality of the soul. The first you may imagine this hero might easily kill himself with, which was no uncommon thing, even among some virtuous *Romans*: the last informed him, that the soul, being *immortal*, cannot die.—This gentleman, on the perusal of some libertine books, thought they were deadly to the morality and religion of numbers of our fellow-subjects: but his good opinion of *Virtue in Humble Life*, led him to think it might be a means of inspiring the reader with such notions of God and the soul, as would restrain him from wickedness.

*D.* Now I understand the comparison; but what is a *mithridate*?

*F.* *Mithridate* is an antidote against poison; also reckoned a cordial or opiate, esteemed more effectual.

(a) Rev. Francis Thompson, Dublin.

(b) This alludes to the *first edition*.

effectual than *Venice treacle*. It is called by this name from *Mithridates*, King of *Pontus*, who is reported to have so fortified his body against poison, according to the receipt found in his cabinet by *Pompey* the *Roman* general, that when he attempted to kill himself, the poison would not take effect.

*D.* It is beyond a doubt, that this gentleman thought highly of the design and usefulness of *this book*.

*F.* Another ingenious person says, "I have in the course of my life perused a vast number of books, but never yet found one so likely to promote the *temporal*, as well as *eternal* interests of the rising generation. By reading with attention, the mind is led into a pleasing captivity, while the force of conviction leaves no room for doubting."—These testimonials, *Mary*, added to my own sense and opinion, induce me to believe it will do great service to a number of such as attend to what they read; and read for the *improvement* of their minds, and the *correction* of their hearts, in hopes to render themselves acceptable to God.—But you are not to imagine, the more a book is calculated for such purposes, the more it will be esteemed; for this supposes the major part of readers are *pious*.—And as to those who read merely in a *critical* view, they are too apt to look for faults, rather than excellencies and usefulness.

*D.* *Elizabeth*, upon this occasion said, "I am sure my sisters, as well as myself, are happy to find your father and you have such a partiality for a book, the *title* of which pleases us so well: we shall long till our father provides it for us." I told them, perhaps *they* might find many blemishes, which neither you nor I could discover. She smiled, and answered, "In respect to this part of the story, *we* are not *critics*: our good father taught us early the *fable of the bee and the spider*."

*F.* What is That, *Mary*?

*D.* The *bee* pursued his *occupation* on the flowers of the same shrub as the *spider* spun his *web*: the *bee* covered her thighs with honey, while the spider distended his bag with *poison*. Viewing the *bee* with *envy*, mixed with *surprize*, "How comes it," said she, "that I am able to collect nothing but poison from the same plant that supplies thee with honey? I do not take less pains than thou dost."—"It proceeds only," replied the *bee*, "from the different dis-

positions of our natures: mine gives a pleasing flavour to every thing I touch: whereas thine converts to poison That, which by a different process had been the purest honey."

*F.* Admirable: this is truly the case, *Mary*, in many instances, not with respect to books only, but in every part of life. Those who hear *sermons* with a view to find fault, are *spiders*. The *scoffer* only adds to his sins. The *candid bearer*, as the *candid reader*, will reap improvement, and enrich his mind, where the *froward* find matter for censure only. All human works are *imperfect*! Happy is the honest man, who is warm in the great cause of religion, and writes with sufficient ingenuity to engage his reader. The best book is the *Scriptures*: and happy are they who not only read the word of God, but think closely on what they read.

*D.* I am sure my cousins will be pleased. There are many descriptions which exactly suit *their situation*, and their *father's*, whose character is so singularly good.

*F.* I believe they will be pleased. *Sir George* has had an opportunity of knowing the sentiments of various persons. Upon my mentioning the book, the other day, as a thing that pleased *me*, he gave me a copy of some commendations of it, which had come to his hands, particularly a *letter* from a lady of fortune of his acquaintance, to whom he hath recommended this book. I brought it with me; and if you please you may shew it to your cousins.

To *Sir George* Friendly, *Bart.*

Dear Sir,

"I Am to acknowledge my obligations for your obliging letter, which accompanied *Virtue in Humble Life*. After spending a considerable part of my younger days in *London*, I am happily arrived at years of reflexion, and consider what I ought to do to render myself acceptable to God. To this end I have turned an eye of pity towards my *servants*, and behold their *ignorance* and *carelessness* with compassion. I think it is owing to the *negligence* and *impiety* of *masters* and *mistresses*, that *domestics* are not rendered more governable: at the same time I acknowledge it to be an arduous task to keep them within bounds.

Blest as I am in the virtues of my *children*, gratitude to the God of my fathers, calls on me

to point out by, every means in my power, the way to heaven to my *tenants, domestics,* and the whole village, where I have influence. I have recommended many books to them, in times past, but I have not met with one which suits my purpose so well as this which you have sent to me. It breathes the genuine spirit of christianity; yet it is wrought up with so pleasing a variety, I could not keep it out of the hands of my daughters till they had gone through it.

A *layman* finishing his work with a *manual of devotion*, might at first lead one to think it the offspring of *fanaticism*; but nothing can be more remote from any such spirit. It is good sense, improved by *time* and *observation*; and evidently the effect of the experience of one who feels his own imperfections; and seeing those of other people, has thought much on the vanities of life. Several of the subjects are handled in a copious manner, and some well finished. The style is elegant, without any flowery embellishments which can confound an unlettered reader. Many of the instructive parts are sententious, therefore the more striking. The historical part is agreeable and entertaining. The whole abounds in such sentiments as afford the poor a sumptuous repast. I never perused a book abounding more in *philanthropy*; nor any one in which the heart appears to have had a greater share. Amusement is blended with true christian rules of conduct, and the mind maintains its balance under the most trying circumstances.

*Temporal happiness, liberty, and the love of our country*, as built on the everlasting foundations of moral rectitude, and the sublime precepts of christian doctrines, are rendered familiar. The *highest* cannot read without pleasure, nor the *lowest* without edification. The part the most important, and from which I expect great advantage, is that which relates to the *sacrament* of our Lord's supper; in their attention to which, I found my servants and tenants, and in general the labouring part of my neighbourhood, deficient to an astonishing degree. This evil is so general, one would imagine many believed they might be *christians* without remembering *Christ*. This subject is handled in so scriptural and persuasive a manner; the reasoning is so strong, yet familiar; and so many true lights are thrown on it, some of which are new to me, I think my *dependants* will prove them-

selves to be as stupid as oxen, or incorrigible as the children of perdition, if I cannot, by means of this book, *open their eyes* to the true sense of the scriptures, and a right understanding of their own eternal interest in this point. I have the pleasure to tell you, that several of my servants actually receive the *sacrament*, from the conviction derived from this book.

The scenery of this piece lying in the country, the more interesting it becomes to the farmer and the *peasant*. The *drama* is confined to a *father* and his *daughter*, two of the most intimate relations in life: they talk of things and persons in a copious and intelligent manner, treating no character of the living, or the dead, without such a portion of tenderness for the weaknesses of human nature, as gives us high impressions of their good-will to mankind.

Filial piety and paternal love display their charms in such full lustre, methinks I give my *children*, and receive from them, a pleasure, which I never felt, in the same degree, before.

Several of my *servants*, who have read this book, are apparently the more inclined to do their duty, and treat me with a higher respect, as their *friend*; as if they had learnt to act upon *principle*, and were less mercenary in their views.

The singular regard which this gentleman has shewn to domestics, must be highly flattering to them. The part he takes in the most interesting concerns of their lives; and the instruction he gives them, particularly the females, ought to excite their esteem, whilst they shew their gratitude by observing his precepts, and shunning the dangers against which he warns them, with so much regard.

The daughters of my tradesmen and tenants, to whom I recommended this work, at first drew themselves up forsooth, saying, *they* were not going into *service*; and therefore *Virtue in Humble Life* did not relate to *them*; though, by the by, many of them must be *domestics*: But when I informed them my daughters and I had read it with pleasure, and learnt from it how to behave ourselves to our *superiors*, as well as our *equals* and *inferiors*; and that *princes* might peruse it, they also were induced to read; and now I hear they relish the book very highly; and those who *may*, and those who *may not* go into service, I dare say will be considerably the better for it. My labour, you may perceive, is not lost on *them*; nor will the book, I hope,

be considered as unworthy attention by those who live in the same degree of affluence as you or I.

If my *equals* or *superiors* will not take any pains to promote religion and virtue, let them at least be *silent*, not only with regard to the worthlessness of their domestics, but also the *contagion of vice*, which poisons the root of *national government*. It is evident, that we all are, just as we are trained, and kept within the bounds of *virtue and religion*.

The quantity of the *good promoted*, or the *evil cured*, is the measure by which I judge of the value of a book. In these several views, your *recommendation* shall stand on a distinguished shelf in my library.

You, Sir *George*, who are never so happy as when you are doing good, will therefore forgive the length of my epistle in these overflowings of my heart. I consider myself as under the highest obligations to you; and I beg you will let *Lady Friendly* know I think of her, not only with the highest esteem, but that she is so much the happiest woman in the world, in being allied to you, who not only do good yourself, but are the instrument, under Providence, of the good which many others do, particularly her who is,

With the most perfect esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most assured friend,

and servant,



*D.* Surely this letter gave Sir *George* and *Lady Friendly* much delight: and I think it will be no less grateful to my *cousins*. The lady who wrote this letter is as ingenious as she is good.

*F.* Whatever she may think of the literary merits of the book, her zeal to promote *christian knowledge*, and diffuse happiness, are very conspicuous. I believe the dialogues will please your *cousins*: the ablest judges acknowledge, that “they turn upon a great variety of important subjects, on which are found many useful reflexions and admonitions, enlivened by a number of characters, stories, fables, &c.

adapted to interest the reader in the different topics offered to his consideration (*a*).”——These young women will find, that “the whole forms a system of morality and religion, adapted to the capacities of *ordinary readers*. In these dialogues, there is that unaffected simplicity, that sober piety, that candour and philanthropy, which distinguishes most of the former productions of this benevolent writer (*b*).”

*D.* What did they mean by *ordinary readers*?

*F.* Such as you and I, and other people who aspire at *virtue and religion*, and not the reputation of *learning and deep knowledge*. I have heard Sir *George* say, that the author, whenever he thought he could do good, took great pains. He is now old, and has a good title to leave off writing. He also says, that these *dialogues* are drawn, for the most part, from *real life*, and are, as the *lady* says, the most rational appeals to the understanding and the affections: that there is much real history in them; and that the inventive part is divested of the extravagance of *romance*, and kept within the sober bounds of probability. That a book so calculated to keep us within the paths of virtue, must likewise operate as a means to induce offenders to leave the errors of their ways. That it contains the pith and marrow of many a good volume, and may serve as a complete library to those who possess but few other books.

*D.* Do not some think it too long?

*F.* At first view they were frightened; but when they set out on their journey through it, they found the way so agreeable, they wished it to be longer. There are many resting places (*c*): and you may tell your *cousins* if, before they make an *end*, the *beginning* should be new to them, the design will be so much the better answered. The more the *heart* is rendered pious by the first perusal, the greater delight will the *understanding* receive from the second: and you remember that the author says, that he never meant his “reader should hurry through it, as girls read novels, to see the catastrophe; who dies, or is born, is married, or continues a virgin.”

*D.* Yet such details captivate by their novelty.

*F.* As to novelty, *Mary*; as one generation succeeds another, the world will ever afford  
pleasure

(a) Monthly Review.

(b) Critical Review.

(c) In this edition, the first volume contains 84 conversations: the former contained only 23.

pleasure to those who are in the early stages of life. Every one of the least attention must be sensible, that it is not the number of pages which are read, nor the delight the fancy may receive, that will do the good which ought to be done, but the attention of the heart, in dwelling on the rationality and piety of the sentiments, and impressing them so strongly on the mind that no temptations shall be able to efface them.

*D.* It is not the lowest of mankind who are the objects of this book.

*F.* No; not the lowest: but Sir *George* says, he has not a domestic of common sense, male or female, who has read it, but say they understand it very well. Whether the daughter of a poor farmer, such as you are, or an inn-keeper, the parish clerk, the gardener, or the labourer; or if we advance, the tradesman or the gentleman, the son or the servant, the *prince* or the *beggar*; I see not how any can read, and not be pleased and edified. As to the object of the book, they are all interested. Human nature is the same; and as the soul of man is

equally the object of the divine compassion, the same common attention is due from every one to the important concerns of the life to come. The author observes, “ That to captivate the slothful and careless by the attractive smiles of religion, and check the career of the wicked by the terrors which she holds out, is the point he keeps constantly in his view.” I have told you the opinion of a gentleman, not less distinguished as a scholar, than an advocate for christianity, which he professes (*a*). He who teaches with a zeal becoming the glorious profession of a minister of the gospel of *Christ*, may be allowed some friendly prejudices in favour of a book calculated for such great ends and purposes. With you and me, I hope it will *live*, though some books of learning and genius, in which *virtue* is not particularly interested, should, in the course of human affairs, fall into the depths of forgetfulness.—If you, my daughter, will attend to what is said in it, through the whole progress of your life, be it long or short, you will improve your *understanding*, delight your *heart*, and prepare your *soul* as a fit offering for *heaven*!

## CONVERSATION IX.

*At the House of their Cousin Robert.*

*Comparative view of the sentiments of the lady of distinction in the country, and another court lady in town. Expostulation of the author with the court lady. The opinion of the lady who wrote the Female Advocate.*

*D.* **E**XTREME!—The lady’s letter to Sir *George* delighted them much. Their remark was, that “ *useful lessons*, with regard to our conduct in this life, and fit provision for That which is to come, are of much greater consequence to mankind, than any thing that is merely *brilliant*, *ornamental*, or serves only to set us off to advantage, during the short journey of us mortals in this our *pilgrimage on earth*. For that how little soever the phrase may be understood, life is but a *pilgrimage*.”

*F.* This was very well observed: but still you

will find the eye of the multitude, whether the *chambermaid* or the *lady*, will be caught by the brilliancy of appearances. There is but a small part of mankind capable of examining things to the bottom. What a different sort of language some fine ladies in town talk, from that of the lady in the country! Sir *George* told me of a conversation the author actually had with a lady of his acquaintance, upon the subject of this book. She said, “ How can *you*, who are a man of understanding, imagine you can do *any good* with the piety, or the sense of a *father*, or his *daughter*,



daughter, whom you have introduced as the principal characters of your *dialogues*." His answer was, "Madam, you will be best able to determine this question, if you will *read* what I have written; otherwise it cannot possibly do *you* any good. If your *servants* become the better for it, you will reap some benefit from their virtues. If any one of them proves an example of piety, you may secretly blush, and perhaps grow better in your own conduct. You will not be surprized that I should *preach*; I am descending into the vale of years; *you* are going up the hill, to take a view of the world, and may have different prospects of it. Many a long day have I beheld the vanities of men! Many of the faults of others are obvious to me; and so are many of my own. I presume to talk the language of a *philosopher*; I therefore say, it is probable your stand in need of some *correction*, such as my book may give you. If this word is harsh, call it *admonition*, if you please. Do I now officiously intrude on your gayer hours? Let me remind you, it is not always *spring*, nor *summer*: do you wish to reach the *winter* of your days? What do you imagine will then contribute most to your comfort, and brighten your prospect? Let not the smoothness of your brow be ruffled by any disdainful look, nor imagine that I am the less your *friend* for daring to talk thus. I wish your hopes may always blossom in the fullest charms of vernal beauty. As years roll on, your passion for amusement, of a less serious nature, will be lulled to rest: and may all your enjoyments be pure as the limpid stream, bright as the meridian sun, and calm as a summer's sea. You are not so young, but that you know some degree of sorrow is the lot of every mortal: but I trust that your *prosperity* will never be impaired by the want of *virtue*; nor your *adversity* be devoid of *consolation*!—In spite of all your charms, e'er long you must deliver up your *material part*, to be the sport of the elements: earth, air, fire, and water, will have their respective shares." She smiled at the formality of his philosophical distinctions: yet recollecting herself, with much politeness bid him go on; and he continued, "I do not mean to give you a *dreary* view of the tremendous scene of nature, or the order which the supreme Architect of the world will follow in the distribution of the matter you are composed of, when your tenement shall fall: but as *nature*, in her yearly course, restores the

beauties of the fairest flowers, though they appear irrevocably lost, your *bodily frame*, charming as it now is, when it shall become mere dust and ashes, will again unite with your angelic spirit: in the mean time, I am persuaded you will look up to heaven, in humble purity and zeal of heart, in hopes of such a *frame of mind*, as will be acceptable to the great Lord of all. You are sensible, that without his favour there can be no solid happiness in either world.—You ask me why I give wisdom to a country girl? Why not, Madam? Drop the thought of the peasant; and if you esteem the education which her good father gives her, amidst *rural scenes*, and the sentiments which nature inspires, far short of that which mercenary masters give in great cities, you may consider her as a well-informed *young woman*, and a *genuine christian*, no matter whether she make butter in a churn, or embroiders in silk and gold, on a *tambour*. As to the substantial value of her occupation, you find your greatest favourite more inclined to give up a *gala waistcoat*, than renounce his *breakfast*!"

*D.* What did she say to this?

*F.* Say! she rather looked *serious*; for the man she wished to marry, happened, in good earnest, to be *inconstant*. Our author continued his discourse—"It is sometimes dangerous to make comparisons; or I should add, that native modesty and simplicity have charms which no laboured art can bring so near the throne of the *graces*. My female character, as a christian, upon the comparison, eclipses all accidental superiority. She seeks for wisdom, not forming her judgment by any finical rules of fashionable delicacy.—Whether I apply my address to the poor or rich, the busy or the idle, you are sensible, as things are managed, the task is arduous: great *riches*, and extreme *poverty*; superficial *knowledge*, and gross *ignorance*, equally militate against *religion*. If in attempting to guard her sacred shrine, I suffer, I expect no miracle to be wrought in my favour; but I hope, *Madam*, you will not forsake me, nor my favourite object in the person of the daughter of this *honest man*. I consider an upright, poor, and pious man, in a view of dignity and regard, as he claims a more immediate affinity with the Father of the poor. You who have *understanding*, and a *heart*, drop the distinction of fortune, and the foppery of life; then you will rather

envy

envy than despite that simplicity and resolution in the cause of virtue, which, in every event, eclipse all the worldly splendor which can attract the eye, or captivate the fancy. For what is *worldly greatness*?—the shining of a glow-worm, deriving its brightness from the dark shade that surrounds it; whilst *poverty*, supported by a *rational confidence*, and *true faith* in God, darts forth rays of glory?—Whether in any case, a certain portion of *enthusiasm* is of service to mankind or not, I leave you to determine: I hope you will find my doctrine as gentle as the summer's breeze. The dictates of reason, and the purity of the heart, are the pedestals on which the *faith* of a *christian* stands: and That which cannot be accomplished by means of *faith*, as it contributes to the happiness of mankind, we must refer to a *judgment to come*. I am not the less *your* friend, because I make some inferior classes of my fellow-subjects my chief object. I hope my appeal to the common-sense of mankind, in defence of religion, will entitle me to *your* charity. Neither are you to imagine I differ much from the rest of the world: I am not disinterested: I aspire at the performance of a task, which may be acceptable to That righteous Judge of men, before whom *you* and I must equally prepare to stand arraigned. Permit me therefore to recommend *this book* to *your* protection. I tell you my thoughts according to my experience: and I expect more good from the *mistress* of the family, than from the master of it. Men are wont to ascribe to your sex, by far the greater degree of *levity*; but in the same breathe acknowledge you possess by much the largest portion of *piety*. If this be true, you stand at least upon equal ground; for of all kinds of abuses of reason, *impiety* is the most shocking. If it be true, I say, that your sex enjoys such a *superiority*, for so I will call it, consider how you may employ it most advantageously. Unite all the honest arts of female softness, with the manly dignity and fortitude of a *christian*; and, by brightening the prospect of the life to come, render your present happiness the more complete.—Example descends: the mistress who is best taught, will be most attentive that her domestics shall know their duty. What security can you have in the fidelity of

*That servant* who is unfaithful to her *God*? The moral world is already in a drooping state: let the *admonition* which is salutary to the *soul*, as wholesome aliment to the *body*, be neglected, and *religion* will droop and die. Much depends, Madam, on your care: the larger your fortune and connections, and the higher and more valuable your talents, it is to be presumed the more charming your virtue will appear in the eyes of men: and I appeal to your own heart, if you can possibly mistake the point, if things are not even so; and *if they are*, will you not, for your own sake, act a consistent part?"

D. Excellent!—What said Sir *George* with regard to this admonition to the fine lady?

F. She knew the author was her admirer, and a friend to mankind. Nor was she ignorant of what her hopes ought to be.

D. He said nothing in diminution of the charms of youth, or *the majesty of beauty*. And allowing for education, what difference can there be between the *mistress* and the *maid*, with respect to *good* and *evil*.

F. *Majesty of beauty, Mary!*—You give beauty a high epithet.

D. I observe it carries a high command.

F. Is not the world governed more by *art* and *wit*, than by beauty?—Have you a mind to tell your *cousins* the sentiments of another lady (*a*), distinguished for her elegant and harmonious compositions, who talks in plain *English*, and commends the design and execution of the work. She says, “ I have perused the book with great pleasure. I am charmed with the piety and benevolence of the worthy author's views; and think the work well calculated to answer his intentions, as it seems to comprehend (to use his own phrase) a system of “ *village ethics* :” and a most excellent one it is. From the variety of the subjects on which he writes, and the entertaining manner in which he treats them, it appears to me as a work exceedingly proper to be put into the hands of young people of *superior* condition, as well as of those in the *lower* ranks of life. In the *second* dialogue (*b*), I think he justly censures our sex for our criminal inattention to the duties of family religion: but That, like many other of our faults, is perhaps the consequence of a wrong education. Those who  
have

(a) Miss *Scott*, of *Milbarn-Port*, *Somersetshire*, author of the *Female Advocate*.

(b) First Edition, in 8vo.

have sober parents or preceptors, are told that modesty is the chief ornament of women; but they are not always taught to know in what true modesty consists: hence we are led to form a vague idea of it, which often influences our conduct through life, and causes us to act inconsistently with our *character, as rational beings, or as christians*. So far are many of us from doing our good works to be seen of man, we absurdly imagine the impossibility which there sometimes is of their escaping their observation, is a sufficient excuse for our *omitting* to perform them. A truly modest woman will no more omit to practise the duties of a *christian*, because she cannot perform them in *secret*; than she will perform them merely to attract the notice of the world.

The notions of charity in the 5th dialogue, are very soothing to those benevolent minds, who are wont to complain of being incapacitated, through the rigours of a narrow fortune, for the exercise of the external acts of benevolence. The author says (*a*), "A tear offered up to misery, where only a tear can flow, will be pleasing to the tender Father of mankind." What a striking idea does this sentiment convey to the mind, of the divine benignity, and the universal extent of the duty of charity!"

*D.* This lady's remarks are in general as judicious, as they are favourable to this book.

*F.* When you are inclined to *thoughtfulness* and *amusement*, and do not wish to gallop through the book for the gratification of your curiosity, you will, as I have told you, be more pleased with the *second* reading, than you were with the *first*. The lady just mentioned, in one of her letters to her friend, says, "In ruminating on the excellent tendency of *Virtue in Humble Life*, these lines fell from my pen:

"Whilst others pant to grasp the wreaths of fame,  
Thy bosom ——— feels a nobler flame.  
To teach the careless, and the weak to guide;  
To check the vanity of reas'ning pride;  
From low pursuits to rouse the thoughtless mind,  
And warm it with the love of human kind;  
To break the force of *fashion's* tyrant sway,  
And point where truth and virtue lead the way;  
With love divine t' inflame the glowing breast,  
And fix its views on realms of endless rest:

O glorious aims! — Ambition all divine!  
A nobler meed, than *Fame* can give, is thine!  
The transport, talents well employ'd impart;  
The peace that flows from rectitude of heart!  
When *Fame* her minions blazons to the sky,  
If *envy* breathes, *their* laurels fade or die:  
But *Virtue* bids defiance to her rage,  
(A flower that blossoms in the frost of age!)  
Yes; *she* shall flourish in immortal bloom,  
When *Fame's* proud trophies sink in endless gloom."

*D.* Excellent! Methinks this *lady's* verses upon the book, instruct one as much as the book itself. She must have read it with as good a design, and as much judgment, as it was written with.

*F.* And what do you think of these lines which came from another *female hand* (*b*), a lady no less distinguished for the purity and melody of her verse. The *numbers* are of a different kind, but the commendation of the book much the same.

"Feeling heart! for ever glowing:  
Ever warm for human kind:  
From whose genial current's flowing  
Purest streams of love refin'd.  
Like th' industrious bee, still sipping  
From each flow'r of fragrant bloom,  
Various balmy sweets collecting,  
Still t' enrich the hive at home.  
Like him too, thy stores are offer'd  
Lenient balm for our race;  
Still with gracious mildness proffer'd,  
Fraught with ev'ry healing grace.

Tender care thy pity moving,  
For the hapless train of woe;  
Still thy *Master's* steps pursuing,  
Still thy deeds with mercy flow! —

Conscious virtue sure rewards thee,  
E'en in this rude vale of tears:  
But what truer joys await thee,  
When the Lord of love appears!"

*D.* I observe the last lady takes her idea from the industry of the bee; comparing this collection of the author's sentiments, and those of other writers, to the sweetness of honey; so pleasing

(a) Vol. I. page 42.

(b) Author of *Poems with a Dramatic Entertainment*, May 1771.

pleasing to the *taste*, and so salutary, both as food and medicine. Which of them is the greatest moralist, is difficult to determine. They are both musical: their lines flow with harmony, and please me much. They make me think of what you have often said, that women may be justly distinguished by the name of the devout sex: and it is very obvious this is a kind of book admirably calculated to please *us*.

*F.* I think it will please *women* and *men* too, who are well disposed. There is food for the fancy, as well as nourishment for the understanding; and much correction of the natural corruption of the heart; at the same time that it warms it with clarity and the love of God.

*D.* Was not the author much flattered by these lines in praise of his work?

*F.* Just so much, I suppose, as they made him hope his book, whatever imperfections he might be conscious it had, would answer the good end and design which he had in view. I dare say he was very sincere in meaning to do good. Strictly speaking, it is the sentiment, not the man, they applaud; for a very bad man might write a very good book.

*D.* Not a *very bad man*, I believe, could write such a book as this; or if he were so bad, his book would rise in judgment against him.

*F.* So indeed, I believe: but there are many such instances in the world: though hypocrisy is a less dangerous evil than daring profaneness. As to praise, *Mary*, all beyond the consciousness of labouring to do good, is the foolishness of folly; it is the vanity of the heart, not the benevolence of the spirit. It sometimes presses men on to action: many are fools enough to believe all that is said to them, even when people commend themselves: But this is of no intrinsic value to the possessor of the vanity, nor to any body else.

*D.* The author surely thought himself highly obliged to those ladies. The praises of women of understanding and genius, which favour so much the religious principles he adopts, must have given him the higher opinion of his own sincerity.

*F.* Perchance, as you imagine, it afforded a higher gratification, than the more solemn commendations of men of letters. Devotion without enthusiasm, and simplicity devoid of folly and weakness, are to be found, I hope, in many quarters; but they are not the characteristic marks of the age we live in. Wherever good sense and piety appear, the *sensible* and *pious*, whether *men* or *women*, will express their satisfaction: and I am glad to find it so well marked by the pens of these ingenious ladies. People who write upon a principle of benevolence, express their approbation of every work, in proportion to the *usefulness* it may be of, to inspire the mind with the love of virtue. These ladies not only commend the author, but teach him what he should aspire at. They seem as if they meant to fire him with the ambition of gaining credit with the world, to enable him the better to do good to it. When that desire ends, indifference begins; and good and evil lose much of their distinctions in our esteem. What should any one wish to live for, *Mary*, but to do good? What mars happiness, destroys life. What true joy can there be, which has not its foundation in virtue? The true glory of man consists in *humility*; not in the *appearance*, but the *reality and substance of it in the sight of God*. Yet I grant, that he who sets no value on a good repute, may be as careless of the event of his actions, as of the bad principles that produced them. The consciousness of *good intentions* may support him; but to see those intentions answered, must be delightful to his soul.

## CONVERSATION X.

*At the House of their Cousin Robert.*

*The force of good or evil conversation. The duty of women of fortune towards female domestics. The danger of bad example. Civility due to women of all conditions. The description of an honest man, and a good father : His care of his children. The characters of affluence, as opposed to contentment.*

**D.** MY repetition of some of your sentiments surprized my *cousins*. They looked at each other, as not expecting such remarks from me.

**F.** You learn from me, as they learnt from *their father*. Allowing for difference in education, I presume even the *maid* and the *mistress* are much alike in their propensities to *good* and *evil*. In general, the *servant* who has virtue enough to have respect for her *mistress*, will form her taste accordingly ; and if the *favourite book of the day* is not recommended to her, she will steal the reading, and save some scraps of knowledge : if she hath common understanding, she will find something to please her : if she was ever taught the duties of religion, though the *remembrance* should have been buried in the tomb of folly, it will rise again, and triumph over her negligence and dissipation.

**D.** If the *mistress* is unhappily a stranger to all books of a moral and religious tendency, ought she to expect any virtue from her servants ?

**F.** A *bad example* does not *always* prevail ; yet it favours the corruption of the heart ; and the *Lord* have mercy on those who live within its baneful influence. My master used to say, “ Whether beauty appears in its greatest lustre without any decoration, is a question not fully decided ; but we are sure that *virtue*, which is so much superior, often passes unheeded for want of those ornaments which attract the eyes of women.” He observed, “ that elegance is as compatible with simplicity, as politeness with humility : and that the heart of man cannot *keep time* with *peace* and *concord*, unless good manners and external decorum are preserved. Without entering into a particular comparison of the *lady*,

and her *female servant*, the superior *knowledge* of the one should come in aid of the *ignorance* of the other. Discourses on morality, and reflections on human nature, particularly in *conversation*, are the best means we can make use of to improve our minds, and gain a true knowledge of *ourselves* ; and consequently to recover our souls out of the *vice*, *ignorance*, *prejudice*, or *habits* in which they are involved. This being established as a truth, the next great object is to find a way to the *heart*, as well as the *understanding*, by *reading* ; and where the young or the aged are pleased with any *real* good book, they may be sure of being profited by it, if it is pleasant. The great secret of life is to make *pleasure* virtuous, or rather to render *virtue* pleasant. The principal character of the book you have recommended to your *cousins*, has this likeness with some of the heroes of antiquity ; he is employed in tilling the earth. If he often speaks like a philosopher, he had the advantage of serving a man of education, and learning his virtues. Whatever share nature or grace has in this character, we must consider that true greatness of mind arises from acquaintance with the most important objects ; and doing all the good possible in our several stations, upon the best and noblest principles ; not from rank or condition. The doctrines recommended are supported by *christians* and *philosophers* of the greatest eminence, whose sentiments may be read in the abstract, without the labour of deep study.

**D.** The author says, he considers common sense and reason more valuable than learning.

**F.** This is evident in every page : and to know how to guard against the engines of iniquity, which the evil spirit employs to work the destruc-

destruction of mankind, is the most important science. The *glory* of conquering *sin*, should raise our thoughts above all other *victories*, and afford more joy, than all the triumphs which attend the greatest prosperity of mankind.

*D.* We confine ourselves to sober *humble* life.

*F.* Ay; and for this reason we have the better opportunity of considering the charms of *moral rectitude*, which do not furnish an idea of worldly grandeur, or give any false glare to life, to put out the eyes of the understanding. The question with *our author* is, not what temporal advantages his *farmer* or his *daughter* shall enjoy, but how they may, in the issue, crown their lives with a *glorious immortality*! They leave the rest to the Providence of God, and the peace of mind which *virtue* always ensures. The *good farmer* reminds his *daughter*, that death must be her lot; and as an honest girl she takes warning. He urges her in the strongest terms, to expect a *judgment to come*; assuring her, that one of these two things must follow; either she will be *happy in heaven*, or *miserable in hell*.

*D.* This is coming home to the heart, as well as the understanding, if these are not both callous: but I think she makes an *excellent girl*: would to God I were half so good!

*F.* She is represented as sensible, that whatever her present condition may be, she must build her hopes on a foundation more durable than the globe on which she stands.—In considering the happy effects of a virtuous life, in the person of a *young woman*, we must view her in a state of innocency, susceptible of the most generous sentiments which christianity can inspire; not elevated with the hopes of rising in her coach, nor taught how to inveigle a *young master*, but reminded of the advantages of being *honest* and *pious*, agreeable to her mistress, and perchance of being one day married to a laborious honest man. An undue encouragement to promote the indigent above measure, is not within the rules this author recommends.

*D.* I have applied what I read, to myself, and I find it teaches me how to conduct my steps in the *safest* manner, through the *slippery* paths of *youth*.

*F.* I dare say you receive *pleasure* as well as *profit* from this book. With regard to myself, the rational affection of a parent to a child, carries with it the idea of the truest charity, and purest love of human kind. It is one of the

most grateful offerings that can be made to the great Father of mankind. The most virtuous hold it as sacred, as the contrary is abhorrent to common honesty. When we extend this consideration to the state after death, *all things below look mean*.—Being persuaded, as I am, of the *immortality of the soul*, you are sensible that I spare no pains to preserve *you*, my daughter; anxious to make you a fit inhabitant of heaven! Happy the land where the authority of a parent is duly exercised and attended to; and his love for his children equally *pious* and *judicious*, devoid of that *partiality* we lately spoke of, which is so apt to extinguish the *light of reason*; yet so *tender* as to engage him in *any hazard*, rather than behold them in danger of everlasting punishment.—

*D.* The author treats his farmer's daughter with more civility than is usually shewn to persons in an humble station.

*F.* I like the book so much the more: Every woman loves civil treatment: He considers that her sex entitles her to such a behaviour. We are often deficient in this respect towards our *equals* and *superiors*; and still more towards our *inferiors*: the evil grows out of *liberty*, and may be owing to the privileges our *women* enjoy, more on an equality with men, than in other countries; or perhaps being generally left as the guardians of their *own honour*, men suppose them capable of being their *own protectors*. To whatever cause we ascribe the want of civility which we often see, it is the offence which women can least forgive. This is a virtue of the inferior class, being little more than a mechanical kind of *decorum*; but it helps to polish manners, and refine politeness into humanity, which is the best preparative for the duties of a *christian*. Upon this principle, *men* should sometimes yield up a portion of what they deem their prerogative, rather than by a rigid exaction of right, do wrong, by departing from the rules of civility to *women*.

*D.* You talk, my father, as if you were a most sincere friend to my sex.

*F.* A *gentle* treatment is best calculated to make an impression on the *native ingenuousness* of the *female mind*: it is more easy to flatter women into a love of virtue, than prevent their being vicious, by denouncing *vengeance*. Where nothing but terror is presented to the mind, it creates an abhorrence, which terminates in a contempt of instruction, or a despair of amendment. I have read,

read, that in the sacrifices which the ancient heathen world offered to *Juno*, on occasion of their *marriages*, it was their custom to throw the *gall* of the victim *behind the altar*, to shew that nothing but *harmony* should reign in that state of life. How much more are the worshippers of the true God, and believers in the religion of *Christ*, in every relation they stand to each other, to abstain from all practices tending to disturb *peace* and *concord*. This being a common obligation essential to decency and decorum, it should always be attended to with the utmost care.

*D.* I agree with you entirely. Those who *marry*, not having this end in view, deserve to be wretched.

*F.* The author of *Virtue in Humble Life*, represents the father of his young woman as a very honest man, formerly an upper servant, as I was; and by attending occasionally to his master's conversation, and reading some of his books, he has picked up a considerable degree of knowledge, and applied it to real life. This, *Mary*, is more than some of our superiors, renowned for their abilities, have had sense enough to do. He supposes that his rustic philosopher respected the memory of a good master, exactly as I do mine: and it appears that he has not forgotten the lessons he had learnt from so good a master; lessons which few masters teach, and fewer servants learn. He retails them to his daughter, with the tenderness of a father, and the zeal of a saint.

*D.* From your account, one would imagine this gentleman's book was particularly intended to instruct such persons as you and I.

*F.* All kinds of persons are instructed by it. I read it with pleasure. It gives my thoughts a pious and a tender cast, which I have endeavoured to improve, for *your* service. The author makes neither the *father* nor the *daughter* say or do any thing romantic, or beyond what may be found in *real life*. If we behold a good man, whose heart is in its proper place, and whose blood beats time with his reason and understanding, though his condition be *humble*, if he has seen the world, and is capable of drawing the line between the *virtues* and *vices* of it, the more we enter into his life and manners, the more useful lessons we shall learn from him: for let us examine things with the utmost precision, we shall find that it is a man's *own works*,

and not *another man's words*, which must exalt him.

*D.* I believe there are many *envied*, because of the praise bestowed on them; though in reality they are very *wretched*.

*F.* That is often the case. My master used to observe, that although we should not seek for *reasoning philosophers* in villages, there are more in that situation, who are practically such, than the *great* imagine; adding, that whatever complaint those who live in affluence may sometimes have reason to make, the villager often bears a number of cares more like a reasonable and accountable being, than people in high life usually support a single solicitude: for, said he, "with the *humble* and *laborious*, the *body* and the *mind* are both kept in action; and the success which crowns the industry of a virtuous man, affords matter for triumph in his breast: if his labours should only give him a scanty meal, yet it allays the *miseries* which invade his condition, and gratifies his understanding and affections: but the *sickness* of the heart, created by a *redundance*, the vicissitudes of *fortune*, or the turbulency of contending *passions*, puts the whole frame into a *fever*. Hence the mind seeks rest in objects which cannot give it; or looks out for some distant *precarious* good, in the flattering hopes of grasping at joy, which generally eludes the embrace." You cannot but feel in your own bosom, that the love of *peace* and *rest* is natural to a well-ordered mind; and where the heart is divided by a habit of contending with *many difficulties*, the burthen of them is not so heavy as when it has only *one great care* to combat.

*D.* Do you think so? We all desire to *mend* our condition!

*F.* Yes: but with regard to wealth, which so much distinguishes mankind, though it may *change our objects*, it may not *mend our condition*, nor render us more happy than we were before; for *habit*, *health*, and *turn of mind*, constitute felicity more than *fortune*.—You see that the truly *honest* peasant dies in the order of nature, and calmly resigns his life: the *rich* are often in misery from the dread of parting with their wealth, and are torn from the earth, with the sin of reluctance to submit to the decrees of heaven. The author strives to teach the doctrines of *contentment*; well knowing that we are apt to fix our thoughts so attentively on things the *world* calls *good*, either in prospect or enjoyment,

we neglect to arm against the *evils* which so often attend us. It is no wonder then to see so great a part of mankind languish in secret for *contentment* and *peace of mind*; for if these are the rewards of *virtue* only, it is in vain to seek for them in *riches*, *honours*, or *worldly glory*!—In these views he meditates on the *thoughts of his inferiors*; he considers the variety of the windings of the soul, and what it is that creates so much pain as we daily behold. He concludes, that the pleasures which the soul generally admits of, under the circumstances of the most refined education, upon the whole of life, do not exceed those of an humble fortune. From hence he teaches us to contemplate the amazing benignity of the great Author of nature, and to praise him for his wisdom and goodness in thus framing the constitution of the *moral world*.

D. Every discharge of duty from one human being to another, in every state and condition, carries the mind to the fountain of all goodness, from whence such streams of benignity flow.

E. Well observed, my dear *Mary*! The more good we do, the more we delight in doing it, till at length *custom* becomes a *second nature*. He who earnestly endeavours to promote the welfare of others, if he chastises himself, so as to be totally resigned to the gracious will of Heaven, may justly call himself a happy man! It was on this principle the author of *Virtue in Humble Life* endeavours to inspire his readers with *charity*, and a deep sense of the *power* of religion, considering his labours as an *offering* at the altars of piety and humanity; hoping that what he had written would, in good time, *during his life, or after it*, make its way to the heart, and answer the glorious ends he had in view!—

D. I will endeavour to retain as much as possible of these sentiments, for I am sure such sensible young women as my cousins, will make them the subject of their thoughts, in preference to the best written novel which has appeared in this century, or in any former time.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N XI.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*Character of an honest man, and a true patriot: his manner of living in the country. His tenderness for his children. His disinterested conduct on occasion of appeasing a riot. His speech to the mob; and his declining of popular honour. Description of modern nominal patriotism.*

D. HE is above *flattery*: he shakes his head when I praise him, and says, “you should take more care how you express your approbation of your friends.” I observe he never distresses one with an excess of civility: he seems only to wish to be as agreeable as he is kind. Every word he utters conveys instruction.

F. He is a good man, *Mary*! His own mind being at peace, he is possessed of a marvellous power to make others happy. He hath long been esteemed a man of the most equal temper, and strictest probity. All the farmers apply to him to decide their quarrels: and he hath the art of sending them away *contented*. He promises with *caution*, and keeps his word with *honour*.

D. Our cousin must be a happy man, thus to

keep peace, and see justice done in his neighbourhood.

F. He lives *within compass*; and his family enjoys all that is *necessary*: superfluities he cannot afford; therefore neither himself nor his family ever visit great cities. He says, such journeys answer a bad end to more than half the people who make them; for they learn to increase their *expences* and *wants*, without acquiring the means of relieving them. You observe that this family is always employed in *work*, or *study* of some useful kind; but it is not without hours of recreation. They sing with the birds; smile with the verdure of the fields; and express their gratitude and thanks to Heaven, as often as the sun rises and sets.

D. The constant *morning* and *evening* prayers, which



which the family offers to the Almighty, is as pleasing a circumstance, as it is dutiful to the great Father of all families.

F. Far more pleasing than the sacrifice of time to the tumultuous pleasures of city amusements. They are not vexed with a train of useless domestics; but consider the satisfaction of being able to serve themselves: and therefore, as you perceive, keep no servants, except for the *lowest drudgery*. The neighbouring gentlemen consider the master of this family, as a man of great virtue and resolution, above partiality to any party; and of so great moderation, as to be able to reconcile their several interests, better than any other of their neighbours?—Would you think it possible, that a man of such consequence, should be employed in any of the laborious duties of the field? yet, he sows his own corn. He is more truly a *farmer*, than any one who calls himself a GENTLEMAN FARMER: but he is not the less a PATRIOT. The other day, there was a great tumult in the next market-town; upon which, the magistrates desired him to repair thither. Though his fortune is not such as to make him of any consideration, in point of *wealth*; yet as a virtuous understanding man, he is esteemed and honoured. He harangued the people in these terms: “Consider, my friends, that your own welfare, and the public good, is one and the same object. We cannot possibly let you perish, without perishing ourselves. The interests of neither can possibly be advanced by a turbulent behaviour and loss of time. What harvest can this produce, but poverty and distress? You are sensible, that without government, no one of us could exist; but what government is there, in the insult you offer to these gentlemen? If you ask for the thing that you stand in need of, as *fellow-creatures*, as *fellow-subjects*, and *fellow-christians*, would you act like the raging of the sea? Would you overwhelm, like the boisterous waves, and perish in the storm of your own creating. For shame! let us be reasonable in all we do, that our requests may come with their due force.” Then looking towards the gentlemen, he said, “I am persuaded, gentlemen, it is not want of humanity, or regard for your fellow-subjects, which occasions such tumultuous assemblies: it is rather the *indolence* of some, and the *irresolution* of others; and perhaps the *thoughtlessness* of many more. These furnish occasion for much

distress, not to these our fellow-subject, only, but to yourselves also. Let me now advise you to provide useful labour for these *honest men*, whose interest it is to make you their *patrons*. This is the true way of making such a distribution of your *good things*, in such measure and degree as Divine Providence requires at your hands. You are the *masters*; these are your *scholars*. For God’s sake teach them what belongs to their happiness: it is by *their industry*, *their piety*, and *their submission* to government, by which they must live; not by losing their time in *riotous meetings*.” Then appealing to the mob for his own conduct, he said, “You know that I am a friend to *all*, *gentle* and *simple*, *lord* and *tenant*. In wealth I am but little superior to the meanest of you; nor in *labour* am I less abundant: I have nothing to hope for, but from my *love* to God and *you*: and I *fear* none but God!—You all know I would hazard my life to preserve *yours*; but I will not countenance any turbulent humour; for That is to be your enemy: in the end it would destroy you!” His discourse was with such authority from reason, humanity, and common-sense, and his grey locks so venerable, the mob stood silent, gaping with *astonishment*. The ringleaders knew him, and his *character*. They saw that he spoke from his *heart*; and at the moment he treated them as turbulent and thoughtless, he hazarded his life without fear. He courted no applause: it was of no significance to him, who had no *private end* to serve. In a word, he appeased their tumults. They shouted *applause*, and promised him to return to their own houses, in confidence that *he* would *take care* of them. Upon this he bowed his head, and shed some tears; as if he mourned for the occasion, whilst he *rejoiced* at their dispersion. He then begged leave of the gentlemen, to recommend to them some regulations in behalf of the *poor*, with respect to the price of corn. “Gentlemen,” says he, “I entreat you to consider, whether in the issue yourselves may not be gainers, whilst *wheat* is at a high price, as the *poor* are taught to think it, to diminish *some* of the expence of your tables; and what you save, to devote to some *useful building*, where labour is required, and still more to the cultivation of some *waste*, or *bad land*. By giving employment, you will lower your *poors-rates*. This will relieve both rich and poor. It will increase the circulation of property, and in no respect hurt you

you, as individuals; it will be the safest prop of the state, as it will tend to diminish the prices of the necessaries of life. But the great misfortune is, you keep such a vast number of horses, and feed them so highly with oats, they *devour the land*. I reckon that you have at least *sixty thousand* in the kingdom, for mere pleasure and parade, *more* than you had *forty* years ago: these *supernumerary horses* consume as much grain, as a *fifteenth* part of the people of *England* eat (a). What are we come to? Is it not obvious, that a *whole people* may be extravagant like a *private person*, and eat themselves up? I grant, that to hear complaints of *want*, and at the same time see the *poor* disdain the bread that Heaven sends, as if a great part of the flour of wheat might be rejected, which I hear is the case in *London*, and most great towns; this is such an insult as *common sense* cannot bear. It is such an outrage against Providence, it shocks *reason* and *humanity*! Are we come to that period of *extravagance* and *folly*, that this *garden of the world*; this *granary of the earth*, is distressed for want of a supply of grain? Is it not apparent, that if you were now to convert a *quarter part* of the oats which your horses consume, into groats, or oatmeal made of good kiln-dried oats, you might have removed all foundation of *just* complaint, with regard to the exorbitant price of grain in *this neighbourhood*? Compute how many quarters this superfluous food amounts to, within a circumference of five miles.—And as to these *riotous meetings*, alas! how many are created by the people *drinking* up their *food* in an excessive use of malt liquor. What country can bear such extravagance? *Fine oatmeal*, with water and a little milk, all the world knows makes admirable food, particularly for *children* and *aged persons*; or indeed for any body.—Discountenance the use of *butter*: let not so much be eaten in your families. Give your servants the milk. Be arbitrary in *good works*!—If any one becomes wantonly turbulent, and disturbs your peace, send him into *solitude*, and bring him to his senses. There are but two ways of governing: *reason* and *religion* for men who have not lost their wits; and *rods* for the backs of *fools*. If reason will not operate on some minds, without a degree of severity, let that severity be well weighed and considered.

Will you send delinquents to our *public prisons*, to associate with offenders, ten times more wicked than themselves; where you are sure they can receive no instruction for the correction of the error of their ways?—Is this a rule of conduct fit for a wise, free, and intelligent nation, under the glorious light of the gospel? I do not mean to extol my country, as if it were the centre of probity and honour: I should be happy, if we were as *upright* as we are *ingenious*: but do we not live more in terror of *robbers*, *thieves*, and *murderers*, than any people on the *civilized earth*? Why is it so? Are *proper means* taken to prevent it? No:—You complain, that the terror of *death* is not sufficient to restrain offenders. Is it that they are so ignorant and undisciplined?—they must be *better taught*. But do you take the proper methods to teach them? We are a *daring* people; daring in wickedness, and require a stricter curb. The *mildness* of our government operates *against* us. You perceive, that the number of malefactors increases annually, and is now reached to a most enormous height. For Heaven's sake let us try the force of *solitude* to bring men to a right sense of their condition. As *evil* communication destroys morality, *good* will cherish it. Divide your prisons, and houses of confinement and correction, into private apartments: let them be enlarged for the reception of prisoners in solitude. If you have not room, *build*; but for Heaven's sake no longer expose offenders, till crimes become atrocious beyond correction. Keep up a sense of *shame*. Shew that you are friends to virtue, and if you feel the force of humanity and religion, you will *communicate* the same sentiments. If you have not room, I say, *build* till you strike the wicked with terror! If a *thousand* cells are wanted, prepare them: the *more* there are, the *fewer* will be tenanted. You see how many poor wretches suffer death, with a gaiety of spirit, as if there was *no hereafter*; yet they tremble at *solitude*! The laws, in some capital cases of death, will take their present course. In the solitary imprisonment, let the time of confinement for crimes be proportioned to the offence; let the prisoners have proper food and lodging, light, space, water, and sweet air; let them have books, but *no company*, except for the time they are daily attended by a

pious

(a) Reckoning six millions of people only, and seven quarters of oats only for each horse's annual consumption.

pious and intelligent clergyman. Let all the *persuasive arts* of humanity be employed, and all the *terrors of a judgment to come, be set before their eyes!* If they continue *impenitent*, see who will be *tired soonest*: you, who by authority of the laws *confine*; or they who are thus *confined*. Are any of us *safe* without *repentance*? Teach them to *repent*. But the evils in question, demand *temporal* punishment: can any punishment be devised more humane, than That which I am now proposing?—Does any promise to be more *effectual*?—I repeat, if you had an hundred such prisons, and by the force of the terror of them, they were all empty, would not the space be sanctified, and the rays of righteousness shine on you, in reward of your *mercy*?—Let us *blush* to talk of the glory of our government and laws, whilst we are subject to such numberless calamities, as our *ignorance*, our *indolence*, our *luxuries* and *excess*, give birth to, and cherish! Let us endeavour to stop the current of iniquity, lest it should become so powerful, as to overwhelm every effort of piety, humanity, and That noble system of laws, which cost our ancestors so much blood, and which they have transmitted down to us with so much zeal and care, let it not be rendered *useless* in your hands! To talk of *liberty*, without promoting *peace*, is not less absurd, than to think of being *religious* without *virtue*.—I have lived more years than some of you gentlemen who are now present. Such as my abilities are, I have exerted them on many occasions. It would be great consolation to me, *in my last hours, which are near at hand*, if my experience and thoughtfulness could be of any use to *you*, or to *your children*!—God knows my heart! If you judge of my discourse, by the ordinary rules of modern civility, you may be tempted to take *offence*, or think I presume too much upon my *grey locks*! I love you all! I have many children of my own; and should rejoice to think I left them in a prosperous land; nay, I flatter myself some of you will consider my numerous family, *for my sake*. I trust by your means, that liberty and virtue, will walk hand in hand. Let us *hope* to see every one discharge his duty with propriety, according to the condition in which the great Lord of nature hath placed him, and the *talents* entrusted to him; that when the hour of death shall come, no one may suffer a painful thought in looking back on

his own *indolence*, or want of care, to answer the great ends of his creation!”——This was the substance of his harangue.

D. And a noble, spirited one it was! I perceive that he is as full of the conceit of *imprisonment in solitude*, as you are; it must flatter you, as being so far the stronger evidence of the propriety of the design. But what did these gentlemen say?

F. They acknowledged that our prisons, as now managed, are schools for *pick-pockets, highwaymen, housebreakers, and murderers*:—That nothing is so terrible to the perverse part of mankind, as *solitude*:—That nothing can be more safe, humane, or pious, than the doctrine of *solitary cells*; whether as a punishment for capital criminals, or in many cases, for young beginners in wickedness:—That a week’s confinement might operate more on the minds of *young offenders*, than any device which has yet been thought of: and as to those who are otherwise incorrigible, it will be the best preparative for both worlds:—That in all probability, the plan will operate happily in reforming the manners of the people; and shew an example to parents how to keep their children in due subjection, by following the same method toward the refractory, even in their own houses, as is now sometimes done with *good success*:—That the commitment to such cells, being in the hands of the *magistrate*, they need not have more or less authority than they now possess; but that they might exercise judgment and justice with a greater mixture of awe, as well as *mercy* and *tenderness*; and be less subject to convert their office into a *traffic*.” My cousin observed to me, that several gentlemen in the commission of the peace, then present, smiled at the word *traffic*, acknowledging there is too much of it! Some who were not inclined to business, took notice, that if this plan took place, they should have fewer *vexatious applications* made to them for trifling offences, as the terror of the cells would spread its influence far and wide. These considerations determined them all to apply to the *next quarter-sessions*, in order to engage the *county* to build a prison of large extent, divided in the manner my cousin has recommended.—

D. I am glad of it, with all my heart. Pray what resolution did they come to, in regard to the use of *milk* instead of *butter*; and a supply of

*good oatmeal*, by being less liberal in the food of their pampered horses, and more indulgent to their fellow-creatures.

F. Some of them, I understand, determined to follow my *cousin's* advice, and all confessed that a considerable portion of the best nutriment might be provided.

D. If I remember right, you once told me, that a vast quantity of oats was consumed weekly in *London*.

F. Eight thousand quarters in a week; which at eight quarters to each horse for a year, will maintain near fifty thousand horses; and so many there may be, for *use* and *pleasure*, in *London* and ten or twenty miles round. It is now near thirty years since we have imported a great quantity of this grain *from foreign countries*. Can any thing be a stronger proof of our *extravagance*?—Notwithstanding all our industry, and the good price which in its ordinary consequences should encourage the growth of this, and every other kind of grain; yet you find it is not sufficient.

D. This indeed seems to be a *proof*, that we *light our candle at both ends*: and what is to be the *end* thereof?

F. That we shall one day be obliged to alter our expensive way of living.—Upon this occasion, the magistrates invited my cousin to partake of a *splendid dinner*. His answer was, “You will excuse me; I have *sons and daughters at home*, who expect me with impatience, not knowing what may have befallen me. Besides, to say the truth, I never chuse to sit down to more than *one dish of meat*; not caring to teach my children to become *riotous* livers; or to imagine themselves to be *in want*, when they have *enough* of the good things of Nature. Nor doth it seem to me consistent, at the moment that the poor are in distress, to make *any sumptuous repasts*. I am sensible this is not the language of *modern times*; but it is most consistent with the principles which I have adopted.”

D. Have we *many* such men, who adhere to their own principles, and will not go out of the true path of life?

F. Our modern *nominal patriots* and *demagogues* live high: many consider how they shall turn the mob to account; and employ their abilities in managing their passions: not with an uniform disinterestedness, or inflexible regard to the *poor*; but a vanity and ostentation, which make ho-

nesty redder with shame at their meanness, and the prostitution of honour.

D. Virtuous men cannot *court applause*.

F. No: They aspire at something higher: they look up to conscious rectitude, and sincerity of heart: they seek the *fear* and *love* of God, the great ruler of the earth, who stilleth the madness of the people, as he doth the raging of the waves! These are higher motives, than seeing dirty caps thrown into the air.

D. Is it true what the *news-papers* tell us, of *horses* being taken out of carriages, to be drawn by *men*?

F. Yes: not as the *dutiful sons*, who drew their mother to the temple, but in a wantonness of mad applause, harnessing themselves like *beasts*! and calling on *liberty*. act like the *wildest slave*.—Upon this occasion, the town offered my cousin a *present* of a *piece of plate*. To which he returned this answer: “I do not chuse to have my throat cut by *robbers*; nor yet to pay a tax for an unnecessary thing: nor, with submission, do you judge well, if you expect that I should be of any use to you on a like occasion. I do not mean to shew a disdain of your favour; but I say the *offer* of a present is not for *your credit*; nor would the *acceptance* of it be for *mine*. I think you have a *right* to all my *poor services*, as a member of the community, under whose laws I and my family are in a secure and flourishing state: nor would I act so as to appear to be biased by any *motives*, but such as are the real sentiments of my heart. Be assured, that I will always defend your rights in common with my own, whenever I think we are justly offended. This is my rule of conduct: all others appear to me *vain*, childish, and without the least stability. The laborious life of a *yeoman*, who is feeding many mouths by his own industry, is more glorious in my eyes, than the most shining *indolent magnificence*!”

D. Is not *this* a kind of romantic disinterestedness in our cousin?

F. Not if you examine things to the bottom. Instances of forbearance in a much higher degree, were not rare among the ancient *Romans*: but without regard to *their* peculiar circumstances, and the notions in which they were bred, it is not difficult to discern, that our *cousin* has a more exalted ambition, than such *star'd* or *garter'd men*, who sleep till noon, and do no earthly good

good in the remainder of the day. The greatest difference in the manner of men's living is, the satisfaction which one man feels in his breast, and his *joyful, calm* expectations of *death*; compared to the thoughtlessness of another, or his *sad apprehensions* of a *life to come*. Whether the covering of his bed be a common blanket, or velvet embroidered with gold; the *comfort* and the *warmth* is the chief object. Our *cousin* considers *life*, only as a passage to a country he is nearly arrived at; and consequently, whatever contributes most to his hopes of happiness, That is, for the same reason, the best thing for him. He knows, that amidst the luxuries and corruption which reign in great cities, *virtue* is become rare; and that he should find it almost impossible to live in peace and innocence, support his dignity, maintain his character, and educate his children, when surrounded by people of so many opposite opinions, different habits, and clashing interests. He conceives, that the *weak* would not be able to see the purity of the principles on which he acts; and the *wicked* would reject him, and his principles also, as a constant reproach to them: and as to the *wise*, says he, they have work enough on their hands, without regarding me. "If," says he, "I could have obtained a place at court, to bow to lords and ladies,

I should not think myself the happier; but perhaps I might be in a state of fervility, which not being accustomed to, would be intolerably irksome to me."

D. Do you think honourably of such a condition?

F. Why should I not? But you see he prefers his present state, in which he gratifies his reason; secures his virtue; indulges his generosity; and triumphs in his love of freedom, without interruption.

D. Do you not apprehend that *pride* hath some share in his conduct?

F. We must not enquire too deeply, not even to examine our own hearts. A conscious *humility* excites some triumphs in the breast. Let us give *pride* its true bent, and it becomes a *common friend* to mankind.

D. Did he ever live in a city?

F. Yes, for many years: but he says his heart doth not now betray him: he hath continual opportunities of thinking *calmly*; but what he might do in the bustle of a multitude, surrounded by magnificence, is hard to say. *Pride* is so *infectious*, *Mary*, I have seen a *footman to a lord*, insult a *gentleman*: but his insolence and impertinence degraded him, and he lost his *place*. You know my thoughts on this subject.

## CONVERSATION XII.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*Oration on temperance, spoken by a boy. Reflexions on temperance. Custom in the East. Prolongation of life, depending on temperance. In general too great a quantity of aliment consumed. A mode of living recommended to lengthen life.*

F. CONSIDERING their age, not in the least inferior to the girls—though for the same number of years, you will always find your sex in childhood or youth the most forward. It is joy inexpressible to behold so *numerous and well-ordered a family*! *George* hath an excellent heart, very attentive to his book; ingenious and exact; the very image of his father: I dare say he will do honour to his family.

D. *Harry* is a fine boy, very sprightly, and no less ingenious; perhaps he may require a stricter eye, being never at his ease, unless he is employed: but having good sense, may be controllable. *Thomas* and *James* are also sensible, manly boys, with such candour and ingenuoufness, as win the heart. *Tom* is not yet fourteen: he entertained us this morning with an *oration* upon *temperance* and *frugality*, expressed in a better

better manner, than I ever heard from the mouth of a man: I not only understood every word he said, but I felt the force of the argument in my heart, from the manner in which he said it.

F. Do you recollect it?

D. I cannot repeat it as he did; but I remember the *sense*, and most of the words:

“TEMPERANCE is the friend to *reason*; the companion of *religion*; the child of *virtue*; and the parent of *health*: it is another name for *virtue* herself; for the command of the passions depend upon her.

“Wine for the aged, or melancholy, taken as a cordial, is good; in *common use*, it is hurtful; when *abused* by excess, it introduces every enemy that can invade the human soul. On the one side, it bringeth gladness of the heart, and cheerfulness of mind; on the other, “bitterness and brawling; increasing the rage of a fool till he offend, diminishing strength, and making wounds.” He that is valiant in wine, will destroy himself, or others.

“Let us rejoice that we are happy, in most parts of this fertile island, in *excellent water*: this is the great blessing of nature—the grand preservative—the sovereign balm that comforts the thirsty traveller!—It is this which gives life to him that sitteth upon the throne, or treadeth the earth with naked feet!—Beer is our *common liquor*; and when good in its kind, is excellent for those who work hard, as it both nourishes and cheers; but the *pure element* which nature provides, is the grand *medicine*, as well as *aliment* of life. It removes the fatal effects of *intemperance*!

“What crowds of the *miserable* go to water-drinking-places, and recover! But such are the sad consequences of a habit of intemperance, they usually return to their former way of *living*, and die ten or twenty years sooner than they might, entailing the gout and other disorders on their children!—

“Now mark me well, my friends! Though *water* is the best *preservative* from diseases, we

may drown our bowels by drinking it *beyond measure*: and this seems to be the reason why it is more in esteem in theory, than in practice. Hard water (*a*) may be rendered soft; and that which is not wholesome, by boiling, and infusing certain herbs, may be rendered healthy (*b*).

“If we take a thousand young men, of the same age, of the same kind of parents, occupied in the same way, and using the same labour or exercise; let five hundred of them drink *wine*, as is the custom of the *gentry*; and the rest, *small beer, water, milk and water*, (or any thing except *cyder, wine, and spirits*); and there shall be *fifty* of the five hundred attacked with the gout, to *three* of those who abstain from wine. Whether the real wine, or the *coloured liquor* which they often give us, taken in any quantity, be the worst of the two, I know not.

“Let us allow to nature, That which nature needs: and the cheaper we support life, in health, strength, and comfort, the more happy it becomes: we are the better enabled to succour our afflicted neighbours; and by example teach them to know, that to one distress occasioned by the ordinary events of life, and the course of nature, *fancy* creates an hundred.

“The wealthy make a parade in covering their tables with superfluous food, and take much thought what they shall eat, and what they shall drink: and what do they, but invite diseases, and nurse *mortality*?

“When *hunger* calls on us to preserve life, the pleasure of *eating bread*, is beyond that of feasting on all the dainties with which the tables of the rich are spread.

“Cheerfulness and refreshment are likewise best promoted by *simple food*, and the agreeableness of society. My father has formerly been a guest at great tables, for the purposes of charitable meetings, or to cultivate a good understanding with the *great*: “I have,” says he, “as often observed, in what manner the countenance hath betrayed the disapprobation of the heart, in thus *labouring through a feast*, while the guest despised the state and

(a) Four or five grains of salt of wormwood will render a gallon of *hard water*, *soft*. It operates as an *alkaline* on the vitriolic particles which renders it what is vulgarly called *hard*. Many have also tried it with success in beer which is in a corrupted state, and restored it.

(b) Particularly ground-ivy, sage, or rosemary. The salts of herbs being dry, are more easily extracted by infusion than when *green*: the great fault is, that such infusions are generally made too strong to be palatable, and therefore are but in little use. We make a parade with *China tea*; but we find it in more respects hurtful to the common people than its ablest advocates can prove it to be beneficial, were it only from the *time* it wastes in the custom of *sipping*.

and ceremony of a pompous dinner." Strange it is! They *feasted* for *charity*; they should have *fasted* in behalf of the poor.

"Some time must be devoted to the sustaining of life: and a pleasant meal is comfortable to the body, as piety is to the soul; and ought to be considered with respect, as gratitude to Heaven. But those who live in subjection to the pleasures of eating and drinking, put themselves on a level with *swine*.

"My much-honoured friends! you who hear me this day! Need I remind you, that *sound sleep* cometh of moderate eating; or that great advantages arise from the early hours of the temperate, their wits being always with them?—

"On the other side, contemplate the pain of watching;—the consciousness of offences against reason and nature;—the pangs of the bowels, which so often attend the *intemperate*! Will not *he* always fetch his wind short upon his bed, who knows not when he hath eaten enough?

"Is it not irksome to him who has a well-ordered mind, to *sit long at meals*! Let us be quick, my friends, that sickness may not come upon us. I do not mean that we should *eat fast*, for the contrary is conducive to health; understand me well, we must not sit to spend time unprofitably, much less to provoke an appetite.

"How very indulgent is *Nature* to us! There is scarce any thing which the earth produces, of the *animal* or *vegetable kind*, from which nourishment may not be drawn, when *necessity* calls for the means of supporting life: and it is wonderful how *little* satisfies nature! Whilst *excess* wounds the purity of the soul, it sends us to an early grave: it leaves a foul stain on reputation! it sullies the lustre of a good name!

"The sight of a poor man, even where *famine* appears in his cheeks, and *need* flares in his looks, is not so shocking, as *disease* swelled up to an enormous size by excessive meals; groaning under a load of complicated wretchedness, brought to maturity by the abuse of *plenty*! The *poor man* drops gently into the grave, perhaps in the sweet arms of sleep, unconscious of any crime injurious to himself or others: he chose to *die*, rather than *steal*. The *rich glutton* expires in *racking* pains; and, if he hath virtue enough to *think*, is tortured with the reflexion of having devoured the food, which might have preserved his *fel-low-creatures*!—How many thousands, and tens

of thousands, never enquire who is in *want*; nor how much they spend in luxury and a profusion of superfluous viands.

"If when nature is relieved by a *little food*, taken in time, we grow strong and healthy; whilst *eating* or *drinking*, above measure, destroys health, wounds peace, and banishes *comfort* from the heart, where, O man, is thy *reason*?—What pity it is so many are deaf to the calls of *temperance*!—O *Temperance*! how doth *thy charms* excel, all that *art* or *nature* can produce by ostentatious profusion!"—This *young man* said more, which I do not recollect: but I think this was the marrow of his discourse.

F. I am glad to have heard *so much*, and from you, *Mary*. Had he *action* as well as *voice*?

D. Yes: he extended his arms, and put his hand upon his breast, occasionally looking up to heaven, as if he felt the force of his own words.

F. O charming boy!—I hope this doctrine will be a precept to him through life; and that he will, with a religious zeal, observe the maxims he has learnt. Nothing can be more true, than that every morsel we eat with moderation, being in *health* and *appetite*, it is as *sweet* as it is *wholesome*—but when people are in a habit of eating a meal, *three* or *four* times in a day, always tempted with variety, nature hath not *time* to do her offices, and numbers perish in the act of rebellion against her. *Intemperance* in eating and drinking, confessedly brings a large portion of mankind to the grave, ten or twenty years sooner than nature intended.—In every situation, let us consider how *fearfully* and *wonderfully* we are made! Thus shall we not be surprized, much less tremble, when we feel ourselves *sick* or *diseased*, or *out of order*. People of *firm minds* and *good hearts*, are always *well*, when they are not *sick*: but the *mind* unstrung, and clouded by the vapours of excess, represents things falsely to her companion the *body*, and immediately there is a *disease*!—On the other hand, in strict propriety of language, how few can say they are in *perfect health*. The very lowering of the sky reminds us of *mortality*! Health depends on *climate*, *age*, *diet*, and the *passions*, with *exercise* or *labour* suited to our strength.—And if *peace* of mind, the *companions* of religious hope, be not added, what estimate can you make of the value of the world to us!—He who is not in full possession of *himself*, and cannot say, *My reason is my law*, is a

*flour*: and *floury* can never make life desirable.

D. But you say there is *nothing perfect*. Life depending on so many circumstances, some which *are*, and some which *are not* at our disposal, we ought to shew it the highest respect, and employ it in the way which will turn to our advantage. I believe some people make themselves *sick*, by thinking too much about their *health*.

E. Well observed!—Many of the *wealthy* make health so much the object of their *thoughts*, and apply to the *doctor* so much oftener than they need, it can hardly be said they are ever *well*. These constitute a part of mankind who are distressed by plenty. He is more fortunate, who being less found in body, by the force of temperance keeps disease at arms-length: and being *constantly employed*, according to the common expression, *he has not time to be sick*. There is more good sense in this adage, than the *rich*, who are *indolent*, can possibly understand without reproaching themselves.

D. Then *we* have an advantage over the *wealthy*. Having so small a portion of our time lying *heavy on our hands*, and but little money in our *pockets*, we cannot see the doctor for a *nauseous draught*; and are so far less in danger of being poisoned by what is called *medicine*.

E. True: *Our* condition subjecting us less to imaginary disorders, we feel *real* ones only; and those in a more *resolute* and *manly* manner. In the mean while, every stage of life has its peculiar hazards, the greatest being at the time when we are least sensible of them; I mean, from the birth to two years of age. The period between twenty-five and fifty, is the most secure part of life; yet of 455 alive at 25 years old, not less than 233 of them go off the stage in 25 years more, that is by 50. We observe how the human race grows by degrees to perfection: this is *pleasant to behold*: the *decay* is not so perceptible; it is *unpleasant*, and we turn our eyes from it. In our advanced age, health makes us *confident*: but the *seeds* of mortality being sown, they are ripening: every spring, summer, and autumn, brings on the withering winter, or the ripeness at which we are to be gathered: time at length pulls down the fruit, and it becomes *mere earth* again.

D. What kind of aliment do you recommend as most productive of long life in this climate?

E. *Bread* and *water* are the best foods: but

a portion of *fresh meat*, once in the day, when it can be had, is *good*. I have often observed, that about one third part in *meat*, or *animal* substance, one third in vegetables, and one third in good bread, with *water*, or *small beer* if *good*, without any other fermented liquor, hath afforded me most health and freedom of spirit, and subjected me least to indigestion.—I am not so happy as some are in strength of constitution; but I have attended numbers of strong men to their grave: and have as constantly observed, that the greater part have been hurried to it by wine, or strong drink, excess in the *passions*, or by the *quantity*, rather than the *quality* of their food; and by their immoderate *passime*, rather than their *work*: that the most healthy among *men*, as well as *beasts*, have the best appetites, and eat the most, though on the comparison they be temperate. In general, the quantity we consume is larger than it need be. I believe some eat a third or quarter part too much.

D. Do you think so much less would produce as much strength, and fewer diseases?

E. It is amazing to consider on how little some people live in some countries.—In *China*, I have heard that ten ounces of rice, and two of fat bacon, without any other aliment but water, is the food of a poor family of a man and his wife and three or four children.—

D. This is amazing indeed! They must be poor weak creatures.

E. They can hardly be strong; but they *live*.—*Double* the quantity, and see how short it is of what we consume in *bread only*. In some countries in *Europe*, but yet more in *Asia*, the people never eat but *twice* in a day; about eleven in the morning, and four or five in the evening. This is best for them; but it does not always suit us. You have no conception how it fares with the greatest part of the *human species*. Upon the comparison, we live in vast abundance, even when we cry out *that we are starved*—and pull down mills when bread is dear—and when it is *given* us, if the colour does not please the eye, we throw it to *dogs*.—I do not say, but that some few suffer extremely, for want of a proper attention from the wealthy: but we oftener complain without reason, and so far make ourselves obnoxious to punishment from heaven!—When you go into the world, you will find this to be the temper of our fellow-subjects—and hence it arises that real necessities



cessities are not always attended to.—As to general rules, *Mary*, after a plentiful dinner, a little supper often proves too much. The proverb says, “Light suppers make long life.” It is very common, even among those who *talk of abstinence*, to eat and drink too much at night: they go to *rest*, but they set nature to *work*, and prevent her repose.

*D.* My sleep hath been sometimes interrupted, to all appearance, by what I have eaten at night: although I presume that labouring people will not rise so well strengthened, by sleep *without* a supper, as by sleep *with* it.

*F.* I believe you are in the right. It is not possible for the poor, more than the rich, always to judge exactly: we must allow for some mistakes. Life depends on *food*, and *what* we eat, on *reflexion*: but with both rich and poor, the *error* is most often on the side of *eating* and *drinking* for *pleasure*, rather than for *life*.—In regard to sleep, it is the great restorer of nature: all the food in the world will not avail for the want of it.

*D.* You know, my father, that I do not indulge myself beyond measure: nor do I retire to sleep before I *pray*. I have often thought, that there is something *sacred* in sleep, as a relief from care. When I live in peace with myself, by keeping fair accounts with *health* and *virtue*, *sleep* and *death* seem to be the same. Sorry I am, if perchance I am awakened by watchful dogs, or cackling geese! The storms which rock the trees, seldom disturb me.

*F.* Sleep is the “counterfeit of death;” yet it is the sweet repairer of *decay*: this is the *medicine* for the *weary* world, and the balm which renews my limbs: it is the “chief nourisher in life’s feast;” it stops the mouth of want; it makes the *villager*, whose dreams are undisturbed, as much more happy than the *wealthy glutton*, as pleasure is preferable to pain. Thus you may perceive, that this bounty of nature is *chiefly* given to the *industrious*: for those who labour, and *rise early*, bid fairest for *sound sleep*. In regard to *temperance*, general rules drawn from particular circumstances, are not always to be depended upon. The strongest of mankind may, as I have said, with safety eat the most: and those who have lived long, have generally had the strongest appetite to their food—and the reason is obvious: every part was strong.

*D.* You can give me some general rules, sup-

posing me to be in good health, how to remain in that happy state.

*F.* Health cannot be secured by the *will*, as *virtue* may: so much is the *body* inferior to the *mind*: but our *manners*, as well as our *health*, depend on *temperance*.

1. I consider, as the first rule to be laid down, that in case of decay, or only occasional illness, the manner of life and diet should be altered. *Change* is often a *remedy*, in *food*, as it is in *air*, though seemingly from better to worse; and a very little change sometimes does wonders.

2. Although the belly hath no *ears*, and mankind are reluctant to take *good council*; yet they always *feel* the sad effects of *intemperance*.

3. The proverb, “quick at meals, quick at work,” is good: but I understand it to mean, that we should spend no unnecessary time; nor be long at table, lest we be tempted to eat too much, but not to *devour* as some do: in general, as I have told you, we eat *too fast*: this acts doubly against us; for by such means we are the more easily betrayed into *immoderate eating*; and we *devour* our bowels, rather than *nourish* them.

4. Eat slow, as the *less will suffice*, and give you *health*: our bodies are not common-sewers, to receive every thing that may be thrown into them.

5. “Eat as becometh thee, such things as are set before thee, and *devour not*, lest thou be hated.” Here you may observe the distinction between *eating* and *devouring*: and that the *Wife* *Man* supposes all food used by men, to be *plain* and *simple*.

6. “Lick horey with your *little finger*.” This is admirable instruction for *health* and decency: *Sugar*, to young people, is inflammatory.

7. Do not indulge your taste: rather acquire a habit of *indifference*: hunger will relish the *plainest food*; and you will take the more proper quantity.

8. *Daintiness in diet*, in people of fortune, makes them *contemptible*: it is much oftener a proof of a *sickly mind*, than required by a *sickly body*.—When *servants* are dainty, and not contented with common food, they betray their depraved inclinations; they become a nuisance to a family, and lay the foundation of their own misery.

9. *High-cosked dishes* are poisonous: they  
indure

inflame the blood : feed on bread and salt, rather than eat them. In large and rich families, a great deal comes from the *cook*, as well as the *apothecary*, which had much better be thrown out of the window.

10. In eating at table, consult the pleasure of others rather than your own ; and be not impatient to seize your food. Shew your superiority by your *civility*, and shame others into *decency*.

11. There are many strange customs, which have crept into the world, in my time. What think you of *gentlemen* challenging a *lady* at table, to *drink wine* ; as if *she* did not know what is good and proper for her ; or that it is a *shame to call for wine*, unless invited ; though no shame to

drink it, when asked ? This custom now begins to be exploded as vulgar. Servants ape their masters ; and in great cities often procure wine, or other strong drink. By all means avoid tasting such liquors, and comply not with any such fantastical fashions as I have mentioned. There needs no provocatives to *intemperance* !

*D.* There are none of these rules, my dear father, which I do not heartily approve : nor indeed do I see how I can act contrary to them, without doing myself harm.—I will write them down, that I may remember them the better, till habit renders them my own ; and that I may teach others, as you have taught me.

## CONVERSATION XIII.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*Characters of Robert's daughters. The force of partiality for ourselves. Fable of the eagle and crow. Love of admiration. Fable of the ass carrying an image. Fable of echo and the owl. Instructions how to treat the vain and affected.*

*D.* **THEY** are all pleasing young women. *Elizabeth*, the eldest, has great understanding, and good memory. She is well read in the scriptures ; and constant at the *Lord's-table* : not less ingenious with her needle ; very polite ; and so tender-hearted, tears stand in her eyes at every detail of misery : yet I think she is so pure in heart, she will never invite mischief to *come* to her ; nor ever *go* to it.—

*F.* Is not something more necessary ? Can she keep it strongly at arms-length, when it seeks her ?

*D.* I hope so : it is not a year since their mother died. They say she took great pains to give them just impressions of what belongs to the care of themselves.—*Maria's* complexion is fairer, and her eyes blacker, and more sparkling. She has great harmony of features, and sweetness in the tone of her voice : and the more she seems conscious of the superiority of her beauty, the more regard and affection she shows her sister, as if she were assiduous that the lustre of her charms should lay no foundation for jealousy. She also is ingenious with her pencil ; and reads

delightfully. The *humility* and *sincerity* of these young women will make them great prizes in the *lottery of wedlock*, to men who are in search of *happiness* !—

*F.* I am glad to hear you, as a woman, speak of other women with so much candour.

*D.* Candour, you have told me, is but another name for truth and justice.—*Jane* and *Susan*, the two youngest, are no less amiable.—But I have sometimes thought that the partiality of a father may be attended with bad effects.

*F.* Be cautious how you condemn a tender father, lest you sentence me and yourself.—Yet I grant that fondness is often attended with evil effects : *fathers* sometimes act as weak a part as *lovers*, when they give themselves up to the guidance or misguidance of their *fancy*. Much tenderness has often occasioned a girl's entertaining too high a conceit of herself, and sown the seeds of *affliction*. The true love of a parent to children, must be express'd in giving That turn to the thoughts, which humbles the spirit, and promotes gratitude to God for what they *really* are ; and not in cherishing a presumption which leads

leads to *affectation*, or a pretension to what they are not. Women who set a high value on their charms, presuming they have a *power* to do what they please, yet having no internal merit, which enables them to fill up the character of one fit to command, they only *act a part*, and make their manners *artificial*. Many a young woman has taken pains to render herself *deformed*, instead of *beautiful*; *mean* and *cunning*, instead of *generous* and *wise*. But this doth not seem to be the case of any of these girls: nor am I in the least surprized, that as far as a *christian philosopher* can allow himself to be fond of any earthly thing, my cousin's daughters should engage his attention.—You seem to have your favourites.—In my eyes, *Jane* is the most charming girl.

D. Her features are regular, and her shape good: but is she too short, and her eyes too light for a *beauty*?

F. You pass sentence on the outside only, according to your *fancy*.

D. And do not men generally judge according to their *fancy*?

F. Yes: but whether *short* or *tall*, or *fair*, *black*, or *brown*, every organ in *Jane* seems to be apparelled in a precious habit, delicate and full of life. Take her whole composition and her *affability*, you shall, for the chief part, find such women succeed better in *wedlock*, and in every other relation, than those who have been *celebrated for beauty*. *Jane* gives proof, without seeking to give it, that she is truly humble; and therefore I venture to pronounce her a girl of understanding. Native simplicity and purity of heart, add a softness to her smiles, which are so inexpressibly sweet, the *graces* seem to contend which shall contribute the greatest share to render her amiable.

D. *Jane* would be a happy girl, if your recommendation could make her so: but methinks you are poetical in your praise of her.

F. I do not mean to say so much to her face, nor desire you should tell her; yet, if she has good sense, it would not *corrupt* her mind.—Would to God my blessing could be of any value to her! All of them have it with my whole heart, and it can do them *no harm*.

D. I dare say they know how to esteem it, not from your *character* only, but as their *father's friend*.—In speaking of vanity and affectation, *Elizabeth* says, “the vain and affected are often

caught in their own snare; their presumption leading them into great difficulties. They observe that some succeed, or *appear* to succeed, and fall a prey to *vanity* or *imitation*; though the good they aim at, is obtainable only by *deceit* or *injustice*. You have read the fable of the *eagle* and the *crow*.” I told her I did not recollect it. “The *eagle*, says she, made a sloop at a *lamb*, pounced it, and bore it away to her young. The *crow*, whose nest was in a cedar-tree, near the foot of the rock, observing what had passed, with the same intent darted down, and fixed her talons in the fleece of another lamb; but soon found herself unable to carry it off, or disentangle herself; and became an easy prey to the shepherd; convinced, as she was, that had she kept in her *proper sphere*, as a *crow*, she had not betrayed herself into ruin.”

F. Very good! we have all as much *vanity*, as we want *understanding*. The vain and affected of your sex, *tempt danger*: for where there is a great shew of want of understanding, there but little resistance is expected.

D. Vanity, without doubt, has betrayed many in various forms: and the weakest fall the soonest into contempt. I am acquainted with a young woman, homely enough, a little deformed, with only a common share of understanding, or ingenuity; but with such a high conceit of herself, as to look down with disdain on her acquaintance. What contributes most to her *pride* is, that she has more money than any of her companions.

F. Let her enjoy her triumphs: those who are of the most importance in their *own conceit*, are generally of the least consequence in the esteem of other people. The case of your acquaintance, is exemplified in the fable of the *asi* carrying an image in procession, we must suppose, in a *popish* country. Seeing the people fall down on their knees, the *filly animal* fancied they worshipped *him!*—Be not *severe* upon those who find satisfaction in their own imaginary importance, provided they are not *mischievous* to others. *Vanity* is not given in vain; it keeps up the spirits of a great part of mankind. You may perceive a harmless kind of insignificant importance in the characters and manners of a great number of people, which constitutes no mean share of the happiness they enjoy.

D. It is obvious, that the heart must be cultivated and manured with *humility* and *sincerity*, or

vanity and *affectation*, like weeds, will sprout up and choke the seeds of virtue.

F. Justly observed! You are sensible, *Mary*, that there are many fools of their own making: and they "who are drunk with *vanity*, are in a worse situation, than those who are overcome by *wine*; for the latter may be most easily restored to their senses."

D. But still it is the degree and manner in which the vanity is shewn, which constitutes the mischief. It is a pretty, instructive conceit, contained in the fable of the *echo* and the *owl*. As the fat in the hollow of a blasted oak, surrounded by awful silence, "Whence comes it," says she, "that all is so still, unless it be to hear the melody of my voice? When I sing, all Nature listens." *Echo*, rebounding from an adjacent rock, replied *all Nature listens*. She went on: "The nightingale has usurped the sovereignty of the night, but my voice is sweeter far." *Echo* again replied, *sweeter far*. Roused by this *empty phantom of applause*, she resolved to join the tuneful choir; and on the morrow mingled her *hootings* with the harmony of the groves: but the tuneful songsters, disgusted with her noise, and affronted by her impudence, drove her from their society; and continue to pursue her wherever she appears.

D. This is a most admirable lesson, not to depart from our *natural character*, nor pretend to be any thing that we are not. The vain must sooner or later feel their folly! The loss of beauty by sickness, or time, must open their eyes!

F. There are a thousand ways by which we may be humbled; but the total suppression of vanity can hardly be accomplished by any mortal, either in himself or others. You will find many women and men, for there are *fops* and *fools* of both sexes, who, if you take away their affectation, would be *amiable*. If these were corrected in a *gentle* manner, they might be reformed; and turn their desire of praise into that which is *praise-worthy*; for it is the immoderate love of ADMIRATION, which is the chief motive to *affectation*. This desire being directed towards *good*, is of the greatest use; if to *evil*, nothing can be more dangerous in a female breast: it leads a woman *into* temptation, instead of detaching her *from* it; making her the object of derision, instead of *esteem*; and in place of love, honour, and respect from the *discerning world*,

she grows into *disgrace*, and sometimes into infamy.

D. How does *affectation* differ from *vanity*?

F. They have great affinity, and generally go together: but *vanity* reigns most in the *opinion* of our own *worth*: and affectation shews itself in our *manners*. Whenever I have seen a woman vain of the charms of her person, dress, wealth, or title, I have concluded she was weak, or ill-taught; ignorant of things wherein her real merit consists; striving to render herself amiable by the very means that expose her to laughter. Affectation seems to be like the tricks of a *monkey*, when he imitates a *man*; with this difference, that *Nature* has given the power of imitation to this animal; but the affected *rational* being, is a *monster* of her own making. What would you think of her who should say, "I am not bound by the same rules as common mortals: I have a right to think, speak, and act, in a manner peculiar to myself. I disdain all vulgar forms, and what you call a *decent, natural behaviour*: I am the most charming creature of all the race of mortals: the earth is too rough for my feet, and the sky too rude for my covering. I am so exquisite a being, that mankind should adore me!"

D. Do you think it possible, that any woman can be such a fool as to make so ridiculous and impious a speech?

F. I never heard so much said by any man or woman, but I have seen a behaviour so fantastical, it implied as much. The vain discern so little of themselves, as to be in many respects *morally blind*. It is said of the wise heathen *Socrates*, that he had so little esteem for *himself*, he thought he knew nothing with certainty, *but that he knew nothing*.

D. He was wise and humble; and therefore not vain.

F. *Vain people* are self-satisfied: they only think that others do not shew them the respect which they are entitled to. When I left the great world, I did not find so many affected silly fine ladies, as formerly; but I observed a new species of creatures; who whilst they were railing at the *affected*, were insolent with a supposed superiority of understanding, and freedom from *affectation*. And this you will find a common evil: but there are so many infirmities which the least imperfect among the children of men inherit, we shall find humility the strongest proof

proof that men know themselves; as knowledge of themselves is the truest evidence of wisdom. The *wise* are happy when they gain their own approbation; the *vain*, when they can recommend themselves to the applause of the world.—Keep a guard over yourself.—Observe others also; but exercise your *compassion*; for this is the surest friend to humility; and give utterance to as few conceits as possible tending to depreciate your neighbour.

*D.* I am sensible that humility, in every station, is necessary, in judging properly of ourselves, with respect to both worlds. But what does the *Preacher* mean, when he says, *all is vanity*?

*F.* Not that all persons are fantastically conceited, but that men are careless of the true end of their being; that they vex themselves vainly about *trifling objects* and events, entirely out of their power; heaping up riches, and *not* knowing who is to gather them.—Before you are much older, *Mary*, you will discover how vanity and affectation show themselves. *Grimace* and *gesture*, *particular phrases*, *forced laughter*, *ill-judged censure*, or *ill-timed reserve*, are the ordinary effects of vanity in common life. Every rank of the people, in these days, harangue, and think themselves fit to govern the state: the inferior abusing the superior, as if it were according to the order of Providence, though nothing can be more repugnant to it. Many discourse of things which they do not understand; the affectation of wisdom proclaiming their folly. We now play a *high game*: if we are not gratified in every thing the heart suggests, in the great concerns of government, we discover to what a height vanity, and the want of the fear of God, may carry us.—

*D.* Whatever the object be, pretenders to *merit*, are always more vain than those who *possess* it.

*F.* This comes to the same point, that the *wakest* are the most *ignorant* of themselves. None of us are in fault for *being what we are*; the evil consists in desiring to be esteemed *what we are not*. A philosopher once told a conceited person, “I wish I was, what you think yourself to

be; and that all my *enemies* were such as *you really are*.”—Our *ignorance of ourselves*, frequently runs so high, it astonishes.

*D.* If *poverty* cannot secure us against *vanity*, how shall I guard myself against this foolishness of the heart?

*F.* Avoid *affectation*: be *sincere*: speak only what your reason dictates you should say. Observe what is absurd, deceitful, or disgusting in others; not that you may treat them with contempt, but in order to avoid such defects in yourself. Give them advice with *candour* and *charity*: commend their *good* qualities, whilst you correct their *bad* ones: and as all persons love flattery, as it is more or less *artfully* insinuated, you will sometimes succeed. You may easily find the way to their hearts, by urging the impropriety of borrowing any thing from *Art*, where *Nature* hath been so indulgent.

*D.* Would not this be an artful way of going to work, inconsistent with the sincerity and honest principles for which you contend?

*F.* Not if they had any *real good qualities*. Might you not, for instance, commend your cousins for certain qualities, and at the same time remind them of any thing you thought amiss. In the vegetable world, “gardeners hide those roots with ordure which they intend shall first spring forth, and be most delicate: it is not so in the growth of *moral* endowments: the roots of *virtue* are constantly garnished with external cleanliness and decency.” In this manner has my cousin bred up his daughters; their late mother, as you observed, having been no less attentive to their *principles*, as the object which she esteemed of the highest importance to *them*, and to *herself*, in the discharge of *her own duty*, as a *mother* and a *christian*. This was her consolation when she took her last farewell of her weeping husband, and her dear children!—

*D.* They are in tears, when they talk of her. How wonderful it is, that mothers can ever think any thing of such moment, as the improvement of the minds of their children; particularly the *daughters*, who live so immediately under their care!

## CONVERSATION XIV.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*The indelicate and unhealthy custom of women exposing their bosoms uncovered. A lady admonished on the subject: her defence of the custom. Observations on the women's dress in other countries. The injurious effects of the breast being uncovered, with respect to health.*

D. VERY decent! yet they take no time in dressing beyond the combing their filken locks, and putting on their apparel, *made to fit them.*

F. You will find in *London*, that the women, particularly of the higher ranks, labour in adorning their persons, especially with respect to their hair, or heads. Take care you do not fall into the same folly! Many shew as much of their person naked, as custom will permit.

D. *Naked!* what do you mean?—

F. I remember a gentleman of my master's acquaintance, once took the liberty to reprove a lady for shewing her bosom uncovered; this custom appearing to him fantastically careless, when it is not meant as a *snare*, and *criminal* when it is. He said, "It would be the highest insult, Madam, to suppose that you mean to *sell your person*, notwithstanding you make so full a display of it: Therefore, in the name of mercy to your own *reputation*, or at least to us *poor mortal men*, I beg to know what ideas you mean to excite? Would you dress thus, were there *no men* to see you?—or if all men were blind? Certainly you would not. Do you imagine, that the charms you expose, can induce no one to wish to be a purchaser of them, nor tempt any to obtain them by fraud or violence? If you have no desires which have any relation to beauty, do you answer for others also? You are not so ignorant as to conceive, that all men are in the same virtuous temper and disposition. Is it *humility* which leads you to imagine you have no charms; or *pride*, that you abound in them?—Can custom change men's natures? You do not mean to gratify your passion for admiration, let it cost what it may.—Then for shame!—cover that fair bosom of yours. Cover it, as if you meant

to cover it, not to attract the eyes of men by diamonds and fine lace. Cover it, as if you were a *ebriilian*. Do not commit a crime, or a *sin*, from mere wantonness. If thousands of other women act the same part as you do, and no man dares speak to them the language of reason or religion, what is That to you? From this hour you will never be able to lament the friendless state in which some have lived to old age. If you have any *evil intention*, take this warning from me, and repent in sackcloth and ashes; and if you *have none*, as I verily believe you *have not*, in mercy to your fellow-creatures, of the male part at least, do not act as if you meant to corrupt the hearts of the beholders."

D. This was close reasoning: did she feel the force of it? Did she follow such wholesome advice?

F. Follow it, child!—You almost make me laugh at the simplicity of your question. The same folly and custom which led her to commit the fault, made her persist in it. I understood that she affected at first to be angry at her friend's presumption, in daring to talk to her upon so delicate a subject:—but her good sense overcame her resentment.—She answered, "I do not enter the list as a champion to vindicate this custom—but a *custom* it is; and a very innocent one to most people."—"Most people, Madam," replied the gentleman; "then it seems it is not innocent to *all*. Will you be so good to tell me, how men are to *distinguish*. You *English women* are reputed the most chaste, and I believe deservedly so: but custom can never be admitted, as a sufficient evidence to maintain the validity of your plea.—It is not many years since you took it into your minds, that the short petticoat, which shewed a great part of the leg, was an elegant,

elegant, and not an indecent dress. This was the *custom*, till *modesty* entered her solemn protest against it.—Then you must needs shew, not your *bosoms* only, but your *shoulders* also.—*Very modestly to be sure!* But this threatened total nakedness, and decency revolted against it. The practice was too much like the *Spartan* custom, and would not pass in this *christian* country.—I ask, Is the uncovered bosom, a *proper, decent, modest* dress? If a woman, under the sanction of custom, dresses herself in any manner, that in the nature of it attracts the eyes of men, and allures or entices, we can hardly suppose she is a legitimate child of a *Sufanna*. I have known a *harlot* assume all the graces of a chaste woman, except that her dress, or gait, or manner, gave some silent *invitation*, not consistent with purity. Give me leave to observe to you, that it is not many ages since *English women* wore a veil over their faces, as some of the  *Germans* do to this day: and in the common *Portugueze* dress, the women shew but a small part of their faces. In the eastern parts of the world, you will hardly see the face of a woman above the rank of a labouring person." To this the lady replied, "Thank God, we are not *slaves!* and therefore may dress as we please." "No," says he, "I deny That: you cannot dress as *harlots*, unless you subject yourselves to be treated as harlots. You cannot complain of an insult, which yourselves provoke. You must acknowledge, that there is an *external decency*, as well as *purity of heart*, from which you are not free to depart: and though *custom* takes off a great part of the force of appearances, as in this instance, it cannot change the passions and affections of men." To this she replied, "And so, my good Sir, you would have us establish your *Popish* and *Mahometan* customs, in order to avoid the imputation of indelicacy."—"No, my dear Madam," says he, "I mean rather to establish true *protestant* christianity. But we cannot depreciate the *Mahometans* in this instance. It is true, they esteem their women as their property, and many females are bought with a price; but it is the most sacred property; and they preserve it more inviolate than the *christians* generally do.—To this end they *wisely* hide their women from each other's eyes—And though their *false* prophet gave them a latitude, which the *true Prophet who came into the world*, has restrained; yet I was once told by a *Mahometan priest*, that

they considered that man the *most* virtuous, who was contented with *one woman*; intimating, as I thought, that in his opinion, no man could be deemed *truly virtuous*, who did not conform to the apparent order of nature, and the rights of mankind, in the adherence of one to one; restraining the promiscuous commerce, which levelled the human species to the rank of beasts." "Well," says she, "all this is very fine, and philosophical—but you will not persuade *English ladies*, in this *free* country, and being in the pride of their youthful charms, to cover their necks in the same manner as their *grand-dames*, when they come to the *coughing age*, and the necessity of covering themselves, lest a cold should hurl them into their graves; and therefore you may as well keep your modesty and humanity to yourself; or exercise it some other way, in which it may be of more use. Women who are *modest*, will never think of making men *immodest*; and those who are *not modest*, will not be assiduous to conceal their charms." What think you, *Mary*, of this curious dialogue?

*D.* The gentleman seems to have taken the most modest side of the question; and expressed himself upon so delicate a subject, in modest terms: but if I understand the force of the *lady's* argument, a woman may go without any clothes, and yet be very modest. Pray how does this kind of dress, or no-dress, affect their health?

*F.* Not advantageously, you may be sure: our climate is not suited to such kind of nakedness. In spite of the *habit* in which these women are bred from children, ten times as many women die of *consumptions*, contracted by colds taken under our unequal sky, as of *men*: and of an equal number of women, *forty* who go with their bosoms occasionally uncovered, die at an early age, in the bloom of their youth and beauty; to *one* of you country girls, who do not expose yourselves in the same manner.

*D.* May not other causes contribute to shorten their lives?

*F.* Granted: but I believe this is the principal and chief cause of the early death of many. And if the fact is, as I have related, there must be some powerful cause for it. To render the absurdity the more glaring, you will find that many a *fine lady* covers her neck at home, and by a *fire-side*, and *uncovers* it when she goes abroad; not so much under a mid-day sun, as when the  
poisonous

poisonous vapours of the night invade her ; and she wings her course from the cold air to *hot rooms*, and returns again alternately into the *cold air* ; often paying a very heavy price for the gratification of shewing that her neck is not yellow, black, nor blue.

*D.* Gratification do you call it ? It ought to do them *much good*, if they hazard their own *health*, and other people's *modesty*, for the sake of it.

*F.* Give it what name you please, *it does them no good*.—Instead of promoting *marriage*, I think it prevents it : female charms, in these days, *Mary*, are rendered too cheap. Does any man pretend he has the greater security in the chastity of his wife, because she exposes her beauty to every common eye ?—If we say it is *vanity*, it may be true, in those whose persons are most charming ! But is not a pretension to superiority in beauty being thus exposed, a proof of so much less *purity* ? A consciousness of beauty, should make a woman the *more*, not the *less* cautious to expose herself to be plundered of the treasure of her virtue. In one of the wars in *Germany*, *Magdeburgh*, now the strongest fortified town in his *Prussian* majesty's dominions, was taken by storm. At that time there was a convent of nuns. These women, apprehending they should be a prey to the brutal violence of soldiers, cut their faces, to render themselves hideous ; and some threw themselves into the *Elbe*, and were *drowned*.

*D.* This indeed was in the extreme on the other side of the question, and seems to have been the dictates of *despair*, as the only expedient to prevent the temptation which their persons might create, and preserve their chastity.—Such women being in the world, we may suppose would not have acted the part which *custom* renders so familiar to us :—but custom, you say, is a *tyrant*, and governs tyrannically. You mentioned the gentleman's remark, in relation to the *Spartan women* ; what was *their* character ?

*F.* By the law of *Sparta*, a celebrated republic of ancient times, the *unmarried* women were to appear in loose attire, even to shew their limbs.

This was the policy of their state, for purposes easy to understand. They were *heathens* ; we are *christians* : and if you read *St. Paul* upon the attire of women, you will not find that he countenances any such practices ; on the contrary, if I mistake not, he complains of those women who spent much time in adorning themselves. If it is meant that the *naked bosom* is to be added to the *graces of the countenance*, and both to combine with *dress*, to attract the eye, he would hardly have been able to give a woman credit for chastity. She who is indifferent, whether another's mind be preserved *pure or not*, can hardly be supposed to enjoy much purity in her own heart : and yet, if modesty is “ the reflexion of an ingenuous mind, either when a man has committed an action for which he censures himself, or fancies that he is exposed to the censure of others,” and this makes him blush in his closet, as well as in public, how shall we reconcile the consideration of such kind of female dress as engages the eyes of the beholders in the strongest manner. The *Spartan* girls, for reasons of state, were indulged in very loose attire ; nor doth it signify to us, whether their *married women* were reserved and cautious not to attract the eyes of men. We do not mean to lay aside the purity of our religion, but countenance the highest notions of chastity : if we believe the story of the *Spartan boy*, the *Spartans* had the strongest sense of shame, to induce them to keep up to their own principles.

*D.* What was That story ?

*F.* The boy stole a *young fox*, which he concealed under his upper garment ; and though the beast eat into his very bowels, yet the pain did not extort from him a discovery : the reproach would not have been that he was a *thief*, but that he was not dexterous in concealing his thievery. However incredible such a story may be, we see things of a similar nature sometimes performed ; and notwithstanding many customs prevail which are in themselves the most absurd, the sense of shame is the strongest in the human breast.



## CONVERSATION XV.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*The description of Robert Goodman's children; and their dutiful return for kind treatment. The excellency of human nature, uncorrupted by absurd customs. Nursing of infants by strangers, productive of many bad consequences to the minds and bodies of many persons.*

F. MOST apparently the result of the *good-sense, piety, and industry* of their father; he consults nature, and the human heart. He looks up to the God of his fathers, and contemplates the lives of those who were most distinguished in their time; endeavouring to separate his children from the iniquitous part of mankind, as much as any *patriarch* of old could do; hoping for so much divine assistance as may be necessary. The noble *disinterestedness* of these young persons, flows from their sense of religion, and the example of their father: and whilst his precepts improve their morals, their tempers are rendered sweet and mild. The rational restraints they have been under from their birth, have rather contributed to cultivate their native freedom, than to render them *fervile*. Their father's love for them, is conspicuous by his inspiring their hearts with a love of virtue: for whilst he instructs them in the arts of living happily, during their abode in this world, he consults how to secure to them the *happiness of the life to come*. Though he cannot give them estates, he enriches their minds with such knowledge, as will, to all appearance, render them *prosperous*: and the persuasive manner in which he keeps them in mind, that they are heirs to a *glorious immortality*, fills their hearts with a pleasing confidence, that no earthly riches can produce! They have enjoyed an advantage, *Mary*, which it did not please Divine Providence to grant *you*. It is not yet twelve months since their mother died. In talking upon this subject last night, my cousin, with tears in his eyes, expressed himself in these terms: "You know that I have lately had the misfortune to lose my wife!—I had the strongest reasons to believe she loved me with great tenderness: she adopted my opinions;

she followed the rules which I laid down for the education of our children; and, as she had the truest affection for them, she was equally attentive to their instruction, in every circumstance that was pious, generous, and useful. Upon her death, my cares were doubled: but I have the pleasure to tell you, that my *sons* and *daughters*, in return, have acted towards me, as if they meant to contend with each other, who should excel in filial piety and obedience, to render the current of my remaining days *calm* and *peaceful*; I might add, delightful! My *girls* are ever attentive to my wants. The sweetness of their tempers; the innocence of their amusements; and the manliness of their discourse, dispel the mists of melancholy, which might otherwise invade me. They know nothing of the wickedness of the world, but from what I tell them: yet by this means, they tremble at the thoughts of *vice*, and are the more captivated with the charms of *virtue*. They sing their hymns of praise to the Great Father of mankind: and whilst they attend to the good of *their own souls*, they comfort *mine*. They enliven my hours when I am in *health*, and by their assiduity render even *sickness* pleasing. They wear no vizard mask of virtue, nor secretly with me dead, as if I stood in their way to the pleasures of youth, and obstructed their enjoyments. They have joy in the expression of their gratitude to me, who they acknowledge to be the *best of fathers*. I speak of my daughters more particularly, as they are chiefly concerned in the domestic oeconomy of my family, and are my handmaids in every office proper for a woman."

D. This gives one a charming notion of their mutual happiness.

F. He went on. "You are to know, that my

my wife nursed all my children.—She was a woman of the sweetest temper, with a great share of understanding and vivacity: and I have the pleasure to find, they have not contracted any disease of mind or body. They were not nipt like unripened fruit, nor transplanted from their native soil to wild and uncultivated ground, in which they might have withered. It pleased Heaven to give her health: and she was not of that class who plead indisposition, in order to decline an office, which prevents a pursuit of amusement. I thank God her health was equal to the duty; for so she understood it to be; and my children have thrived, not like a graft on a different stock; not as a hen nursing young ducks, or a goat giving suck to a lamb, to change its very wool, as I have observed it to do; but from the pure order of nature, and the laws of Providence. My attention to the nurture of these plants, promises to render them the most valuable oaks in the forest. What a noble creature is man, when he comes forth from the hands of God! What a strange uncooth animal, when deformed by the fantastic devices which have crept into society: his body often despoiled of its external beauty and comeliness; sometimes, by the carelessness of a mercenary nurse, losing the use of a limb; and much oftener, I believe, great injury is done to the temper, and frequently to the understanding also, by irregularity in the nurse. How may the purity of the soul be thus hurt by a stranger!—I have been the more free in talking of my girls on this occasion, as you have a daughter who stands so deservedly fair in your esteem and paternal affection. You will easily conceive, that amidst my sorrows for my loss of the best of women, I have felt a pleasure, which you, as a parent, can more easily understand, than I describe!”

D. I thank my cousin for the expression of his regard to me, upon so interesting an occasion, as the praise of his own daughters, who are so

much my superiors.—But does he really think that good and bad tempers, virtue and vice, as well as health and strength of body, depend upon the nursing of children?

F. So it seems: and I agree with him in opinion: but as this cannot be so easily proved, and there must be many exceptions, few have faith in the doctrine. You will find, when you get to London, that it is a common practice, for the greater part of the women, whose husbands can afford to pay wages to a stranger, to send out their children, as if they were puppies, to be reared in their neighbour's kennel; though it may not be half so clean and commodious as their own. Why do three in five of the children of the common people of London die under two years of age? The mothers are careless, ignorant, or profligate.

D. Three in five! Is it possible?

F. In general, eight thousand die annually under this age, and only about twice as many are christened: among the higher ranks of people, the mortality is not half so great, as with the lower classes (a). It is not so in the country.

D. I understand, that only those who can pay, part with their children.

F. Yes: but the customs and vices of the poor, destroy many infants, some through ignorance, and more through carelessness. The wealthy hire nurses, who for the sake of lucre, are tempted to give their own child to a stranger, poorer than themselves: by this means, one may have a worse chance of life than the other; but I believe it often happens that both children die, when they might have been both preserved. My master, who used to attend hospitals and the poor, once made the same remark as my cousin; and his was founded on experimental knowledge.

D. I agree with him as to the value he sets upon his daughters; and am glad he is so happy in them. His sons also deserve his praise, particularly Jonathan.

(a) Knowing the mortality to be great among the poorer sort, I call it 3 in 5; which may well be near the mark, though hardly 3 in 15 of sober careful people's children die. By the bills of mortality, 8000 die under 2 years old annually, and only 16 to 17 thousand are christened: but if only 4 in 7 really die, the mortality is grievous beyond measure; and I am confident, by a skilful police, it might be in part prevented.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N XVI.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*Pride in low minds arising from accidental circumstances. Danger of flattery, particularly in love. Advantage of breeding up the children of country gentlemen of small fortunes to the knowledge of husbandry. Heroism, in what it consists. Character of an amiable clergyman. Description of stoth and false dependance. Fable of the lark and her young ones.*

D. **N**O: I have not so high an opinion of *Charles*, though he is a man more in the newest fashion of the world; ravished with the music of his own vain tongue; full of high compliments; but not solid in judgment to distinguish right from wrong. He talks big of wonderous exploits; but one may much doubt the truth of a great part of what he utters. Whether it arises from his presumption, as being the eldest son, or from having lived some time in *London*; he is not so humble, nor so civil, as his brothers and sisters. People may talk of their *London breeding*; but *Jonathan* is worth an hundred of his brother. *Charles*, upon some occasions, makes fawning speeches; but it is easy to discover, he thinks meanly of *us*, because, forsooth *he* lives at the place where the king resides. I believe his majesty has many better subjects than him, living in the country. *Charles*, I say, is very courageous in *words*; but there is no reason to think highly of his deeds.

F. You seem to be severe: though I am afraid there is too much truth in your observations. Where *truth* and *sincerity* prevail, there needs no tricks: hollow men, like horses of false metal, prance and make a gallant shew; but bring them to the trial, they fall their crest. *Charles* seems to have polished away his *rustic simplicity*; an ounce of which, is worth a pound of *courtly grimace*. The situation of mankind generally affects their *manners*, as well as their *morals*: you are going to the place from whence he came; take care of your own virtue.

D. If I thought *London* would change me, as it has done our cousin *Charles*, I should beg, on my knees, not to go to any such place.

F. Through a long course of observation, I have not found a numerous family, where all the sons were sensible and pious.

D. Nor many, I fear, where all the daughters are so virtuous and prudent as my cousins. As to *Jonathan*, he is sober and decent!—a fine young man!—Yet,—I do not much care to talk with him.

F. I hope he has not offended you.

D. Nor I him, that I know of. I only mean, that whilst he is talking, I am apt to forget there is any body else to attend to.

F. You say he is very decent.

D. Very much so: I mean no harm of him. I would not for the world you should say any thing to his father, to his disadvantage.

F. “Forget there is any body else to attend to!” —Take care, my dear *Mary*: I suspect that he *flatters*. *Honest* men, when they talk to women who please them, are more guilty of *flattery*, than they are aware of: and this is so much like the smiles of knaves, or the nurse's song to lull the babe asleep, there is danger in it: the infant may get *rest*, and the woman lose it. Even children who are growing towards the exercise of their reason, should not be soothed by any art which may tend to favour the corruption of the heart.

D. It is impossible not to be pleased with some people more than with others.

F. True: but when you go into the world, you will find as many forms of *flattery*, as there are *kinds of men*; or as pride and vanity seek for their proper food. I dare say, that *Jonathan* speaks the language of his heart: but his discourse may therefore be the more *dangerous*.

I

D. Shall

D. Shall we then condemn *Charles* for being insincere; and *Jonathan* for being honest?

F. Even so, *Mary*. Homely, but decent words, in a less persuasive stile and voice, are better calculated as a barrier to purity, than all the *candied tongues*, or bended knees that ever paid homage to *beauty*, *wealth*, or *greatness*.—Beauty is most often the subject of *flattery*; this being the strongest incentive to the language of the heart and senses; like the *sun's* enlivening beams, it cheers the beholder, provided it does not act too powerfully, and *scorch* him to death.

D. This seldom happens.

F. If it drives him to despair, or perverts his heart, it may be said to *slay* him.

D. *Jonathan* cannot find any thing in *me* to induce him to *flatter*. He has too *honest a heart!*—It is a high entertainment to see how dutifully attentive he is to his father!

F. Do not you be over attentive to *him*.

D. The girls are bred up with such notions of housewifery, they sometimes go into the field, when the sun is not too hot, and help to make hay. They constantly attend the *dairy*; and are good *cooks*, though not exercised in *maldishes*. They can *embroider*; but their father says it is enough to understand it: their time is spent in more *useful needle-work* for the family.—They *spin*; they *weave*; and even *dye* certain colours: so that with very little assistance, they are able to provide their own *clothing*: with all this, they have hours for *reading*: and he has taught them to play on the *guitar*: this they accompany with their voices, which are melodious. Such entertainment contributes much to his joy.

F. Truly joyous it must be, to any man of sentiment, to see his children happy; but to him who has a taste for music, such girls must create delight. He thinks himself one of the most happy among men. He hopes to send all his *boys* soon into the world. In the mean time, they learn every thing, even to hold the plough, and drive it.—

D. Do you approve of this?

F. By all means.—I have seen Sir *George* himself hold a plough. They understand the construction of the *cart* and *plough*, and all other instruments of husbandry; I will not say better, than the *lord of the manor*; for I question if he has studied any such thing; but as well as the best farmer of them all.—They are not less acquainted with the several methods of making

the earth fertile, by manuring it to the utmost advantage.

D. Some people value themselves for knowledge in things which can neither do their own, nor other people's souls or bodies any good.

F. Knowledge which has only curiosity for its object, can never be compared with That which is *useful*.—And as we have but two things to take care of, *soul* and *body*; next to caution in preserving the soul, must be the means of providing *food* and *raiment* for the body. When these businesses are performed, we have discharged the duties for which we were sent into the world—for the same reason, the *priest* and the *husbandman* are the most honourable offices among men. My cousin says, “A great part of mankind take the least notice of the *most obvious truths*; and lose themselves in a *labyrinth*, by searching after things *unfathomable* to the powers of men.” These lads imitate their father; and pride themselves in studies the most useful and beneficial to mankind, and in being *able* to perform every office that relates to *agriculture*; giving proof of their *strength* and *agility*, according to their several ages. He sometimes sends *Jonathan* to market, with his corn: and though he has so much more the air of a gentleman, than some farmers, who affect to despise such appearances; yet, his method of dealing being remarkably *candid*, and proving that he *understands* what he *sells*, millers and corn-factors give him the preference; they are sure his grain will rather exceed the *sample*, than fall short of it.—These young men being taught such parts of *mechanics* as relate to husbandry, as well as the cultivation of the *earth*, in all fortunes may be able to draw their support from the bowels of it: and if they have no estates of their own to improve, they will be able to take care of the estates of other people. My cousin reasons thus: “I have observed, that the *soldier* and *sailor*, the *lawyer* and *divine*, the *merchant*, *tradesman*, and *mechanic*, all find pleasure or profit from their knowledge of the power of nature, with respect to agriculture, though they sometimes begin to learn at *threescore*. My sons are better masters of the principles of vegetation, so far as our poor scanty powers will go, than landlords of large property generally pretend to be. I have early taught them a reverence for *husbandry*, as the most ancient and honourable employment in the world.

These

These boys distinguish the different *soils*; the nature of the several *manures*; and their various operations. I sometimes remind them, that men born to the highest fortunes, have been trained up to a right understanding of the several *inferior* duties of life, on which the *superior* depend. I go back to the time of the ancient *Romans*; and from thence, to the beginning of this century, when *Peter the Great*, Emperor of *Russia*, shewed the world, that knowledge of every kind, even of the duties of a *common soldier*, prepared the way to empire. I tell them, that to act a part well, whether it be in *higher* or *lower* life, entitles us to the superior station: and though we ought to be moderate in our wishes and desires, we should not reject the smiles of fortune."

D. My cousin will make all his sons *heroes*, as well as *farmers*.

F. HEROISM is not confined to any rank or condition: virtue, supported by *resolution*, carries us through all difficulties: *worth* makes the man: true honour is common to those who are really *worthy*. The *covetous* and *artful*, cannot do *generous* actions, nor do they avoid *base ones*, where a *temptation* is thrown in their way. As for the rest, it is the mere accident of fortune, which mounts up one, and throws down another.

D. But all farmers cannot breed up their sons in the same manner.

F. All such gentlemen farmers might; or men who live in the country, and have some property: this depends on the parent. The more knowing the father is, it is to be presumed, the better instructed the son will be: just as it is in other trades or occupations. We find the bulk of mankind fit only for *labour*: these are happy, that they can even snore upon a bed of earth. Some understand only the *theory* or *science*; others are versed in both. You perceive, that my cousin, who hath been well educated himself, aspires at giving his sons the greatest advantage possible, by making both the *theory*, as well as the *practice*, familiar to them. But his first consideration is their *humility*, that they may shew due honour to their fellow-creatures, and not despise the meanest of mankind. You see with what kindness they treat *us*; not only as they are our kinsfolks, but likewise as friends to virtue, and to human kind. In regard to the education of these boys, my cousin is singularly happy. The VICAR, who contrary to custom,

resides in his parish, has taken a particular liking to this family: it is supposed that he will marry *Elizabeth*: he is a comely man, and in the prime of life.

D. *Virtue*, fed by *good sense* and *understanding*, wedded to *that love* which is nursed by *meekness*, *industry*, and *frugality*, will make a most happy match!

F. It will be *highly pleasing* to my cousin, as this gentleman is a *truly* reverend and religious man. Though his *living* doth not exceed the income of *one hundred pounds* a year, his great temperance makes him *rich*. Free from the moroseness of false zeal, his *sanctity* is pleasing. He has a peculiar sweetness in his manners. His speech is accompanied with such mildness, as naturally draws the attention of all his hearers, particularly among the youthful. His precepts are pure, and strictly agreeable to the great law of *Christ*!—He preaches with the majesty of a *judge*: and whilst he alarms the *passions*, he appeals to the *understanding*, as to a jury, sitting to give a verdict in a cause of *life or death eternal*! He requires no assistance from *enthusiasm*: the law of righteousness is his guide. His life is so strictly conformable to his doctrine, that even his parishioners honour and respect him: as a proof of which, they constantly attend divine-service; and listen to his instruction, as if they meant to follow it.

D. *Even his parishioners*!—Are not these always the most ready to approve?

F. How strange soever it may appear, *Mony*, contests so often arise about tythes, or something of less consequence, I have seen parishioners the last to honour their pastor. In these cases, we generally find errors on both sides. If any wrong hath been done to this gentleman, he bears it with *patience*; being in nothing more careful, than not to *return* an injury: yet he is guarded, not to *invite* any. He says, that he would gladly *obey his Lord and Master*; and apprehends this can only be done by *imitating* him. He is always ready to visit the sick; and, as far as his slender income will allow, to succour the *hungry* and *naked*. He reproves the reprobate in a proper manner, let his condition be ever so splendid; rather hazarding resentment, than departing from the *great duties of his office*. The gentlemen of the neighbourhood are well acquainted with his character: and as often as they come to hear him preach, they receive

new impressions in favour of the *Christian faith*. Such is the character of the man who honours my cousin with his *friendship*; and teaches his sons the learned languages. The hours which country gentlemen generally spend in various *sports* and *jollity*, my young cousins employ in science, moral philosophy, and agriculture. Their time is divided between useful labour, which serves as *exercise*; and *books*, as innocent *amusement*: you have seen, that their *work* is their *delight*. Their knowledge being at once applied to *real life*, gives them the strongest impressions, how *learning*, supported by *practice*, excels That which is merely speculative; for indeed, if our knowledge were not communicable, it were just the same as if we had it not. The more useful the pursuit, the more my cousin endeavours to inspire these young men with hopes, that the world will be as much in want of *their services*, as they may be of the favour of persons of superior fortune: but *inferiors* must seek *superiors*: *these* will not seek them; and no way is so ready to obtain favour, as *application*. Heaven bestows nothing on us, that is not for *common good*, as well as *our own*. He cannot be a *true saint*, who cloisters himself up, not meaning to *do good*, as well as *think* it.

D. If they go on in this way, the *women* whom they marry, will surely be very happy.

F. My cousin lays it down as a maxim, That there is more toil and uneasiness in *sloth*, than in *industry*. And indeed it is amazing to consider, how the best understanding, the best memory, the most lively genius, and the truest benevolence of heart, may be rendered as *useless* to all intents and purposes, as if a man were *dead*. He thinks that what slothful people *consume*, is a robbery committed on those who would have done some good. *Sloth* undermines all the virtues which flow from the head or heart.

D. It must be true, that he who doeth no good, is what we commonly call *good for nothing*. To *intend* to do good, and *not* do it; is much

the same, with respect to others, as to intend *evil*, and *not* to do it.

F. Very true, *Mary*: the best which can be said of a *slothful* person is, that it does not signify what he *thinks*: his sloth can hardly expose him to much temptation; for as he hath not spirit enough to do *any thing*, he can do *no mischief*. Whether this be strictly true, in every respect, or not, I much question; but in this contemptuous manner he speaks of the *slothful*. “Consider,” says he to his sons, “although the race be not to the *swift*, nor the battle to the *strong*, but the whole government of the earth under the direction of one great Lord and omniscient Sovereign; yet from the nature and constitution of things, *skill*, *prudence*, and *industry*, generally, though *not always*, succeed. So far, and no farther, men may be said to be the carvers of their own fortunes.”

D. Still Providence governs the world.

F. Yes: and to obey the calls of Providence, is to be *industrious*, and *lose no time*. Are you acquainted with the fable of the lark and her young ones? In matters which concern yourself alone, rely principally on your own diligence. The lark, whose nest was in a field of ripe corn, upon her return to her young ones, they reported to her, that the *farmer* and his son had been there, and had appointed the next day to cut down the corn, depending on the assistance of their *neighbours*: this did not alarm the dam. Being disappointed of their neighbours, the day after the farmer determined to send for help to his *friends* and *relations*: neither did this report give the lark any great fear. At length, he and his sons having been a second time disappointed, determined to cut it down *themselves*. “Nay *then*,” replied the *lark*, “it is time for us to remove: for,” says she, “when people resolve to *do their own business*, it will undoubtedly be performed.” Thus should all the sons and daughters of men be bred up, to trust that the Almighty will befriend their own endeavours to promote their own happiness!

## CONVERSATION XVII.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*True and false tenderness to children. Observations on immoderate dancing, particularly at water-drinking places. Danger of dancing to young women among the common people. Iniquity of poaching. The tyrannical and impolitic custom of imprisoning debtors. Description of their situation. Partial reasoning, false principles and resentments, often the cause of imprisonments. Fable of the cat and the bat.*

F. **W**HEN he commands his children, they consider him as their lord and sovereign; but they are all *free subjects*, under a *just prince*, who would *die* rather than injure them. When his injunctions clash with their apprehensions of *right* and *wrong*, he requires of them to question him concerning the reasons of his conduct: and he discourses and answers in an open and ingenuous manner. *Susan*, drooping in her health last year, was recommended to bathe in the sea at *Margate*. When she took her leave, he said, “You are going, child, in search of *health*; without which there can be no solid *happiness*, in this world. You will be under the care of a sensible lady of my acquaintance, a woman of good nature; and I know she will be more inclined to *indulge* your youthful inclinations, than to *check* them. It is the custom at those places of resort for bathing, to DANCE, though in the *heat* of summer: and many have I known, who *danced away* in the *evening*, all the good effects of bathing in the *morning*. The zephyrs which come from the *sea*, or the winds which dash the waves against the lofty cliffs of chalk, of which our ancient history talks so loud, avail nothing. Forgetting the design of going to such places, the *young* and *old* meet in what they call the *long-room*: but I never yet saw a room half long enough to contain the multitude which sometimes assembles. Thus many young women, under a notion of *health*, lay the foundation of *sickness*, whilst they make their *persons cheap*; never engaging our *esteem* by their *dancing*, however they may chance to please the fancy of some men. No woman, I believe, ever made the better *wife*, for being a *fine dancer*. It is generally good to *do well*, whatever we attempt:

but some things are of a nature not to be desired, in their perfection. *Dancing* seems to be one of these things: and though it is deemed a necessary accomplishment for a *gentlewoman*, your *fortune* ought to render your *ambition* very moderate: and let me tell you, to one who is applauded for *dancing*, ten are laughed at. In some places abroad (*a*), they applaud dancers by *clapping*; but this exposes the company to *gross flattery*; for if they do not clap the *bad*, as well as *good* dancer, it is uncivil. *We* are more polite, reserving this mark of applause for the stage. I had much rather you should *walk* or *bow*, or bend the knee *gracefully*, than *dance* the best of any woman in *England*. Those who dance the *best*, are *stage-dancers*: and these are generally of a *kind*, I must not mention. Dancing well, is not, in my opinion, so excellent an accomplishment, as *walking gracefully*: and I have observed many women, who could dance well; yet, notwithstanding, were *affected* in their gait. My daughter heard me with attention, and replied, by saying, I should be sorry, if you imagined I have any passion for *dancing*: I like it, as other girls, *better* than myself, may do. Dancing is the *fashion*: my sister has taught me; and she says I shall make a *good figure*. I will take care for my own sake, not to hurt my *health*: and therefore I hope, *my dear father*, you will leave this matter to the discretion of the good lady and myself. To this I replied, *Susan*, you know how much I love you; I hope you will believe I have not lived so long without being able to judge for *you*, better than *you* can judge for *yourself*, on this occasion. I mean to check that desire in you, which prevails in the breast of most women: and the more they pride

(a) Spa in the bishoprick of *Liege*.

themselves in such kinds of excellences, the less attentive they often are to the accomplishments of the head and heart." Upon this, she looked a little sorrowful, as if she had been *convinced against her will*. The propensity of women to *parade* and *show*, is great: I soon found, by some expressions she dropt, that she thought I should stand in her light, in regard to the promotion of *her fortune*: as if she could not make a display of her personal charms so well any other way, as by *dancing*.—My cousin said this with a smile; adding, "Custom, *my friend*, is the law in all such cases; but people are wise or foolish, in proportion as they distinguish *moderation* from *excess*."

D. And pray, my father, what was the issue of this *curious contest*? My cousin seems to be much in your way of thinking about dancing.

F. Yes: but he knows, that let us fortify ourselves ever so strongly in what is *right* and *fit*, if the *old* are not too obstinate in opinion, the *young* will be too much ruled by habit, and the vanity of the heart. As to girls *making their fortunes by dancing*; since these *public* dancing meetings have been in fashion, it appears to me that *marriage*, among the gentry, has throve so much the less. I know not if any, who chuse to keep their wives to themselves, are afraid of *dancing* them into the arms of other men.

D. You are severe in your conjectures.

F. I mean not to be *severe*, but *upright*. My opinion is, that this entertainment often makes too large a deduction on the native modesty, reserve, and gentleness, which are the greatest ornaments, and most amiable properties of your sex. You will grant, that the girl who is fond of dancing to-day, will be fond of it to-morrow: and if she gains a lover by dancing *before* marriage, she may, by parity of reason, and likeness of blood and affection, gain one *after* it.

D. Not if she is *reserved*, as she ought to be. You have granted, that *ladies* of the strictest virtue, may dance in a *certain manner*; and children, under the restrictions of parents, whose vanity does not betray them into a false fondness of them.

F. I apprehend no modest woman can allow herself to dance, in *all the ways which fashion* sometimes warrants: but in *our rank*, I think it best to *avoid dancing*. I never chose your mother should dance, except in a *private family way*: and since I have seen more of the world, I more dislike this custom.

D. I believe you are in the right as to *mode-*

*ration* in dancing, and also with respect to the *danger* to girls in *my way of life*.—What success had my *cousin* yesterday at the assizes, in his attack upon the POACHERS?

F. Some of them have *fled* the country: others have been so wary, as to *evade* the law. I am afraid he will not be able to punish many of them. He tells me, he finds it difficult to preserve any game from *poachers*. They have many ways and contrivances; and improve the *arts of poaching*, in proportion to the difficulties they are under; insomuch, that he questions if there is *now* so much *game* in *England*, as when there was no *game-act*.

D. Do not these fellows look on themselves as *thieves* and *robbers*?

F. What *they* think of themselves, I know not; but I see no difference between a man's taking my *money* from me, or my *partridges*, which if I eat, I must purchase with *money*.—Some of them are *desperate fellows*, who care not what evil they do to *others*; nor what happens to *themselves*.

D. I have heard people say, that this *game-act* is contrary to our *liberty*.

F. Contrary to our liberty!—Why, does not *liberty* secure our *property*? And if we have property in the ground, have we not property also in That which feeds upon the ground? I agree with those who think, that the *landlord* should shew some degree of indulgence to the *tenant*; and make it his interest to preserve the game to the utmost of his power, by his having a share in it himself. The *devil* will not then be able to tempt him to crush the eggs; nor let *hawks* and *kites* destroy the young birds, when he may easily destroy *Them*: but he cannot do this, if he is not suffered to carry a gun. I am sensible by what *tenure* I hold my land; and that, as an honest man, I am bound to do no *harm to the game*: but it is understood, there shall not be so much of it, as to do any *considerable harm to me*, or to the produce of the land which is *mine*, while I *pay for it*. If I had a reasonable allowance in *game*, I might think the hardship the less, if the quantity was greater than usual; whereas I may be now induced to think it *great*, when it is not so.

D. But if you carry a gun, you may be tempted to use it too much.

F. This is no argument. Would you leave us a prey to poachers?

D. I only say what *they* may urge.—Whilst *landlords*



landlords are so zealous of their right to a *hare*, or a *partridge*; I wish they would preserve us from being FALSELY IMPRISONED.

F. What is the matter? You are in no danger, *Mary*.

D. I believe not: but have you not heard, that your old friend *George Goodwill*, was mistaken the other day, for another man, and a *bailiff* dragged him away to a prison, and detained him till he could *find bail*? His son *Harry* was present, and would have knocked down the *officer*, but his father told him to forbear, for that *violence* was not permitted on such occasions. This young man however insisted, that he would attend his father; declaring that he did not understand what they meant to do to him; and that he would not leave him, *unless he had any breath in his body*. Is there no punishment for such offences?

F. The *offended person* is entitled to *damages*; but it is difficult to make them appear. *Fear*, *dissquiet*, *indignation*, the anxiety of friends, and the impressions which the world may receive to his disadvantage, are of such a nature, in some cases, that a *jury* cannot easily decide upon them. And after all, who is to be prosecuted? A *beggarly bailiff*, or his followers?

D. It is *provoking* to be treated in such a manner.

F. So it is: but it cannot happen often. We live under an admirable government; but it is not *perfect*. The *common notion* in which we are bred is, that if we could seize and imprison the person of no one for *debt*, we could not give *credit*, and *carry on so much trade*; the prison being a security for *property*.

D. Is *inhumanity* then essential to trade? If it is, I wish *trade* was at the bottom of the sea.

F. As we manage it, in some instances, trade renders us the less civilized and humane; in others, it may have a contrary effect. The credit given to people who are usually plunged into prison for *small debts*, is generally of an iniquitous kind. Many have it, who ought not to have it: it is often given for purposes of a pernicious tendency. Such debtors are frequently much overcharged, from a presumption, that if the creditor gets one third part of his debt he shall lose nothing. I have known *girls* plunged into prison, for the food and raiment which they thought had been *given* them. Under a pretence

of tenderness and hospitality, the iniquitous practice of prostitution is carried on for the emolument of a procurer, who throws the miserable prostitute into prison, if she dares think of leaving her whilst any health or comeliness remains. Many are rendered *drunkards* by means of the very credit they have gained; and their *ruin* is completed by being thrown into *prison*.

D. It is somewhat strange, that we, who make such pretensions to humanity, should, in so capital an instance, act so much less humanely, than I am told other nations do: and when we mean to encourage *industry*, that we should first give credit, to make men *idle* and *drunken*; and then complete their wretchedness, by depriving them of their liberty. Should not the man who *gives* credit, by which a member of the community is lost, be himself punished, rather than the thoughtless Being who takes it?

F. Well observed, *Mary*! If this be what we call *liberty*, Heaven cannot smile upon it. We shall rather draw down vengeance on our heads, for presuming to talk of so sacred a thing; and at the same time delegate a common power of being tyrannical, to the meanest and vilest of the people! Such I apprehend are many of those who exercise the right which the laws have given them. I have seen such worthlessness and inhumanity in a *creditor*, and such bad habits acquired by the *debtor*, it hath appeared to me, that scarce any thing can exceed the *iniquity* of this practice, except the *impolicy* of it. You have heard, that other nations are strangers to it; so have I. We have sometimes accused the *Dutch* of *cruelty*; but in this instance they are *humane*; and I apprehend by far more politic than we are. The faith between *man* and *man* is stronger tied: they can seize a man's *goods* and *chattels*, and punish him corporally, if he hides any thing; but they cannot plunge his person into prison like a *felon*, to be lost, or become a burthen to the community. Nor is it only people who are rendered *drunkards* by the credit given them; but in a trading country, how often is it the fortune of *honest* and *sober* men, to owe what they *cannot* pay; and to be ready to give up all they have; and yet the *merciless creditor* demands his right of putting the man in *prison*. Those who are *honest* and *industrious*, *will* pay when they can; but they *cannot* pay if you tie their hands.

D. It

*D.* It is an established *custom*, and agreeable to *our laws*; and therefore they exercise this power: but it seems to be tyrannical.

*F.* It is the *tyranny of the custom* and laws, of which I complain. Perhaps at first it was well *intended*, but in length of time it is much *abused*. The evil is rooted deep, and may require much labour and attention to eradicate it; but it is of the highest importance to the freedom, humanity, and policy of the nation, to correct the abuse. I have seen much misery in a crowded prison; ten, fifteen, or twenty persons thrust into a room fourteen or sixteen feet square: the prisoners grow indifferent to *life*; they become hardened to all the feelings of humanity: they *curse* their own species; their creditors oftentimes acting worse than cannibals, for they are *legally* permitted to *devour* them *alive*.—Upon enquiry, I found, that many of the debtors had been there for *seven years*; and that there was as little prospect of their ever paying, as at the first day of their confinement. When I asked the *jailor* to what end they were kept there, he smiled, as if he wondered any rational creature should ask a question, to which no other answer could possibly be given, than that *law* and *custom* had made it so. Thus it is: but I hope our eyes will soon be opened to behold the evil tendency of this practice.

*D.* What says our cousin *Robert* on this subject? he must be a very good judge.

*F.* He lifts up his eyes to heaven, whilst his tears speak the sentiments of his heart. I asked him his opinion; he says, “Judge you of the condition of these people, what hopes they can entertain of a release, when they have none of obtaining the means of satisfying creditors, of whom, many wear in their breast, flints instead of heart!” Many are imprisoned in behalf of the crown; but, if I mistake not, the jailor informed me, that he had not known one in thirty years who had paid his debt. Would it not be much better, if the officers of the crown were more cautious in taking securities for trust, and prevent so cruel a necessity? Some times you will see a wife and children following the hard fortune of a wretched husband, by administering to him.

*D.* Is this not rather an aggravation of his distress? What end can it answer to a man who cannot pay his debts?

*F.* It may afford him some comfort. He who

can pay, and will not, let it be proved that he has acted like a felon, and he should be treated as such. If a poor debtor has any money to satisfy his immediate wants, extortion in prison is as common as the air. If he has occasion for law, attorneys, who attend prisons, are frequently as hungry as the prisoner himself; and more frequently add to the load of misery, than lighten the burthen; for the charges are heavy and certain; but their solicitations generally fruitless. In some prisons you may see a dozen people, men and women, crammed into a small room, without any change of raiment, frequently destitute of bedding; and how, and where they sleep, seems to be a mystery. What can be the sad effects, but sickness, which oftentimes becomes contagious, and is attended with very fatal consequences. My cousin says, he has seen such scenes, as hardly allowed him to think himself a subject of a free country. “In whatever garb,” says he, “you dress *liberty*, you can never reconcile her to a prison. In criminal cases, she requires this sacrifice for the safety of good subjects: for the rest, I believe there are more foolish and vicious people who give credit for petty sums, than foolish or vicious people who take it. Let a man be punished for running in debt, even to the having his bed taken from under him, if the creditor will go to the rigour of the law: but surely this is chastisement sufficient for the offence he has been guilty of. To proceed farther, is destroying the distinction of crimes, and acts of imprudence; and partakes more of the slavery of *Morocco*, than of the *freedom* at whose shrine we offer our vows, when we pretend to be ready to die in her defence.”

*D.* He is then as much *against* imprisonment for debt, as he is *for* solitary confinement in *criminal cases*.

*F.* Common sense points out the vast difference between one and the other; and how much more dangerous That man is, who robs me by *violence*, than he who only says, “*will you lend me some of your money?*” If you should be *humane* and *politic* enough, in some cases, or *foolish* or *imprudent* enough in others, to lend him, you always consider whether the party has any property: if he *has*, that such property is subject to the debt; and if he *has not*, that you hazard the event, rather giving the money than lending it. We vulgarly say, that no man can have *more of*

a *cat* than her *skin*; but we give the *sworst*, as well as the *best* part of mankind, the power of treating each other with cruelty, and load a *falling man*! *Interest* and *inclination*, in all such cases, have a greater share than *conscience* or *principle*. The pretence that we act agreeably to the laws, or that the debtor is a *worthless fellow*, is either an imposition which a man's own heart puts upon him; or not a sufficient reason for distressing a fellow-creature. The fable of the *cat* and the *bat* suits the situation of some whom I have known. The *cat* having devoured her master's favourite *bullfinch*, overheard him threatening to put her to death. In these melancholy circumstances, she preferred her prayer to *Jupiter*, *vowing*, that if *he* would deliver her, she would never eat *another bird*. Not long after a *bat* came in her way: her *vow* opposed the gratification of her appetite; but at length she determined, that as a *bird*, it was not a *lawful prize*; but as a *mouse*, she might devour it.—So have I heard some of my companions reason, with respect to the distinction of the *man* and the *debtor*, not considering the *humanity* which *God* requires; and that the mercy which man should exercise to man, is the law and the prophets. It is the first and greatest impression which the Almighty Author of our being has stamped upon the soul.

*D.* But I suppose, in *some cases*, men may be subject to imprisonment for debt.

*F.* I am not a judge in what case: as we manage, some have retained their estates, and submitted to imprisonment. This again is a rank absurdity; and shews the inefficacy of imprisonment.—If men were suffered to labour, or go on with their business, upon any agreements between *debtor* and *creditor*, the *debtor* would still be at the mercy of the *creditor*, if he did not comply with the condition of such agreement, because his *goods* and *chattels* would be subject: and if

these were made over to others clandestinely, this would be deemed a theft, as it is now in cases of bankruptcy. I believe the people are more exact in paying their debts in *Holland*, than they are in *England*.

*D.* I observe a vast number of bankruptcies appear continually in the news-paper.

*F.* I wish they appeared no where else: I remember a few years ago the number reached to seven hundred. The ordinary computation in the kingdom is three hundred. These, which are ten times more injurious to society than debtors, who are usually thrust into prison, escape with impunity: they are not punished by confinement; but delivering up, or being supposed to deliver up, all they have, are by *law* or *custom* released.

*D.* Why should not he who owes but ten pounds, be treated with as much mercy as him who owes ten thousand?

*F.* I know not: I believe there are more bankrupts who have acted an imprudent and unjustifiable part, considering the numbers who trade largely, and the numbers of labouring men, than of debtors who only owe small sums. Credit given wantonly to the lower classes of the people, is a bad practice: it rather hurts industry, than promotes trade: it certainly wounds the morals of the people; and when they carry things to the extremity of imprisoning each other, it gives a stab to their humanity. If no debtor might be imprisoned, the people in general would become more provident. If some did not give credit, where credit ought not to be given, the debtor could not be so extravagant as he often is: and if we *really* had somewhat *less trade*, we might have *more virtue*; and consequently be the better for it. So things appear to me; but we must submit them to our lawgivers.

## CONVERSATION XVIII.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*Gratitude for kindnesses done, particularly from children to parents. Fable of the ostrich and pelican. Story of Zantippe and her father Cimonus. Of a daughter and her mother. Story of Metellus and his son. The reward of piety in filial duty.*

F. YOU remember what I told you yesterday? Was young *Goodwill* right, do you think, in not leaving his father?

D. Leave his father! he should rather have died on the spot! Want of *courage*, in such cases, is a blot never to be wiped out. Those who defend not their *parents*, must be *cowards* indeed, and not sensible of kindness to any other relation.

F. The *undutiful* may expect to be paid in kind: their own children will retaliate their disobedience: and whether this happens by an act done in the face of the sun, or by any gross negligence, the case is much the same.

D. In this instance, to have deserted his father for a moment, would have been shameful to the last degree. He has been always good to his son!

F. *Gratitude* and *generosity* produce the same fruit: they grow from their common root, *truth* and *virtue*. In the same manner, *ingratitude* and *penuriousness* are constant companions. *John Gripe*, not long since, lost his pocket-book, in which was a great value in *bank notes*. A *butcher's* boy finding it, brought it to him, and he rewarded the boy for his honesty and care:— he gave him a *shilling*.

D. A *shilling*!

F. Ay, child, a *shilling*! It was said, that we might see in what estimation *John* holds *honesty* and *gratitude*, “*He thinks they are not worth above a shilling.*” *Squire Stock*, in watering his horse the other day, was in the utmost danger of being drowned— a spirited young fellow, a peasant, at the hazard of his *own* life, saved the *squire's*, for which this *generous* man gave him — *half-a-crown*.

D. Astonishing! The story cannot be true!

F. Indeed I doubt it: but the *squire* was penurious: the wags said, “*For once in his life he hath been extravagant: He gave half-a-crown for what is not worth sixpence.*”——

D. If *riches* were always so distributed, they would be a *curse*.

F. It could only afford an opportunity of displaying, how insensible one man can be of the obligations he is under to another. Men who act such a part, may look on with indifference, and see the world in flames, provided it were possible they could escape the conflagration. You see in these instances, how justly *covetousness* may be called the *sin of witchcraft*: it *fascinates* the soul, and lays waste all that is *beautiful*, *kind*, and *generous* in it. Not so was the conduct of *Lord Noble*. His taylor *William Stitch* found in the pocket of his lordship's waistcoat, which had been put into his hands to button, a bank note of an *hundred pounds*.—*William* brought it home, and desired to see *my lord*; and being admitted into his presence, told him what he had found, and that he did not chuse to deliver it to any one but his lordship.—This noble lord commended his honesty, and desired *William* to accept of *five guineas*.—“*What, my lord,*” says he, “*take money for being honest!*” no: the satisfaction of my own mind for doing my duty is a *reward*: it abundantly repays me. God forbid that I should be ever tempted to withhold another man's right, or expect a reward for doing him *justice!*”

D. He was certainly in the right: my lord might remember him some other way, as a man of probity. Do you think a *rogue* can be grateful?

F. *Honesty* may be supposed to carry *gratitude* always

always in its bosom : but I think it cannot inhabit the breast of a villain, in any eminent degree, to be depended on.

*D.* Ingratitude in children, is of the worst kind : it is the “ *marble-hearted fiend*,” more hideous than painters could ever represent.— All my cousins appear as so many of their father’s *grateful friends*, rather than his *children*.

*F.* You do not imagine that the name of *friend* is more endearing, than that of *child*. Children are the best *friends*, when they act up to a true sense of their duty as such. In general, I have observed, that if the conduct of parents towards their children, is *tender, pious, and judicious*, there are but few children so perverse as to display any extraordinary disobedience. But if the child is not taught his duty towards God, the father of us all, what is to be expected, but the cold indifference and contempt which we too often behold towards parents ?

*D.* Cold indeed, where there is no sense of *gratitude* ! I consider my obligations to you, as sacred as any *friendship*, heightened by the *truest affection*.—You are, in my esteem, the *wisest* and most *agreeable* man of my acquaintance : your conversation is more pleasing to me, than that of any other person : and I have a satisfaction in it not to be described. My persuasion, that I am acting agreeably to the pleasure of our great Lord and common Father, who is in heaven, gives me an inexpressible joy.

*F.* My dear *Mary*, I am glad to hear you talk thus ! I expect nothing from you, but what is *reasonable*. You know that I avoid any shew of rigour : and it would pierce my heart to see my love lost upon you. The anxieties of parents are hardly ever over-paid by the duty and affection of their children : and though partiality to the follies of children often appears weak or ridiculous, it is so pardonable, it sometimes seems to be a virtue. Do you remember the fable of the *ostrich* and the *pelican* ? The *ostrich* took notice of the *pelican’s* bloody breast, and expressed great surprize ; desiring to know what had befallen her. The *pelican* said, she had been only feeding her young with some of her blood, according to her constant custom. The *ostrich* ridiculed her extremely ; alledging, that she laid her eggs in the sand, and gave herself no further trouble, whether they were hatched by the heat of the sun, as generally happened, or crushed by the feet of men or beast : and if they were

hatched, she gave herself no concern about her young ones. “ Unhappy wretch,” replies the *pelican* ! “ it is thou who art *cruel* to thine own flesh, not I : if I suffer any *pain*, the *pleasure* I receive is the most exquisite that Nature hath indulged us with ; and the pain only serves to heighten the *enjoyment*.”

*D.* This is beautifully descriptive of the tenderness of parents. I remember well, how my mother used to take me in her arms, with such fondness, that one would have thought she could, with pleasure, have shed her blood for *me* : and thank Heaven, I have no reason to think of you, but as my *guardian*, my *protector*, and my *friend*, as well as my *father*.

*F.* The days were, when a son or daughter would have perished, rather than shew the least mark of disrespect to father or mother.

*D.* How comes any change in our *manners*, in this instance ?

*F.* We are not so *virtuous* in this respect. In general we are more *civilized* ; yet having less *simplicity*, and *honest sincerity* ; *false glory*, and *false greatness*, captivate our poor hearts : and if the *great* are defective in generosity of spirit, it is no wonder *we* should be so. *Dress, equipage, titles, splendid tables, and amusements*, harden the affections of the *rich*. Among *us*, a merry-meeting, a handsome coat, a purse of money, or some consideration of interest, or unwarrantable gratification, rubs off the finer impression of those duties, which ought to be prized above all other things in the world. *Decit* now often borrows gentle looks, and with a *visor* hides her real colour.

*D.* Was it not always so ?

*F.* The *duties* of religion were never better understood, than they are now : yet many do not know what it requires at their hands : they do not *consider* at least in what the *charms of life* consist. They are not so sensible of shame, in each other’s eyes, as they ought to be, in regard to negligence towards parents : nor do we meet the same applause for obedience, as in days of greater simplicity ; and consequently the motives to *such good actions*, are not so strong as they were.

*D.* This must be owing to the want of the practice of *religion* amongst us.

*F.* Whatever cause it may proceed from, we do not enjoy so much happiness in *this life*, nor have we the same security for the joys of the *life to come*, as we might have. Instances of

love towards parents, were not uncommon in the *beathen* world. My master used to talk of stories, related by the historians of those ages; observing, at the same time, that many acts of generosity and humanity, which the wisest of them saw with astonishment, are familiar to *real christians*. It is not that we have better understandings than those nations; or more resolution than some of the less cultivated people of the earth; but that the *Son of the Most High God* coming down from heaven to visit us, and condescending to be himself our *teacher*, *Christians* are not only possessed of more *divine truths*, than any other people who *have been*, or *are* now upon the earth; but all steady believers, whenever called upon by the *events of life*, act as if moved by a *divine spirit*, to enable them to perform their duty.

D. I believe this of all who are warmed with the true spirit of *christianity*, and have heaven in their view! But you said, there are many instances of great love shewn to parents: Do you mean from *daughters*?

F. I remember to have heard of *two*. One was of a woman condemned to be *strangled*. The jailor thought it less cruel to let her die of *hunger*. He often suffered her daughter to see her; first taking care that she carried in no kind of nourishment. After some time, the prisoner still living, he watched the daughter, and found she nourished her *mother* with her own milk. This was looked upon as an act of so much *piety* and *ingenuity*, that the woman was not only pardoned, but *she* and *her daughter* supported at the public expence: and a temple dedicated to *Piety*, was erected near the prison, in memory of this deed.

D. A *christian* would not think much of this.

F. The event proves, that it was thought a wonderful instance of filial love. The other story is of a young woman (*a*), who fed her *aged father* (*b*) at her breast, while he was in prison, and under sentence of being starved to death: of this there are now many pictures and statues.

D. I think I could do this, were I in the same circumstances.

F. Serve your God with zeal, and you will prove, that the milk which you have sucked at

your mother's breast, has given you no inclinations, but such as do honour to human nature: and that the *true love of parents*, like *true self-love*, is the *first law of nature*. We are *animals*, *Mary*: the bodily part of us requires support from those who have the *natural* power, and by the appointment of Providence, the *inclination* to support it. We are *spiritual beings*; as such, we are endued with *reason*, and accountable to the *great Parent of all*, for the discharge of our duty: and if, under God, we owe our *present life to the care of our earthly parents*; so long as we *value life*, we can never *over-pay* the obligation.

D. We find nothing in this house which clashes with your doctrine.

F. God grant that the *father* of it may continue happy to the end of his days upon earth, when he may remove to a scene of glory in heaven!—Among a variety, no story pleases me more than an event which happened in the civil wars of the *Romans*, the father (*c*) was on one side, and the son on the other. The son's party was victorious: and he happened to be appointed by the conqueror as a judge. The father, loaded with *years* and *infirmities*, disfigured by a long hoary beard, and his clothes grown ragged and dirty, by the hardships he had gone through, was not immediately known to his son. But as soon as he recollected his features, he *wept bitterly*, and ran to embrace him. Then turning towards the victorious emperor (*d*), he said, "My father has been your *enemy*, and I your *officer*: he deserves to be *punished*; and I to be *rewarded*. The favour I desire of you is, either to *save him*, on my account; or order *me* to be put to death with *him*."

D. O worthy son?—What was the *event*?

F. The judges were all touched with *compassion*: and the emperor granted the father his life.

D. This was an action worthy the best of sons! But were those *Romans* so *fond of life* as we are?

F. I believe they had not so many terrors concerning death; and were more *manly* in their notions of life. Not that we are without generous spirits, when these are called into action. As *Christians*, I have said, we have done, and ought

to

(a) Zantippe.

(b) Cimonus.

(c) Metellus.

(d) *Cæsar Octavius*, being at *Samos*, or *Limnos*, after the battle of *Actium*.

to do, more than was common among the *Romans*. I have told you that they acted up to their *principles*: if we acted up to *ours*, how *great* and *good* we might be! Our *hopes* are higher, and our *assurance* of happiness after death stronger! They are founded on the *Rock of ages*!—The

hopes of the *Romans* were involved in clouds of darkness. They saw as through a glass darkly. On us the light of immortality shines forth in all the glory of the wisdom, the goodness, and the mercy of God, in the redemption of the world by his Son *Jesus Christ*!

## CONVERSATION XIX.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*Brotherly love. The force of friendship and affection. Story of two brothers Portuguese. The curse of disobedience to parents. Character of a respectable labouring old man, and his children placed out in the world. Immorality of every kind arising from intemperance in living. Reflexions on the age of sixty-three, called the grand climacteric.*

F. IT is a great pleasure indeed to behold AFFECTION IN BROTHERLY LOVE: coming from the same stock, the same blood seems to flow in their veins, animated with one soul.

D. This is not always the case amongst brothers and sisters.

F. No, *Mary*: other passions work as strong in base minds. Some outlive their *reason*: others, by diversity of tempers, and weakness of understanding, are perverted, and pull different ways. Where there is *real* love, it must ripen into *friendship*, and give that friendship so much the brighter lustre. There is a celebrated story of brotherly affection in the persons of two *Portuguese*.

D. I thought that *Portugal* had not been renowned for virtue.

F. There are many vulgar notions that prevail in the world; and almost every nation thinks another a *base generation of men*: They see the mote in their brother's eye, but cannot discern the beam in their own. The *Portuguese*, I am told, are debauched, as most nations are, and particularly in the *southern parts of Europe*; and the common people, according to the notion of some of the *papists*, are too apt to think they may by *confession*, so balance accounts with heaven, as to set their minds at ease, though they should have made but slender resolutions in regard to the time to come. In the mean while, I have heard such

incontestible evidence of honesty and moral rectitude in the payment of debts, after the dreadful earthquake and conflagration at *Lisbon* in 1755, as gives me very high impressions in favour of the *Portuguese*. A certain merchant of my master's acquaintance, among others who lost all their books and bonds, recovered of all his debtors, who put him to no kind of trouble, but acknowledged their debts, and paid them with a more religious regard to their duty, than if their bonds had existed.—My story is of a large *Portuguese* ship, bound from *Lisbon* to *Goa*, being cast away, and only nineteen persons out of a great number preserved. These got off in the boat. Finding their provisions would last but very few days, they agreed that every fourth man should be thrown overboard; and they cast lots for this purpose. One of the four, on whom the lot fell, was a *Portuguese* gentleman, who happened to have a *younger brother* in the boat. The gallant young man embraced his brother, and with tears besought him that he might die in his room; alleging, that himself was a *single* man, and his brother had a wife and children at *Goa*, besides the care of *three sisters*, who depended on him. The *elder brother*, melted with such generosity, insisted, that as *Providence* had appointed him to suffer, it would be wicked in him to permit his brother to die for him; alleging further, that as

the

the younger would inherit his estate, *he* might be a *father to the family*. But nothing could make him desist; and he was accordingly thrown into the sea. There is in Nature a kind of instinct, which operates to the preservation of life: the young man swimming well, followed, and held the *rudder* of the boat with his right hand, which one of the sailors cut. He then seized it with his left, which was also cut. The people in the boat still saw him swimming, by the help of his bleeding arms. So moving a spectacle raised their *compassion* to such a height, that forgetting the occasion, they all cried out, "He is but one; let us save him!" They accordingly took him up, and bound up his wounds.

D. You make me weep to think of such a scene!

F. The next day when the sun arose, they discovered land: it proved to be the *Portuguese* settlement of *Mozambique*, in *Africa*; where they happily landed, and the young man was cured of his wounds.

D. This surely was sufficiently providential, to excite the highest gratitude; and to make a life, which was offered up in so generous a manner, most highly acceptable to the great Giver of life: but was it consistent, after giving up his life, to struggle for it?

F. You may easily conceive the story to be true, both with respect to his *offering to die*; and yet, being in the water, *struggling* to save his life.—The notion of the possibility of recovering land, might keep some spark of hope alive in his breast; or more probably, he might *struggle*, because he had no longer the exercise of his *reason*. The fact is attested by a writer of credit (*a*), who declares, that the two brothers, being conveyed from *Mozambique* to *Goa*, in a *Portuguese* ship, he saw them *landed*, and supped with them that very night.

D. It is a very interesting story. I know not, whether *Jonathan* would do so much for *Charles*; tho' if *Charles* had as much virtue as the *Portuguese* might think his elder brother possessed, I am persuaded *Jonathan* has virtue enough to act such a part.—I hope they will all be happily wedded; and their *children* behave to them, as they do to their *father*.

F. They bid fair for it. A son, inured to a sense of *FILIAL DUTY*, will make the best husband, as a *daughter*, the best wife. The Wife

Man says, "Who so honoureth his father, shall have joy of his own children; and when he maketh his prayer, he shall be heard."

D. These are high promises of *great blessings*: but whilst he bids us honour a father, with our whole heart, he adds these sweet words, "And forget not the *sorrows* of thy mother!"

F. He also reminds us of the *curse* which attends *undutifulness*: "The eye that mocketh his father, and despiseth to *obey* his mother, the *ravens* of the valley shall pick it out, and the *young eagles* shall eat it."

D. This is a beautiful allusion to That perverseness, which inclines many to *forget*, and some to *insult* their parents.

F. And it denounces the judgment to be expected, either by some temporal calamity which will befall them; or by the vengeance of Heaven, which will overtake them in the next world. Such offences are of so black a dye, nothing but *true repentance* and *amendment* can wipe them out.

D. The proverb says, "God, our *parents*, and our *masters*, can never be requited."

F. True: such is the nature of our obligations to them: and what can those expect, who are so unnatural as to trample on the *venerable decays* of human nature? They act like *fools*, as well as impious persons; for they do but expose their own future condition, and laugh at themselves beforehand. If I should ever need *your* help, will you assist me, *Mary*?

D. To my last breath!

F. Nature has ordered it so, that the parent shall be attentive, in the first place, to the child. The hungry *canibals* feel more humanity to their infant children, than to shed their blood: and he that without a tear can see his children languish in pain or misery, is not fit for human society.

D. This I grant: but she that frets her father's cheeks with tears, and adds wrinkles to his brows, by any marble-hearted *ingratitude*, is a monster in human shape: and well may she expect the eagles to pick out her eyes.

F. You talk like a *good girl*; for I think it is not the custom of our days for children to shew such a strict attention to their *aged parents*, as the laws of God, and the obligations to society require of them.

D. Perhaps the *rich* are, as you have said, too attentive to their *pleasures* and *amusements*.

F. Ay, and the *poor* also. In *our* condition, I fear some old people are thrown on the *parochial* charity,



*charity*, whose children might provide for them. I had some discourse with *old William* the other day: he is now fourscore. In him you see the *cheerful* man, and the *good christian*. He says, "My children are long since grown up, and some of them also become *old*: they live in different parts of the kingdom: I hear from them: they send me little presents occasionally, as much, I believe, as they can afford. They consider *their own children and poor neighbours*. I am happy in thinking they *remember me so far*: and hope they will do so as long as I am alive. I chuse to live in the workhouse, where I am well treated. Indeed there is good reason why they should treat me well; for I work as much as I can. I might plead *my age* to be excused from any *labour*; but I can still thrash out a sack of corn in a day; and they pay me a *shilling a quarter*: so that for a considerable part of the year, I get sixpence a-day, which makes me so much the less expensive to the parish. They give me what I get, to spend in *clothes*, and the *necessaries of life*. How long I shall be able to work, I know not: but labour contributes so much to my health, I suppose when I can work no longer, I shall die:—I shall go to *my fathers*: and as I have endeavoured to serve God with singleness of heart, I hope he will have *mercy on me*, and make me completely happy, for ever and ever!" (a)

D. Good old man! He seems to be a respectable character in his poverty; and I dare say will die as greatly as the first minister of state can be supposed to do.

F. There are many countries, where the inhabitants are far short of us, in other respects, yet excel us in the *duty of children to parents*. My master used to say, that the *Gullicians*, who who are labourers in *Lisbon*, and the *Russians* in *St. Peterburgh*, who come from distant parts of the empire, are never so happy, as when they carry home their *gains*, to assist their aged parents; or buy a cottage or land for themselves. This may be more difficult with us, notwithstanding our superior freedom, land being so much dearer, and requiring so much expence to improve, and labour being well paid for, such a practice is the less necessary to *our* happiness.

D. In the mean time, we are sure that children ought to honour their parents, that *their* children may help *them*; and the *great Father of mankind* be their friend; and their *days* long in

the land, wherein God hath given them life and health to enjoy those blessings, in the stations which his providence hath appointed them.

F. Heaven knows I have but little to leave, but "*my good spirit!*"—yet that little might induce some children, to think I lived too long, and pervert their hearts. The riches of the wealthy often prove a temptation to wickedness of this kind.

D. To such young persons as are impatient to possess the goods they are to inherit from their wealthy parents: but it may be hoped *we* who are *poor*, are safe from such iniquity.

F. Human nature is in some respects the same in all; and in all is *corrupt*. One languishes for *ten pounds*, and another for *ten thousand*. The best way to curb all evil desires, is to live so as to have no *fantastical wants* to gratify, nor any desires, beyond what is daily necessary to *Nature*, and daily supplied: But we ought to forego any gratification, rather than be exposed to the temptation of this evil.—He that feeds his fancy, avarice, or ambition, on the expected death of his parents or friends, is so near wishing they may die, the thought recoils on the heart with horror! When I hear a man, upon notice of a relation being sick, form schemes how he shall dispose of the wealth he may inherit, I suspect his covetousness, pride, or fancy, triumphs over his humanity and religion.

D. How are we to correct this *dangerous* desire in the mind?

F. There is but one way, that is by exercising the virtues of a *christian*, and a *man*, and learning to be *temperate*. The love of pleasure will prevail in the heart; but the consideration in what our pleasure ought to consist, should be the great object of our care, that the mind may be kept *free* from every kind of wickedness. The force of *temperance* is such, that upon the comparison, the different turn of men's minds seems to depend on the indulgence of the *animal part* of their composition; and the *good* or *evil* that befalls them, arises in a great measure, from the same cause. Of this we have a striking proof, in the two great vices of *whoredom* and *drunkenness*. You have heard how men destroy themselves by these means. The wisest of the *heathens* discerned the ideas of virtue and happiness to be one and the same thing; and their notions of the existence of an *all-wise superintending Being*, harmonized with the same opinion.

(a) This was the speech of an old man, whom I met near Mr. Medley's, in S. Tex.

opinion. One of them, by some suspected of not believing in a God (*a*), talks in very high terms of the force of *temperance*. He recommends *milk* in preference to *wine*; proving how much he revered *temperance*! We see a few old men, who have indulged freely in *strong drink*, retain their powers to the last, whilst some temperate men *lose* them; but *in general* we find that *spirituous liquors* burn up the *springs of life*: and *drinking* and *bad women* are the cause of the destruction of vast numbers, who perish by *untimely death*.

*D.* As to temperance, I have observed, that the wife, with a smaller stock of strength of mind, has retained her powers, when the *husband* has lost his, and rather *vegetates* than *lives*.

*F.* You know that my opinion is, both *rich* and *poor* consume a great deal more than they need. So much *wheaten bread* was never consumed by our forefathers, even in the most flourishing times: not half the quantity of *malt liquor* was drank; nor perhaps a quarter part so many oats consumed, by the vast number of *horses* which are now kept for our *pleasure*.

*D.* We can *afford* to live better than formerly.

*F.* I grant it: but in my judgment, we *cannot afford* to live so fast as we do; and that by *eating*, *drinking*, and *riding* wantonly, we are galloping, into *poverty* or *decay*. The bounds which *prudence*, *nature*, and *health* prescribe, are exceeded in our *habits of living*. Our *real riches*, as a nation, are short of our *property*; and we seem to be under a *delusion*, as to our abilities to spend. We see individuals of large fortunes daily impoverished, and the evil is more general, than the major part of us are aware of. As in the case of *spendthrifts* in common life, our expences exceed our property: we are actually spending a great deal, which in propriety of conduct, with respect to our own safety as a *people*, belongs to the *state*; and consequently act as if we believed we could exist *without a state*. The splendor and profusion of our present habits stretch the *sinews of life* beyond their due bounds.

*D.* You think we are extravagant; and that extravagance will bring want.

*F.* This is the natural course of things. An unnatural thirst grows into a custom or habit, and spreads itself through all ranks of people. One of its consequences is, to carry us to our *neighbours well*, as well as to *our own*: and we

are not so attentive as we ought to be, whether we have his *consent* or not. Thus you find, one runs in debt beyond what he has any prospect of paying; another entertains a secret with his best *friend*, *parent*, or *relation* were dead, that he might have the inheritance. *Forgerers* and *coiners of false money*, *thieves* and *robbers* of every denomination prevail amongst us, in a greater degree than in some former times, when the land did not bring forth near so vast an increase as it does now; and when we had full as many, if not more people to consume it. What is it that wounds our *morality* so deep? It is *intemperance*! Were we *temperate*, *modest*, and *humble*, we should shew more *zeal and love for our country*: we should be more ready to succour the *state*: we should not be tempted to be *dishonest* in any respect; and esteem it our greatest glory to be *disinterested*, and administer to the prosperity of our neighbour! Such virtues only can teach us to reverence our *parents*, our *masters*, and *superiors* in every station.

*D.* There have been *times of more wickedness*.

*F.* In the reign of *Henry VIII* (*b*), more people, *they say*, were executed for *felony*, twice told, than we *hang* or *transport*, though our number in 38 years might be between 30,000 and 40,000.

*D.* Those were barbarous times compared with the present age, bad as it is. I believe that *temperance* is the foundation of all virtue; not in our sensual gratifications only, but also in our *vanity*. I am sure, *my father*, I had rather give up *one* of my gowns, and *all my ribbons*, as my small contribution, to put things upon a proper footing of security to the public, than that any harm should happen to it: and I think my *cousins* would do the same. They appear to be as *contented* as they are *temperate*, anxious only how they shall perform their several duties, particularly to their *father*; and he you know is a *real patriot*, not a clamorous complainer of the evils the people bring on themselves, but he contrives how to remedy them. His temperance renders him as strong and healthy as any of his children; and they are the happier on this account.

*F.* All virtuous people are *real patriots*. You see the force of *temperance*, in the health both of the *old man*, and the *young* people. They spend no more time at their meals, than is necessary: half an hour, or forty minutes, is sufficient for *their dinner*: and they are as fit for business after their meal, as before it.—

*D.* Our

(*a*) Epicurus.

(*b*) From 1509 to 1547, viz. 38 years.

D. Our cousin *Robert*, in his manner, good humour, and spirits, seems to be as lively as any *young man*—how *old* is he?

F. He has just past his *grand climacterick*.

D. What age is That?

F. I have heard my master say, that both *heathens* and *christians*, ancient and modern writers, have laid a stress on the alterations of the human body, upon every *climax*, or mounting of *seven* years. Some of them ascribed this to the influence of the planet *Saturn*; but it is very reasonable to suppose, so exquisite a piece of workmanship, as the human body, composed of so vast a number of parts, should in the periods of its growth, its more fixed state, and its decay, undergo a variety of changes; that is to say, from the *birth* to *seven* years: from thence to *fourteen*; thence to *twenty-one*. These three periods fall within the compass of *your* observation, though you are not half way in the *third*.

D. I am sensible how rapidly time runs on; and what an *excellent monitor* he is, if we would but attend to his admonitions.

F. Observe how the growth of the body, and the dawning of reason, may be compared to the rising of the sun upon the earth, or the *morning* of the day. The *noon* gives the greater light: and the *afternoon*, the *evening*, and the *night*, are so many emblems of the life of man. The perils of infancy and childhood, are considerations which exalt the soul with gratitude to God, when we have received *good*, or been delivered from *evil*.—Think you, my daughter, of your life and manners, in *your present seven years*! During the period from *twenty-two* to *twenty-eight*, it is no less wonderful how we escape! About *thirty*, *man* is said to be at maturity. Then let us suppose he stands upon his *firmest ground*: and let him take heed lest he *fall*: his judgment may be stronger, but his passions and appetites are not the less awake: he is the more confirmed in wishing to continue his species, or to acquire the means of their support. From *twenty-nine* to *thirty-five*, ambition, or the love of gain, or these united together, make up the seven years. Shall we say, that from *thirty-six* to *forty-two*, there is but little danger? Is not this admirable piece of *clock-work* decaying? Do not cares and anxieties, whether these arise from the love of a wife and children, or the want of such objects to exercise his affections, in spite of all the religion and philosophy, which

man can generally boast of, contribute largely to wear him out? From *forty-three* to *forty-nine*, is a period of no less *thoughtfulness*, the *darkness* spread over the *time*, that lies *before* him, rendering the *uncertainty* the greater, how *long* or *short* it may be.—If he is childless, he is often *sorrowful*: if he hath children, full of care.—His *son* is going into the world to supply his place, which he must soon leave: his *daughter* is marriageable; and he sympathizes in her secret wishes, to find an honourable and comfortable establishment. From *fifty* to *fifty-six* (*a*), the prospect of *long life*, or *many* happy days, bears a resemblance to the sun dropping from the horizon, to leave a twilight before *night* comes on.—There is *then* more reason to think of the *night of death*!—Thence we come to this noted period of the *grand climacterick*, *sixty-three*. The chance of death upon the years remaining, increases so much the more; that is, from *sixty-four* to *seventy*, which is called the life of man. But it is of little consequence how *old* we are, if at any years of *maturity*, we are not happily arrived at such an acquaintance with *God* and *ourselves*, as to cherish vigorous hopes in *immortality*! When this is not the case, how can our hearts be cheered? *For what is it that we have lived?* We may well complain, that our lives have been a *scene of vanity* and *folly*: and perhaps that it were better, we had not been born. You see, *Mary*, in the person of my cousin, what it is to live like a *man*: his *cheerfulness*, *vivacity*, and *understanding*; his love for his children, his country, and mankind; and his usefulness to the world, whatever imperfections he may have, seem to afford an earnest, that the Almighty Father of mankind will not disdain his *love*, his *truth*, and *sincerity*.

D. My dear father, I feel my mind enlightened by your detail of the *grand climacterick*.—How wonderful it is that we live so long!

F. Wonderful indeed, when we consider how often we become a prey to our own passions, or the wickedness of others! You see how merciful the *great Author of our being* is: and if it were not so, how would those escape, who have so much less virtue than my *cousin*? As to the age beyond *sixty-three*, every day of life seems to be *clear gain*; something recovered from a *precarious debt*. By the age of twelve times seven, or *eighty-four*, not above twenty remain alive, of a *thousand born* (*b*).

C O N-

(*a*) By fifty, near four in five born, are dead. (*b*) In *England*, we generally find, that by 94, the whole 1000 born, are dead: yet, if we credit the bills of mortality, 5 in 48,000 live to be an hundred and upwards.

## CONVERSATION XX.

*At their Cousin Robert's.*

*His cousin presents him with a picture, in which an human skull is introduced. Reflections on this spectre of mortality, under a variety of representations. The triumphs of a Christian. The great view of religion, particularly with regard to the christian sacrifice.*

F. MY cousin has made me a present of this portrait of himself; with a handsome compliment, desiring that you and I would consider it, as an expression of his gratitude, as he politely chuses to call it, for the pleasure we have done him and his family, in the visit we have made him. The thing is a bauble, but his manner of giving it makes it valuable. The taste of it is *satirically humorous*: there is a human skull represented, lying on the table. We must not be surpris'd hereafter, if some wag should ask us, if it is a *thick*, or *thin*, or *hard*, or *soft*, or *rugged skull*; if the contents be *watery*, *dry*, or *bet*, the quantity also determining much as to the intellectual powers.

D. These may be enquiries for the *curious*, but the spectre can be no subject of ridicule for people in their senses. The picture is a strong likeness.

F. Whether it conveys any expression of character or not, let you and I endeavour to convert it to some good use. Let it remind us, that to this the *finest features* and the *fairest skin* must come at last.—If we suppose it to be our cousin's own skull, I should say,—Here, in these hollows, do you observe them well, *Mary*,—here were the eyes, which guided the pen over so many thousand pages as he has written; or let-in guests into his mind, against which he should have shut these *windows* or *doors*.—Here were the ears, which were 'bent to the poor' and the distressed; and, perchance, at some period of his life, listened to a *fiery voice*, against which it were happier they had been shut.—This organ may have felt a transport of delight in the vibrations of many a *well-tuning instrument*. Through this cavity, *Mary*, many a blush may have been raised in the countenance, on hearing others talk like *fools*; or from a consciousness of his own *unguarded words*, the sound of which oppress'd

him.—Here was the *tongue*, which in spite of our partiality for him, I dare say, has a thousand times abus'd the *heavenly gift of speech*!

D. And also express the benevolence of a heart, such as his is, in many a *healing word*.

F. How many blows may it have suffered, and survived!—How often ached, in spite of all pretences, true or false, to *temperance* or *discretion*!—How many *ounces of hair* have grown upon it? And how many of *borrowed locks* have covered it in *twenty-three thousand days*, and as many nights, for so many there are in the sixty-three years, which his life, in this very month, extends to.—These and *ten thousand such circumstances* are common to us mortals. And let us go higher, and apply it to the soul of man!—Here we may suppose *reason* held her court, with *understanding*, *judgment*, and *memory* at her side. Here sat these judges in array; issuing their sovereign mandates. Here resided the *affections* and passions which preserved the world in *peace*: or, by creating *corroding jealousies*, or *anxious fears*, *violence*, *treachery*, or *injustice*, set it on fire.

D. The worst you can represent is applicable, I fear, to many skulls,

F. Over this skull you and I, *my daughter*, may preach when the late owner of the picture, shall have nothing remaining of him but a *skull*: and perchance not so much; for it depends on the quality of the foil in which it is laid; and our cousin recommends *lime* to consume the bodies of men. Yet advanced as he is in age, it is possible your skull, or at least *mine*, may be the object of his thoughts, and he may shed the tear, when you or I shall be beyond the reach of sorrow. An human skull, *Mary*, has been often the play-thing of a hermit. Painters are fond of skulls, and *penitence*, as companions at the toilet of an *anchorite*. Happy it would be, if some

*fine*

*fine men and women* would think a little more of *mortality*. Such may be *our* occupation when we read a lecture on this skull.—But let us mark the *book* which he holds in his hand!—There you read what is actually written. “*This corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality!*” — Will it indeed do so? ‘Lord what is *man*, that thou hast such respect unto him, or the *son of earth* that thou so regardest him!’ — In moralizing on mortality, we may remember my cousin’s remark, on occasion of his talking of *sickness*, That “*a fever is better than a clerk.*”

D. This is an excellent proverb for those who have any *good* in them; but *alas!* how many are there of whom *this* humorous saying, may be with as much truth applied :

“*The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be :*  
“*The devil was well, the devil a monk was he.*”

F. It is humorous, but it contains much truth : you will grant, however, that *sickness* often preaches more powerfully than the *divine* ; and even objects of *sense* strike us, when the *invisible* things of heaven make but very faint impressions. It was by parity of reasoning that my *cousin* conceived a notion he could give a more important lesson to his *children*, whom he considers as the object of his care, next to his *own soul*, from the representation of a skull in his picture, than from exhibiting the finest *shepherd’s staff*, or *gun*, or *dog*, *park*, *water-fall*, *wood*, or *lawn*. “Come hither, *Elizabeth*,” says he. “Let us suppose this skull to have been once the property of a charming young woman ! On this part was the complexion !—Here were the eyes !—Do they *sparkle* now ? Do they speak the language of *love*, *pain*, *sorrow*, or *joy* ?—On the surface of the whole visage, the *graces* dwelt, as poets have agreed to call the powers of beauty, in the body or the mind. Here they stood arrayed in their attractive charms, which perhaps caused some *wise*, and some *foolish* hearts to *flutter*, if not delude themselves with *fantastic images* !—But it is not probable, from the whole composition of external excellence, that by it any man learnt to strengthen his *faith*, his genuine *christian charity*, or *heavenly hope*. Yet, by viewing this skull, our thoughts may be

familiarised to *hope in a life to come* ! If we think only of *this life*, what an unpleasing reflection it is, that this *paragon* of the earth, this beautiful animal, *man*, should end in such a spectre ! No flashes of merriment, or solemn harangues !—No rank, no condition, not all the *wealth*, or *pride*, or *pomp* of Kings, can *prevent* their coming to *this* ; and the part about them, which generally furnishes the most wholesome thoughts, is this *poor object* which *imagination* holds in *hereditary* abhorrence ! Shall we not be *humble*, my child, when we reflect what *may* happen *every day* we behold the *light* ; or when the *darkness* visits us !—Sleep is the image of death ; and the transition in the imperceptible moment, in which we fall asleep, may, for ought we know, be a true likeness of what it is to pass from *life to death* !—But view the skull, as the *seed* sown in the earth, sown in *corruption*, to rise *incorruptible* ! View it in the *mind’s strength*—and it *smiles* upon us, exulting in triumphant joy, giving a *relief* to every pleasure the earth can now afford us !—Hence we learn what *generous*, *manly*, *heavenly* faith doth mean : how it exalts the soul, and renders the *king of terrors* no longer terrible !—Instead of being a nest, in which to brood melancholy thoughts, as if the grave could hold us bound, *our poet* (a) says :

“*An Angel’s arm can’t save us from the grave :*  
“*Legions of Angels can’t confine us there.*”

In the more emphatical words of the *great apostle*, “O death where is thy sting ! O grave where is thy victory !” You know what follows, *Elizabeth* : let those who listen to *vice*, tremble at a *skull*. When the sky lowers, and the heavens thunder ; let the storms beat and the rains descend, you see the motto on the frame, under the crest, *Never despair!* Let us not *fear*, but *rejoice*, with exceeding great joy, in the assurance of a life to come !—So *he* talks : and with regard to the changes of life which he has experienced, the motto at the bottom is proper enough, *So it hath happened.*

D. Pray, what did he mean by this *scroll* and pen on one side of the decoration of the frame, and a *wreath of leaves* on the other ?

F. A crown of *dry leaves* is an emblem of *poverty* : here is also the *eye of Providence*, within

the circle, expressive of the care taken by the great *Father of the poor*. Our cousin has been, for many years, a kind of *enthusiast* in his pursuits, and written a great number of tracts, in relation to *police* and the *welfare of the poor*; and by his active labours, often promoted the *protection* and welfare of them.

D. Is he not fanciful, for an old man?

F. Yes: but you see his fancies are of a religious cast. The *philosophic poet* says,

“Pleas'd with *this bauble still*, as *that*, before;  
“Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.”

D. Nothing ought to be called a *bauble* which tends to carry the affections towards heaven!

F. Fancy controlled by judgment, may contribute to the great end and design of moral instruction: let you and I learn how to give our thoughts a *true and proper* bent, from this object of *moral fancy*. If this skull is part of our stock in our *intellectual trade*, let us see how we can turn it to account, and grow rich in *grace*. In contemplating this crown of *dry leaves*, let us also look forward in hopes of acquiring one more precious than all the *gems* which the *eastern* or the *western* world, ever provided for the children of vanity or ambition!

D. Whether we lay out our talent, well or ill, to *this* it must come!

F. Ay, *Mary*, therefore whilst we *use* this world, as the Lord of Nature hath appointed, let us not *abuse* his kindness, but look forward to *That*, whose glories never fade nor perish. The face and frame of this earth, will grow old and sink in tears, with all her powers. The moon and stars, and all the heavenly bodies we behold, with thousands, and as far as we can tell, ten thousands of worlds, may have the same end!—But the *spirit* which came from God, to God will it return, and the virtuous will exist in glory everlasting!

D. I shall not forget your skull-lecture.

F. With regard to pictures, they are all scriptural or historical. He would not admit of any, be the value what it may, if it tends to convey *false* ideas, or *vicious* ones.—He says, “I am sure there is *corruption* enough in the heart; there needs no provocatives!” He parted with this picture to *us*, from an apparent motive that *we* also might learn so much the more; not live in a

*careless* manner, nor yet ‘be *sorrowful* as men without hope;’ but believing the great truths contained in the *New Testament*, rejoice in the *God of our salvation*, and triumph in his merits, whom we receive as our *mighty prophet*, *lawgiver*, and *king*, our *true and unfailing friend*, our *redeemer*, and our *God!*—

D. In these several views we cannot but pay honour to our old cousin's picture, whimsical as it appears to be, at the first view:—And when I am married, if so it should happen, if my husband should not be so good a *christian*, as every man ought to be, I will preach to *him*, and take the skull for my text: I will take advantage of what you have so agreeably and instructively explained to me: I will supply by *consideration*, what *he* or *I* may want in *experience*: and seeing that the *phrenzy* of so considerable a part of mankind is so great, as appears by their *thoughtless*, *foolish*, *vicious* pursuits, we will endeavour to preserve ourselves in our *right minds*, one means being *this picture of a skull*.

F. Your intention is good: and it will be a cheap way of doing the business, if you can accomplish it. I hope you will have no occasion for such a monitor: but if you should, trust not entirely to this emblem of mortality. Though we naturally turn our eyes from objects which remind us of death, a *real skull* may be so familiarised, as to make as little impression on the mind as a *tea-pot*. However, take *all the advantages* you can of *this skull*, and of every other object. In the mean while I am glad to find, *I* am not preaching in vain. You, *Mary*, are better than a *thousand careless creatures*, ‘who shut their ears to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely.’

D. I have long since resolved to do my best, to learn some good from every thing.

F. Do not imagine, my child, from what I say in contemplating this object, that I esteem it consistent with the dignity of religion, to make absurd and *fanatical* likenesses of things. Every part of the visible world proclaims the Deity!—Whether we look up to the heavens or down upon the earth, we should contemplate the invisible things of God, by the objects he has set before our eyes: and let this *skull* remind you, there is no repentance in the grave: And whilst you breathe the vital air, never cease to think, that *sorrow with amendment*, is the only tribute you can pay for your offences!—Remember, my child,  
that

that he who gave us the *law of life*, yielded to *death*. He has declared *his yoke* is easy, and his burthen light. He came to abolish those burthenfome and expensive ceremonies and ritual observances of the mosaical institution; and yet to carry our thoughts back to the origin of those rites. His blood has been a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the world,—if the world will *hear* and *obey*. You *understand* your religion: There are but two ordinances: The one, the covenant made by the Almighty, with the great father of the faithful, renewed to every christian in *baptism*.—Would to God the rational followers of Christ, were awakened from the sleep of ignorance and indolence, to consider *this as it is!*—For the *other* covenant, you and I need not go up to *yonder mountain* to build an *altar*, and kill a *ram* or a *he-goat*, and light a fire and burn it, that the incense may go up to heaven as an offering for our sins. No: we are to commemorate the *death of the lamb*, that was slain for the sins of the world! To repair to the altar, which is built to our hands, in our parish church, and receive the sacred elements, sacred as “an *outward* and *visible* sign of an *inward* and *spiritual* grace,” that the *incense of our prayers* may ascend up to heaven! Thus we *christians* offer up the sacrifice of our hearts, by worshipping God in *spirit* and *in truth*, imploring his mercy; that as *bread* and *wine* nourish the animal part of us, the remembrance of the occasion of this solemn celebration, may *nourish* our souls unto everlasting life. The folly and perverseness of the *times*, oppose these plain obvious truths, these important duties, so easy to understand, if those who have *eyes* would see, and those who have *ears* would *hear*. The *common people*, alas! seem solicitous to shut out the light of the *sun*. They will not hear the *Son of Righteousness* inviting them to *remember* him.—In this respect they act as if they lived in the ages of darkness! When will they open their eyes to “behold the things which belong to their peace, before they are hid from their eyes for ever!”—After this manner, my good cousin talks to his children, and gives them large and comprehensive ideas of what has passed in the world, from righteous *Abel*, through generations of men, down to the moment in which he is speaking to them,

and says he, “I thank the Almighty, they hear me with attention, and forget it not!”

D. This manner of treating the subject gives the mind a very comprehensive view of *religion*, and of man’s importance to himself, as a creature formed by the finger of God for the great ends and purposes of *religion*. Methinks I receive the deeper sensibility, of the natural inclinations of mankind to religion, and of the manner of expressing by *sacrifices*, their hopes and fears, through a long succession of ages, till the Saviour of the world appeared, to shew us the sure path to everlasting joy. My cousins would not act like themselves if they were not deeply attentive to such discourse; and I perceive from whence it is, they are so *wise* and *joyful*. I observe with much pleasure, that their father lays as great stress on the observance of the *christian duty* of receiving the sacrament of our Lord’s supper, offering the true *christian sacrifice*, as you have done on so many occasions of instructing me. The more I consider this matter the greater is my sorrow, to behold our neighbours plunged into such a depth of stupidity; such a dreadful rebellion against God, as to persist in not obeying the commands of their *dying Saviour*.

F. You talk as if my labours were well bestowed, and you cheer my heart in making me think they are so. You will still be the better able to instruct your friends and acquaintance, and shew them what it is that creatures owe to their *Creator*; and what incense of *praise* and *thanksgiving* they ought continually to offer: for though *God* is in *heaven*, and *man* is as a worm crawling on the *earth*, yet hath the Almighty assured him, he will accept this *sacrifice* of *praise* and *gratitude*, and that the sweet savour of it, will ascend even to his throne, as grateful incense.—What absurd notions must that man form of God who thinks of *pleasing* him, yet *obeys* him not; or that *disobeying* him, he shall not draw down vengeance on his own head!—The Saviour of the world left it in command, even with his *dying words*: *Do this in remembrance of me!* As to my cousin, he is a *christian*! He says, “Can any man act a consistent part, and not remember Christ, in the manner which he, *our great Lord* and *Redeemer himself*, hath commanded us to remember him?”

## CONVERSATION XXI.

At their Cousin Robert's.

*Description of several fanciful serious decorations of their cousin's library, and other apartments. Observations on the sabbath-day, particularly with regard to the iniquitous practice of those who spend their time in business or amusement, and neglect the public worship.*

D. AFTER your dissertation on the skull, with the assistance of my cousin Elizabeth, I have been copying writings from the sentimental decorations of my cousin's library.

F. He has not many books: he says he has been too much in active life to enjoy time for reading: and that he apprehends a little reading and much thinking is better than much reading and little thinking. He has had great opportunities of reading men in their lives and manners. This, with a thoughtful turn of mind, seems to have made him what he is. But what have you collected, Alary?

D. I have copied the inscriptions on the pedestals of several moral figures. Fortitude is displayed with her emblem of a pillar, as expressive of stability. On the pedestal are these lines:

*The sweetest Friend and Patron of mankind;  
The Pillar which supports Reason and Faith,  
With all their bright and shining attributes!  
'Tis thine to taste the real good possess,  
And triumph o'er the ills thou sufferest.  
At sight of Thee, OPPRESSION flies dismay'd,  
And LAUGHING FOLLY hides her face with shame.*

F. You understand his meaning. What admirable properties are ascribed to Fortitude, but she loses her name when she is employed in trifles.

D. I understand it perfectly: her companion is Prudence, looking at herself in a mirror, with a serpent in the other hand. On her pedestal is written in a fair character:

*PRUDENCE, 'midst all the virtues, stands approv'd  
Harmless as doves, and as the serpent wise.  
As the bright mirror shows the face of man,  
She sees and notes similitudes in things.  
Her throne is built on JUDGMENT'S solid base,  
And SOLEMN SILENCE guards her sanctuary!*

F. This is truly descriptive of Prudence. I What does a civic crown mean?

F. It

hope you will remember these lines in the conduct of your life.

D. I trust I shall: next to her stands Contentment, looking down on a crown, which lies at her feet, to denote her superiority over all earthly gifts. On her pedestal are these words, which I understood, allude to a monumental inscription of his friend, a sea officer, who lately died: (a)

*To find the soul calmly resign'd to part,  
Is of all earthly bliss the most complete;  
For if the lab'ring bark climbs hills of seas,  
It straight must fall again in the deep vale.  
Or if the roaring cannon vanquish foes,  
Triumph herself must yield her trophies up.  
Here we behold the vanity of life,  
Where fortune smil'd and frown'd in various forms,  
Still scanty in dispensing solid joy!*

Opposite to these figures is Gratitude, with a lion at her feet on one side, and an eagle on the other. The lion, I was told, alludes to the story of the Roman slave, who was condemned to be devoured by a lion. This king of the beasts, upon the man's appearing, knew him to be the person who had once taken a thorn out of his foot, and instead of devouring, fawned upon him.

F. I know this story is related with the solemnity of a truth; if it be false, it is well invented to express the force of gratitude.

D. Her pedestal explains her attributes thus:

*If KINDNESS once a lion's rage o'ercame,  
What is a man estrang'd from GRATITUDE?  
Behold her looks, how tenderly she weeps!  
Her brows adorned with a Civic Crown,  
Emblems of trust, dignity and worth!  
As the strong eagle mounts to Heav'n's high arch  
Rejoicing, on her wide expanded wings,  
She joins with angels in their grateful praise!*

(a) Alludes to a chamber monument at the Marine Society's Office in Bishopsgate-street.



*F.* It was only a *wreath of leaves*, but it was in the highest esteem among the ancient *Romans*, being given to those who had guarded a fellow-citizen, and saved his life in battle.

*D.* Her companion is *Friendship*, with a branch of palm in one hand, the other held up to her heart. The lines on her pedestal are :

*Her garb is simple, her deportment mild,  
And on her breast most pure she lays her hand,  
Emblems of Truth and sweet Sincerity.  
Without these virtues she disdains to dwell  
In habitations with the sons of men !  
The palm which grac'd Messiah's sacred way,  
Denoting triumph o'er his vanquish'd foes,  
With peace on earth, good-will to fallen man,  
She holds as token of her attributes,  
Standing secure amidst the darts of death !*

*F.* Is not this strongly expressive of the purity of manners and constancy of mind essential to friendship ?

*D.* Most truly : the figures which form the two wings, are *Charity* and *Hope*. *Charity* is represented with a flame issuing from her head, and with the horn of plenty in her hand. On her pedestal is written :

*O beauteous Charity ! thy heav'nly Charms  
Diffuse both earthly bliss and endless joy !  
Behold her zeal in bright ascending flames,  
Whilst PLENTY overflows in copious streams,  
True riches shine in our benignant works ;  
In these we trust for our eternal state.  
In sense of misery behold her weep,  
While Peace and Mercy brighten in her Eyes.  
So Human Kindness, doth in sweetest notes,  
Charm all the passions of the soul to rest ;  
Shewing how best to form our lives by laws  
Replete with solid hopes of Heavenly joys !*

Her companion is *Hope* : she is seated with a *wreath of flowers* round her head ; her *right* hand on her breast, holding an *anchor* in her *left*. This seems to be the *true companion of charity*, when duly exercised. The inscription runs thus :

*The mighty Prophet of the human race  
Who knows the heart of man, bids us rejoice:  
Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world !*

(*a*) The original figures of *Hope* and *Charity* compose part of the monument of the late Earl of Shelburne, at High Wickham, in Buckinghamshire.

*Our hope in Him is joy indeed !*

*Hope is as manna, which from heaven fell,  
Giving fresh life to her afflicted sons.  
Her balmy sweets draw comfort from distress,  
She smiles, as Spring crown'd with the gayest flowers ;  
And anchors safe amidst tremendous storms.  
On her left breast she holds her lily hand,  
And calm, in manly looks, she calls on heaven  
To evidence her true sincerity ! (a)*

*F.* Admirably descriptive of the true properties of *hope*.

*D.* Opposite to the several figures I have mentioned is a monumental statue leaning on a pedestal, on which stands an urn. This figure holds a label in his hand with these words :

*Father of all ! grant me this Good supreme,  
To think on Time, and never lose an Hour !*

On one side of the pedestal is a circle in allusion to *eternity*, round which are these words :

“ *Eternity thou pleasing dreadful Thought !*

On the die of the bracket, which supports this piece, is written :

*What a piece of work is man ! How noble  
In reason ! In action like an angel !  
In his image, resembling his Maker !  
The beauty of the world ! The paragon  
Of animals ! The quintessence of dust !  
Where is thy brightest form or moving, now ?  
Behold them here,—enclosed in this urn !*

*F.* These last lines are the *sentiments* of our great poet *Shakespeare*, and noble they are !

*D.* As an expression of our cousin's loyalty and piety, there is an *equestrian statue*, the bracket of which is decorated with an inscription written on vellum, in a fair character, containing a prayer for the *king* and *nation*, in these words :

*O eternal Father ! the supreme governor of all things,  
the hope of the ends of the earth, and the trust of those who believe in the resurrection of the dead !—  
We implore thee to hear our prayer, and protect thy servant,  
whom thy providence hath appointed to be our king !—Instruct his counsellors, O God ! and teach*

*teach*

teach his favorites their duty. Let justice and mercy support his throne, and guide his steps; that whilst he serves **THEE** with awe, **HE** may rule us with wisdom. Let his example influence our future kings, and generations yet unborn bless the glories of his time! Grant him a long and happy life, and when his years shall end, let him rest in thy peace, that he may reign in thy glory! Shower down thy choicest blessings on his Queen, his family, and servants; likewise on the legislators of these realms, and the clergy. Let thy gospel be diligently taught us, and thy true worship established in our hearts; that intemperance and corruption, prodigality and dissipation, may no longer prevail amongst us; but we, knowing our duty to ourselves, our country, and mankind, may render our knowledge, riches, and industry, subservient to the true ends of government, and the glory of thy name!—Teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts to solid wisdom!—Assist us, O merciful Creator, that we may discharge thy will on earth, as it is done in heaven. Give us grace that we may behold the things which belong to our peace, and never be estranged from Thee!—In Thee alone is happiness here below, and in confidence of thy mercy only, is the joyful prospect of eternity! This petition we offer at thy throne, O God, through the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, who came from heaven to reform, and offered himself up a sacrifice to redeem the world!

F. These are so many trophies of his fancy, under the guidance of a religious turn of mind. He is zealous and thoughtful in all his ways, though sometimes jocular. This prayer is truly expressive of his sentiments, and how much he thinks the welfare of his country depends on obedience to the laws of the Most High; and the peace and concord which naturally flow from such a principle.

D. He has made Elizabeth a present for her room, of a figure of a vestal offering incense at an altar, with these lines on the bracket which supports her:

*Meek, humble, and contemplative she stands,  
As if enamour'd of her own pure Thoughts,  
Trembling for fear of any blot or stain  
On her rich robe of heav'nly innocence.  
For man, perverted from the path of life,  
Feeling the tyranny of lusts untam'd,  
She stands devoted by a sacred vow:  
Sacred as fire, when ancient Rome beheld,  
This vestal charge, a pledge of empire wide,*

*Passiv'd by tenure of pure chastity!—  
Then, as the holy flame ascended high,  
The pious vestal worshipp'd her God!*

To which is added, as an admonition to the reader:

*O guard thy soul with strict religious awe,  
And in true incense let thy vows ascend,  
And all thy life be one continu'd pray'r!*

Under this are placed six pictures of beauties in various expressions of sentiment; one of them is the Nut-brown Maid, cutting her lover's name in the bark of a tree; another laments the loss of her husband; and a third in the act of devotion is looking up to heaven. These are decorated with a gilt ornament, in form of a ribband, extended over them, on which is written:

*Nor arts, nor arms, nor fortune's gentlest smiles,  
Nor all her frowns could ever yet subdue  
The mighty force of BEAUTY'S pow'rful charms!—  
Sages of old have oft maintain'd that man  
In nothing more delights: yet if the passions  
In rebellious rage usurp the sway;  
If JUDGMENT yields her sov'reign empire up,  
Or FANCY wild, distracts the human mind;  
Great NATURE'S bright prerogative's disgrac'd,  
Her charms are sully'd, and her honour stain'd!—  
Behold RELIGION points with awful looks,  
To heav'n's exalted bliss! There MORAL  
BEAUTY reigns, and PLEASURE sits enthron'd  
Dispensing joys to all eternity!*

Under these six beauties, is a convex glass, round the frame of which is written:

*Wov't thou my daughter, fairest of the seven,  
Think on the progress of devouring time,  
And pay thy tribute to humility!*

F. Very good admonition to those who are too fond of looking at themselves in a glass, as well as to others. Such fancies, being reduced to the standard of religion, render art tributary to piety. It is well when imagination acts so chaste a part, and is kept within such bounds. It would be happy if painters and statuaries, and all kinds of artists in design, were punishable when they should be judged to have departed from the paths which religion has marked out. We might then see the divine precepts of our Great Legislator, the laws of the land, and the execution of the laws of the land,

land, unite in one common cause, *the preservation of the purity of the soul*, and the means of preparing it for the bliss of angels! You have had your fill of delight in *moral, christian, agreeable company*: and may be the better for it during the whole course of your life.

D. I have indeed, been happy, and hope I shall not attend the less to my duty when I get home; for still I think of comfort in being *at home*. If home does not transport with a *variety*; it gives *command* and independency, affording *joys* more easy to *conceive* than *describe*: and while I am with *you*, I am sure I shall be *happy*!

F. Very *civilly* said; and I believe truly. I hope you will be happy, not only till we part, but through your *whole life*. *Think of God*, and delight in thinking of him! Contemplate his attributes; and from the things of nature which you *see*, ever carry up your mind to the invisible things of Him, to whose command all nature is obedient!—To-morrow, *after prayers*, let us thank our good host, for the pleasing, instructive, and most kind entertainment he has given us in so many happy days, and *set out*. I intend to return by another delightful road, though it is farther about, intending to afford you as much amusement as I can: we shall not lose our time on the road: There are objects enough to moralize upon. If we make three days, we shall get home before the *sabbath-day*.

D. I am glad of it. You hold it wrong to journey on the *sabbath-day*.

F. According to the *commandments*, we are to do *no manner of work*. The *master* and *servant*, and the *beast*, is to abstain from *labour*. This law of *Moses* was not repealed by *Christ*; but That which is *necessary* to be done, does not destroy the distinction of the day; witness the proposition of *pulling the ox out of the pit*. The duty of *public worship*, I apprehend to be the *first* concern; and this should be performed *morning* and *evening*. The day will still leave time for *pious* and *pleasing* entertainment. I have already told you some of my thoughts on this interesting subject (a).

D. Doth it not require some candour to distinguish between what *is*, and what is *not labour*; and what *is*, or is *not necessary*?

F. A little candour and common sense will explain to us, what we *may*, and what we *should*

*not* do. Many who are distinguished for *piety* and *good sense*, are of opinion, that no kind of *travelling* is warrantable on the *sabbath-day*; and some will not *dress any meat*. Some devote their whole time to *prayer* and *meditation*.—Others say, this out-runs the powers of their minds: they cannot maintain such discipline with sincerity of heart. Under such circumstances, what is to be said? let every one that standeth, take heed lest he fall.

D. What was the *sabbath-day's journey* among the Jews?

F. It seems to imply, that they might go a small distance. We are sometimes *obliged* to go a few miles, or we should not have any public worship. The *sabbath* was ordained for the *good of man*. It is sometimes called the *world's birth-day*. The word *sabbath* signifies *rest*, or *ceasing from labour*: it was appointed by God himself (b), in commemoration of the great work of creation. When the *Israelites* returned out of *Egypt*, this day was established to be kept *holy*: the *Jews* now begin their *sabbath* on the *Friday evening*, and end it on the *Saturday evening*. The *Christians* consider the *sabbath* as the *first* day of the week, as instituted by the *apostles*, to take place of the *Jewish sabbath*. The distinction of a day was early adopted by the *christians*. *Pliny*, in his famous epistle to *Trajan*, tells the emperor, that the *Christians* met on a *certain day*, which alludes to their *sabbath*. *Saint John the Evangelist* was banished by *Nero* to the island of *Patmos*. The *Emperor* was suspicious lest he might head an insurrection among the *Jews*.—In that place he wrote the *Apocalypse*, the revelations or visions—and he says, “*I was in the spirit on the Lord's-day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.*” The *Lord's-day* was the day the christians were universally agreed to set apart to commemorate the resurrection of *Christ*. It implies a memorial of *redemption*, as well as *creation*; the former being completed by the *resurrection* of *Christ* on the *third* day, his body being taken down from the cross, not to be exposed on the *sabbath* of the *Jews*. The observance of *one day in seven*, supports the *spiritual* temper of the mind: it not only recruits the *souls* of men, often impaired by the *six days* business, or pleasures of the world; but it provides for the *refreshment* of

(a) Vol. I. Part I. Conversation VI.

(b) Genesis ii. 2, 3.

of the bodies of *men* and *beasts*. The *laws* and *customs* of countries regulate what shall, or shall not be done, *Christians* differing much from each other. All those who worship *God* in spirit, and in truth, are certainly attentive to this day, more peculiarly devoted to his service. I have already had occasion to tell you, whatever innocent amusements you take, you must be mindful of the end and design for which this *happy day* is set apart, and shew *no example* which may offend those who are more strict in their notions. Whether we go *five miles*, or *five furlongs* to church, according to the situation we may be in, let us abstain from *labour*: let us not think ourselves warrant'd to make *journeys*, or allow of *stage-coaches*, or *stage waggons*, to be seen on the road; at least not till after the sun is set. Let no one dare to open his shop, even half way, as the custom of some is: nor let us countenance the *rich* and *gay*, who think themselves warrant'd to do *as they please*: and many of them, alas, are *pleas'd to act like persons* who are ignorant, or have lost their *wits*. They shew the most infamous example, by devoting their *Sunday mornings*, to their *counting-house*; or they ride out, totally neglecting the duty which would do most honour, not to their *condition in life* only, but also to *human nature*.

D. I have heard that the *Scotch* are generally much stricter in their observance of the *sabbath* than *we* are.

F. The discipline of the *kirk*, though much relaxed from what it has been, is more regular than ours; or they require discipline, and we do not. On the other hand, I have observed many *North-Britons* in *England*, more careless than common. I once heard a *Scotch gentleman* questioned. His answer was, "In my youth my parents kept me with a degree of strictness beyond measure, insomuch that when I went abroad into the world uncontroled by them, or by the ordinary custom of *England*, I declined into the contrary extreme."

D. He condemned himself: Extremes are *dangerous*. But you say he was a *gentleman*: The common *Scotch people* are not *above* being religious.

F. That which can be done consistently with the preservation of *health*, and the *sincerity* of the heart, will ever claim a superiority over *fanatic*

*cal*, as it does over *monkish* rigours, which from the nature of things, must often degenerate into *hypocrisy*, or mere form, answering no good end, or losing the true life and purity of religion.

D. But in this *pleasure-taking*, *libertine age*, is it not rather comforting to the spirit, to behold those who go a little beyond the mark, than such as fall short of it?

F. It is so: I have recommended to you to *rejoice* when the *sabbath-day* returns; not that you may be *idle*, but *employed*: busy, not in the affairs of this world, but in doing the most *grateful work*, which God requires at the hands of his creatures, even to worship *him*, to cheer their hopes in *him*; and to learn to *live*, so as to die the death of the righteous, that *their last end* may also be like *his*.

D. This is the glory of human nature.

F. It points out to us, in the clearest manner, how indulgent the *great Lord of nature* is, in all his appointments, but particularly in setting apart a day devoted to the adoration of him; and to commemorate the cause and great intention of it. It goes further than perhaps you have considered. The public worship is one of the necessary preparatives for that celebration, which prepares us for the *coming of our Lord*; I mean, the offering of the sacrifice of our hearts at his altar, that shewing forth our *remembrance of his sufferings and death*, and the great end for which he died, we may finish our course in peace, in sure and certain hopes to rise to life immortal!

D. Alas, my father! do those think of *immortality*, who trifle away life, and have such pleasure in *vanity*, and anxiously seek after the means of diverting their thoughts from the things which regard their *souls*!

F. It is amazing to observe how many there are, who from a fond presumption of a *freedom*, which they imagine to be derived from their condition, become careless of themselves; and offer incense to *folly* and *vain pursuits*; and whilst they are in the chace of *pleasure*, neglect the means of promoting their only true joy and happiness!—Whether on a visit, or at home, let you and I do our *duty*, that by the mercies of God, all may be *well with us*!—You will prepare, *Mary*, for *to-morrow*.

P A R T II.

*On the road home from their Cousin's.*

C O N V E R S A T I O N I.

*The advantages of society with the virtuous and understanding. Story of the Moor suffering the murderer of his son to escape. Story of the murderer of a jeweller. The workings of love in honest minds. What love is; the danger of it. How to wear off the impression. Prudence in concealment of love: custom renders caution necessary to women. Allegorical fable of love and folly. The only relief of folly to be found in wisdom.*

F. IT is not probable my *cousin* and I shall ever meet again! I am not the less thankful to Heaven, that we have lately had so happy an interview: I hope it is for each others good. I am the *better* for it; and he is, for That very reason, the happier man.

D. It is one of the glorious effects of virtue, to *receive* pleasure by *giving* it.

F. I have had many *pleasing*, *serious* reflexions in the sweet leisure I have enjoyed, during our visit at my *cousin's*: I have received much comfort and pleasure from *his* discourse: though the parting is the more painful. His sentiments have assisted me in forming the higher conceptions of the joys of the life to come; and the consideration that I approach nearer to it, makes the stronger impression on my mind. What is the world, and all the joys it is capable of affording me? Yet the more I see of the good part of it, the more sensible I am of the kindness of Providence, in forming my mind to delight in moral excellency. Thus taught by reason and time, my faith seems to acquire new strength: and you will easily conceive, that the more I comply with the dictates of my reason, the stronger my *reason*, and my *faith* become. Thus, as I perceive my power to *think*, I am enabled to *act* the more agreeably to my thoughts; equally

convinced, that both *thinking* and *acting* come from God; that is, when all my works are begun, continued, and ended in him, I glorify his name, with a view finally to obtain everlasting happiness. This affords my mind an inexpressible satisfaction. Whatever the *errors* or the *sins* of our lives may be, discourse with *sensible* and *pious* persons, serves to keep us in awe, and gives the mind a right bias. Few things are more to be lamented, than the *reluctance* of the volatile or trifling part of mankind to associate with those, of whom they can learn *good*; and the eagerness which they so often shew for *bad company*.

D. You feel yourself to be a happier man than you was before making this visit.

F. Most certainly: though my heart is heavy. Did I not see a *tear* standing in your eye also, *Mary*?

.....

D. I have been thinking of the excellent characters of our good friends; and whether, *honour*, *honesty*, or *piety* are most distinguished in them.

F. I am not acquainted with any character, in which true *honour* and *probity* appear in a more striking manner, than in my *cousin's*. *Nothing* can be truly honourable, which is tainted with

with guilt; nor *dishonourable*, that is innocent. Though we must take mankind as they are with respect to *education*.

*D. Elizabeth* made me promise to write to her.

*F.* If you *pledge your faith*, or make a promise, by no means forfeit it. This is a principle which is equally worthy of applause among *men* and *women*; but you are bound by *gratitude* also.

*D.* I have lately read the story of a *Moor*, that *promised* protection to a *Spaniard*, who confessed he had spilt a man's blood. It was afterwards discovered, that the person killed was the *Moor's* own son; and the *murder* committed under circumstances which rendered the *Spaniard* highly criminal. However, he told him, "You deserve to die; but *I* will not therefore offend God by any breach of *my promise*. I will furnish you with the means of escaping."

*F.* Many such stories have I heard, of the highest sentiments of honour, upon no other foundation, than a *promise* made. If the rudest part of mankind entertain such sentiments, in cases of a *doubtful nature*, how much more ought *Christians* to regard every circumstance, wherein *truth* and *justice* are concerned.

*D.* *Justice* was concerned in the case of the *Moor*, that his *promise* should not protect a *murderer*!

*F.* You may perceive, that he pronounced him worthy of death, and left him in the hands of God and his OWN CONSCIENCE. The *Moor* determined to have no burthen on his mind for a breach of his word. *Conscience* is the test of the *good* and *evil* of our lives: he can hardly know much, in regard to his own state, who is not conscious when he doeth *wrong*. If he acts *against* his conscience, he is of course condemned at the tribunal of his own mind. To give you a true notion, how *conscience* will follow us into life; a remarkable story occurs to my memory. A *jeweller* was murdered and robbed *on the road*, of a considerable value, by his own *servant*. This man had the fortune to escape justice, and went into a distant part of the country, where he set up a trade; and managed it so as to appear as having acquired a fortune by his skill and industry. Being a man of sense, and decent carriage, he was in great *esteem*: he married a young woman of a reputable family in the town; and was promoted to the rank of one of the first magistrates there. *Thirty years* after the crime was

committed, a prisoner was brought before him, accused of the *murder* and *robbery* of his *master*. The evidence was clear as to the fact; and nothing remained, but to commit the offender to prison. This man, as a magistrate, must have given his suffrage to the condemnation; or as it might be, to pronounce sentence. Struck to the *heart*, as being himself a criminal *in a like case*, he turned *pale*, and was in *great confusion*!—At length, rising from his seat, he came down, and stood at the bar with the prisoner. He arraigned himself: he related the whole matter: he gave such circumstantial evidence *against* himself, and seemed so perfectly in his right mind, that sentence was passed *against him*: and he paid the price of his own blood, for the blood which he had spilt so many years before.

*D.* This was a *judgment* from heaven, indeed! Murder, they say, never goes unpunished.

*F.* You may perceive, that the man was not so hardened a sinner, but that he wished to make all the satisfaction he could; and to suffer *in this world*, trusting in the mercies of God, that he might entertain *better hopes* of happiness *in the world to come*.—But let us not forget—As to the matter I intended to talk to you about.—

*D.* I believe, my father, that *you* and *I* have left my *cousin's* with a *good conscience*: and yet I know not how it is, my mind is not so *peaceful* as it was before I entered his doors!—The *young women* we have left behind us, are extremely amiable: I never met with such before; and God knows when I shall meet the like again! *Elizabeth*, as I was saying, desired to hear from me, particularly from *London*; and hoped I should soon get *out* of it again.—Do *girls* of humble birth ever make *good gentlewomen*?

*F.* I believe but *rarely*. The few who marry to persons of *fortune*, for the most part either become *unhappy*, by being *ill treated*, or forget themselves and grow *insolent*.

*D.* There are *degrees* of *gentlewomen*. I dare say, some girls of slender education have learnt to act in character.

*F.* It is not merely what the *master* teaches. A girl may *dress* well; she may laugh loud; dance to perfection; play on a musical instrument; and yet be very unlike a *gentlewoman*. She may be devoid of *sentiment*, and not know  
when

when she should *spe*ak, nor when she should hold her *tongue*: nor is it easy to learn to *think* and *spe*ak, but as we are familiarized in the early parts of life, at the *table* where the *gentry* learn *gentility*. Dignity of conduct and behaviour, mark out the difference between those who are educated in the polite world; and them who are strangers to such kind of *decorum*. Some people of fortune are vulgar: but I speak of the impropriety of matching those whose *minds* and *manners* are not *alike*; and consequently are seldom truly satisfied with each other. If perchance a *chambermaid* weds a gentleman, it is well if her condition does not change her mind; not to accommodate it to her *fortune*, but to make her fortune administer to her *pride* and *folly*. There are certainly some exceptions: I have known a *footman* converted by *fortune* into a *decent gentleman*. As to a girl, if she grows foolishly imperious, or turbulently plaintive, she will appear more horrible to her husband, than if she had been the daughter of a *duke*: though her ladyship may perchance shew as great, or greater folly. You are going to town: you will see how fine folks live. If you are wife, *Mary*, let not your fancy loose to think of tying the knot for life, with any man above a *farmer* or *tradesman*; one who is *honest*, and not *weak*. If any *gentleman* should *honestly* or *dishonestly* commend your person, as if he wished to possess it, let it pass as *words* which he may be accustomed to speak. In the *first* case, it may be his *opinion*, which he had better have *concealed*; in the *last*, guard yourself by shutting your ears, and *fly* from the *snare*. *Fortune* is represented *blind*; and whilst her *wheel* goes round, some *fall*, whilst others *rise*; and none of us can say with certainty, how she will court us: but do not *you* court *her*, to endanger a *happiness* which is *within your reach*. Do not attempt to *climb* up the ladder, when *modesty* may forbid your putting your feet on the *first round*. There are who have abundance, yet *enjoy* it not. If you have *wholesome food*, and *appetite* to relish it, with a *mind at ease*, and a *hope of Ulys* to come, think yourself happy, *my dear Mary*. Many a partner of a *duke*, could never say such pleasure filled *her* heart!

D. What charming views are these!—I am glad we are going home!

F. And yet you look sorrowful, and say your

*mind* is not so much at *peace* as it was.—When *yours* is troubled, *Mary*, *mine* sympathizes. You mentioned *Jonathan* at my *cousin's*?

D. What of him?

F. You made a kind of complaint, as if you were *disspleas*ed; and yet charged me to say no *evil* of him. Tell me, *Mary*, what is the *matter*?

D. Will you excuse me, *my father*, if I say no more of him?—I have nothing to complain of.—And perhaps the less I talk of *him*, the better.

F. You have always opened your heart to me, as your *friend*. I feel myself uneasy, lest any *concealment* should nestle in your thoughts, to breed *disquiet*.

D. Indeed, my father, it is *nothing* that I believe will do *him* any harm: nor do I fear *any evil* to *myself*.

F. Any harm!—Come child, tell me if he has made an impression of *LOVE* on your heart; or that you think you have made one on *his*.—I dare say, twenty-four hours airing, on this blithefome road, will give it to the wind.

D. I confess to you, that I *think* of him when I *would* not: and yet I know not of any reason, why I *should* not; for he hath much goodness of heart, as the tender manner of expressing himself proves. When he took his leave, he threw his arms round me, and with tears in his eyes said, “My dear, *dear cousin*, *farewel*!—Continue to be as *good* as you are, and I shall be very happy in hearing of your *welfare*.”

F. And what of this, child?

D. I only say, he meant *no harm*: and I am only *grateful* when I think of him.—

F. I know more of the *heart*, my child, than you do: Young women do not think with disquiet of young men, merely because they are *grateful*, or that they believe them to be *good*: it were better to think how to avoid *every man*, because there are so many *bad ones*, than disquiet yourself because you have found a *good one*. Tender thoughts run swiftest through the mind, and derive strength from exercise. *Lovers* have eyes and ears, quicker than other men: their sensibilities are stronger; and their voices have more melody in each others ears, than the most *seraphic music*. Know this, *my daughter*, and chide your thoughts.

D. My dear father, you talk, as if you ima-

gined

gined I am in love with *my cousin Jonathan*; as you did the other day, as if *he were in love with me*.

*F.* I talk as it both were *possible*; and I mean, that if either be true, one of you is *unguarded, weak, or foolish*.

*D.* I hope I am not the *weak or foolish* party. I will forget him—*if I can*. Is it true, that *love* improves manners, by the desire the sexes have to appear amiable in each others eyes?

*F.* Love, as an *affection of the soul*, enlarges and improves the mind, and holds affinity with angels; but as an *appetite of the body*, it is common to brutes. True love is allied to *virtue*, and can no more die than virtue herself: *Constancy* is united with her, and they live and die together. When love is seated in *reason*, it is *judicious*; when supported by *virtue*, it is the scale by which we may ascend to *heavenly love*. As the genial motive implanted in the breast, whence all the dear relations of *husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister*, spring, it wears the face of an angel! In this view, it is the *noblest passion of the soul*: and hath generally the power of controuling all the others. *Fear, hope, and pride; anger, pity, and despair*, are subject to it: yet, we often find it so blended with our *animal nature*, and so imperfect in *strength*, it doth not *command itself*. Nothing is more solemn and awful; nothing more *absurd and capricious*, than *love*. Like *fire*, to which it is often compared, though an admirable *servant*, it is a terrible *master*! We sometimes see it make the *madman* sober, and the *sober man* mad. What *treachery, perjury, adultery, and murder*, hath it not produced!—Like a *devouring monster*, concealing his cloven feet, it preys on *innocence*. What numbers of heedless victims have been offered at the altars of *love*!

*D.* Your account of love is as *terrible* on one side, as *pleasing* on the other. I believe many an *honest girl* hath been blameable in giving way to her affections: yet, being *really honest*, she will smile at sorrow and disappointment, even in the agonies of death, rather than trespass against *virtue*.

*F.* Very true, *Mary*. The evil part arises from the *bad minds* of offenders: but remember, that an *honest man* in love, may *talk* the language of his heart, perchance in terms which do honour to human nature; and yet he may *act* a *foolish* part: he cannot act a *wicked* one, with-

out giving up his character. The philosopher owns the *power of love*, and under certain conditions, submits. Nothing is more *serious*, nor any thing more *comic*, than this passion, as it affects the mind. Nothing is so generous, or so *base* but occasionally proceeds from it.

*D.* These are properties which seem *incon-sistent* with each other.

*F.* It may be happy for you, if you never experience whether they be *true* or not.

*D.* The proverb says, “ Follow love, and it will flee thee: flee love, and it will follow thee.”

*F.* Is not this a token of its *capriciousness*? Yet, it is one proof how nature guards our *native modesty*, and draws the line between the *rational* part of the creation, and the *brute*: and this distinguishes the *chaste woman* from the *prostitute*. Love is *blind*: nothing is so common, as mutually to ascribe to the *object beloved*, *qualities* not possessed; *accomplishments* *she* is a stranger to; *perfections*, of which there is not so much as the idea, in the mind of the person beloved. What is this, but *falling in love* with the creature of *one's own brain*?

*D.* Do you think this often happens?

*F.* Very often. You will also hear him, who is become *wretched* beyond description, by this very affection, plead that it is of all the other passions, the most *harmless*.

*D.* The most harmless—yet makes him wretched! It is strange, that such *disorders* of the soul should be created by the sight of a *human face*!—If *beauty* makes such impressions on the mind of some persons, how are they to prevent it?

*F.* How are the impressions of *anger, pride*, or any other passion prevented? If reason condemns it as a *foolish fancy*; the wife, believing it to be so, and thinking it of an evil tendency, will endeavour to *check* it: they will be watchful of their eyes, that they may not *stray*: They will contemplate the superior excellency of *moral beauty*, and strive to give their minds a bias in favour of it, rather than of an *external* form, which, however bright and attractive it may be in the eyes of the lover, often conceals *bitter darkness*. It would be wise to consider the whole species as beautiful; or endeavour to view the whole with equal applause or indifference.

*D.* But love is not confined merely to *comeliness of person*.

*F.* Not



F. Not comeliness of person *only*, but it is the beauty of the person, as it appears to the lover, which generally affects him. No one falls in love with *deformity*, more than with crookedness of temper and disposition.—There is nothing so fantastical as the *imagination*! The same object appears very differently to different persons; and to the *same person*, at *different times*: otherwise we should not see so many proofs of *inconstancy*. Whether we suppose the whole of the species to be *beautiful*, or the whole to be *uncomely*, no *wise person* gives a loose to fancy, on which beauty depends. The truest way is to make a covenant with our eyes, that they shall be under the command of *reason*, and see nothing which the mind apprehends to be hurtful.

D. This is a *safe doctrine*: but I fear the eye *will see*, as the ear *will hear*, what is pleasing to it.

F. If the eye *will see* what it should not, it is a proof that the heart is perverse. It is true, man is an *engine*; but he is also an *engineer*: he is the *thing* directed; but he *directs*; and it costs great pains for any one to persuade himself to the contrary. He may complain of the violence of his passions, when he should complain of himself, that he has taken no pains to regulate them. As moral agents, we feel *pleasure* or *pain*, in That which the mind *approves* or condemns; and therefore we can hardly mistake, when it is *ourselves* are in *fault*. The advice of the *Royal Psalmist*, who knew what it was to *trespass*, recommends us to *offer incense*, not at the shrine of the *affections*, but at the altars of *righteousness*—to pay homage to *virtue*—to stand *in awe*, and *sin not*—to commune with our *own hearts*, in our chamber,—and to be still!—In other words, he would that we should lull our passions to *rest*, and let our *reason* maintain its authority. Some are framed more susceptible of *love* than others; but their sensibility, so far as the habit of indulgence is concerned, is certainly more their *fault*, than their *misfortune*.

D. I can easily conceive this: but are there not *occasional accidents*, which imperceptibly involve people in great difficulties of this kind?

F. Every event may take the name of an occasional accident: but where virtue reigns in the heart, and the passions are in a habit of control, few are involved in *great difficulties*.

D. If *men* were not to see *women's faces*, nor

*women men's*, there could not be much of this weakness in the world.

F. This I believe is verified in the *Eastern nations*: but the commerce of the sexes among *them* is much less refined. It is the *face* which generally catches the fancy; though to an ordinary observer, it may have no expression, but *mere feature and colour of skin*. But still I allow, that in the face the *graces* dwell: thence fly the shafts, which poets feign to wound the hearts of men; and from which *fancied* wounds, do the sexes often find *real* pain, trouble, and inquietness, *even to death*. Such is the force of *imagination*!—Nature, having a great end in view, hath ordained, that the *fancy* shall be subject to such impressions: and these sometimes *please* or *perplex*, beyond description: nor can she make any thing of such moment to us, as the love of the sexes towards each other. But for the same reason, the terms and conditions of their union, are guarded by all the sanctions of *divine* and *human* laws. The *wife*, I say, are watchful, and restrain their fancy; and some, most happily, have no *fancy* for *beauty* in the person of a woman. Remember this, *Mary*, that *love*, like *conscience*, hath its good and evil *attendant spirit*: and it is not uncommon for the *evil* one, to bait his hook with an *appearance* of *virtue*, in hopes to catch a *saint*. He who may combat the art and cunning of an abandoned woman, may not be able to face the eyes of a *virtuous* one, who perchance hath captivated him; nor trust himself to hear *her* speak, whose voice, in his ears, hath the property of *enchantment*; or in other words, gives strength to fallacy and delusion! The pageantry of external show, makes the untaught peasant gape with wonder; and *beauty* measured by the eye, though it may tie down men more knowing, is but a *flower*.

D. An *honourable* and *virtuous love* is often created by beauty; and this sometimes conquers even the *vicious*.

F. Some wicked men caught by the eye, have been reformed by women of virtue: and a wicked woman may be reformed by a man. *Love* ought to have this effect, to render the conjugal state such as Providence means it should be. There is a huge difference in the measure of the *wrong*, where love hath seized the *virtuous*, or the *vicious* mind: for it still comes to this. Love changes its colour, according to the mind it takes possession

possession of: but *chastity, humility, meekness,* are not always, of themselves, sufficient preservatives against the impressions of it: but these virtues have the property of shielding us against its most dangerous effects; whilst *lust* and *impetuous pride* brook no repulse. Where *love* gains an ascendancy, in a *good mind*, there shame of doing wrong, restrains: and when no better weapons are employed, the united force of *modest pride*, and *decent shame* perform wonders, in reducing this passion to the yoke of *reason*.

D. Wonderful is the goodness of God, in requiring nothing of us, but as he gives us power to perform it, if we use the assistance he affords us!

F. Well observed, *Mary*; so it is: and in no case can we forget *religion*, without forgetting ourselves. *Prudence* in love, is vulgarly supposed to be a *contradiction*, because so many act *imprudently*; but there are various circumstances to be considered, before we *pronounce sentence*. Prudence frequently prevails, even by mutual consent of *true lovers*: and so far from destroying the good part of the passion, it prevents many of its *evil* consequences to society.

D. I believe there are few, who please their *fancy*, even in *marriage*, against their *better judgment*, but in the issue heartily repent of the bargain.—Are not *women* at a disadvantage in discovering their likings.

F. In this respect custom is against you, yet not so, but that you sometimes *court* the man, and make gratitude create love, or confirm it. That *fancy* often deceives cannot be disputed: though it is that which furnishes a great part of our *pleasures* and our *pains*. Mankind, in many instances, are like the *camelion*, their colour appears according to the light in which they are seen. True *modesty* is equal in both sexes; but by the custom of the world, *women* are obliged to be the most reserved in the discovery of their affections. I think this is not quite fair, because not *equal*; though it hath *good* effects, as well as *bad* ones. Many imagine, that where *love* is, it cannot be concealed; and where it is *not*, it cannot be counterfeited: but the contrary in both cases, is sometimes proved. I grant, that people of understanding often discover *fictitious*, from *real* love; but it must be, by knowing characters and tempers. *Love* is as credulous as a *child*; or he is a *credulous child*, not easily undeceived, when he adopts a mistake.

D. If he is *blind* himself, it is no wonder he should mislead other people.

F. The *heathen* allegorical fable justly supposes *love* to be of *divine original*, and a principle that existed previous to the *creation*.

D. And according to the *christian* revelation, God is *love*.

F. It is sometimes called his favourite attribute, and represented as a motive to his creating such beings as we are; and that when we had offended, it moved him to *redeem* us. To this we ascribe his *mercy*, and to this we fall down in *humble adoration*. For want of language we use the same word, *love*, as applicable to men. Love, in its purest state, is another word for *humanity, benevolence, and christian charity*. Sometimes a propensity to these virtues is attended with the *weakness* so often seen in love. Love, as I have said, refines the heart and enlarges the understanding. As applicable to the desire of the sexes for each other, considering it as a *passion* or *affection*, it is not always distinguishable from the appetite of *lust*, except that in virtuous minds it is restrained by external forms and reserve, and opposed by the mind, when it wars against the purity of it. Like other passions, it is productive of *great good*, or *great evil*, just as it is, or is *not* restrained by *reason*.

D. It must be our own fault if *love* is abused, or administers to *sin*.

F. That is the just notion I wish you should form of it; for, alas! my daughter, we see every day, how subject it is to be *corrupted*, like other passions, by *sin*. Adam himself was not *deceived* into sin, but fondly *overcome* by love for his wife. How careful ought all his posterity to be, not to take the *reins of love*, out of the *hands of reason*. The fabulous conceit of the heathens is founded upon truth, and the reason of things.

D. What conceit?

F. It supposes *Folly* to be the daughter of *pride* and *ignorance*. She was early fond of *Love*, whom she corrupted. They soon became devoted to each other, but they never conversed together without doing *mischiefs*. Their practices not only exposed them to ridicule, but involved others in distress. *Folly* acquired the ascendancy over her companion *Love*; and, in order to play her game the better, she *blinded* him. He was so much prejudiced in her favour as not to find out his misfortune, or impute any of his sufferings

to his *dear companion*. His mother (*Venus*) however found it out, and petitioned *Jupiter* to punish the forcerers *Folly*, who had thus deprived her son of his sight. After a full hearing, *Jupiter* determined to punish them *both*, which he could not do more effectually than by compelling *Love* to wander about the earth, commanding *Folly* to be his guide.

*D.* Most excellently well conceived. This is a true picture, and I suppose universally acknowledged to be a striking likeness. But is there *no love* without *folly* attending it?

*F.* It would be hard if there were none; but in general, speaking of *love* merely as a *passion*, we may venture to pronounce, that *folly* in some disguise or other, comes close at his heels, and takes a share in his labours to vex the hearts of poor mortals, and frequently to lead them into a labyrinth of perplexities.

*D.* If they appeal to *wisdom*, she will deliver them. Mankind, I fear, are more inclined to receive *love* as their guest, though attended by his companion *folly*, than shut their doors or *hearts* against him.

*F.* I believe they are. If *folly* has often a great influence in the disposal of our hearts, *experience* teaches us what the consequence is: and if we will not learn from *others*, we can complain only of ourselves. *Folly* often pretends

to be *wise*, and renders men satisfied with their share of understanding, be it ever so small. We frequently find that the *greatest fools* consider themselves as the *wisest men*. There is a mixture of *folly* in the cup of those who are universally deemed *wise*: and if all men are in some degree sensible of the power of *love*, it is no wonder they should be all agreed to make allowance for the influence of *folly*.

*D.* It is well when we listen to conviction, and do not pay too dear for entertaining such *dangerous guests*.

*F.* True, *Mary*: *folly* indulged, takes the character of *sin*, and becomes so *treacherous* as to meditate and often accomplish our *destruction*. Upon the whole, beware of *love*, lest *folly* should be his counsellor, and betray you into a snare that may cost you the *peace of your mind*, which is the substance of your happiness.

*D.* That will be paying more for the pleasure of entertaining him, than he may be able to retaliate. To live secure against falling into his clutches, requires much care.

*F.* It seems to be more easy to *get out of his hands*, than totally to prevent falling into them.—

.....  
Let us stop a little, and take a view of this delightful country, the *charms* of which we may contemplate *without any danger*.

## CONVERSATION II.

### *On the road Home.*

*The guilt of seduction. Uprightness in love essential to common honesty.—The influence, properties, and inequalities of love in different minds. Its various effects. Productive of good or evil, as directed by reason. The inconsistency of the human mind, with respect to love and virtue. Moderation in all desires, essential to virtue and happiness.*

*D.* DOES it often happen that *women* imagine themselves to be the objects of men's love, when nothing more is thought of, or intended, than *civility* and *good-nature*?

*F.* In *love*, *Mary*, as in all other workings of the passions, there are almost as many degrees of *folly*, as there are *hearts*: but the *civility* and *good-nature* of some men, have really more the air

of *love*, than the real affection of others, whose manners are not *courtly*. When a woman *wishes* to be the object of a man's love, she may easily *mistake*: or if she is *afraid* of being so, she will sometimes misconstrue his conduct. I have also met with some women so suspicious, they drew conclusions from trifling incidents; and others so vain, as to imagine, every man that looked

at them, was wounded by the darts which flew from their eyes.

*D.* Poor creatures!—But some men, I suppose, are so weak, and some so vain, as to err frequently in the same way.

*F.* You, my daughter, are subject to assaults, not only from the reality of your own affections, and the passion of men; but also from their vanity: some men have a peculiar satisfaction in betraying girls. And a great part of my sex, is less honest in love, than in other cases.

*D.* Less honest in love!—May a man be honest, and not honest in love? Can honest men act like villains?

*F.* You argue closely, Mary. A real honest man, must acquit himself as such, though it be to his own mortification. He who deceives a woman to her injury, whether in her reputation, or her person, seems to be more guilty than a robber, who only takes his neighbours goods, which he can do without. O 'tis a horrid deed to hurt an innocent defenceless woman; or take advantage of her poverty or distress! If, being fallen from the heights of virtue, we do not endeavour to lift her up: if we aggravate her distress, by increasing her iniquity: or plunge her into the depths of misery, never to rise again!—Doth he not call down a heavy curse on his own head who is the author of such evils?

*D.* If this be not guilt, there is no difference between virtue and vice.

*F.* Yet where there is no violence, nor any legal proof of injury, the laws stop short. The punishment is only the abhorrence shewn by the world, or self-reproach. The unwary girl, must stand to the consequences; and, according to the Persian proverb, “Sleep in the bed she hath made.”—In the commerce of the sexes there are many cases, particularly of ingratitude, which are not cognizable by human laws; while shame, which often prevails in the breast of the woman who offends, hides the greater crime of the men.

*D.* To be wary, is to be wise.

*F.* Love, in the most comprehensive sense, is the foundation on which the happiness of life is built: but That which is ruled by appetite, is a dangerous thing!

*D.* Love which is governed by the fancy only, can subsist no longer than the power of fancy lasts; and I am sensible this is not to be trusted.

*F.* Very little dependance can be made on the steadiness of fancy?

*D.* But fancy and understanding may unite in a common approbation of love.

*F.* They often do: I speak of the numerous instances, wherein they are at variance.—But all excess verges to destruction; for although the doctrine is not much attended to, it is most true, that we can do no harm to another, without hurting ourselves.

*D.* This is a glorious principle; I wish it were attended to, particularly in love.—What temper of mind is best, to guard us against the impressions of this passion?

*F.* Not always That which is best in the general value of it. You may easily conceive, that the gentle, patient, and humble, who most easily restrain themselves from violence of passion, are not therefore the least susceptible of love, nor perhaps the least credulous in their expectations of happiness from it.

*D.* So I imagine; or we should not see so many good women become such dupes, by their marriage with worthless men.

*F.* The language of true love, Mary, expresses the integrity of the heart; yet it is never to be trusted, without caution: she who makes no preparation for a retreat, in case of danger, may be obliged to surrender at discretion; and find herself at length in the hands of an enemy, instead of a friend.

*D.* It is equal folly and wretchedness, in those who convert love into an instrument of deadly mischief to themselves: but he must be the most abandoned wretch in the world that deludes the innocent.

*F.* Except him who forsakes her whom he hath deluded.—You talk according to the generosity of your resentment, knowing but little how the world connives at offences, of which so many are guilty. The wicked often punish themselves: conscience follows their evil actions, to sting and goad them.—But, know my daughter, there are many of my sex, who act as if women were but the mere creatures of their desires, and think but little of any consequence that may attend criminal gratifications.

*D.* You grant that such persons act with cruelty and injustice, and deserve severe punishment in this world.

*F.* As severe as the degree of the misery they create! But the great law of retaliation in these cases, I say, is not often attended to; and the injustice committed, as rarely compensated.—Of all the miseries of love, the most dangerous part

part is the *extravagance*, to which it sometimes leads its *retaries*, even to seek relief by rushing violently into *eternity*!

D. What a story have I lately heard, of a *young woman*, who despairing of an union with the man she loved, *banged herself upon a tree*!

F. This was a sad event indeed! I remember a *young man*, in my neighbourhood, whose fellow-servant having given him a refusal to marry him, in a rage of love and *pride*, for *pride*, I apprehend, hath a great share in these cases, hung himself by an iron rail under her window.—Actions of so wicked a kind, but rarely happen. Such *desperate freaks*, do not invade the common run of *suitors in love*.

D. It would be miserable indeed, if they did.

F. *Love*, which strictly deserves its name, should preserve its good properties: and the fewer bad ones it has, the more it provides for the common good. It is hardly describable in all its windings: It is made up of *pure faith, fancy, wishes, service, observance, adoration*. It is composed of *patience and impatience; purity and desire; humility and pride*, and a long catalogue of I know not what. In some, it is shown by a careless desolation in dress and manners, with *cheeks hollow, and face unshaven*. Others, of more open tempers, weary their hearers with the praises of their mistress; which few, perhaps, believe she deserves. It goes farther yet: the lover on his knees, before his God, thinks of his mistress, and makes himself an idolater!—How many in their *earthly occupations* feel themselves unfit, because the object of their love is *absent*; and in her *presence*, they know as little what they should *say or think*. Their thoughts throng so tumultuously upon them, no room is left to *muster* them:

D. Your account is more descriptive of *madness*, than favourable to what is commonly called *love*.

F. So *you* may think; but thus it is with great numbers, who suffer themselves to be led by a blind impulse, as if they had indeed discarded their *reason*. Supposing the blood to be *tame*, and the *heart obedient* to judgment, let us seek for the true line of life. Consider what the *gospel purity* requires, in support of the rational, moral nature of man, and his responsibility for his *thoughts and actions*. The best intentioned person may be betrayed, by a *foolish wish* to possess the person of another, under the *gentle name of love*, to such thoughts, as are re-

proachful to the *heart and understanding*. To say, “*thus far thou mayst go, but not farther*,” is a line of liberty, which I fear hath often proved a clue to destruction. You see how wary the *chaste* part of your sex is, in the most distant *appearance* of indulgences in *love*; though the same persons may secretly pine in thought. Those who are less chaste, or only *think of appearances*, often cherish a serpent, which stings them to death!—Every day furnishes fresh instances, how foolish and inconsistent a part many poor mortals act. They *pawn* their *time*, their *thoughts*, and their *experience*,—and purchase with the price, an instrument of torture to the mind, cruelly oppressing their *better judgment*. It is dangerous, in all cases, to suffer this passion to throw up works, or plant *cannon* against the *nobler faculties* of the soul.

D. I perceive that the mind’s *richest cordial*, may be converted into a dose of *poison*.

F. Ay, *Mary*, and with an *envenomed* fire burn up the entrails. There are other deadly draughts besides *arsenic*. Preserve your *reason*: From the moment that *virtue* is driven from her throne, there is no order in the *empire of the soul*: the government of the *man* becomes a prey to *anarchy and confusion*. Whether madness be created by a *raging fever*, or a *fond fit of love*, it is still *madness*; and either in *love or hatred*, if we trespass against *heaven*, by heaven we shall be punished. Tho’ *religion* is not always attended to, in these cases, as it ought to be, yet the contest is frequently referred to the *court of conscience*.

D. *Advice* is seldom welcome, I believe, when it crosses a favourite inclination. For my own part, I am truly sensible, that if the *tender passions* are not restrained, they operate as *powerfully*, and sometimes as *dangerously*, as the *harsh convulsions of the soul*. It doth not follow, I presume, but that *love*, in the bosoms of a generous and manly pair, where gentle passion and sound judgment are duly mingled, emulates the highest joy that man can boast of.

F. I grant it: I only mean to prove how necessary it is to be *cautious and advised* in love; the desires created by the object *beloved*, or the object *hated*, though very different, ending sometimes in the same kind of tragedy, of *injustice, cruelty, and even murder*. Of this the history of mankind furnishes numerous instances. He who *hangs himself* for a disappointment in *love*; or he

who is *hanged* for the consequences of his *hatred*, hath fought his own death, through the *intemperance* of his passion. If we lose our *wits*, what *judgment* can we pass? Is it not far better to feel a *short pain*, in suppressing a dangerous passion, or breaking off a *perilous treaty*, than be punished severely all our lives; *perhaps for ever!* To believe well of one you may happen to like, without proof of his virtue, or in *opposition* to the testimony of your best friends; or to *wish* for one with whom there is no prospect of an *honourable alliance*: what is this but *folly*?

D. The friends of *young persons*, are often severe in judging, in such cases; they forget that themselves were once *young*.

F. It happens so *sometimes*: but a woman should not therefore be the less ashamed of a passion for a man, who is generally condemned as a *worthless person*. Be assured of this, that he who is an enemy to *virtue*, can never be a friend to *love*, whatever a disordered imagination may suggest: his love of *to-day*, may easily become hatred *to-morrow*.—It may melt away like *wax before the fire*, bearing no longer the image or impression it once wore; or as a figure marked in snow, the first warm sun or shower will dissolve it. So it is with new objects in the eyes of changing or *worthless* men.

D. To *love*, and not be *beloved*, by an *equal*, seems to be most deadly to the heart; though the *folly* may be as great, and yet more *litter*, than to fix the heart upon a man, so much superior in condition, as to afford no prospect of an *union*.

F. If it be *folly*, who are the *foolish* to blame but themselves? He who is out of reach, or him by whom there may be more *loss* than *gain*, avoid with equal care and circumspection. You are sensible, that *virtue* and *happiness* are generally companions: and so long as we retain the use of reason, this will shew us the gross absurdity of indulging a tender, *fruitless* passion. If you are wife, consider the command of *every passion*, as your *greatest happiness*; and be not partial even to *love*: remembering, that those cannot be said to live *free*, whose affections are *enslaved*; nor do they act with *liberty of mind*, whose conduct is *unreasonable*.—Many a childish thing happens in *love*: and if *love is a child*, as poets represent him, and the companion of *folly*, as the fable describes, it is not strange he should want *judgment*, or plunge himself into *distress*. So way-

ward is this *foolish love*, like a *testy babe*, it will scratch the nurse, and presently all-humbled *kiss* the rod. Beware of him, *Mary*. As the forward bud is sometimes eaten by the canker before it can blow, losing its beauty in its earliest prime, love turns the young and tender wit to folly.

D. You seem to describe it very naturally. I am perfectly satisfied how necessary it is, in every case, to exercise my *reason*, and not resign it to the caprice of *fancy*.

F. On this account we should be solicitous to acquire a command over ourselves. Where *reason* and *love* unite, *peace* creëts a temple to their praise, and takes up her abode with them. The *earth*, our common parent, feeds both *man* and *beast*: but *love*, guided by *judgment* and *virtue*, is nourished by *food from heaven*.

D. Do you think so *highly of it* as this amounts to?

F. When it is such as it ought to be, not sunk in sensual gratification, nor seeking *delusive mirth*, and *foolish jollity*: nor should it hunt for *solitude*, to “sit unseen, and hear the *nightingale’s* complaining notes,” soothing distresses of its own creating; but *joyous* and *thankful* to heaven, that it hath found a *mate*, a fit companion to calm the unfought troubles of the soul, and give a *zeal* to life, and all its choicest joys. Such is the *balm* which *Heaven* bestows, to heal the wounds our pilgrimage on earth subjects us to. This is the *comfort*, this the *resource*, that the great Lord of nature, in mercy to fallen man, has so liberally bestowed!—But, *my dear child*, carry in mind this great truth, That *virtue* is the *first* and truest object of *love*, and *vice* of *hatred*. If God should be in *all our thoughts*, *religion* must direct every *affection* that can interest or attach the heart: and in this should our hopes and *wishes* centre. In the mean time, when *evils* come, it is good to understand the *cause*, that we may discover the *remedy*. The ablest physician cannot cure the patient, till he comprehends the nature of the disease: and unless we use our understandings in restraining the *madness*, and correcting the *weakness* of our hearts, how are we to prevent the *dangerous* effects of our passions?

D. Your representation of this passion when controlled, is soothing to the heart, whether we are fortunate or not. I have heard it said, that those who have never been in love are *jealous*; and that they who are often so, are *weak*.

F. Weak

F. Weak indeed! There are some, of whom we have been talking, from a *peculiar tenderness of heart*, or a *weakness of head*, which approaches to *frenzy*, every pretty face, with signatures of *gentleness*, affects them *wonderfully*.

D. Their love surely must be very changeable: it must be like an *April morn*, which, during one hour, shews all the beauty of the sun, and in the next, darkens the day with clouds.

F. I have known some men of *good judgment*, weak in this instance, and carrying a propensity to such *inconstant* kind of love with them to the grave. And men in general, however they may praise themselves, their fancies are often *giddy* and *infirm*; more *longing*, *wavering*, and *sooner lost* than *women's* are: but if they have *virtue*, knowing their weakness, they acquire *strength*, and give themselves not up to *folly*.

D. You have observed, that *liking* and *disliking*, *love* and *hatred*, make up a great part of the history of life.

F. It is in no instance more a scene of *trial*, than with respect to the love of the sexes for each other. From this we may date the *first transgression*. This levies a *host of evils* which have made inroads on the earth, from *Adam* down to this hour: But it comes to the same issue: those who exercise themselves in *virtue*, with a *determined mind*, act like *men*. The *youthful*, who spend their hours in complaining of a *propensity to vice*, or more shamefully *indulge* it, what can be the end of such a *devastation of time*? "Let us not seek the *wrinkled brow of care*, nor build a nest in hollow eyes," when *joy* should sparkle in the visage of *contentment*: let mutual zeal, and wishes for each other's happiness, be the chief business and employment of our lives. Let *charity*, the charity of a *christian*, triumph in our hearts, that the *current of our days* may glide on, making their course gentle, sweet, and pure, till lost in the wide ocean of *eternity*!

D. Charity is the pure love which saints and martyrs gloried in. But how are we to digest a regular rule of conduct from a consciousness of *inconstancy*, and convert *weakness* into *strength*? If we make the *evil* administer to the *good*, it can only be done by the proper object of our *affections*. We cannot change our *nature*.

F. No: but we may do That which God requireth to be done. Whether for the *constant* or the *variable* marriage seems to be the *best cure*, provided the woman be of the *gentle* kind,

and her person *pleasing*. As to *inconstancy* in temper, nothing is so common: but observe, that the *honest* part of mankind correct the evil, by recurring to a *sense of duty*: this *relieves the mind*, under the consciousness of *inconstancy*. In the mean time, the good wife recovers what she may chance to lose; and as occasions offer, *both parties* mutually recur to the obligations of *gratitude*, thus fighting a virtue against a vice; or one passion against another.

D. Give me the man who is constant to *one object*; whose word is his bond; "whose tears are pure messengers sent from his heart; and his heart as far from *fraud*, as heaven from earth."

F. This is the man for every woman who is not a fool:—and such there are; but it is not the fortune of every woman to find one; nor of every man to find such a woman.—

D. Surely not: which do you think the *most unhappy*, the *irresolute lover*; he who is *crossed in love*; or he who is mortified by a wicked or a *foolish wife*?

F. You propose the question well, which is the most *unhappy*. The condition of all three is bad. The *irresolute* seems less exposed to great bitterness; but he is *never happy*; and he is the least a friend to nature and his country. He who is *crossed*, repairs the evil by *another object*; or he also will become *irresolute*. In the rugged course of the affairs of life, there are *many evils in marriage*; contracts made with great difference in years, which prove unhappy: the discovery of *adverse tempers*, where years agree: pain, sickness, corroding jealousy, and poverty: These often blast the smiling spring of *love*; and all its fairest flowers hang their desponding heads, making our lives, which might be *joyful*, pass like *uneasy dreams*! At the best, the fear of losing That, which is suspended by the *tender thread* of a poor life, often eclipses the brightest noon-day of our joys.

D. *Prosperity* may give a charm to love; but *constancy* and *virtue* need it less than *vice*.

F. The greater the tenderness, the greater the sensibility of *misfortunes*: but we must prepare for all events. You see That cloud yonder: it intercepts the sun's glorious rays; whether it will bring on a *shower*, or blow off, and restore the day in all its splendour, we cannot tell: Yet we *travel on*, and trust to Providence. The *wayward* will of men being such, many are but little blessed in love; they suffer from their own

*temper*, or their partner's, as great a variety of *sunshine, calms, and storms*, as our *inconstant climate* daily shews us: but it is *their own fault*; *their sun* might shine much oftener, if they would brighten up their *own minds* with *heavenly hope*, and cherish the *comforts of good-will and peace*. If they would measure their short span of life *by this rule*, it might be happy!

D. As to *pain and sickness*, these are lightened by a partner in our *joys*. *Happiness*, I perceive, still depends on *virtue*.

F. Where there is *virtue*, the load of poverty, pain and sickness will be lightened; but when *virtue is wanting*, poverty makes *pain* more painful. Much have I seen of life!—I know that *prosperity* is apt to intoxicate and seduce; and that *fore affliction* banishes the *graces* from the brightest eyes, changing the complexion of the heart, to a sickly, jaundiced colour. To such evils are we *mortals* subject: and yet I say we may *rejoice*. Heaven, in its *choicest gifts*, means to restrain an *immoderate* affection for the things of *this world*, the better to prepare us for those regions, where *pure and unmixed love* reigns in its fullest glory! Think not, *my dear daughter*, that I mean to recommend a *solitary state*; or that you should deny your *hand and heart* to some industrious honest man, who may deserve them, when the proper time shall come. It must needs be in *love*, as in every other pleasure; where bright *reason* and *religion* smile on our affections, there we may hope to drink of the pure streams of joy, which the great Lord of nature doth present us. “Set your *affections* on things *above*, not on things on the *earth*!”

D. This counsel cannot be rejected: neither can we refuse to comply with That which says, “*Rejoice always*.”

F. I have often preached to you on this text.

D. Whether the wretched utter their *complaints*, or the happy *triumph*, you think the sexes are to each other, the *cordial drop*, which Heaven hath thrown into the cup of life, to give it a pleasing relish. *My dear father*! you at once *depress* and *cheer* my heart: while I *sigh*, I *rejoice*, in humble *hope of happiness*.—But you have not said what is the most *effectual cure* for a heart a little *sick* with love.

F. Many are cured by the *presence* of the object; by which the *fancy* is at length *undeceived*, and the *imaginary* heaven lodged in the sight often vanishes. Some find the surest remedy in

*absence*; and others in the discovery that the object of their love is not an *angel*, but a mere *mortal*; and if not a complication of *imperfections*, yet too imperfect to have any title to fascinate the mind.

D. I conceive absence to be the surest cure.

F. This I will venture to tell you; I have known several instances of young women, who had so much *strength of understanding*, and *liveliness of temper*, as to be able to *reason*, or to *laugh* themselves out of the fancy of an *ill-timed, improper, or dangerous* passion. *Love* which creates pain, would be continually *starved to death*, if he were not fed by *fancy*: and, as I have told you, those who depend on *fancy* to govern them; the Lord have mercy on them!

D. As in our ordinary acquaintance there are some, in whose company we most delight, may we not be so far indulged?

F. The degree of the delight, may perhaps approach to *love*. If it be friendship or social intercourse, as among the aged, or persons of the same sex, the question answers itself. But as you have engaged me so deeply in the subject, I will tell you, *Mary*, that in the *manly and comprehensive* view of love, to be *unhappy* because we are not in the company of a particular person, is a *proof of love*: but it is no less a proof of the *foolishness* of That heart, the *pleasures* of which are so *narrowly circumscribed*. Moaning and complaining is a very *foolish* way of spending time. *Good humour, lively spirits, cheerful company, change of objects and diversions*, seem to be the best prescriptions to heal this *sickness of the soul*: for the greatest advantage of successful, *virtuous love*, is relief from *anxious* thought. But if the passion promises *no success*, and we can furnish ourselves with pleasures more *safe and innocent*, whether they be founded in the *judgment* or *memory*; whether we acquire them by pursuits of *labour, amusement*, or by *prayer to Him from whom all good doth flow*; how absurd it is to act, as if the *heart* could become *free* by being *shackled*!

D. It cannot well recover its *strength*, by indulging its *weakness*.

F. No, my child. The *joy*, as well as the *glory* of man, is the *exercise of his reason*.

D. There is not much danger from love in *virtuous minds*; and in this age *vanity* and *self-love* make up a great part of the characters of *men and women*.

F. Yes:



F. Yes: but virtuous minds do not indulge vanity, nor vicious self-love.

D. The mind that is as free as yours, may exult in a philosophic liberty: but would you my father, have known so much, if you had not learnt it from *experience*?

F. The strength of the understanding, as well as the sensibility of the heart, combine to teach us such lessons; though sometimes too late to practise them *advantageously*!—I talk the language of the greatest masters of the passions; men who studied them most, and wrote, as you suppose I speak, from experience. You see how the human face corresponds; yet every man is distinguished, though some with such difficulty, the pen cannot describe the difference; nor the pencil delineate half the graces or expressions of human countenances. The Wise Man says,

that the hearts of men correspond as a face with a mirror. Granting a thousand undefinable differences in different men, yet we judge of the cause by the effect: we cannot see the heart in pride, anger, vanity, ambition, or covetousness; yet we see when men are *proud* or *covetous*.

D. Not in the exact proportion or degree which may really exist.

F. But we know enough to form our judgment: and though in the tender passions there is much concealment, he that *thinks* will *discern*: and if things are so, you will give me credit for the information, and learn how to guard yourself from evil. In doing this, *virtue* will become your friend, and serve you as a shield and buckler.

..... ?  
Let us alight, and lead *jolly* up this hill.

### CONVERSATION III.

#### *On the Road home.*

*The advantages of humility in regard to love, The charms of good sense and virtue, as superior to those of external beauty. Fable of the diamond and the loadstone. Fable of the tulip and the rose. Description of an unhappy match. Reconciliation to a disappointment in love. A woman the cause of bringing a man to the gallows.*

D. I Perceive, in every case, a most apparent necessity for caution, that we may not unguardedly fall into the snare. If the most tender-hearted, are the most susceptible of love, they had need be most on the watch not to mistake a *weakness* for a *virtue*.

F. The most tender are the most susceptible of *hope* or *fear*, and many other passions implanted in the human breast, which produce happiness or misery. There are some, who for a *brother* or a *sister* will *rejoice*, or shed a copious *stream of tears*, as good or ill hath befallen them.—And there are more charms in tender good affections, than in the austeries of virtue. But the desire of beauty is oftentimes the object, when the weak *deluded lover* imagines it is *pure virtue*, to which he offers his

*daily vows*, and *nightly meditations*; with this distinction however, that whilst the most *fostish* are the most apt to worship the *mere statue*, the figure in *flesh and blood*, the *best* and *wisest* may be enraptured with *strength of thought*, and *harmony of sentiment*.

D. But if the philosopher found these properties in a *woman*, whose *person* pleased him, would he despise her *form* and *comeliness*?

F. He would cease to be a *philosopher* if he did. It is for the honour of your sex, *Mary*, that *wisdom* is represented in a *femine character*; perhaps from the partiality which the sternest philosopher may entertain of a *woman*, when she supports her dignity. Nor is it more surprizing, that impressions of *love* should be received by she

the eye, than *joy* and *compassion*, or any other affections. The *face* is the index of the mind: some being made of waxey stuff, soon take the impression of love: and many are likewise so combustible, they quickly burst into a flame of *wrath*. I have frequently seen the same person agitated in both instances, in the same degree of *violence*.

D. I hope my life will be so governed by *reason*, that I may pass my days in freedom from all violence of passion.

F. This must depend on a habit of restraint: and I hope with the mercies of God, you will give yourself *fair play*; and under no pretence, sell the *glorious freedom of your own mind*, to a headstrong *will*, which acknowledges no guide! "Blessed are the *meek*: for they shall inherit the earth." Those who cherish this *christian* habit and mix it with *manly sense* and resolution, learn how to conduct themselves through life. They see things as they *are*; not as *fancy* represents them: they discover the path to *happiness*, and walk in the *fear of God*!

D. But as there are such strong affections in the soul, founded in a desire of contributing to another's happiness, it is fortunate there are *lawful conditions*.

F. It is evident, that the *Author of our nature* is no less than the *God we worship*! Happy are those who go not beyond such *conditions*! If, instead of promoting another's happiness, together with our own, or taking care of innocence, as the chief charge of heaven; in rebellious blood we oppose its ordinances, and violate its laws; what can be the effect but *punishment*? When *love* doth not offer peace at the shrine of *virtue*, it loses its name: it is *not true love*. Temperance in our *affections*, constitutes the *peace of life*, and the true sweetness of it.

D. *Beauty* seems to be the cause of much mischief.

F. Ay, *Mary*: this *judgment of the eye* is not to be trusted. The sentence is sometimes so capricious, it changes more suddenly than the weather.—Yet beauty is made up of such flimsy stuff, a distance of two yards shall sometimes *disprove the impression made on the mind*.

D. Are men so weak and capricious in their fancy?

F. Even so: yet there is in beauty something arbitrary and unyielding to caprice, which every *eye* confesses. The *royal Preacher* says, that "*Beauty* cheereth a man's countenance; and

that he loveth nothing better;" at the same time, he admonishes him to beware of its *intoxicating power*: "Stumble not at the beauty of a woman; and desire it not for *pleasure*." With regard to more generous impressions, received from superior worth, he says, "The *bee* is little among such as *flee*; but her fruit is the chief among *sweet things*:" alluding to the substantial excellency, which may be concealed under an *unpromising* appearance. Whatever the power of *beauty* may be, how are its triumphs often humbled to the dust, when opposed to *intrinsic merit* and *solid worth*.

D. The fable of the *diamond* and the *leadstone*, is very instructive. "The diamond shone with great beauty and lustre; and seeing the leadstone appear like a mere *flint*, bid him keep his distance. The *leadstone*, with great propriety, pleaded his use; as by his means the *compass* was made, by which ships steered to their port, and the commerce of the world is carried on: "I am willing," says he, "to allow you your due praise; you are a *very pretty bauble*; I am mightily delighted to see you glitter and sparkle; I look upon you with *pleasure* and *surprise*: but I must be convinced that you are of some sort of use, before I acknowledge that you have any *real merit*, or treat you with that respect which you seem to demand."

F. A most judicious and pleasing conceit! It is very obvious, that *merit* will make good its cause against *beauty*: and yet men are more apt to be enchanted by external charms, than by any other object.

D. But you men acknowledge your weakness. It is evident that beauty maintains its empire over the heart, though men often revolt against it.

F. It is governed by *fancy*; and as nothing is more an object of fancy, than a woman's face and person, what strikes *one* most forcibly, will make no impression on another. Happily for mankind, they do not all see with the same eyes!

D. Do you remember the fable of the *tulip* and the *rose*? It is wrought up with more tenderness, than that which I have just mentioned. These flowers were *both* extremely beautiful. The *gardener*, by frequently smelling to the *rose*, excited the jealousy of the *tulip*; inasmuch that she address him in these words: "Why are my beauties thus neglected? Are not my colours more bright, more various, and more inviting, than

than any thing which that *red-faced thing* has to display?" The gardener replied, "Be not dissatisfied, my *fair tulip*: I acknowledge thy beauties, and admire them as they deserve: but there are found in my *favourite rose*, such attractive odours, such *internal charms*, that I enjoy a banquet in their fragrance, which no *mere beauty* can pretend to furnish."

F. This also is an *excellent lesson* to humble the pride of *haughty beauties*: it likewise teaches men to consider, what it is which affords the most *lasting delight*, and contributes most to their *solid happiness*.

D. It seems no less to instruct my sex, how they shall adorn their souls, rather than their bodies.

F. I have sometimes seen the least handsome sister of the family preferred; as if men of understanding did not chuse to hazard their fortunes in a vessel, the more subject to be attacked by an enemy from its outward ornament, and rich appearance. *Distinguished beauty* soon captivates; *internal charms* secure the conquest. If *folly* often upholds *love* in leading-strings, the *little archer* sometimes breaks *loose*, and runs to *reason*. Where there is neither good sense, nor good nature; where a woman is a *fool*, or a mere *fine external composition*, the impression which the *eye* received, the *heart* may disdain, and the *understanding* recoil against it.—I have seen the lustre of a woman's eyes fade, and her rosy bloom of cheeks wither; yet, by the force of her understanding and address, she hath obtained as great a victory over a man's heart; and he has paid as unreserved a submission to her power, as the *greatest beauty* could ever boast of. Depend more on your *virtue* than your *face*; and subdue a man's *strength* of judgment, rather than the *weakness* of his heart.

D. You counsel well for me, my father: for let what will be the event of *my life*, I am sure I shall be the better for my *sincerity*; and probably the more prosperous for *judging well*.

F. I hope so.

D. Happy had it been for *Harry Winter*, if he had preferred *Sally Sweet*, to *Rebecca Wander*! He acknowledged, in respectful terms, *Sally's* charms; but in *his* eyes, the air, the grace, the form of *Rebecca* were so exquisite, he could not behold her but with transport: and at length, he married her. She had been used to the *triumphs of beauty*, and

never *rightly informed of any thing*. She is of so turbulent and impetuous a temper, as not to brook contradiction nor disappointment. Her *resentments* are as *keen* as her *vanity* is *uncontrollable*. All her husband's wages are hardly sufficient to find her in *top-knots*. Where is their *mighty love*!—They are *parting with mutual disgust*.

F. And will perhaps become *vicious*, as it were by mutual consent. Alas, poor *Harry*! When he contemplates *Sally's* merits, her simplicity and sweetness of temper, her *constancy*, *piety*, and *humility*;—what can he say? Happy; thrice happy had he been in the choice of her! He has discovered his mistake, by his *misery*, and laments his *fortune*! He told me the other day, "Alas! *my friend*, I have acted a foolish part! My imagination being set on fire, a thousand phantoms danced before me, by the *light* of it: but That light was *darkness*. I heard all the *harmony*; I saw all the *beauty*; I felt all the delight, which the *youthful fancy* when they are in love: not all the pleasures of the poets paradise could enchant me more! But, alas! I find I have been deluded, and led into a dream of fantastical bliss. All my joys were as transient as the morning dew! Instead of a *paradise*, I found the abode of torment: even *there*, "where I had garnered up my heart," I found it infested with foul vermin, devouring all the *substance of my happiness*. No treatment can prevail to make her *humble*: no persuasions, *generous*; no *reasoning* upon the hopes or fears of an *hereafter*, can make her That calm and gentle, That pious and resigned *Rebecca*, which my fondness had suggested to me. My eyes are opened, and I see the fatal error I have committed. O *Rebecca*! thou art tall and slender, thy person graceful: thine eyes sparkling; thy teeth white; thy lips well formed: and therefore,—like a *silly coitiff*, I have lost my *peace*! I trusted thee with my happiness; and, like an idle profligate, thou hast squandered it away! I gave thee my *heart*, and thou hast *trampled* on it. O leave me!—leave me to brood over my sorrows! Thou art a stranger to *virtue*; and I am *widow*!"

D. Poor *Harry*! with his *eyes* and *lips*! Yet am I *sorry*, most truly sorry for him. He deserves a better fate!—Have you heard of *Joseph Hartwell's* love affair?

F. *Joseph* had given his father a *promise* not to marry till he was turned of twenty-four; as he

will then become master of a little fortune, and be enabled to take care of a wife. *Joseph*, however, conceived a violent passion for *Susannah Constant*, who was equally fond of him: he struggled hard, between his word engaged to his father, on one side, and his passion on the other; till at length his love yielded to his prudence. He took an honourable leave of his mistress, with this mournful declaration: "Now am I banished from the object I hold most dear: my promise is sacred, and so is my love: I could renounce all hopes of lands or tenements, and encounter all difficulties, for the sweet, heavenly company of my much-lov'd *Susannah*. Every pleasure now vanishes, and leaves the world in desolation! Where *she* is not, all objects appear with the gloomy aspect of melancholy!" It seems better to die, than live without her!

*D.* This seems to be a kind of tragedy rant.

*F.* No: he is sincere: yet he had the resolution to tell her, "My father challenges my former promise. Perhaps I was rash to make it, and more heedless not to tell you of it. But I hope the time is near, when no impediment shall oppose my happiness; but who can tell what may happen to either of us! You may alter your mind for some more advantageous match. I do not pretend to hold you bound; yet believe me, *Susan*, I feel myself more interested for your happiness than for my own!" She owned her passion for him, and lamented his engagement to decline marriage for a season. She hoped he would continue as constant as she meant to be, and in this conflict they parted. *Joseph* seems to have cut off a limb: this is not a new-planted passion; it hath taken root; but he is dutiful to his father. I suppose it will come to a match at last.

*D.* Does *Susannah* think honourably of him for leaving her in this manner?

*F.* "If an eye offends thee, pluck it out," is the language of religion. His obedience to his father; his pious regard to his promise; his hope of preserving his love, his interest, and his honour, must reconcile her, and support him in this trial, though it is a severe one.

*D.* God grant him assistance!

*F.* The parting of lovers is a tender scene; but the heart is not so easily broken as the vulgar imagine.

*D.* Do women command love better than

men? I fear many think as much of the gratification of the vanity, as of their affection. We are more accustomed to control, and therefore may submit with so much the better grace to disappointment.

*F.* I cannot answer for this: the most benevolent of either sex, seem to be the most susceptible of sorrow, as they are of love: and these are the most happy, when well paired. The same moderation which leads men or women to a good choice, guards them against the dangers of love: and women are supposed to be the most controllable.

*D.* There seems to be neither good nor evil in the world, but a woman hath a share in it.

*F.* You make your sex a compliment, although it be at their cost. The interest of the whole will affect the whole. The wise and good of both sexes, naturally court the society of each other: and so do the wicked and abandoned. Where the harmony of social life is preserved, it is not by those who live wickedly; they either do not pray for help from God; or if they petition, not to be led into temptation, they suffer their passions to lead them into the worst company. Many a young fellow, *Mary*, has gone to the gallows, on account of a woman. Do you remember *Jery Flint*? He was a clever young fellow, and knew a great deal of good, though he practised very little. Having cast his eye on *Betty Broom*, he enticed her from her service, under the pretence of marriage; but like a villain, as he proved to be, evaded it. He was, however, very fond of her, and dressed her up like a gentlewoman. Finding his pockets grow empty, he strained his credit, and borrowed all he could. When this resource failed, he resolved to go upon the road: and the third robbery he committed, he was taken, and hanged.

*D.* Was she privy to his getting money in this way?

*F.* No: happily for her, he kept her ignorant, and was ropt in his career before he had made her an accomplice.—She, unhappy wretch! was under sore affliction for him, as you may imagine: but it turned to her good; for she repented, and disposed of her gaudy attire; and is now in her former place, and a good and faithful servant. Her master, who is a man of great compassion, assures me, she behaves extremely well.

*D.* Do you give this adventure also the name of *love*?

*F.* Call it by what name you please, he sacrificed his life, for the sake of his dear *Betty*: he was fairly *hanged* for her, though he did not, as in the case of the *poor footman*, perform the office of an executioner on himself.

*D.* *Love* seems to be almost as large and intricate a subject as *happiness*, to which it is allied.

*F.* Have I gratified your *curiosity*? Do you think you can act *with reason*, even in *love*? At all events, remember your duty to God, and you will not despise my counsel.—We have beguiled the way for many miles. Do you observe the sign of the *good Samaritan*? It is the most pious device I have seen on the road: Let us stop here and bait.

## CONVERSATION IV.

### *On the road Home.*

*Contemplation of the visible world; the path which leads to the Great Author of it. View of a house and garden, distinguished by the ingenuity of the inhabitant. Strictures on the character of a young gentleman of distinguished talents improved by study, who died at an early period of life.*

*F.* IT is from the enquiry into *nature* that the mind is carried up to *God*, the fountain of all; and the adoration of him gives splendour and delight to all his works! Whether in the *solemn temple*, or the *silent grove*; in the *cheering sun*, or *cooling shade*, we may find him in all our walks. He speaks in a *still, slow, awful* voice, inviting us to the *love of virtue*! In your humble paths, *Mary*, seek him, and you will surely find him; and finding him, your heart will be filled with joy!—And forsake him not: depart not from him for the love of any thing the *world* can give. In *this fine scene*, which so much delights us, let the mind be overcast with *conscious guilt*, the brightest sky will lower, and the whole face of nature wear a *frown*! When we are *conscious* that we are the objects of *his* retributions, who is the sovereign Lord and proprietor of all, what joy can the heart receive? We fear to offend a wealthy landlord, who can turn us out of a *comfortable farm*,—shall we not fear God?

*D.* I have been long since convinced, that in every walk of life, if we mean to be *happy*, we must strive to be *virtuous*.—The soul must be at

peace with *God*, or it cannot be at peace with *itself*.—

.....  
That house on the *common* seems to be agreeably situated. It is, I think, rather too near the road; yet passengers make a variety that pleases. It commands a beautiful prospect on all sides, of verdant woods, and *pasture lands*.

*F.* I know it well: the owner of it is a scholar with good judgment and strong memory, and a lively disposition. His lady is also very amiable; they both read much, and have great knowledge of *herbs* and *flowers*. In these days, the more people know, provided they are wealthy, the more elegantly they live.

*D.* Was it not always so?

*F.* No: we have made more improvements in this century, than in thrice the time before. The son who does no more than his father did, through a succession of ages, cannot see things changed for the *better*.

*D.* Nor the *worse*.

*F.* Invention is now afloat; we see it in this house.—I knew it in its former state. The *apartments* are now disposed and finished in the

most pleasing manner, and furnished with no less *taste* and *propriety*.

D. The poorest sort of people, being *industrious*, are always neat and cleanly in their apartments; and cleanliness is the best ornament in the world.

F. Except *substantial virtue*, of which *cleanliness* is indeed a part. In regard to fine houses, I never think so much of works of *art* as of the productions of *nature*. In a palace, we naturally go to the *window* to look out, as if the verdure of the fields had more charms than the rich carpet; and the canopy of the heavens, more grandeur than the painted ceiling. Here the ground falling in an easy decline of near a furlong, exhibits a pleasing view of a piece of water of near twice that extent, affording room for *fish* and *fowl* of many kinds, to take their range in ample joy; and much pleasure doth it afford to behold every part of the creation *happy* in its kind. In the centre of this piece of water, is an *island* rising some fifteen or twenty feet, with a temple on the summit, surrounded by *trees* and *shrubs*, the banks being composed of *verdant lawns*, and *shrubberies* of *exotics*, with a plantation, affording a *delightful shade*. At one end, is a *Gothic temple*, built upon arches, under which the water pursues its course to the adjacent fields. When my master was on a visit, I remember the time when I once sat there for *two hours*, soothing my thoughts by the refreshing breezes, and the murmurs of the stream which glided under me. There I ruminated on the *events of my own life*; the number of *losses* I had sustained, and the early death of the eldest son of this family. At the age of about *twenty-one*, he seemed to have filled up the measure of the *virtue* and *knowledge*, which usually comes to the share of the most upright and intelligent among the children of men. *He* was a *youth* of rare accomplishments, *Mary!* He gave the world an *early lesson*, too good for the age he lived in: and seemed to leave it, as if he were chosen for some greater end. He was a fair flower cut off by a destroying blast: he died of a fever, not created by any excess, but nature seemed to have formed him to last no longer. *His better part is gone to heaven!*

D. His parents must have lamented much his early death.

F. They are sensible, that of all the duties required by religion, no offering is more grateful to God than the incense of *resignation*. In our

dependent state, nothing can become us better; no disposition of mind can be more acceptable to the Great Parent of mankind. To be satisfied with That which he gives, and to acquiesce in that which he takes away, is our daily prayer. Though it is impossible to avoid feeling such wounds, the *lenient hand of time*, where the mind is virtuously inclined, will surely heal them. It is an honour to a man, to have had such a son.

D. What was he most distinguished for?

F. I have heard that he was not less remarkable for his *moral sentiments*, than his skill in herbs, minerals, and *vegetables*: in a word, the *history of nature*, both on the earth, and in the heavenly bodies. His good sense, and freedom from *pride*, led him to make the *best choice* in his studies; and to apply his talents to the most effectual way of serving his country and mankind. Those who know but little, often esteem themselves for something of a *useless nature*. He aspired not to the ostentation of science, nor pretended to call his own understanding the *reason of man*, as men often do when they corrupt their reason; but with a *modesty* peculiar to *virtue*, supported by extensive knowledge, he considered what was most valuable to *man*: his humility shewing him the direct path to the best of all knowledge, *the knowledge of himself*. To know the whole history of mankind, and all their iniquities, is of much less consequence than to *prevent the growth of evil in our own hearts*; and he who fortifies his reason most, bids fairest to support himself against the siege the world lays against every human being. He who has the best parts to comprehend, what is for his *own service* and the good of *his fellow-creatures*, has the *best chance* of becoming useful.

D. Was his knowledge amiable, being so young?

F. We sometimes find a glow in a young man's virtues, which *time* effaces. When the novelty of objects is lost, our joys grow less lively. The blossoms of the spring captivate the eye more than the autumnal fruit. It is no prodigy in the *moral world*, to unite them in *one*, which seems to have been the case of this young man. His *ingenuousness* was exceeded by nothing, but his *thirst after knowledge*, which was as ardent, as his powers of mind were retentive. With his improvements in *language* and *science*, his *taste* was refined, and his manners rendered graceful. His mind was impressed with a due sense of *religion*: he seemed to have no propensity

to vice. His application to study prevented that *stultifubness*, in which so many of our youth of fortune are dissolved; and the liberality of his sentiments, rendered his heart a stranger to all mean and sordid views. He possessed a freedom of thought, and an ease of expression, which engaged the attention of all who had any relish for the subject of his discourse. Subtilties and refinements, which lead the mind into a labyrinth, made no part of his pursuits: On the contrary, he seemed to fix the mark, beyond which it was vain or useless to pass. He furnished his mind with what was *profitable*, to render him, in the best sense, a philosopher, a *lover of wisdom*, or a *wise friend* to it, declining what he thought would *injure the understanding* by *prejudices*, or *corrupt the heart* by *infidelity*. He laid it down as a rule, “that good judges are as rare as good authors;” and he sought for *good* where he thought he could *find* it, not how to comment on what he esteemed *imperfect*: He considered the *perfection* which men sometimes talk of, but never *find*, as a proof of their greater *imperfection*. The knowledge of *divine things*, so far as they are made known to us, and the *visible* productions of nature, engaged his chief attention. He found in every fruit and flower, every plant and shrub, from the blade of grass up to the *stately oak*, subject for wonder and adoration of the Author of Nature. With regard to *birds and beasts*, and *creeping things*, the qualities of *earth, air, fire and water*, their different effects under different circumstances:—these were his study and delight, making his pleasure subservient to his devotion. “*Socrates* was esteemed the wisest man of his time, because he turned his acquired knowledge into *morality*, and aimed at *goodness* more than *greatness*. And how often doth it appear that he who hath *learning* without *good sense*, hath only more ways of exposing himself even than he who is illiterate.”

D. We are in no danger, I believe, from *knowing too much*,—but in *practising too little*.

F. “The reason of things lies in a very narrow compass, if the mind could at any time be so happy as to light upon it. The greatest ornament of man is *judgment*. In this is the perfection of his *reason*: it is in itself, the utmost power of *reason*, joined with *knowledge*.”

D. An unlettered person may have a very *good judgment*.

F. Ay, *Mary*; and for the same reason you may perceive, that a small stock of learning, with a well improved understanding, may do great things in promoting our own happiness. If we take pains to moderate our *hopes and fears*, and *govern our passions*; and by bearing patiently the *evils of life*, attain the art of *contentment*, there is very little more to be wished for, that life can furnish. In the same manner, to entertain a true penitent sorrow for *sin*, and to *mend* our lives, is of much greater consequence, than to be able to talk *learnedly* about *sin, virtue, or any thing else*.

D. I see no use in talking of sin, but to subdue it; and though *learning* may be preferable to *riches, sense and virtue* seem to be better than both.

F. *Seem to be!*—They *are* better. In every pursuit we find, “*wise men* instructed by *reason*: men of less understanding by *experience*; the most ignorant by *necessity*, and the beast by *nature*.”

D. This is a truth no one can deny, though it may not be obvious to the vulgar. If the knowledge and love of our duty is of more consequence to us than a great capacity, it is very evident that the distribution of the bounties of heaven, is more equal than the generality are aware of.

F. *Well observed*: the path which leads to heaven is the same, both for the *learned and unlearned*; and if we know what belongs to *our salvation*, what better or *higher knowledge* can we attain to?—The *young gentleman* of whom we were speaking, had strength of judgment beyond his years. The blaze of youth, like oil taking fire, is often too strong for *reason*; but his desire of knowledge was accompanied with a *discipline* of thought, so that he appeared to be arrived to a maturity of age. Few can do more when their heads are covered with *grey hairs*.—You see what may happen!—The *rose*, which is most fragrant, and the *violet* the most sweet, do not therefore last the *longer*. Life is a *trial*: this young man had been proved; and perhaps, in a few years, *saw and understood* much more than the boundaries of life, or the foolish pursuits of it, generally admit to the children of men. If he had *liberty and peace* in the full enjoyment of his reason, he had lived to the greatest and best of all purposes, and may be said to have *escaped from a world which wages war with innocence!*

innocence! Alas! my child, how often the world triumphs over virtue, should rather be dreaded than described. Who knows what *twining snake*, or *crouching lion*, in the form of man or woman, might have taken him in a sleepy hour, or if his *passions* strayed abroad, they might betray his *reason*! Who can tell, I say, what might have befallen this *excellent young man*. Now he is *safe*!—Safe beyond the *lion's paw*, or the hand of *man*, sometimes more savage.—O *Mary*, when I think of *my own life*, and of the host of  *sins* and *infirmities* which have invaded my soul! The *arduous* contest I have upheld, and the poor *doubtful victories* I have obtained; methinks I *wish*, O God forgive me if I err! I wish, *if it had so pleased heaven*, I had lived as this young man!—and *died* as early!—I have endeavoured to employ my poor talents profitably, but how have they been squandered! I have not indulged myself on the bed of ease, totally unmindful of the miseries of other men; yet my offences are past all number!—I know there is mercy for *offending man*, who departs from the ways of his iniquity, and implores the forgiveness of his *offended God*!—

D. My dear father—You make me sorrowful! not that a *virtuous man* should die, in his youth—but that *you* should not rejoice in having *lived* to an *advanced age*!—

F. You *chastise* me, *Mary*!—I say no more—Let us pluck *comfort*, from the bending branches of *Mercy's* fruitful tree, and *hope* that all will be well.—I have heard that some honourable memorial of this young man's early virtues is intended. Considerations of *immortality*, or *existence after death*, by whatever means excited, are of all others the most *instructive* and *interesting* to man. It is the great *crime* of this age, and may occasion the *punishment* of it, that religion has not its due influence on men's lives: or rather, that by the force of *worldly gratifications*, we have *refined* away the *substance* of it. Whatever produces a *manly*, *rational*, *Christian consolation*, is most desirable.—Though we are to resist the *blandishments* of the world, and the “illings and arrows of outrageous fortune,” as heaven shall please to try our strength; yet if the period of men's lives were bounded within a narrower compass, than the *short span* now allotted, there might be much less *devastation* by *sin*, and by *war*, in the *image of God*, in the

*persons of men*; and their *morals* might be preferred, where they are now laid waste.

D. That is a subject of curiosity. If life were longer, I believe men would sin more.

F. Of all the men of my time, who are gone before me, I do not recollect one whose condition I esteem equal to this young man's, who filled up the measure of knowledge and moral virtue in so short a time.

D. Do you imagine he passed through life without any *guilt* or *suffering*?

F. I do not apprehend he lived without any contest with warring passions, but that he was *comparatively* replete with knowledge and *moral rectitude*. His was more a *life of innocence*, reason and *religion*, than older men can generally pretend to. The ordinary race of men, *rich* or *poor*, who crawl about the earth, or wantonly take wing and fly in search of—*nothing*, or something that is *evil*,—what *are* they? Fit only to be *forgotten*? Our remembrance of the virtuous is a mark of our *gratitude to heaven*, for what we have enjoyed, and should be a token of *submission* to the Almighty, for the *good* we have been deprived of.

D. These are *manly*, though *tender thoughts*.

F. To view both worlds with intrepidity; to have pleasure in looking forward to what is to come, by reflexion on what is past; and to count our years with a grateful mind, are the substantial effects of religion: he who believes in Christ, may find such a pleasure; and possessing his soul in constancy and firmness, enjoy the good things of life in delight and satisfaction.

D. Those who have their bread to labour for, and those who have it provided for them, by means of that very labour, should eat it with equal thankfulness, to the *giver of all good*.

F. Methinks we are in some danger of being benighted.—The crows wing their speedy course to yonder wood.—Nature tells *them*, what is best fitted to their preservation. The lowering night calls darkness on, and will soon intercept the view of these fair fields. You see the shepherd folding-in his sheep, to guard them from their lurking enemies; and with his faithful dog prepare for their *defence*, lest in the absence of the *friendly day*, they should become a prey.—There is a village not two miles further on, where we may sleep,—*I hope in safety*.



CONVERSATION V.

On the Road home.

*The iniquity of swearing. A misfortune created by drunkenness. The danger of it. Servants staying behind their masters to drink on the road. Compassion due to the distressed. The miseries of gypsies and vagrants. Description of the situation of a lady of distinguished character. Nature beautified in our fields. View of a fine seat, which had lately changed its owner.*

F. HAVE you slept well?

D. Far from it—I heard so many horrid imprecations uttered under my windows, it shocked my soul. Whether they were travellers, or villagers, who abused their speech so much, I know not; nor could I discover what motives they had for swearing, as if they imagined the ears of the Almighty were shut, because darkness was spread over the earth.

F. The want of light renders our condition the more awful. Many are horribly careless in this instance: I suppose these persons were drunk. Whether the licentiousness of our manners undermines the foundation of our religion; or our inattention to religion creates such depravity in our manners, the effect is the same. “Whoever believes he is free from the obligations to divine precepts, cannot look on himself as bound by any human laws.” The greatest of all punishments is to be given over to infidelity: but whether these people are infidels or not, it is amazing they should be so unprofitably wicked. When their brains are heated with liquor, their tongues are prodigal of these expletives, or words calculated to make up the deficiency of sense in their discourse, as if they meant to garnish the entertainment, though it were with the poison of adders lips.

D. Real poison is not so deadly to the soul:  
.....

F. What do we behold yonder! A man, a woman, and a child, sprawling in the dirt! Let us go up to them, and see if we can lend them assistance.  
.....

The woman, with lamenting eyes, told me: “My husband is in liquor. He would not

suffer me to take the reins; and I expected some fatal accident would befall us. I thank God that we have escaped by only breaking our poor chaise, and being rolled in the dirt, though I was near being crushed under the wheels of the wagon that was passing.” I promised her to lend them assistance from the next town in our road, which is not above two miles.

D. What distress must That poor woman feel, whose husband is a drunkard, or tipples on the road!—You mean to assist them: but shall you find people ready to go two or three miles at a venture?

F. Not without something in advance.—When the poor hear of the poor, they think of themselves, not of others. At least, I do not expect to find any one, who will say to me, “You appear, Sir, as an honest man; I cannot allow myself to think you would wantonly deceive me: it is motive sufficient that there is a fellow-creature in distress, whom I can relieve in my way. I thank you for the intelligence: keep the money you offer me, for some other good purpose. I will take my bag, and walk to them immediately.”

D. Such generosity of spirit, I fear, is rare among labouring people, or mechanics: yet human nature is the same in every one.—But all gentlemen do not feel much on such occasions!

F. Nor do we call it sharp-tongued unkindness, when they are unmindful of this duty.

D. Those do not abound in the milk of human kindness, who are not ready to succour their neighbour in such circumstances.

F. He who hath the power, or means, with inclination at his beck, should be always resolute in doing right, that he may say to his own heart,

heart, "*Thou art true and faithful to me.*" In this case, a woman and a child, were real objects of compassion. *Drunkenness is not uncommon*: I have seen *drinking* on the road among servants, attended with two very bad consequences. A *nobleman* or *gentleman* mounts his footman on a horse which perhaps cost him fifty pounds; and the man, presuming on the speed of the horse, stays behind at an alehouse-door, in idle chat, tipping beer or *spirits*. Ten or twenty minutes soon pass away: his master has got two or three miles before him: the *seaman* says, a *stern chase* is a *long one*; before the footman can get up to the carriage, his master is robbed, for want of his guard on whom he depended: or, the servant's brains being heated with liquor, he pushes his horse through good ways and bad ones, till the poor generous animal is lamed, foundered, or becomes broken-winded.

D. I verily believe that one or other of these cases, happens much oftener than is generally discovered immediately: and sometimes the man falls from his horse and lames himself; the real cause being concealed. Such a servant is grossly *unfaithful*, and *unjust* in service.

F. The servant who acts in this manner, is a proper subject for the rod of the magistrate, as well as the anger of the master: but I do not recollect, that I ever knew any servant brought before a magistrate on such an occasion; which I impute, not so much to the defect of *our laws*, as that few masters have sense and resolution enough to act up to the plainest dictates of justice and common-sense in this instance, to shew a good example. We saw no drunkenness, nor heard any swearing, when we slept at *Tom Widdone's* house.

D. I shall never forget the happiness I enjoyed there, in the discourse of his *good wife*, whom I should call my *sister*.

F. I wish the state depended less on our drinking *intoxicating liquors*. I hope you will never be wedded to a man who uses them immoderately; nor to one who will not be ready on all occasions to succour the *distressed*, though the calamity be occasioned by drinking.

D. Good God! what miserable beings are these!—Surely "*they sweat and groan under a weary life!*"

F. If so it can be said of those who toil in *idleness*. These *children* living the wretchedness

they are overwhelmed with, know nothing, but that as beggars, their lives have been preserved; as such they came *into the world*, and if they are not hanged for *stealing*, they may probably go out of it in the same miserable condition.

D. You give a melancholy account of them.

F. The *poor children* are not sensible that they might enjoy the blessings of virtuous minds, and peaceful consciences, with a portion of bodily comfort, which they are now strangers to, whilst their tender limbs are exposed to cold. Nakedness and *hunger* are their constant companions. They give proof that a *human creature* can be rendered almost as hardy as a horse. Their *misery* is complicated, and difficult to be described; whether the *parents* of these poor children, the *magistrate*, or the *laws*, are *most* in fault, is likewise not easy to determine.

D. One would imagine, from the conduct of these people, that they found delight in what you or I should think the greatest misery.

F. Instead of labouring with their hands *honestly*, they live by *beggary* and *rapine*.—There have been times when ignorance, want of employment, the hospitality of *religious houses*, and *monkish charity*, bred thieves and robbers in greater abundance; but they were often treated with the greatest severity. We must now trace the evil to some other cause: There must be some capital fault in the *nature* of our laws, or in the *execution* of them. If to behold such misery is reproachful to a *christian, civilized nation*; if it is certainly a proof that *justice* is not done, *we* may lament the *evil*, but it belongs to our superiors to remove it. The more abject part of the people, could not become so profligate or miserable, if those who should be *shining lights*, did not leave them in *darkness*. The gross ignorance, and inability of any subjects to obtain a decent support, is a reproach to the rulers of a land.

D. Is not this owing more to the *imperfection* of *governors*, than of the *governed*?

F. When people run mad with notions of *liberty*, rulers, in this country, often find their hands tied, and when they would gladly *prevent* a corruption of *morals*, they are restrained, lest the hem of the garment of liberty should be accidentally soiled. So very cautious are we become! This breeds a swarm of evils. It is the unavoidable misfortune of mankind, that the *wickedness* they are, the more *impatient* they grow under every kind of government, till at length they

they render the most rigid discipline necessary. Impatience under a salutary control, naturally induces the profligate to call every kind of government tyranny; and immediately people run into *confusion* to prevent such misery; till at length, numbers are suffered to sink into the forlorn condition you see these people in. Thus it happens, that what was originally the *fault* of the people in general, becomes the sore *punishment* of individuals.

D. But how are such *wretches* as these, to be delivered from their *abject* condition?

F. Whatever prevents *idleness*, equally prevents *vice* and misery: piety to God promotes *peace* and *industry*: *religion* is the corner stone on which the whole structure of government depends.

D. When the *county houses of industry* are established, which they talk of, I hope this kind of misery will be no longer found amongst us: if *religion* and *industry* are generally encouraged, the whole community will be rendered so much the happier.

F. Behold, *Mary!*—There you see the *beautiful side of human life*. This *fine road* hath been lately turned into this hollow, which seems formed by nature for the purpose: In former times, the way was close under the house. Such improvements are as advantageous to the *publick*, as they are beneficial to *private persons*; indeed, every thing that is done to the advantage of an individual, the *publick* partakes of it by a necessary consequence, provided this be considered in the first place, with a disinterested view to public good.

D. The prospect of the bridge, with the fall of water, the meadow grounds on the bank of the river, with the woods which rise in so pleasing an ascent, bounded by prospects so agreeable, render the whole scene delightful.

F. The lawns and plantations on the other side the house are yet more grand, and, from the shade which they afford, more pleasing. The mistress of this house is blessed with the means of succouring the distressed: and her *charity* and *piety*, joined to her generosity and knowledge, with her constancy in *friendship*, make up a character extremely amiable. Here she lives with some *chosen friends*, who are of the same turn of thought: they spend their time in *needle-work*, *drawing*, *music*, *reading*, *housewifery*,

and the company of a few good neighbours; never neglecting the more essential duty of *worshipping God*. She assembles her family constantly every *morning* and *evening*; by such regularity rendering it hardly possible that her *domesticks* can be insensible of the power of *religion*, or the joyous hopes which it inspires. This gives every face an expression of *satisfaction*; for whilst the domestic receives his *hire*, his *mind is enriched with heavenly hope*.

D. I *hope*, they are truly sensible of the advantages they enjoy in such a family.

F. My master used to spend a few days here in the summer, and always expressed his happiness at the kindness of his reception; and in its being so different a scene, from any he met with in other families either in town or country. He gratified his own charity in the pleasure of beholding other people's; and improved his piety by seeing his friends walk in the true path of life.

D. You give me high impressions of this lady's merits.—This place is delightful! If our *morals* were improved as our fields, after this lady's example, how happy might we *all* be!

F. The embellishments bestowed with so much art and labour in the culture of our *gardens*, cannot but strike every beholder of sentiment with pleasure.—In these days, *fancy* is become a handmaid to *nature*, and dresses her up in so exquisite a taste, she seldom comes out of her hands without *new* charms.—Here we see *temples*, *obelisks*, and *falls of water!* There the earth is levelled, as if intended for a bowling-green.—One shapes his ground to make every adjacent field appear as an appendage to his *garden*: another forms large pieces of water, at once to delight the eye, and provide for *fish* and *fowl*: whilst a number of men are at work, to make *serpentine gravel walks*, amidst *woods* and *lawns*, banks of shrubs and hanging woods, where rustic arbours are formed out of roots of trees and moss. Thus we enjoy shade and shelter when the limbs grow tired of walking over such delightful scenes. Even *roving fancy* calls for relief. As we gaze on a succession of beauties, the mind requires rest, our powers of enjoyment being confined within a narrow compass! It is in heaven only we shall be *perfectly happy*.—What pity 'tis, some small part of this *expense* is not bestowed to prevent *vagrancy*.

D. Is it not rather the *expensive amusements*, and *vices* of the *town*, which occasion our seeing such

fuch numbers of vagrants and idle perfons, and not the coft bestowed on the country?

F. One may learn fomething useful from every object on the road.

D. *Fancy* may draw the landscape, but memory of what we have really feen, can only make a *lasting impression*. What gives me the moft delight, is your difcourfe, which renders my mind capable of relifhing objects which might otherwife pafs unheeded.

F. How glorious it is to look down from this height on the valley! The fields which furround us, rifing fo gradually, add a grandeur to the fcene.

D. The neighbouring eminences feem to place this grand fcene, as a garden in the midft of a county. The fhade of thefe lofty trees: the clumps interperfed in thefe extenfive *fleep rifing grounds*, gladden the whole appearance, and render it as noble as it is rural.

F. That *piece of water* feems to be of forty or fifty acres: and diftinguifhes this place fo much the more, as the eye finds water no where elfe. It is fometimes fo agitated by the wind from the valley, as to beat over its banks.—The elevation on which the houfe ftands, whilst it makes the profpect magnificent to the inhabitant, adds a grandeur to the fcene, in the eyes of every

beholder. Every thing here is ftrong, folid work: the temples and grottos, as well as the houfe; and the lofty walls of gardens within gardens: here is a vaft abundance of fruit.

D. It feems to be a little paradife.

F. Novelty may make it appear fo to you; and the more, as the country round it, is rather dreary. The gentleman who lately parted with it, I am told, bears the mortification with great tranquillity. He fays, “Had I fucceeded in all my enterprizes, I might have been intoxicated with pride and prefumption. The moft captivating fcene foon becomes as familiar to the eye of the beholder, as beauty to the lover. If I, by the aid of nature and of art, could have thrown the whole county into villas and parks, and inclofed them all, as my own property, I fhould only have had the beholding thereof for a few fhort years. If they had not departed from me, I fhould have left them for fome other to poffefs. I have now been ftopped in my career, and I fubmit to the difpenfations of Providence.”

D. Does he really think that Providence has been kind to him, in depriving him of this eftate?

F. If he finds reafons to be, not only reconciled, but to have thought himfelf in danger from a flood of profperity, he may be a gainer, with refpect to his hopes in eternity, by his temporal loffes.

## CONVERSATION VI.

*On the road home.*

*Observations on travelling in Scotland, and the rude fcenes of the Highlands. Reflexions on harvest time.*

*Hopes of joys in heaven, derived from the beauties of the earth. The comforts derived from contentment.*

*Submission to the difpenfations of Providence. The glory of human nature.*

D. THE country here is more dreary.—Did you ever travel in Scotland?

F. That country is very much improved, from what it was. The abolition of the heritable jurisdictions, or the rights of landlords to lead vaffals implicitly, has introduced a fenfe of *property*, to which induftry is a conftant companion.

D. Have they a language of their own?

F. What they call *erfe*. The *Highlanders*

who fpeak *Englifh*, I am told, pronounce it more perfectly than fome of the politer people of Scotland. In many of the leaft cultivated parts, the land is amazingly cheap, and money no lefs fcarce. In a more general view, many landlords have raifed their rents, who will now be obliged to fall them again, that they may not drive the inhabitants into *the other world*.

D. What, deftroy them with poverty?

F. It

*F.* It is destruction to this island, to force them to embark for America. This hath been the bad policy of some *later years*, or there would be a yet more pleasing view in many places in *Scotland*. The mountainous parts are but little cultivated, and as thinly inhabited, in comparison with *England*. — As to travelling, the mind may receive a pleasure from the rudest scenes, and be usefully employed in contemplating the works of God, and the wonders which he hath wrought in forming things as they are. We find, that those who live amidst mountains, are more *active* and *cheerful*, than low-landers. They generally retain the greatest likeness of customs and manners, handed down through a long succession of ages. Their habitations are almost as little frequented, by those who approach them with *friendly views*, as by an *enemy*, who *cannot* attack them advantageously, and *will not* do it, as expecting no *plunder*.

*D.* Some parts of Wales are much in the same circumstances.

*F.* It is said our antient *Saxon* conquerors, were never masters of the *Welsh*. Where we find the face of the earth, or the tempers of a people, rude, whether their customs are influenced most by their situation, or their ignorance, is not very material. The difficulty of passing mountainous countries, must render the inhabitants less civilized, were it only that the people cannot communicate with each other with the same ease.

*D.* They say, we are become more *vicious* in the country, since the paths to London are rendered so numerous and so fair.

*F.* *Evil communication* corrupts *good* manners. The mountaineers of *Scotland*, divided as they were into clans, used to be mightily disposed to quarrel, even to the shedding each others blood. But such folly and madness, at length, gives place to common-sense and discretion, and, I suppose, to *religion* also. *Ignorance*, *pride*, and a *habit of violence*, are generally companions; but as *regular government* takes place, the passions of mankind become more disciplined; and they consider more what ought to be done, than what they *can do* by force of arms. So late as in the reign of *King William*, a battle was fought at *Mull-Buy*, which is but a few miles from *Inverness*. This happened between a clan of *Mac Intosh*, and a clan of *Mac Donald*. Such wild decisions of right are no

longer known, nor would they be permitted. Prejudices and animosities now give place to *civilization*. These mountaineers are in an uncommon degree hospitable; and though *poor*, shew a generosity of spirit unequalled by some who enjoy all the advantages of the most refined manners.

*D.* This should teach us charity for all sorts of people, but particularly our *fellow-subjects*. Have they not a *distinguished dress*?

*F.* They used to wear their *plaid*, which being a loose garment, was less convenient than ours; but it was a favourite dress, till a law was made for altering it: and now, if I am rightly informed, the people are well satisfied. To those who delight in grand rocky scenes, and a rude face of nature, *Scotland* may afford greater delight, than the flowery meadows, which you and I have been accustomed to survey. Our friend, *John Persian*, has lately been at *Fort-William*, where he was most courteously entertained. He says, it stands on the bank of a *loch*, or as we call it a *lake*, called *Lochiel*, forming an arm of the sea, which runs about twenty miles up into the country: it is four or five miles broad, and surrounded with high mountains. This loch abounds with *berrings*, *mackarel*, *cod*, *salmon*, and other *sorts of fish*. The greatest part of the road is between prodigious mountains, making an appearance, as he says, like so many hundreds of fugar loaves, placed on a table, through which scarce a mouse can make its way. He was obliged to walk on foot, up many steep places. It is a military road, made since the year 1745; and this, together with General *Wade's* road to the *north*, considering the number of stone bridges over every brook in the way, greatly excels all the old *Roman* walls and causeways in *Britain*. It was an undertaking that few nations in *Europe* could bear the expence of (*a*). This appears as a rugged country, but contains *many inhabitants*, who seem pleased with their lot; and he tells me, there are numbers of small *black cattle*, *sheep*, and *goats*. There are also *inns* at certain distances, with *hard fare*, and *harder beds*. From *Fort William*, he returned by a more easy road to the eastward, in a plain along the banks of lakes and pleasant woods to *Fort-Augustus*, a small but neat fort, distance about thirty miles. From thence to the town of *Inverness* is *thirty miles*. He also speaks of *Fort-George*, which stands on a neck of land on the

*Murray-Frith*: it is esteemed the best built, strongest place on this island, and so situated that no ship can pass up the *Frith*. From thence he continued his course southward, and came to *Pertb* the third day. This road is *rough* and *mountainous*, but not so bad as the *western road*. He did not travel in the best cultivated parts of that kingdom: but he says, that from *Antermony*, near *Kilfyth*, to *Aberdeen*, he did not see any idle folks, or ragged boys or girls, all of them being employed in *knitting*, or other occupations: and wishes he could say the same of other great towns to the southward.

D. I should receive much satisfaction in seeing such scenes, though they are more *grand* and *awful* than *pleasing*.—Have you ever been in the mountainous parts of *Wales*? I am told, it affords much delight.

F. What a profusion of beautiful objects surround us!—The deep and sharp descent on both sides of this road falling from this high land; and the hills which again rise, so beautifully intermixt with woods and lawns, form a scene of amazing magnificence!

D. It is most delightful!

F. The great breadth of the avenue, bounded on each side with a rich grove of oaks, leading to that stately mansion, with an easy ascent, for near a mile, is most pleasing as well as grand.

D. It affords a *sumptuous feast for the eye*. Have you ever seen a more beautiful spot?

F. Take it all together, we shall not find any country superior to our own. Such numbers of venerable mansions; magnificent houses of nobles and gentlemen, and other elegant structures; with their parks, gardens, woods and groves, cascades and pieces of water! All these strike the eye of the beholder, and give the strongest idea of the wealth, the ingenuity, and taste of a *happy people*: of this we have lately seen many proofs.

D. What a fine distance from the house, is That temple on the rising ground!

F. And how grand the obelisk! The lawns, which the eye every where meets, interspersed among the woods, make one think of imaginary land recorded in romance.

D. If we *English* were not troubled with the malady of *grumbling*, we should find out that Providence is very kind to us.

F. True, *Mary*: but it is not every one who enjoys such a fine prospect: nor could we have

always the same relish as the *novelty* now affords us. Such is the nature of the human mind, that every thing cloy: and That which once transported us, is apt to grow *insipid*.—If it were not for this, should we ever see the *wealthy*, who might enjoy a perpetual feast of such delights, *grow tired*, and long for something else, although *That something*, which they seek, often proves to be *miser*.—My master used to say, that no country produced such views as *England* and *Wales*.—But our improvements, since his remark, are great: we have added unnumbered beauties.

D. It is too true, *my father*, that we are all subject to be cloyed.—

Look, they have begun to *cut corn* in yonder fields.

F. We shall be ready in a few days after we get home. Do you not think it one of the glories of our country, that our sons and daughters are so hardy, and fit to bear the fatigues of the field? I have been frequently out *all the day*, and *all the night also*. It is sometimes our fortune to work hard.

D. This duty, I am told, is more laborious in some countries than with us.

F. It is more fatiguing, and less safe under a broiling sun, to which our *temperate climate* is less exposed.—Our people seldom suffer much, unless it be from *bad small beer*; of which, instead of taking a sip now and then, to moisten the glands of the throat, and keep the body cool, they are apt to take monstrous draughts, and overcome themselves: the more profusely they drink, the less appetite they have to eat: and this weakens and renders them the more unfit for work.

D. The discretion of the experienced husbandman, and the prudence of the aged, should teach them better things.—

F. Many are the cares which attend every part of life. Storms of hail and rain, that often bend the *bearded product* of the *golden year*, and sometimes lay it flat, is very unpleasant to behold, yet still Providence preserves us! Sometimes it rises again, or ripens as it lays, not un-nourished by the moistened earth. Now, as the corn grows ripe for harvest, observe how this wide grove of ears, waving their heads, bend with the wind that sways them. Let us rejoice that our fields promise such plenty!

D. You moralize on the *corn*, as well as the *grafs* of the field!

F. Is it not time well spent, to consider the inferior works of God; and whilst every part of Nature smiles around us, to contemplate the great designs of Heaven with regard to our own *being* and *end*, embracing every present opportunity of our happiness, and turning all objects to advantage?

D. It seems to be *true wisdom*.

F. To enjoy what is really *good*, and submit gracefully to *evils*, which we cannot prevent, are the great lessons on which happiness depends.

D. How charming are the banks of this river!

F. The hills on the opposite side covered with wood, and the meadows which border the stream enliven the prospect, and lull the mind into a pleasing tranquillity.

D. Do you observe how delightfully the cattle appear: the view being broken by the bodies of these lofty elms! How the eye is charmed with that villa on the rising ground.

F. The whole is enchanting. Very different are the views in *London, Mary*; and yet you will gaze and wonder as much, though not with the same kind of natural delight. *Brick* and *stone* ranged in magnificent order, may with propriety be said to be equally the work of God: yet they partake more of what is commonly called *art* than of *nature*. You will soon perceive the difference of a dirty *red* and *white*, compared with this beautiful verdure. The clouds of dust, which sometimes half smother one in the streets, differ much from this pure stream, which fans the air whilst it moves along, seeming as if it *renewed* life, though we know it is *ebbing* out. The motion of water generates air, and meadows look healthy on this account, as well as derive their fertility from moisture.

D. Such advantages are not to be expected in *great cities*.

F. Where there are rivers running through them, as I understand, is the case of the most part, through all Europe, the banks being kept clean and dry, the *inhabitants* enjoy the more health on this account.

D. The condition of mankind, with respect to their enjoyments, seems to be very unequal.

F. Do you mean as to *town* or *country*? Many covet to run into the obscurest holes in *cities*, compared to airy tenements in the country: and what is worse, the *great* have not *wisdom*, or at least not *charity* enough, notwithstanding here is

so much space unoccupied, to lead them back again into the country, and furnish them employment, by which they might get food and raiment from the labour of their own hands, instead of suffering the extreme *misery* and *beggary* in which thousands of them live and die in *great cities*.

D. And some perish even in dungeons.

F. Not for their *virtue*: this is an evil common to the wicked in town and country. If in the rough course of human affairs, any should be deprived of these bounties of heaven, and languish in a *loathsome prison* for maintaining their *integrity*; then is a dungeon the ready road to *paradise*, and death itself more welcome, than the full possession of all the charms of life can be to the *wicked*.

D. In the great view of eternity, it must be so!—

F. Tell me, *Mary*, is my conversation of too serious a cast for you?

D. I know not how it fares with young persons of a different turn, I am never more happy than when I learn something useful; especially from *you*, who I know to be my friend. The persuasion, that I am address'd by one who loves me, and interests himself in my happiness, is exceedingly flattering; but when the subject relates to God and *eternity*, it would be the most miserable of all things, if instead of receiving pleasure, I found myself tired and displeas'd.

F. You talk like a girl of sense, and a good daughter. It is a sure sign of wisdom, when we listen to *instruction*: and let wisdom essay to do her best, what can she not perform, even to wing her flight to heaven? The most knowing stand in need of her: and youth, void of experience, and negligent of advice, *cannot go right*. Conversation that is useful, is the fairest step towards wisdom: and that is most worthy of the name of *useful*, which serves best to promote CONTENTMENT, and guide us to eternal joys. You have lately seen how a little, with *frugality* and *labour*, will make a family respectable. We have the authority of a very wise man, that “better is a little, with the fear of the Lord, than *great treasure*, and *trouble* therewith.” All the pageantry of life cannot contribute much to set the HEART AT REST, unless we suit our desires to our circumstances. The man who does not know how to limit his desires, is *poor in plenty*, wretched with abundance; and never finds re-

pose. He whose temper is equal, and his mind such as our *cousin Robert's*, knowing where to fix the bounds of his desires, *feels*, as well as *understands*, that "a dinner of herbs, where there is *love*, is better than a stalled ox, and *hatred* therewith." You have seen, with much pleasure, a picture of a father and his children consulting each others happiness. This is a sight fit for heaven! My cousin is not afraid of the *giout in the gate*. A habit of *contentment* lightens the load of life; it makes us *manly* and *calm*. Death is vulgarly considered as the greatest evil incident to our Being: my cousin is contented with the lot of mortality. It is the *privilege* of nature for men to die: what would they do with life beyond the enjoyment of a certain portion of days? Upon this principle he acts his part cheerfully; enjoying the *present* hour, and seeing the approaches of the *last*, as a circumstance that is *necessary*, as leading to unmixed solid joy! As to this world, his *contentment* will probably be rewarded with a *happy end*. If southern winds and rain bring on a rot among his sheep, or eastern blasts injure *his* crop; if his neighbour's fields are more plentifully covered, it does not add a wrinkle to his brow: he laughs at all the foolish cares and fears of mankind; observing, that we have it within us to grant our own wishes,—provided we have *wit* enough to petition for That which the great Author of Nature shall think *best* for us.

D. This surely is true; but few have sense enough to think so. How did he bear the loss of his excellent good wife, who died about a year ago?

F. He could not lose her without mourning: were he insensible to *grief*, he would be to *joy* also; but he was far from murmuring at Providence. He gave proof how justly he thinks of happiness, and the duties of *contentment*, by considering, that *heavy* as his loss was, with regard to her intrinsic worth, yet it was *light*, compared to the miseries which mankind are subject to. In speaking of this event, he said, "If we reflect on whole kingdoms laid waste by the sword, or famine; whole cities destroyed by earthquakes, or sieges; whole families murdered by the merciless hands of the sons of rapine: if we behold the wretched, who are imprisoned in loathsome dungeons, wishing in vain for death; others groaning under the excruciating pains of tortures; or, what is worse

than all, such as in their last sad hours, are tormented with conscious guilt, and crying out for mercy on their departing souls!—When we turn our thought on such *little* events as a single death, our griefs seem to smile at us. I *might* have lost *all my children*! Sorrows sometimes invade us in whole battalions. You, my friend, have but *one child*: may God preserve her!"

D. My cousin is a *wife* and *good man*! When we think of such things, we find reason to be *contented*.

F. As no one can in his own person bear all the miseries which human nature is subject to, it is not right to expect *all* the happiness that mankind may enjoy, but remain contented *with our share*. So far as we undervalue whatever is short of perfection, we diminish the happiness we are capable of. Vain and fruitless longings, and ignorance of our advantages, constitute our *discontent*. The necessaries of life, to virtuous minds, lie in a very narrow compass: nature is contented with a little. "The chief things for life, are *water* and *bread*, a house, and clothing to cover shame." It is past all doubt, that the spring of peace, in every human heart, is *innocence*; and the fountain whence it flows, *contentment*. What a joyful thing it is to see the *peace of a private family*!—The *peace of our country*; and, if it could be so, the *peace of nations*!—How often hath this land been vexed, when citizen against citizen, brother against brother, father against son, met upon hostile terms, and in fierce combat shed each others blood. "The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife, cuts its own master." What tears have flowed from *women's* eyes, when one day's civil broil hath made them husbandless; and robbed them of sons, who might have relieved them, when Heaven should take their fathers.

D. O hellish deeds of civil butchery.

F. Thank Heaven, we see but few remains of civil broils, except such an ancient castle as this, with the meat round it: these were the fences which our forefathers thought necessary to guard them from a *surprize*!

D. Was this the intention of the ditch, round this ancient mansion?

F. Moil surely.

D. Are no modern houses built in this manner? Thank God, that we are grown wiser and more humane, than in those times of trouble!

F. As to our wisdom in this respect, but little



can be said: many are too unwise to give us much repose. You may learn, *Mary*, to be a good subject: You are not likely to be embarrassed by *wealth*, neither will you, I hope, be perplexed by a multitude of desires: the more temperate you are, the more you will enjoy That happy freedom and peace, to which so many of the *great* are strangers!

.....  
 We are now approaching to a fine garden, where I am known. The owner of it is a person of large fortune, great generosity, and fine taste. My master was well acquainted with him: and we may be permitted to walk, if we please.—Let us alight and rest under this tree.

CONVERSATION VII.

*On the Road home.*

*How far penury and ignorance of the world may produce peace and justice: Religion the only sure guide of life. Observations on statues, particularly of Apollo. Pagan worshippers of the sun. Description of two grottos: and King Alfred's tower; and the outlines of his character.*

F. EVERY place produces something to commend itself. *John Persian*, I should have told you, found much honest simplicity among the *Highlanders*, and also in the Western Islands. His journey has rubbed off some of the prejudices which he had early received; though he saw more poverty than he had any notion of. In former days, when these lands were held in bondage to chiefs, they were only sufficient to maintain the owner of them; and he could live in no other place: as things are now circumstanced, if any man has property, the rents of which he can convert into money, he wanders from home, to see what is passing in the world.

D. Then he will learn mischief enough.

F. So far we agree. You may easily conceive, that where there is little or no money, in order to live, an exchange of the necessaries of life must be made: and when people are bred in a *habit of contentment* with such necessaries, and their desires seldom go beyond the present enjoyments, authority in the ruler is strengthened by the satisfaction of those who are ruled. The common motive to discontent, is an *impatient* desire of mending our condition.

D. Yet those people, you say, used formerly to quarrel much with each other.

F. That is true: and whether *pride*, *wealth*, or *ambition* was the object, may not be easy to

determine. In all ages, such passions have occasionally perverted men's hearts. A restless spirit has set the invention at work, to try if it could acquire something *unpossessed*, though the means of acquiring it, unavoidably rendered life less safe and quiet.

D. Would you wish to see people poor, in order to their living *peaceably* and *quietly*, as honest husbandmen; and think of nothing beyond their present fordid condition?

F. Whether men be rich or poor, *peace* and *quietness* are the greatest blessings bestowed on mortals. Be their condition what it may, they should think of a *better*, in a *life to come*: and if they learn the *christian* religion, they will be *humble* in all conditions, and industrious in their callings: and the more industrious they are, the more *comforts* they will procure to themselves. For after all that can be done, knowledge which is not attended by a sense of *religion*, is of no value in the grand estimate of the life of an *immortal being*!

D. That which is of most use in *this* world, seems to be in the highest esteem at present.

F. This is too much the case; and the reason is obvious. Where the fountains of gain are running, and the passions awakened by a vast variety of objects, many *imaginary* wants are created, and the more such wants are attended

to, the less regard is shewn to pure simple nature, and the hopes which religion inspires. The things of this world at length engross the attention, and heaven grows out of men's thoughts.

*D.* I had rather be fet on shore on a desolate island, and die with hunger, *with God in my heart*, than enjoy all the pleasures of sin.

*F.* You would certainly make a wise choice : but the extreme, or lowest stage of poverty and ignorance, we generally find attended by a savage disposition. Wherever the love of peace and justice prevails most, human nature acquires the most honour. All the grandeur which the most flourishing state can afford without them is delusion.

*D.* But is this the case in the Highlands, or western islands of Scotland you were speaking of ?

*F.* I told you that *John Persian* says you may travel in safety ; and that the people exercise hospitality as a part of their religion : he observed, that they have fewer wants, and know how to supply them by their own hands, better than we do. You and I should not like to turn tanners or tallow-chandlers ; but this is done in private families in some of the places where he has been.—It is true, there can be but few people in those places. In all civilized countries, as the inhabitants increase in numbers, they establish trades of all kinds within themselves, and become so far the happier.

*D.* Is it not strange the inhabitants of those remoter parts of Scotland, should be so much behind us in knowledge, and improvements in the arts of living ? One would imagine their country was much more remote than it is.

*F.* You will not be surprized when you consider, in what a fordid state of ignorance, misery, and blindness to the common advantages of property and industry, are sometimes found in villages of the best peopled counties in England. It requires not only time, but vigilance and expense, to give those who were born and bred in such a manner, true notions of what they might be. When a landlord is influenced by motives of religion, humanity, and good policy, to put the most object of his tenants, and their labourers, in the enjoyment of real comforts, he acts a glorious part ! It is the condition of the bulk of mankind to live from hand to mouth ; and let us rejoice that we know where to find every article necessary to comfort ; and above all, that we

have hearts to feel them, when we have them. As for the rest, you and I cannot reform the world ; but we may reform ourselves ; and this will be a task sufficient to keep us fully employed.

Here is the gay scene I spoke of !

*D.* Are there any statues in the garden ?

*F.* Statues are not crowded into gardens, as they were in former times, one to answer another, in a formal stiff Dutch taste. Where any are introduced, we find them interspersed with art, to catch the eye, and surprize the fancy.—There is one—it is the figure of *Apollon*. Behold how he extends his arms, whilst his harp rests on the trunk of the tree behind him. The pedestal, so advantageously placed on an eminence, makes the figure the more animated.

*D.* Who was *Apollon* ?

*F.* He was, as poets suppose, the inventor of medicine, and the art of shooting with arrows ; also of divination. Of these branches of knowledge, he is represented as the genius, chief or patron, to whom the heathens ascribed divine powers. They also supposed that he presided over music ; and that the muses, or powers of poetry, owned themselves his votaries.—On the other side That piece of water, on an eminence, you see a temple, in which is the figure of *Phæbus*, or the sun.

*D.* It is not wonderful the heathen world, ascribing divine powers to the creatures of God, should worship one so glorious as the sun.

*F.* There are yet people in *Persia* and *India*, called *Gobers*, who worship the sun, as some idolaters did, as the sacred writings inform us : and there was more sense in this idolatry, than in paying divine honours to cows, monkies, or other animals, which some pagans have been so stupid as to worship. We see the whole face of nature gently warmed by the sun, and his invisible virtues shoot into every plant and flower. This is the great lamp which lightens us to toil : and when it burns out, we prepare for rest, and are occasionally relieved with the moon's milder light, while this great luminary of the heavens, with unwearied steps travels on to dispense the same benefits to another part of this earth.

*D.* What a bright and trembling reflexion doth the sun afford, when his rays strike on the polished glass, at a distance, or when we see them hover on walls, pavements, or ceilings !

*D.* When

*F.* When mounted to his meridian height, how bright and glaring to the eyes of us mortals! At night, when he retires, mark his redness, as if fatigued with the travels of *the day*, still leaving his tracts of glory in the sky.

*D.* He appears most beautiful when he tips the mountain tops, rising with a purple hue, or comes fresh from the bed of the sea!—Of all his delightful works, none afford such pleasure as *new hay*; not only on account of its usefulness, but as the meadow lands are soft to tread upon; and the trees and hedges around being all dressed out in their new livery, look gay and smiling as in the youth of spring.

*F.* To make hay *whilst the sun shines*, you likewise know, is proverbially expressive of *prudence* and *industry*.

*D.* And a *good proverb* it is. Which among the most *distinguished* flowers is the most beautiful? The *blushing rose* claims a preference for the reasons you mention; though the whiteness of the lilly, from its being an emblem of purity, is spoken of in the scriptures with most honour.

*F.* Where we see sweet blossoms, fruits, and flowers, rise in a gay confusion, it is difficult to determine which of them affords the most joy. The *herbs* also seem to claim their share, as they delight the eye and smell.

*D.* Have you observed, *in the spring*, how actively the sun's warmth calls forth the beauties of flowers?

*F.* Yet, by the force of heat, in a short time, they droop and wither!—Such is the condition of the most beautiful product of the earth: and do you not observe, that *time*, which brings the *fair flower of youth* to a full height of charms, does in the same moment begin to work its *decay*? The difference is, that the flowers are restored, as Nature makes her *yearly course*; and they go on in a continual change: but the great *master-piece* of Heaven, so far as the *rational world* may claim That name, has but one *spring*, one *summer*, and one *fall*, till in the great circuit of time, we shall burst the prison of the grave, and triumph in *everlasting youth*! *Life* will return in victory over the gloomy mansions of death; and to the *just* restore the *glories* of *immortal light*!

*D.* How beautifully are these banks enamelled with shrubs and flowers! The odours they diffuse delight the sense!

*F.* The more we attend to these productions  
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of nature, the more we discover the hand of Heaven: the very grass that grows in the fields; the leaves that shoot from the trees; and the fruit which they furnish: the growth of every plant should give us joy in beholding it! All parts of Nature furnish matter for *gratitude*, *comfort*, or *delight*!

*D.* And of *wonder* also!

*F.* Where will you find the hand of art, which can give *corollips* such a yellow, or *violets* such a blue? Have you considered how beautifully the *rose* is adorned; and how justly it is esteemed the emblem of the most captivating *beauty*?

*D.* The apple, or peach blossoms, are not. I think, less grateful to the eye.—

*F.* That walk, throughout its different windings, is covered with stately trees, down into the valley; the charms of which are heightened by the *piece of water*, and the several islands, inhabited by the feathered kind. As you pass over the bridge, on the opposite side, the ground is steep and lofty, covered with woods; at the foot of it is a narrow path, leading to the grotto of a *nymph*, which is formed of rude rock work, level with the water. I once attended my master as he was walking here: we found her sleeping, her limbs hardly concealed by a light garment. You need not be alarmed, *Mary*, she was but mere marble; yet so advantageously placed, and shewn by a light which comes from an opening above her, I could not survey the figure without good wishes for her repose. The water which falls under, into a marble basin, serves as a cold bath, and animates the scene. The inscription is,

“ *Nymph of the grot, these sacred springs I keep,  
And to the murmurs of these waters sleep:  
Stop, gentle Reader, lightly tread the cave;  
Or drink in silence, or in silence leave.*”

We were speaking just now of worshipping the *sun*, as a part of *ancient idolatry*: if we might be enamoured with a work of *mens hands*, wood or stone, the representative of the guardian spirit of a solemn scene, a *nymph* like this, arrayed in native innocence, sleeping by the side of the pure waters of a subterraneous bath, would be the most *ingenious device*; and not the *silken-robed lady*, arrayed with ribbands, crowns, and perriwigs, such as in *Portugal*, I am told, they fondly represent the  
Q *Blessed*

*bleſſed Virgin*, when they carve her in wood or ſtone. In *Italy*, it is ſaid, they are more exact; ſome of their images of the *Virgin Mary* are elegant and beautiful.

*D.* But you do not conſider the people to be the leſs idolaters.

*F.* In that reſpect juſt the ſame.—Near to this is another grotto, in which is an old man, with a long beard, in a natural poſture: having one leg in the running water, the other reſting on a piece of the rock, on which he ſits. This figure repreſents the imaginary being poetically ſuppoſed to preſide over the adjacent river.

*D.* The whole is very charming indeed! I never received more pleaſure than from the ſcene I now behold! This valley, ſet on each ſide with ſuch a variety of trees, which ſeem to be chiefly of *foreign growth*, looks as if all the earth had contributed her bounty to beautify *this ſpot*, and produce a perpetual verdure.—What is that tower?

*F.* It was lately built by the owner of this fine place, in honour of the great King *Alfred* (a), who reigned in *England* above 800 years ago.

*D.* Was this prince very remarkable?

*F.* After various battles, he at length obtained a great victory over the *Danes*, in the plain juſt below us, and obliged thoſe heathens, for ſuch they were at that time, to be baptized, or to leave *England*. This prince is repreſented as a man of great conſtancy and ſteadineſs; enjoying great reſources in his mind, when he was unſucceſſful; and very moderate in his proſperity; being ſkilful in making his advantage of all opportunities. By the beſt account we have of thoſe early days, he was brave, without being raſh; ſincere in his devotion to God; liberal and magnificent, ſo as juſtly to merit the ſurname of great. He was a great encourager of arts; and founded the univerſity of *Oxford*. He invited learned men from foreign countries, and gave them penſions. He built two magnificent abbeys, and rebuilt the city of *London*, which had been ruined in the late wars. This was the ſovereign who divided the kingdom into ſhires, tiſhings, and hundreds. He reigned 28 years, and died, if my memory does not fail me, in the year 900.

*D.* It might have been happy if he had lived

much longer, being ſo much inclined to do good. The gentleman who owns this ground, ſeems to ſhew great reſpect for his country, in erecting ſo ſtately a monument to the memory of ſuch a benefactor to it.

*F.* I am entirely of your opinion, *Mary*.—You ſee how commerce gives us the peaceful command of the world, even to bring home of every kind, of the trees of the earth.

.....  
We have aſcended to a great height. This calm day repreſents every object in ſo much the greater perfection, and fills the heart with a ſucceſſion of delights! Theſe woods, at their proper diſtance, fill the eye with an aſſemblage of grand and rural objects, which at once amaze and charm the fancy.

*D.* If the things of the *earth* can give us ſuch joy, what will *heavenly* things do?

*F.* If it were not for the *hopes of heaven*, what joys could we receive in ſuch *earthly* things, which death muſt deprive us of? The fear of *miſery*, or even of falling into *nothing*, would diſqualify us for receiving any laſting ſatisfaction.—Do you ſee yonder mountain? How majeſtically it raiſes its top in the clouds, while the valley below ſeems to ſmile under its protection. *That hanging wood* invites to *thought*: it ſeems to draw us up: and in this *aſcent*, we may figure to ourſelves the *progreſs of virtue*. The waters which glide gently along the valley below us, have a beautiful ſimilitude to a *life of peace*, and *calmneſs of days*; as the ruſhing torrent which falls from the hill, ſeems to threaten *deſtruction*: yet, behold how it is reſtrained; the quantity of water doth not *increate*: it is as conſtantly going off, and loſt in many leſſer channels, till it runs into the ſea, where it appears as *nothing*. So it is, *Mary*, with thoſe who make the greateſt buſtle: their *time* is ſwallowed up in the *gulph of eternity*! One follows another: many make a *noiſe*; but it is only a noiſe, “*ſignifying nothing!*”

*D.* Nothing, compared with the life to come, except that ſuch life depends on the part we act in this poor world. If the earth can delight us ſo much now, whiſt our minds are ſo inconſtant, what, I ſay, muſt *heaven* do, where our joys will be unchangeable!

.....  
*F.* That

(a) Alludes to *Stourhead*, in *Wiltſhire*, the ſeat of *Henry Hoare*, Eſq;

*F.* That is Lord Grove's: The avenue to it is charming! It was formerly in a regular line of trees: we now imitate nature, and break the view with a variety of objects, not terminate the sight by one, which is the case when trees are ranged in a direct line, as you look up an avenue. We need not envy the greatest of them; for we have some fine sheltering shades at home, and many thick fences, planted by my own hands:

I hope posterity will be the better for them. Mankind are taught, by the indulgence of nature, to be kind to each other; and variety gives new pleasures. The journey of life becomes the more pleasant, as the friends to mankind render their own lives useful to the remotest ages: it is in the power of the greater part of farmers to add something for beauty, as well as use.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N    V I I I .

### *On the Road home.*

*The properties of contentment to render men happy. Instances of the submission of Mahometans. The bad effects of declining to pay tithes. Duty of a parochial clergyman. The impartial distribution of justice now exercised by our laws. Story of Henry Prince of Wales striking a judge; and the conduct of the judge. The inflexibility of our judges. Remarkable story of justice to a lady of Zealand. Story of an act of strict justice exercised by an eastern prince.*

*D.* DO you think that *contentment* is the chief object of the concern of mortals?

*F.* That which dispels *melancholy*, and banishes care, will give every object a pleasing colour; it will make us satisfied with *ourselves*, and the rest of the world: what can be done more?

*D.* You have been an eye-witness to the miseries of many who are in want of the *necessaries* of life.

*F.* Yes: but in the midst of poverty, I have beheld the goodness of God, in giving them *hands to labour*, and *humble submission* to his providence.—And in the various gradations of human misery, I never saw the *virtuous* and *industrious* totally unprovided for. In the several situations in which the Almighty places his creatures, I have as constantly observed, that *afflictions* to the *good*, are more beneficial to them, than the greatest *prosperity* is to the *wicked*.

*D.* It must be a *comfort*, when afflictions come, to take them humbly; and if they come not, of what can we complain? But is it not more easy to talk of a *heart at rest*, than to enjoy this blessing *without interruption*?

*F.* Without interruption! This rarely happens, for the very reason that we are imperfect Beings. As to the different conditions of man-

kind, observe how indulgent Heaven is to the *wise* and *righteous*. A *wise man* never desires more than he may gain *justly*; use *soberly*; distribute *cheerfully*; and live with *contentedly*. He never wishes to change conditions with others: he thinks it too much to venture. He indulges no painful solicitude about future events, farther than such precaution as *prudence* dictates. To distrust Providence, is a proof of discontent.

*D.* Do not the major part of mankind submit only from *necessity*?

*F.* Let us grant they do: it is one thing to *murmur* and be discontented; and another to make a *virtue of necessity*: and surely those are in the best condition, who frame their desires to their circumstances; for things are *easy*, if not *severe*, when complied with willingly, though *bitter* when they are forced upon us. And whatever our *fancies* may suggest, if the value of any thing is in proportion to its use, nothing can be more valuable than a *mind* inclined to contentment.

*D.* This is good reasoning. Such a mind is in our power to pray for; and if we pray for it, believing it will be *given* us, we make *faith* and *contentment* assist each other.

*F.* To believe in a happy state to come, is *faith*.

Q 2

*D.* How

D. How far do you think *contentment* and *submission* to *Providence* may carry us in the discharge of our duty?

F. As far as is *necessary*; even to *death*, when death is necessary to give proof of obedience. We see that it induces some, who were in the most *exalted* stations, to submit to the *meanest* condition. I have heard my master say, that *bashaws*, and *governors* of provinces in *Turky*, being *degraded*; and, justly or unjustly despoiled of their wealth, by their master the *Grand Seignior*, have been sometimes seen selling *vegetables* in a common market, still maintaining their dignity as *men*. In these cases, they say, “*It is the will of God.*”

D. If *Mahometans* carry their submission so far, what a shame it is for *Christians*, whose Master was so glorious an example of submission, to *murmur* or *complain*. I shall be hereafter ashamed, when I feel myself *discontented*! I had no notion, that so much virtue was to be found among the followers of that *false prophet*.

F. A belief in God, and his providence, is common to *Mahometans* and *Christians*.

Do you observe *That gate*? I believe it is the very same I have heard of. The *vicar* of the parish, and the farmer, who lives in yonder house, having quarrelled, the *farmer* shut up this passage, to make it more difficult to the *vicar* to cart away his *TITHES*.

D. Good God! What miserable Beings we are!

F. Miserable indeed, that men cannot measure their short span of life in peace: and that there should be any *contend* with the ministers of God's word! If we ought to “render to God the things which are God's, as unto *Cæsar* the things which are *Cæsar's*,” there seems to be a double obligation on us, to pay our *tithes* conscientiously; or make it as *easy*, not as *difficult* as we can, to remove them. This is one of the best expedients for living in harmony, and learning *from him* That divine peace, which our great Lord and Master taught his followers. Those who *seed* *discord*, will reap the harvest of *unrighteousness*. I am sorry to see so many reluctant to pay their *tithes*.

D. What is the foundation of these contests, in which the interests of the *clergy* and *laity* are so apt to clash?

F. Human laws, in no country, ever kept mankind in peace: there must be some awe of a divine power: and in this case, those who refuse to pay for being reminded of such a power, I am afraid will shew no great attention to it: but these contests do not happen every day. In the times of popery, the monks held certain lands for their support, and paid the *vicar* for doing church service for the *parish*. When *protestantism* took place, many of such lands were given to *laymen*; and they made an allowance to the protestant vicar, by a salary, or the *small tithes* of certain articles, for doing the church duty of the parish: the *great tithes* remained vested in the *layman*.

D. Is not this absurd and contradictory?

F. Whatever it be, the landholder possessing by right of inheritance, legally demands; but he generally agrees for a sum as an equivalent, short of the real value. When the vicar has a right to the great tithes, and demands to the full, tenants are apt to grow impatient: but if this be the condition of a lease, and the law of the land, why should it not be cheerfully complied with?—There are many cases of a complicated nature, which bring on *law suits*. *Spiritualities* and *temporalities* are often so entangled, it is difficult to unravel them.

D: Some farmers say, the produce of a *tenth* part of *their improvements* does not properly belong to the church.

F. On what principles they found their opinions, I know not. If the nine other parts are improved, it seems reasonable that the clergy should enjoy their proportion, in common with the laity. In some instances, as in *hop-grounds*; or the plantation of *madder*, which is uncommonly expensive, and the produce more uncertain, it is often practised to agree for a certain sum in lieu of a tenth part of the produce. I wish that the collecting of tithes in general, could be made in an unexceptionable manner, by a certain sum of money; and not convert our holy teachers into *farmers*, *merchants*, and *tax-gatherers*: it is not for *their* honour to be in such a situation, nor for *ours* to dispute with them. So long as the laws require me to pay, *I will pay*: I knew when I took my farm, what taxes it was subject to. Not to pay what I owe, when it is in my power, is the same as robbing a man of his property. If the *clergy* have a right, let them be paid their due.

D. Our

*D.* Our neighbours say, yes: but authority was never given to *do wrong*, but to punish the *doers of wrong*: and laws were made for the *vicar*, as well as the *tenant and landlord*. Do you not think, that some of the clergy are occasionally in *fault*?

*F.* I believe there are *mutual provocations*: the *vicar* is often deficient in not living on the spot. But the clergy say, every thing necessary to life bears a high price, in proportion to *improvements*: and it is true the education of a clergyman is more expensive than it was. He pays his taxes, according to his consumption: and there are very few *clergymen* who can maintain a family, in any degree suitable to their education, but as they are paid to the full amount of the tithes due to them: and I think *they deserve them!*

*D.* When they do their duty, and pay their curates well.—

*F.* As far as I know, the laws relating to *tithes* for the support of the clergy, need a *revision*. This I am sure of, that their *right* should be so established, as to be uncontrovertible. Their business is to soften the hearts, and inform the understanding of their parishioners, not inflame or pervert them. *Charity* can never put on a more venerable aspect, than in the character of a *preacher of God's word*: he should bear his commission in his very looks; and temper the *dignity* of his office, with the *softness* of his words, bearing *some wrongs* with patience. Let him be ready to attend the *sick*, and succour the *distressed*: let him live according to the doctrine which he teaches; and square his life by the rules of his great *Lord and Master*. In a word, let him be such as my cousin's *reverend friend*. There must be something unhappy in the constitution of our church government, when such disagreements arise. It is a sad case, when the leader and his followers are not agreed about *charity* and *justice*; for the exercise of these is the only true path to heaven.

*D.* But some of our neighbours say, they must take care of their own families: "who so bringeth an offering of the goods of the poor, doeth as one that killeth a *son* before the *father's* eyes."

*F.* It is dangerous to introduce texts of scripture to accommodate them to *worldly* concerns: This text may serve for the *clergy*, as well as

the *laity*. It is an aggravation of their iniquity, who pretending to take care of their own children, are tempted to live on the spoils of another. I wish this matter were happily decided. The law is sometimes *too strong* for the weak, or *too weak* for the strong; but in this happy country, the first and greatest of mankind are not above the JUSTICE OF THE LAWS: changes of circumstances, indeed, make new laws necessary, whilst *liberty* multiplies them without end.—What will be their number at last?

*D.* Do you believe, that we are better guarded by *laws*, than other nations?

*F.* Formerly we were less civilized: yet even then the *greatest* dared not offend the *least*, without being subject to be called to a severe account. It is recorded in our history, that a *Prince of Wales* (a) having interested himself in a cause, wherein one of his *favourites* was indicted for a *misdemeanor*, and condemned; the *Prince* was so incensed, he struck the judge (b) on the bench. This *magistrate* very coolly ordered him to be committed to prison: and the *Prince*, conscious of his crime, as calmly submitted. When the news was brought to the king his father, he cried out in a transport of joy, "Happy is the king who has a magistrate, possessed of courage to execute the laws; and more happy, in having a son who submits to them!"

*D.* This judge acted with a spirit becoming his character.

*F.* In our politer days, such an outrage could happen only from a *mad populace*: but few are inclined to submit to the laws, merely from a *consciousness* of having transgressed them. You are to understand, that this judge was in the *chair*, or *throne of the King's-Bench*; and consequently represented the *king*. The offence was therefore so much the greater: it was as if the prince meant to set his father's "decrees at naught; to pluck down justice from her awful bench; to turn the course of law, and blunt the sword that guards the peace and safety of *king and people*." Imagine a son in common life, striking the representative of his *father!*

*D.* Profane wretch! Were he to pass unchastised, his next step would be to *strike his father!*

*F.* We should never suffer the dignity of the laws—

(a) Henry Prince of Wales, son to Henry IV.; afterwards Henry V.

(b) Sir William Gascoine.

laws to be trampled on, nor their dread purposes played the fool withal. Caution and uprightness are the portion and proper qualities of the *good and virtuous magistrate*. There never was a time in which *judges* were more *uncorrupt*, than at present : and this is one of the greatest securities of our *civil rights*. If once we treat them with disdain, farewell to *property*, to *peace*, and *liberty* ! Let us be armed at all points, to reverence the guardians of our laws, and those who are intrusted with authority.

D. Are not *judges* sometimes *wantonly* abused ?

F. The turbulent spirit which you allude to, according to news-paper information, hath *occasionally* prevailed beyond all decency : yet there is a great deal of *virtue* and *good-sense* in this nation, which we are not to look for in *news-papers*, nor in the *abuse of the press*.

D. Is there not likewise abundance of *vice* and *nonsense* ?

F. Yes : but our *laws* are happily founded on our *religion* ; and our *judges* are obliged to decide according to *law* : or in cases, wherein the laws are silent, they determine according to what appears to be *equitable*.

D. But may not this occasion their exacting of a man beyond his ability to comply : and thus, under a colour of law, the judge be instrumental to *injustice* ?

F. No one is *infallible* : but our *judges* seldom err. One way or other, *satisfaction* is given to the offended, as far as the imperfect state of mankind will admit, without punishing the offender beyond measure. I have told you that we have a *court of equity*, which mitigates the rigour of laws, and *uses* out *justice* by *rules of reason*, and *evidence of facts*.

D. Our laws being founded on *religion*, must be *just*, whatever the *practice* may be.

F. I once heard it said, by a person of high character, “ The law is a *noble profession* ; but the *practice* of it *infamous*.” He meant in the practice of some inferior departments. You know that the tongues and pens of counsel-learned in the law, are made use of. Some defend wrong, or plead to obtain what they do not think right : but still they plead ; it being their trade to contend for their client.

D. What a trade is That, which supposes a man to disguise truth, and tries to defraud his neighbour !

F. They leave it to their opponents to prevent

it if they can. This does not affect the judge, further than by *delusive argument* ; himself, and counsel on the other side, are to discover the fallacy, and state it fairly. The justice which we so generally find in this nation, adds strength to authority, procures respect, and gains reputation ; and as it never appears brighter than in promoting *peace*, it is instrumental in preserving us from all the inroads of *violence*. In this respect, we have a better security for our *continuance as a people*, than the ancient nations, who were not *Christians*. From the frame of our government, in the guardians and representatives of the people, by *king*, *lords*, and *commons*, whilst each controls the other, and all unite to *preserve the laws*, we stand upon securer ground, than any other nation upon the face of the earth.

D. But do we always know *what the laws are* ? If these are clear, why do we make such a *bustle*, and talk so much of *ruin* ?

F. Yours is a hard question, *Mary*. What answer can I make, but that we are used to talk of *ruin*, as if it were a pleasant subject, but we do not mean it. Some are capriciously wanton in discourse ; others *artful* and *designing*. Honest men are often *jealous* beyond measure ; and we are in general given to inconstancy. *Perfection is no where to be found on earth* ; but rulers are often challenged, as if they ought to be *infallible*. And as men are apt to call their own *opinions*, the *common-sense* and *reason of mankind*, many make no scruple to speak of their *political notions* as the general sense of the people. *News-writers* tell us what our sense is, as if we really had no sense, but such as they please to give us. The people are so dinned with reports of their sense, that I have been sometimes at a loss to know what they have meant by answering for me. The sense of the people can be realized only by their representatives : let them be changed ever so often, it comes to this. If we make a bad choice, we shall feel it : but I apprehend that we often complain of government, when we should complain of ourselves.—We are in more danger from our *morals*, than our *politics*.

D. We cannot punish certain transgressions, in so complete a manner as they do in some countries.

F. What do you mean ?

D. I have been reading an interesting story, and a most remarkable act of justice. A governor



governor of a town in *Zealand*, imprisoned a gentleman under a false pretence of treason, with a view to compass his evil intentions on his wife. This lady pleaded hard for her husband: the governor told her, the only condition of saving her husband's life: and when she had submitted to a deed her soul abhorred, merely from her love for her husband, this monster of cruelty, caused the poor man to be executed.

*F.* Monster indeed!

*D.* The lady soon repaired to court; and with the dignity of the deepest affliction, supported by resolution, made her story known to the sovereign. The prince having been informed of the fact, and satisfied of the truth, asked the governor, who was present, if he knew the lady. The governor, finding himself discovered, offered immediately to marry her, as a reparation for the injury done her. This was performed in the presence of the sovereign. "Well," says he, "you can now have no doubt to make your *will*, and leave your *wife* your heir after your death." To this also he submitted. The sovereign then, turning to the lady, spoke to this purpose: "Now, *madam*, I have done *you* all the justice that is in *my* power: it next belongs to me to do justice to *myself*, and to the *laws of my country*:" and immediately ordered the governor to execution.

*F.* This was nobly done! The prince who condemned the governor, you see, was not biased by any partiality. With us this man might have been *hanged*, and his estate forfeited. You see, in this instance, an exercise of arbitrary power: and when it is executed with such justice and judgment, it is a *happy power*; but it is too dangerous to be trusted in one man's hands. We rather chuse to trust a number of equals, than one superior. *Justice* is represented as hoodwinked, in order not to be biased. This lady's person or misfortunes might have created a partiality, and too hastily condemned the malefactor—or perchance, through interest, screened him from

justice.—Yours is not the only story of the kind. I remember one of an *eastern monarch* in a camp: a peasant complained to him of being driven out of his house by a soldier, who had at the same time violated his bed; but he could not mark out the man. "Well," says the king, "perhaps he may return to you again; and then let me know immediately." So it happened: and the king went himself, with his guards, each with a lighted flambeaux. When they came to the house, he commanded them to extinguish the lights, and go in and kill the adulterer, and then bring him out, and lay him before him. When this was done, he commanded them to light their torches again; and viewing the dead body attentively, he rejoiced exceedingly, and desired to sit down to the peasant's plain fare. Being asked the reason of his conduct, he said, "I was afraid that this daring wickedness, could be perpetrated by no person less than one of my sons: and I was determined to see justice done: it was therefore I ordered the lights to be extinguished, that my pangs as a father, might not subdue my justice as a judge."

*D.* This was a glorious instance of *resolute virtue*!

*F.* As a proof of *impartial justice* nearer home, I must tell you, that my young landlord has paid all his father's debts, though by law he was not obliged. He argued thus: "Men who act upon no higher principle, than what they are bound to by human laws, will be condemned at That tribunal, where the *divine law* is the rule of judgment: and it never can be agreeable to *eternal justice*, that any of us should triumph in the spoils of the wretched, merely through the unavoidable defects of *human laws*." It is this conduct which makes me think he will be kind to *me*. His uncle, a very worthy gentleman, to whom I am well known, lives not half a mile out of the road. Let us go and pay our respects to him.—

## CONVERSATION IX.

*On the Road home.*

*Description of Wisdom, and the advantages of it. Reflexions on the weather. Description of a grove. The honour paid to groves by the heathen nations. Story of a nobleman offering dishonourable terms to a young woman of virtue. Her father admonishes him. Representation of the state of libertinism, compared with a virtuous alliance.*

D. **A** Very worthy gentleman! He talks as if he had a true respect for you.

F. He is sincere; and does me great honour: he is in search of true wisdom, and to know the will of God as it is revealed to us, that he may obey it. This is the sum of truth and justice. The demand which Wisdom makes of all her children is, to become *wise unto salvation*. She says, "God giveth to man that which is good in *his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy.*" You see these are joined together; confirming what I have so often told you, in praise of *true pleasure, and a cheerful mind.*

D. If God giveth to man wisdom, the exercise of wisdom will be expected from him.

F. Even from you, my child. The *humility* which is sometimes found among the poor, baffles all the pride of human learning. She says, "I call, and my voice is to the sons of men;" to every rational being. "O ye simple! understand wisdom; and ye fools, be of an understanding heart! Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold."

D. What is meant by inviting *fools* to understand wisdom?

F. By *ye fools*, I understand those who have gone in the ways of folly; and also such as are *unlettered*, as opposed to the *learned*.—Observe the reason assigned for this invitation. The great Lord of nature, in the character of *Wisdom*, continues to speak to us in these terms: "I was from *everlasting*, from the beginning, or ever the *earth was.*" Thus you see, that *truth and justice*, which comprehend all other virtues, are essential to the *being of God*. As these respect the Almighty, it is said, "Who can find out the *height of heaven, and the breadth of the earth,*

and the *depth of wisdom.*" But in regard to us, it is very obvious what is meant, when it is declared, "All they that *hate me, love death.* He that *sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul.*"

D. This is a noble and satisfactory description!

F. And that we may be sure not to mistake, nor to seek in vain after *wisdom*, it is said, "If thou desirest wisdom, *keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee.* He that *loveth her, loveth life*; and they that seek her *early, shall find joy.*" It is said before, that God gives to man *knowledge and joy*; and that they who *hate wisdom, love death*: the promise is particular—*they who seek wisdom, shall find joy.* Those who are foolish in their *youth*, hardly ever find *joy in their age.* "He that *holdeth her fast, shall inherit glory*; and wheresoever *she* entereth, the Lord will *bles*s: but if he *go wrong*, she will forsake him, and give him over to *his own ruin.*"

D. This is a most persuasive and interesting invitation, to act a virtuous and religious part in all conditions of life.

F. Doth it not fire the soul? Observe how *great*, and yet how *easy* the task! "Wisdom is glorious, and *never* fadeth away. Whoso seeketh her *early, shall have no great travel*; for he shall find her *sitting at his doors.*"

D. O my father, how beautifully plain and simple is this instruction! And how bright and shining to those who will not shut their eyes against *this charming light!*

F. Harken to what follows, and contemplate the grandeur of the description: "She is the brightness of the everlasting light, the *unspotted mirror* of the power of God, and the image of his goodness!"

D. Most gloriously said!

F. He then sums up the whole in an address to the Almighty, in these words: “ O God of my fathers, and Lord of mercy, who hast made all things with thy word, give me wisdom, that sitteth by thy throne, and reject me not from among thy children. For though a man be ever so perfect among the children of men, yet if thy wisdom be not with him, he shall be nothing regarded.”

D. Thy wisdom!

F. The wisdom which leads to a state of eternal happiness. Thus you may form the clearest understanding, and most just comprehension, of the condition of human life. Let the world smile, or applaud in the highest terms, yet, he who is rebellious in the all-searching eye of God, is as *nothing*; he shall not obtain mercy. You perceive how mankind may be exalted to heaven, or plunged into hell!

D. I do indeed perceive in what my true glory, as a rational and accountable being, consisteth; and how I may be blessed with *virtue*; or if in disobedience to my God, I should walk in the paths of folly and iniquity, I may be *curst*. O my father! every word you have uttered, charms me into the love of virtue; it strikes me with the dread of vice; it arms me with resolution to oppose the power of the evil principle within me.—Grant, O God, that I may delight in virtue, and walk steadfastly in the ways of thy commandments!

F. Amen, with all my heart!—Ever carry in your mind, that those who most delight in wisdom, are the greatest ornaments of human nature: and they that express the highest adoration of God, who is the fountain from whence all wisdom flows, are the most happy among the children of men.

D. I am sensible enough of this: but how would you describe wisdom, as it is commonly found among us poor mortals?

F. True wisdom, I fear, is not commonly found any where. To describe it, according to my apprehension; it is an *evenness of soul*, and a steadiness of temper, which, speaking as a man, no cares can ruffle; a *purity of heart*, which no desires can inflame, nor passions conquer: it is the *obedience of body and soul* to the great Author of life: it takes the lead in the triumphs of *virtue*: in no *conflicts* doth it shrink at *danger*; nor doth it ever yield to *folly*.

D. Where then shall we look for a *wise person*?

F. Mind the substance of my advice. Be as *wise* as you can; or in other words, keep *virtue* constantly in your view, and endeavour to adhere to it. This is the *wisdom* which you are to “ *love above health or beauty, and chuse her rather than the light: for the light which cometh from her never goeth out!*”

.....  
We have beguiled the time, *Mary*, for *twelve miles*.

D. I am not tired: the objects around us seem to be the more pleasing from the consideration of the charms of *wisdom*, as you describe them; and as far as I am capable of contemplating them!—Do you think it will *rain*? We should be *unloved* by a *wet harvest*.

F. Now, child, you forget your wisdom. Never talk That language: “ Sufficient for the day are the *evils* thereof.” Do you consider, that the *life* of every man depends upon the *weather*? I have not read that *famine* hath at any time invaded this happy land. You make me think of the fable of the *farmer*, who petitioned Heaven that he might be indulged with the *choice* of weather, and give his fields sunshine and rain, as he should think most proper.

D. And was it not attended by a *large crop*?

F. By no means. He found himself grievously mistaken, and begged to resign his charge to *Providence*, at all events.—What is good for one field, is bad for another; and many circumstances combining, sometimes render That *good*, which we considered as *evil*.

.....  
Is not *this grove* delightful?—It was my master’s *favourite walk*: he used to say, that in such *green palaces*, the first kings the earth ever knew, reigned and slept in peace: and as they thought of God, grew *wise*: their food was the fruits and vegetables of the *field*; their music the enchanting notes of birds; and their *gay feathers* stretched in the air, reflecting beauty from such crystal floods as this, fed their fancy with delight.—This shade he consecrated to *silence* and *contemplation*, lulling his mind to rest, whilst he thought on the *past actions of a various life*; all the dangers he had *shunned*; and all the *pangs* which he had *suffered*. On these occasions, he reflected on his losses in the untimely death

of several friends and acquaintance; but particularly the *farewel* he took of a lady, whose repentance in her last hours, had made the deepest impression on his mind.—You shall know the story one of these days.

D. I dare say he was the better man for his reflexions.—This *murmuring stream*, and the notes of *nightingales*, under these lofty trees, affect the mind wonderfully: they make me *ferocious*; at the same time, I feel as if some *good* had befallen me; and my hope in the future mercies of God, increases with my sense of my *present satisfaction*.

F. You rejoice in the solemnity of the scene, and feel the effects of *piety*, in the contemplation of the *power* and *goodness* of God! He who presides here, and over all the works of nature, is the *fountain of all joy*: they who drink deeply at it, shall never *die*. Happy were it for mankind in general, if they delighted more in *peaceful* thoughts: but in the world at large, we often find, that *reflexion*, like a troubled stream, comes rushing on, and sometimes overwhelms the *wretched children of this world*.

D. The idolatrous nations, mentioned in the holy Bible, and *heathens in general*, I think, were fond of *groves*.

F. *Lofty trees* are the most magnificent production of the vegetable world; especially when they spread their branches so luxuriantly: they naturally create *awe*; and accordingly we find those *heathens* had such great reverence for venerable trees, they dedicated groves to their *idols*. This was so offensive to God, that when the *Jews*, then the chosen people of the Almighty, made war with these nations, they *threw down their images*, and *cut down, or burnt, their groves*, as monuments of Almighty Vengeance. When people are wickedly inclined, not venerable forests only, but even solemn temples are subject to *profanation*.—How often do men depart from their common-sense and reason, and go a *whoring*, as the scriptures term it, after *strange inventions*!

D. If I do not mistake, it was in this grove, my good and much-lamented friend, *Margaret Faith*, and her father *Daniel*, were affronted: I never heard the particulars of that story.

F. A YOUNG NOBLEMAN of this neighbourhood, had some time before cast his eyes on *Margaret*; and happening to see her unattended in this wood, seized the opportunity of making her a proposal to *keep her*, as they call it. She

rejected it with the *disdain*, which all who knew her would have expected: and walking up to her father, who was near, told him with a smile, what the *gentleman* had said. Upon this, the old man, with great calmness, address'd him in these terms: “This young woman and I had just been saying, that groves should be sacred to *piety*; but I find you are of a different opinion in respect to this, for you would give her an *impious* office.—Did you talk to her of the flames of *love*, and the *beauty* of her looks, and at the same time, shew her *the way to hell*? Happily you find her better guarded, than was our first parent, when the *devil* used such fine words to persuade her how much happier she would be, if she did *That* which God had forbidden her to do. But pray, Sir, did you intentionally wait here, with a design to way-lay this poor girl, to *rob* her of the treasures of her *innocence*? Will you permit me to ask, if you are a *Christian*? Do you know that there is a *God*, in whose sight virgin purity is more precious than the estate you possess? All the gems that glitter at the court which you frequent, are not of such value to her as a pure mind, and *faith* in the promises of God. You may there *hear* softer language than I talk, though perhaps not so upright.—Go home, for shame, and rejoice in your disappointment. If you *are a Christian*, the remembrance of your disappointed evil intentions, will make you rejoice. What could you have gained by being successful in a design which would have stained your honour, violated your conscience, and in the issue disgraced your humanity? Go home, and *repent*!” To which he replied, “*D——n* you, Sir, who are *you*, who pretend to *school me*: what are *you* to this young woman?” *Daniel* answered, in his former gentle tone, “O fye, young man! Because I undertake to defend my *daughter*, you would consign me to everlasting perdition! Was it for this you was so many years at school at *Westminster*?”—At the mention of *daughter* and *Westminster*, the young man began to change his note.—“Well,” says he, (swearing by his Maker) “you are a fine *old Græcian*.—How came you to know that I was bred at *Westminster*?”

D. What did he mean by *Græcian*?

F. Such young men use certain cant phrases, alluding to some venerable character; or perhaps without knowing what they mean. When my  
old

old friend said, “ *my daughter,*” the young man spoke in *French*, “ *Elle est diablement belle!*” she is *devilishly* handsome.

*D.* *Devilishly* handsome! Is that the way of commending beauty?

*F.* Why, *Mary*, those who pursue it for wicked ends, we may say are *devilish*, though the *beauty* may be *heavenly* that excites their evil desires; for that which is most precious is often the cause of theft and rapine, treachery and murder: and sometimes we see this in the instance of female charms, when the object most to be honoured and protected, is used with vile, and most tyrannical oppression. My *old friend* said, “ I know, Sir, that your ancestors were distinguished for *heroism*; but it did not consist in such achievements as the *seduction of young women*. They crowned their lives with glory; chusing rather to die, than give up the cause of true religion and liberty. They were renowned in arms; and succoured the *distrest*; they did not seek how to render the *poor* unhappy, or deprive them of That which the world cannot give. Some of your modish companions might applaud your conduct, had you succeeded with my daughter: But give me leave, Sir, to say, *they* are bribed by their passions, and as criminal as yourself. You have not treated me as a *friend*; but permit me to give you some *friendly advice*: and perhaps I know more of the world than you imagine.—Marry some virtuous woman of education, suitable to your high rank:—if beauty is the object that most affects your heart, make choice of a handsome young lady, whose education hath been strict, according to the Christian faith; and be *true* to her, without the least appearance to the contrary, that she may be *true* to you. Throw her not into the eyes of other men, that you may not throw her into their arms.—Encourage her not in a fondness of much *company* and *diversion*, lest she should grow sick of *you*, or *you* of *her*. There are *virtuous* women in the world; and it is plain by your present conduct, that you think there are *vicious* ones. Perhaps you will remember the admonition of an old man you once met in a grove!—If you keep a mistress, as it seems you propose, you will live under the harrows: if she is *viciously* inclined, you will be her *dupe*, and support her in treachery against yourself. If she hath sentiments of virtue, her manner of life will *sting her soul*; she will be *miserable*: and if you

have the heart of a man, the seeing *her* in distress, will make *you* wretched also. In the mean time, you must *conceal* her, as well as your *children*, and hide yourself from the conversation of the virtuous world. *All distinctions* are not yet destroyed! I appeal to your own heart, if in your present pursuit of false happiness, you do not find your *imagination* clouded with deluded notions of pleasure, which *experience* derides, and *reason* condemns, whilst *religion* weeps at the evils you are drawing on your own head. The greater licentiousness you indulge yourself in, the more insensible you will become to the solid transports of *honest love*. Nor will you only endanger your *soul*; it is probable your health also will become a *prey*. I presume you are an advocate for *liberty*, at the very moment, in the insolence of fortune, you take for granted you might *enslave my daughter*! I know that this is not so often regarded in *morals*, as in *politics*: but let me ask you, if *my son*, who is as comely a person as yourself, were to attempt to seduce your *sister*, would you not think it as warrantable to shoot him, as you would a *dog*? Where then is your *love of liberty*? Is liberty confined to *wealth* and *title*? No, Sir: the *poorest* should enjoy it in *spirit*, as an emblem of that state of perfection, wherein the slavery of sin is subdued; the chains of iniquity broken; and men become the true servants of the true God, in whose service only is *perfect liberty*!—I hope this interview will be for your benefit, and my comfort, even in death. If I make a convert of you to the love of *truth* and *innocence*, and your future conduct averts the avenging arm of Heaven, I shall think myself an instrument in the hands of God, for the glorious purpose of making *you* happy! If you *continue to nurse foul thoughts* and *base intentions*; if you will be a fond libertine to play with your perdition; if you will ensnare your own soul, you must stand to the event! If you will not cure yourself of the frenzy of a lawless appetite——The young man interrupted him, by saying, “ Not so fast, my old friend; I meant nothing but as a *fair bargain*: I like your daughter, and would *keep* her.”—“ What, replied *Daniel*, in the chains of *hell*, to administer to the prince of darkness? No, Sir: *she* is a *Christian*: as such she hopes to live and die. Whether I shall meet her in the regions of the blessed, I know not!—But this I know, that I live in hopes the righteous God, whom

I have endeavoured to serve, will succour me, and preserve my daughter!—*You* call it a *fair bargain*: I think it would be a *foul bargain*. Under a notion of *love*, you mean to load me and my child with infamy!”—Here the good old man shed a tear. *Compassion* for the *young man*, and tenderness for his daughter, brought nature to his heart:—recovering himself he went on.—“I have *but one*, and she alas a *tender plant*! but I hope to preserve her, till she grows up to heaven! Were she to trespass, I should think that Providence meant to chastise *me* with the severest of all trials!—I should have wished to have adopted a beggar’s brat, covered with filth and rags, with rheumy eyes, and scald head: perhaps I might have restored her to health, and found a *soul* capable of generous impressions. *She* might have cherished *me* in my old age: no matter who her *father* might be, I would have been her *father*!—but as *my own dear child*! mine, whom I love so *tenderly*!—to see her tumbled by a vile hand, “into a pit of ink;” where should I find the stream to wash her clean again?—Consider, my *young lord*, what it is to be *honest*, and a *father* to a child he loves!”

D. O mercy!—What did he say?

F. My old friend, full of his subject, went on: “Perhaps, you have not been used to hear an old man talk from ancient fages; but I can tell you a very wise person once said, “If thou givest thy soul the desires that please her, she will make thee a *laughing-stock* to thine enemies, that malign thee.” And to speak to you, who are young, as a *prophet* once did to two *old sinners*, I must say, *Beauty hath deceived thee; lust hath perverted thine heart, and turned thine eyes from heaven!* You, like them, would be as *cruel as lascivious*: not to give false witness to take away my daughter’s *temporal life*; but you would consign her to *infamy*; you would leave her to *repentance*, or *everlasting death!* Behold her there, and *tremble!*”—He answered, “I did not expect to meet with a *Methu list preacher* in these woods!”—My old friend replied, “No: nor, I suppose, with any other preacher: therefore you are the more *treacherous!* But know, *young lord*, that Heaven is ever watchful over its worshippers: and often, in mercy to the *wicked*, blasts their designs; prevents the commission of foul deeds; and saves them—*from themselves*. Heaven grant

this may be your case; you who are the *son* of my much-honoured lord and *patron!*”—The young Lord started back, and said, “Did *you* know *my father?*”—*Daniel* having so far discovered himself, replied, “Yes, my lord: my name is *Daniel Faith*: and *your father*, now sleeping in the bosom of the earth, called me his *friend!*—Not long before his death, as we were walking in this grove, in the fulness of his heart, the tears streaming down his hoary cheeks, he said, “In spite of all my care, I fear my much-lov’d son,—(ever shall I remember his tears!) my *much-lov’d son*, will *forget* his God!” These were his words.—I know that your conduct, my Lord, corresponds with the *custom* of modern young men, who *rob* young women, whom it would be their glory to *protect*. He who ruleth above, once destroyed a *world* for its iniquity. Heaven grant, that *you* may repent! *This is my blessing!* Though you have acted as my *enemy*, you may be again my *friend*. Kind Providence hath furnished me with an occasion of shewing respect to the memory of my much-honoured friend and *patron!* O may the righteous God, for *his* sake, turn the heart of his *son*, and guide his paths to *everlasting peace!*”

D. Gracious God! *Could* he resist such an admonition?

F. Upon this he took out his handkerchief, and shed some tears.—My old friend, whose tone was already in the mournful strain, then said, “I perceive, *my lord*, there is virtue in your soul! Will you permit me to take you by the hand, in token that my indignation is turned into *pleasure*, and my *grievance* into *joy?* I hope we shall always meet hereafter, on terms of *friendship*. My high obligations to your father, have made me the more daring on this occasion. God knows my heart! I wish to be *your friend!*” The young lord stood mute for some time, and then said, “My *good friend*, you will *forgive* me!—Methinks I should be happy if I could call you by a more *interesting* name!”

D. This was glorious on both sides!

F. There is a strange mixture in most characters: but what is the essence among men, where there should not be a *mutual forgiveness?* If all our souls were forfeited by sin, and he to whose anger they were forfeited, found out the *means* of forgiveness, *mercy* should flow in streams from the heart that hopes to find mercy.—

Who

Who is that coming?—Our *John*! That *honest, affectionate* servant, impatient to see us, has taken a walk of several miles, for the pleasure of expressing his regard.

*D.* I am glad to find *all is well at home*.

## CONVERSATION X.

### *On the road Home.*

*Story of the young nobleman continued. Conversation with him on the licentiousness of modern fine men. Shamefulness of the practice of concubinage. Reflexions on the slavery of sin, and subjection to the appetites. Danger to young women of trusting to generosity. Strictness in imaginary honour, in preference to mercy, a proof of its being of the cobweb kind. Elegy written by a lady, in praise of the young nobleman's father.*

*D.* I Am glad to see *John*; but he interrupted your tale:—who was this young nobleman's father?

*F.* Lord *Theodore*: his seat was at *Arno*.

*D.* And what did the young Lord mean by “*a more interesting name?*”

*F.* When I first heard the story, I imagined he intended to make some *honourable* offer with regard to *Margaret*. The tenderness which worked in his heart, on this occasion, I apprehended might raise his thoughts of *her* virtue, as well as of her *father's*. A true consciousness of having trespassed, added to such considerations, might have had such an effect on a mind tinctured with *generosity*.

*D.* What became of *Margaret* all this time?

*F.* She looked down with sympathetic sorrow, the big tear standing in her lovely eyes: but she could take no part in such a conversation. She was the *temptation*, though not the *tempter*: and her father's repentment of the insult offered her, could not but alarm her, whose health was so much on the decline. The candour of this young nobleman, in acknowledging his fault, must likewise have given her very different impressions, from those she received on his proposal of a criminal contract. To find him submitting to be admonished, by one so much inferior in condition, was no less new to her. The whole scene, you may easily imagine, must have agitated the thoughts of a young woman of sentiment.

*D.* But was it not strange that *he* should be so *patient* under the lash?

*F.* Not if you consider *Margaret's* charms on one side, and the respect due to grey locks, so well matured by time and virtue, on the other: these circumstances, joined to an interesting tale respecting the deceased lord, fixed the young man as it were within a magic circle. This interview terminating in so friendly a manner, and his lordship discovering that he had met with a very *honest, sensible* man, whom his late father had honoured, he invited *Daniel* to his house. Upon his arrival, he addressed him in these words:—“*I thank* you for the lesson you gave me in the *wood*: I never received half so *good* an one at *Westminster*, nor at any time since I was at *school*, except from my *father*, whose memory I revere. I am sensible that my conduct has been faulty: I will endeavour to correct it. You may believe me when I say, I am glad to find you are so happy in that amiable, virtuous girl, your daughter! I hope she will be constant to her principles; for though I was in a *wrong pursuit*, I am not less convinced, that the path she is in, is the true one.”—To this *Daniel* replied, “*You know, my Lord*, the young men of this age, afford very frequent occasions for *such lessons*: and if my superiors were as zealous as I feel myself to be in defence of our *holy religion*, what numbers might change their rule of conduct, and become friends to *virtue*, in something more than theory! But give me leave to say,

scue

some sins are privileged from being exposed, for this reason, that “ a modest tongue cannot relate, nor a modest ear receive, an account of them.” The apostle, in allusion to *criminal connexions*, says, “ *It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret :*” but such vices are become so familiar amongst us, as to be *no secrets* : yet, when *reason* is employed as a *slave* to do the drudgery of *vice*, we must not be surprized that men should become as *shameless*, as *slaves* usually are, when employed in the lowest offices. He that makes That his rule of life, which is common to *beasts*, however elegant he may be in his vices, throws aside the *dignity* of his nature ; and destroys his rank among men. And of all follies it seems to be the most foolish, to defend *vice*, by pleading *custom*, and the practice of those who act the same part. If this could give a privilege for doing whatever our appetites might prompt us to, without considering what is reasonable and fit to be done, we might disband all the forces of *virtue*, and leave religion with nothing but a mere name. Your Lordship has an understanding to comprehend, and a heart to feel the miseries created by vice. What disturbances of families !—What devastation of morals !—What bloody contentions, are created by the lawless commerce of the sexes !—You must see, in what troubles the mind may be involved by this transient gratification.”—“ Indeed, my friend,” replied his Lordship, “ to suppose that those act according to the order of nature, who defeat the ends of nature, and destroy the peace of society, must be absurd. I fear, with you, that many of us attempt to bribe nature to vindicate our excesses, instead of following her pure and uncorrupted dictates, as *reason* and *religion* direct.” *Daniel* continued, “ I am glad to hear your Lordship acknowledge so much : do you consider in what chiefly consists the difference between one man and another ? One *shuns*, and another *seeks* the temptation : one employs his *wit* to administer to his *appetites* ; and another uses his *reason* to *subdue* them. This happens every day, with men of the same temper and disposition, with regard to constitution. Among persons of sentiment, the stronger their propensity to sin, supposing they believe in *Christ*, the stronger is their watchfulness, that they may not fall into a snare. If evil habits prompt us to sin, a good principle, and the secret workings of the heart, assisted by the

divine favour, will bring us back to our duty. We shew our resolution in cases of moral danger, by *flying* from it. In the same degree as the passions are accustomed to *subjection*, there will be safety. He who gives up the reins, will assuredly be drawn into danger, and betrayed to his enemy : he will become the *prisoner of vice*. Many a man has half persuaded himself, that he is impelled by a resistless force, at the very moment he is *conscious* he doth not use the means he hath been taught to resist sin : still finding in his breast a testimony of his error, and a warning of the fatal consequences of it, he returns to a performance of his duty to the great Ruler of all things. If the mighty Law-giver of the christian world will judge mankind in *righteousness*, how will the unrighteous stand before his throne !—Can any reasoning Being think of this and not tremble ?—Human nature is the same in all : and in general the same causes produce the same effects.—Let a man, not totally given over to what is emphatically called an *impudent mind*, be taken from evil communication, and he will become a different kind of Being. Many have been reformed by *virtuous* women ; but never by *vicious* ones. The same will hold in the friendship of men, and those confederacies in vice, and leagues, which constitute the ordinary friendships of *men of pleasure*. You cannot be insensible, that the *circumstances* and *situations* of persons, create the *temptation*, or restrain men from sin. A supposition that a lawless *desire* can be gratified, is often the cause that excites it.” —“ I allow,” replied *my Lord*, “ that the fear of a prison, or some temporal evil, keeps many a young fellow in awe, whom no sense of dignity, nor any fear of an *hereafter*, would have held within proper bounds. Some hazard their *necks*, and many more their *health*, to gratify their appetite : and of these, what numbers, conscious of guilt and shame, despise themselves most heartily ! Nor does it stop here : we are fatiated with such pursuits, and wonder at ourselves, and our own folly ; and yet we go on.” —“ So it must be,” replied *Daniel* : “ No man can stifle his sense of *good* and *evil* ; he cannot drive it from his bosom. Though he may sometimes *lull it to sleep* for a time, it will haunt him. *It is the mercy of God* soliciting his return to *virtue*. You know, *my Lord*, when a certain venerable personage, *St. Peter*, recommends to us



to call on the Great Father of mankind, who *without respect of persons*, judgeth according to every man's *work*, he lets us know, that we are to pass the time of our sojourning here on earth, with *fear*; or in other words, *to stand in awe of a judgment to come!* And whilst we consider what our *works* are, to implore the divine assistance for the amendment of our ways!—Let us set all our hopes and fears, with respect to a *future state*, against the *solicitation of our senses*, and *momentary gratifications*, and then see if these are not contemptible and vile! Shall we, for the sake of them, renounce an eternity of *bliss*?—Shall the heir of immortality *meanly* and *servilely*, give up his birthright, and plunge himself into misery? Is the soul immortal? Is there a state of rewards and punishments after death? Can we by any reasoning, or accidental circumstance of worldly condition, change the decrees of eternal justice?"—At these words, the young man turned pale, and looked up to heaven.

D. No wonder! What fools must those be, who do not believe, or believing do not call up all the strength of their minds, to withstand the dangers which threaten their *everlasting destruction!*

F. *Daniel* went on: "Yet, alas! *my Lord*, many give themselves up to work *wickedness*; as if, in the issue, it would be profitable; I say, in the issue; upon a supposition that every reasoning creature thinks of something more than the *present moment*. In the comparative view of gospel righteousness, and our sinfulness, every man's heart may, with great propriety, be said to be full of deceit: but how can common candour prevent the *deepest blush*, when any attempt is made to argue in defence of vicious practices?—There needs no abstract reasoning to discover that there is something to be *said*, and *done* in the world, by us rational, intelligent beings: and he who is wise, will say it, and do it, to the best of his abilities, whilst his hour lasts.—It is but an hour, *my Lord!* and *the scene will change*: what it will change to!—That is the question!—If there is a life to come, it must be happy or miserable. A man of sense may consider *innocent delights* or *amusements*, as *play-things* for his diversion; not good enough to employ much thought about: But, when he recollects *how short his time is*, will he allow himself also in *guilty pleasures*, which may so soon take a ghastly form?

In effect these are *ruffians*, lying in wait, to take away his life. They will rob him of the treasure of his hopes of a glorious immortality. Can there be a more inconsistent creature upon the earth than a man who even *doubts* whether there is any *after-reckoning* to be made, and makes no provision for it? If he indulges his appetites contrary to the express command, supposing a life to come, of the contrary of which no man pretends to be sure; if he acts against such command, can he be said to be in his right mind? In the conduct of human laws, the madness of the heart is punishable; and God, who has given man the power of governing his appetites, with the most apparent view of rendering him happy in both worlds, will surely require *obedience*. Men condemn themselves for their offences against their Maker. If by the means of our passions and appetites, our virtue is tried; and by the means of virtue our happiness is acquired; if we make That a licence for sin, which God and Nature intended as a trial of virtue, is it not evident that we revolt, and trample on our own reason, striving to quench the spirit which the Almighty hath planted in our breast!—Had we no desires which might incline us to do amiss, we should not be in a state of *trial*." *My Lord* replied, "But do you make no distinctions? The mercy which may be hoped for in the divine compassion, for one sin, may not for the same reason be expected for another sin, or for all sins."—"My dear *Lord*," said *Daniel*, "this is a kind of flattery too gross for men of common-sense.—Are not mankind as subject to pride, avarice, and ambition, and other evil desires, as they are to lust and sensuality? And may we not as well plead for the gratification of these passions? Why should not these be indulged *with* or *without* reason, as well as the other? Pride, ambition, and covetousness are confessedly great vices; under certain regulations they change their name: they cease to be mischievous to society, and sometimes appear as virtues: They may be refined into *generosity*, *emulation*, and *prudence*: even lust may be so suppressed and regulated, as to become gentleness and genuine love: but can the many thousand such reasoners, pretend that their gratifications are refined to such a standard? Should we see such bad effects from them, if they were? The ingenious, at all times, exercise their wit to destroy the distinctions of virtue and vice; particularly

particularly in cases where themselves are offenders. However compassionate we may be to ourselves, as *imperfect beings*, and according to the nature of offences, the truest compassion is shewn by a fair and candid judgment; not a *sentence* that flatters the sinner, nor seats the prisoner of justice in the judge's chair. Woe is denounced against those who call evil *good*, or good *evil*: but so we call things when we judge ourselves partially. We are still referred to *reason*, as the rule of human actions; and to *faith*, to which reason rightly informed, will yield obedience. If we mean to contend for the *prize of immortality*, we must run the race that is set before us. If we indulge unlawfully, in this world, our enjoyments must cost us dear: they can be of no long continuance; for whether life be virtuous or vicious, it is short and precarious. I talk to you, my Lord, as to a man who has been taught the *Christian religion*. I know your *father* took great pains to possess you with true notions of it. If you are engaged in the society of men, who labour to root up all that my good Lord was so anxious to plant in your breast; if you cannot *reform* them, let them not *deform* you; let them not metamorphose your generous mind into the disposition of a *satyr*. You reverence your father's memory: you cannot at the same time suppose that he was ignorant or insincere: but his thoughts and actions were totally repugnant to those principles which many libertine young men, and old ones also, endeavour to render subservient to their appetites. If your father was *wise*, they must be *foolish*.—You, my Lord, are born a lawgiver: you inherit a legislative power: would you think it right that a cause, in which the passions and appetites being parties, should be the only evidence admitted? But how would you relish a proposal of resigning your legal authority, and constitute the parties, *judges* also? The *vicious* use their wit and dexterity to compass their designs; often proving, that “the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light;” but it often happens, that the better they accomplish their purposes, the nearer they approach to the ruin of their souls.”—“Indeed, my good friend,” said my Lord, “your reasons in behalf of virtue, are unanswerable.”—*Daniel* replied, “you grant that evil companions pervert the heart: why do you not forsake them, and seek

for good ones? If you subscribe to an opinion contrary to the conviction of your own mind, do you not dissimble, and impose on your friends, as well as yourself? And is not this the most disgraceful, servile submission, which *tyranny* itself can impose on the moral freedom of the mind?” My Lord answered, “I feel the force of your argument, and am fully convinced, that many young fellows of the present age, daily make such sacrifices: and though they are ready to run a man through the body, if upon any occasion they happen to be told they lie; yet, in effect, they are false to God, themselves, and the world. They do most emphatically live a lie; and substitute *thoughtlessness*, *pride*, or *folly*, for principle and persuasion; acting against their judgment; assiduously seeking for reasons to maintain the practice, against which their minds revolt.”—“Well, my good young Lord,” says *old Daniel*, if this be your opinion, can you hesitate a moment to abandon such false friends? God knows how soon the day will come, when his judgments will go abroad into the earth! Shall our zeal flag, because these are not days of *persecution*? If our passage through life is made smooth and calm, shall we make this a reason for revolting against Providence? Those friends of yours would have their *learning*, *sense*, and *knowledge* honoured, and their lives rendered *prosperous*, with a fair view of happiness to posterity: can these ends be answered without *righteousness*, *temperance*, and *attention to a judgment to come*? Either these considerations make them tremble, or they discard their *religion*, at the moment they confess that no government can subsist without it.—Where then is their merit; or what safety can be found in their society? Will a woman go to a brothel to learn chastity? Vice is contagious: for heaven's sake avoid it.—And as your Lordship has indulged an old man, in hearing him talk in defence of his faith, will you give me leave to mention another circumstance, which I think of moment? Many of our fine folks affect to disregard the sabbath; both themselves and their servants acting as if it were set apart only for the *vulgar*. This is the inlet to a great part of the wickedness that prevails. Those who are eager to *worship God in truth*, may be supposed eager to obey him, by going constantly to his temple: but when a nobleman or gentleman, and his servants, are negligent in this respect, they live in an habitual offence,

offence, preparing destruction for *themselves*, and, by their *example*, to the *community* also. The common fault with those young men, who go such desperate lengths, as to *forfeit their lives*, when they come to the last sad scene, they often tell us, the *neglect of the sabbath* was their undoing. How many in the highest life, who die *stately* in their beds, upon examining their souls, might with equal propriety say the same thing. Human nature is the same: and a public testimonial of a belief in a God, and obedience to his laws, is necessary to the preservation of individuals, and to the community: a neglect in this instance is pregnant with moral and political destruction, and trains on *temporal* and *eternal* misery. And if you wish to preserve yourself and your country, be attentive to this part of *civil* and *religious* œconomy."—In answer to this, his Lordship said, "I acknowledge that many of us act, as if *rank* and *fortune* were privileges of exemption from duties of so obvious a kind, as to be inseparable from our condition as dependent creatures."—*Daniel* continued, "I have observed also, now popular applause has been coveted of late years, in constant opposition to *government*, as if government itself were an *evil*, or none of us were *fit* for it. Let who will take the reins, and be the measure ever so good, a *formal opposition* to it is constantly maintained. This seems to be an anti-christian practice, and productive of temporal misery. We who are in humble life, cannot easily be brought to understand how evil may be done, that good may come of it. Opinion and probity of heart, may lead men to oppose the ruling power with all the strength of their reason: but can it be consistent with truth to oppose in all cases? An indiscriminate resistance of good and evil, is an attempt to destroy government, whilst it ruins its own reputation; for it seems to militate against men, rather than measures. No end is noble, where the means are base: And are not all means base, which are not founded in truth and candour? Government exists, and is sometimes prosperous; and therefore I conclude that the administrators of government sometimes judge well. How are they to be condemned when they judge ill; or how can they be punished, when they act injuriously to the state, if you clamour against them at all times? We in *humble life*, I say, are apprehensive, that an impatience for the eme-

luments of power, is the main spring of the contention: But whatever the cause be, we cannot reconcile it to the uprightness which ought to reign in the heart of a christian. *Your Lordship* will therefore impute my zeal for truth, to an awful veneration for That supreme Lord of all, who is represented to the hearts and understandings of men, as the God of truth!"—The young Lord, smiling at *Daniel's* concern for the interest of virtue and religion, said, "Stop, my good friend; you are now descending into the regions of politics: morality and religion were our subjects." *Daniel* replied, "Does your Lordship consider, that if God should be in *all* our thoughts, and nothing essential done without regard to his honour, how can our politics be separated from our religion? Can That which in private life would be scandalous, in public be honourable? Can any thing, which is of great importance to the public, be of an *indifferent nature*? I am not without hopes, the day is near at hand, when you, *my Lord*, will be as great and good a man, as was your noble father: but I never heard, he took any side but That which he esteemed to be true and right, and agreeable to the greatness of his comprehension.—Every practice which is against the faith of *Christ*, tends to the establishment of opinions and customs, which necessarily give mortal wounds to the hopes of a christian."—This was the substance of what *Daniel* related to me of the conversation he had with this young *nobleman*.

*D.* I suppose it might have suited many *commoners* quite as well. It was an interesting conversation; I hope it had its due effect; and as this young nobleman was staggered by the lesson he received in the *wood*, *Daniel's* conquest would be complete in this interview: and that his Lordship, who seems to have some good principles of Christian virtue in him, might also gain a victory over himself, by being subdued to a right sense of his religion.—

*F.* Some say he is become a sober man.—But, alas! not *Moses* nor *Job*, in conjunction with twenty such honest men as our friend *Daniel*, can work on the minds of *stiff-necked* and *perverse people*. It is with many in these days, as in years of old: They regard not *Moses* and the *prophets*, as to the moral law; neither will they be *persuaded* to follow *Christ*, though they believe he arose from the dead.

D. I wonder that *generosity* does not keep young men of education, *virtuous*.

F. Do you mean *chaste*? It is not every one, who is of a generous mind.—Trust not to *generosity*: it does wonders *sometimes*; but if prudence, and a sense of religion, do not restrain the ardour of youth, or the impurity of age, I fear generosity is not to be trusted.

D. The young lord was certainly mistaken in his object: *Margaret* had as high sentiments of virtue, as any *duchess* in the land.

F. Her father knew this; and therefore he treated the young nobleman, as one whom he wished to reform, not fearful of his daughter's conduct. This affair was not spoken of till after *her death*, as it would have answered no purpose, but that of making the virtue of his daughter, a subject of common talk, which he wisely thought ought to be avoided; since to *boast of virtue*, can only subject it to be *suspected*.

D. He acted the part of a wise man, and a *Christian*: but many fathers would not have been so easily appealed.

F. Perseverance in a good cause, keeps honour bright. The honour of an honest man, and a friend to human kind, will teach him to consider what it is to be a *man*, a creature whose essential property is *infirmity*: Such honour is not of the cobweb kind, for every fly to stick in it. Those who are truly good, and bold in conscious integrity, do not suffer their resentments of indignities, to carry them beyond the bounds which *generosity* for an enemy prescribes. But here you see the tenderest motives of gratitude, and respect to the memory of a father, pleaded with the united force of tenderness for *his own daughter*.—All the world loved the good old Lord. Lady *Friendly* had great honour for him: she knew him well, and made an *elegy* on the occasion of his death, supposing him to have passed his days in the simplicity of a *shepherd's life*.

D. Can she write verses?

F. If women had a proper education, we might find them excel generally in works that depend on the imagination, particularly in the *three sister arts*, as they are called, *poetry*, *painting*, and *music*. Lady *Friendly* is a woman of the purest moral character, heightened by *piety*, and enlivened by *fancy*. Her sentiments are delicate, and her heart tender and benevolent. You remember how she treated you, on occasion of your waiting on her: can you be surprized that

she should be capable of expressing her sensibility of the death of a person of so excellent a character as Lord *Theodore*?

D. I readily grant how truly she deserves praise; but I did not imagine she had the talents of a poet.

F. This is a work of *nature*, not of *grace*: but it is happy when the *muse* is *graceful*, and *piety* and *imagination* unite their force, as in Lady *Friendly's* heart.

D. I have heard, that the spirit of verse reigns much in the hearts of women, in this age. I know that girls *sing*, draw *patterns* for their work, and make *couplets*, especially where *love* or *disdain* are concerned, much better than our *rustics* can do.—Do you remember the *verses*?

F. In order to understand them, you must know, that he was a great *statesman*, an admirable *poet*, and an excellent *historian*: very charitable, and no less humane.

D. And yet not *fortunate* in his son!

F. Not whilst he was living. The young Lord now does honour to his father's memory. The ELEGY runs thus:

YE bow'rs of ARNO, (where the graces rose,  
Lave 'mid your springs, or round your valleys play)  
Shed all your sweets, despoil each fragrant grove,  
In balmy ruins spread your shepherd's clay.  
Mourn Widow'd Graces, every pleasure fled,  
Even Virtue mourns, for THEODORE is dead!

That THEODORE, who whilom us'd to lead  
Your sportive train, to wind the mazy stream;  
Who lur'd your steps, o'er ARNO's lawns to tread,  
And pierc'd each grove, with your enlight'ning gleam.  
Mourn, hapless shades; decline each flow'r its  
head;  
The pride of Virtue, THEODORE is dead!

That THEODORE, by ev'ry Muse ador'd;  
Whose silver harp, so often tun'd their praise,  
Whose fixt attention, lib'ral arts explor'd,  
Who did to wisdom lasting trophies raise.  
Mourn Muses, mourn, the gentlest spirit fled,  
Mild Wisdom mourn, for THEODORE is dead!

That THEODORE, whose noble bosom glow'd  
With patriot fondness, for his country's weal;  
He from whose lips, persuasive reason flow'd,  
Whose polish'd truths could rapt attention steal.  
Mourn Britain, mourn, the firmest patriot fled,  
Bright Honour mourn, for THEODORE is dead!

That

That THEODORE, whose gentle nature felt  
 The pains and sorrows that were not his own ;  
 Who ne'er denied, when trembling anguish knelt,  
 But said with ready joy, the sacred loan.  
 Mourn mercy, mourn, the kindest spirit fled,  
 Soft Pity mourn, for THEODORE is dead !

That THEODORE, by every science hail'd,  
 Whose stedfast virtue, faction ne'er could blame ;  
 In whose warm heart, religion's truths prevail'd ;  
 The brightest trophy in the fairest fame.  
 Hush then thy plaints, thy passive strains give  
 o'er,  
 For THEODORE now shines—to set no more !

D. Exceedingly elegant, tender, and pretty,  
 indeed !—Lady *Friendly* must have an excel-

lent heart, to have entertained such sentiments  
 on occasion of the death of an acquaintance ; and  
 be very ingenious, to be able to express them so  
 well.

F. We have beguiled so many hours on in-  
 teresting subjects, we are got almost within sight  
 of our home.—I hope, *Mary*, you will never for-  
 get this journey, nor the good which you have  
 received from it. To-morrow we shall again  
 walk in the joyful fields we have been used to ;  
 if so it pleases God, the great proprietor of  
 them. I have yet much to say to you, before we  
 part : and I hope to strengthen your mind, as  
 well as entertain it agreeably.

## P A R T III.

## CONVERSATION I.

*Letter from Mary Trueman to her cousin Elizabeth Goodman. Reflexions on politeness, expressed in attention to discourse. Virtuous love a foundation of happiness; and vice of misery. The fallacy of women trusting to the generosity of men in love. Story of the deluded daughter of a yeoman; and her untimely death. The repentance of her betrayer, and his mournful end. Propensity in many women to countenance debauched men. The path to eternal happiness varying with the fortunes of men. The piety and resignation of the soul equally necessary to all.*

F. I Am glad to see you again *at home*. Me-thinks there is something *comfortable* in home, beyond all the gratifications which dissipation can furnish.

D. I also feel myself happy, not only in the comforts of home, but that I find *John* and his wife have done their part so well in our absence, there is much to commend, and nothing to complain of.

F. You are happily not given to *complaint*; a disposition which mars the bliss of thousands, who might be otherwise happy. I have known some very fortunate persons, in various conditions of life, who seemed to complain of imaginary evils, because they were suffering under no real ones; and were therefore anxiously assiduous to find out some cause for discontent, as if it really constituted a part of their happiness.

D. I readily comprehend your meaning, though it is a sad proof of the weakness and corruption of the heart. My first object is, not to put off till to-morrow what I can do to-day; particularly with respect to gratitude and fidelity in friendship. I have written to my cousin *Elizabeth*; and here is the *letter*.

“ Dear Cousin,

I Have the pleasure to inform you, that we are arrived safe at home, after the most pleasing journey imaginable. The heavens were bright,

and the earth smiled. We met with several little adventures, but none interesting enough to communicate. You know that my father is always ready to do all the good offices he can to every fellow-creature. Your father and brothers and sisters furnished us with the most interesting discourse, almost the whole way; and the moments seemed too much on the wing, when we talked of our gratitude for your kindness: I hope I shall never forget it. Your sentiments and example have made the deepest impression on my mind. The thoughts of my heart are so much enlarged and bettered by your conversation, all the books in the world, except the Bible, could not have done me so much good. The many excellent lessons I have received from my father, appear the more valuable, from the pleasing dress in which you represent truth and virtue. I can give you nothing in return but my poor thanks: yet, if I could possibly shew you my heart, I am sure you would think it worth your acceptance. My father sends to all of you his most affectionate blessing, and kindest service, and hopes to hear soon that you are happily wedded to the man you love; and that his next favourite, *Jane*, will find a husband not less virtuous, though he should be much younger and richer. He bids me tell you, that although it is not in the human heart to be without wishes for *mending our condition*, yet in whatever station of life you may hereafter be, it is a great chance that you never will be happier, being

being blessed as you are with so excellent a father; adding, that some of the ways of life are very slippery, and others very rough; and with all our caution, we need much the gospel admonition, "Let those who stand, take heed lest they fall." He talks with more pleasure than I have words to describe to you, of the hopes which he entertains, that you will all be very happy. Without any diminution of his love for me, he seems now to have so many more sons and daughters than before we made your father a visit. As I know you will value his good mind towards you, the more anxious you will be not to stray into any path that may darken your prospects in either world. In saying this, he knows *your* father will consider him so much the more as *his* friend, as well as yours: I might tell you of a thousand kind words more which he says. I could not delay a moment to write to you, though I have much business on my hands. I shall remember my promise when I get to *London*, where you hope I shall not stay long. God only knows what my fortune may be: if my mistress proves to be a good lady, I shall wish to continue in her service, convinced as I am that the number of the truly good is far short of them of a contrary character. My father joins with me in our best respects and love to your father, and all his children: and be assured that I am, with the most unfeigned affection,

Your very true friend,  
and loving cousin,  
till death,

MARY TRUEMAN."

*Will this do?*

*F.* Very well: you have taken my sense, as if you lived in my heart, and knew all that was passing there. As for the rest, *Elizabeth* has so good an understanding to expect your letter should be expressed in more elegant terms.

*D.* She has been used for many days to hear me speak, and lent a patient ear: I think she will not despise my letter. I have often been in the company of young persons, where every one seemed desirous of speaking: my cousins on the contrary, were all attentive to *hear*. There were some pauses in their conversation; but they were generally followed by pious or instructive remarks. Among them who are fond of speaking, one often hears three or four *talking* and *laughing*

at the same moment, as if the business were of no significance, whether it be heard or not. My *cousins* set some value on what they say: they do not throw it away wantonly; nor are they so ill instructed, as to interrupt others, for the pleasure of hearing themselves talk.—

*F.* All talkers, and no hearers, is a vulgar saying, but often verified in so great a degree, as to offend common sense, and common decency. It is vanity which makes people impatient of expressing their sentiments; yet nothing is more humiliating than to speak without being *regarded*: and how can that person expect to be heard in his turn, who will not hear. I have been frequently tempted to think, that under such circumstances, any confused sound, which exhilarates the spirits, or confounds the apprehension, would do just as well as an attempt to communicate *sentiments*.— You will learn from your *cousins* what belongs to *good manners*, as well as good thoughts, expressed in proper words. This will give you a habit of knowing what you are going to say; and utterance to your conceptions in a graceful, articulate manner.

*D.* Does not exactness restrain discourse, by each fearing the remark of his neighbour?

*F.* You need not be afraid: whilst *vanity* prevails in the world, few will entertain so mean an opinion of themselves.

*D.* A thousand circumstances of what we have seen, and of the persons we have conversed with, have crowded on my thoughts, since we parted last night, but particularly in relation to *Margaret* and the *young lord*. I have thought, that if she had entertained no greater fear of God, than he had before his eyes, when he made wicked proposals to her, what a different situation she might have been in, *now* that *she is gone to give up her accounts!*—O my father! how this thought fills my mind with joy and comfort, that she had *virtue* to resist. You know I loved her with much tenderness; and I think of her with a bleeding heart: yet I rejoice at her escape from a bad world.

*F.* Such reflexions are awful! But what compassion have you for the young *lord* himself; would not he have lost the greatest of all pleasures, the pleasure of being *virtuous*? Instead of doing and receiving kindnesses from a virtuous woman in lawful wedlock, stamp'd with the glorious marks of a godlike approbation, he could only have given a loose to voluptuousness, and

and suppressing the most noble and generous sentiments, become a slave to conscious guilt, and a prisoner of heavenly justice!

D. He had very different notions from yours, when he made the foul proposal.

F. At that period it might be so; but when he considered *calmly*, his fears and hopes more nearly resembled mine than you seem to imagine. Do you suppose the powers of his mind were benumbed, and his moral sense of feeling lost? He happily escaped *Margaret's* charms, as *Margaret* was superior to his temptation. He soon after married, agreeably to divine and human laws, and enjoys the bright sunshine and genial warmth of a virtuous woman's smiles, reaping the golden harvest of an innocent and untainted love. Instead of being poisoned with the envenomed fork of sin, he now flourishes under the cheering smiles of virtue. If the health of his mind is preserved; if he looks forward with a pleasing confidence, that he is acting the part which Heaven hath assigned him, his hopes in *bliss eternal* will also flourish, and he will be happy.

D. I wonder that *generosity of sentiment*, and compassion lest others should be rendered miserable, do not keep more men in awe, than your account of things seems to justify a belief of.

F. You often talk of the supposed *GENEROSITY* of mankind!—Be assured, *Mary*, it is not to be trusted, in any such case. It is attended with too great a hazard. I can tell you one very remarkable *tragic story*, in which I acted a considerable part. The daughter of a yeoman of reputation in this county, was seduced by a young gentleman. He had flattered her into a belief, that he meant to marry her: and she had great confidence in the *generosity* you talk of. Her father was my old acquaintance; and knowing my disposition, he entreated me to act as a mediator. This was the more arduous task, as I had been befriended by the relations of the offending party: I say *offending*; for I was well assured, he was bound to protect this girl against all harm. I made him a visit, and expostulated with him in these terms: “For *God's sake, Sir!* for the sake of your honour and reputation, think seriously of this matter! What could be the purport of the words you acknowledge to have spoken? If they were *meant to deceive*, how can they be justified before God? If they were *not meant to deceive*, what could be in-

tended, but *marriage*? *She* says you *promised*; she understood that you *designed* to marry her. Mistakes of this kind may easily arise, where there is no *signing* and *sealing*: I always suppose, that men are more liberal in *promises*, on such occasions, than themselves are aware of. It was not only the affection which this young woman entertained for you, but yours for *her*, which betrayed both. Was this a sufficient reason for you to throw her off as *unworthy* of you? Had you never spoken to her of *marriage*, or made no promise of *constancy*, it is probable she would have smothered her passion in its infancy. Her birth and education made her, in every view, too good to be your *barlot*: nor do I find you have now any reason for not marrying her, but that her fortune is *small*. In my humble way of thinking, *justice* claims the more from you, because it is *small*: if it were *large*, you would marry her. Does *poverty*, or narrowness of fortune on *her* side, warrant *oppression* on *yours*? How will you stand in the esteem of the world? No crime is of a blacker dye, than *cruelty*! And cruelty to a woman, a woman in such a case, is the most hideous! It wears a monstrous visage: it *murders* while it *smiles*. Soft words that wound, are insults as well as stabs. 'Ere long you will pay dearly for your transgression, when it may not be in the power of mortal man to restore your peace, or heal your wounded bosom. Reflect on this whole scene!—Guiltless you *found* this unhappy girl, smiling in youth, in innocence, and joy: How do you *leave* her? tainted, oppressed with guilt, and overwhelmed with sorrow, of which you are the cause! Consider, Sir, what mournful consequences may follow! *She* will not accept the wages of iniquity;—you can make her *no satisfaction*, but by marriage!—You left no means untried to gain an *artless maid*; and *now*, betrayed by *your* love, and *her* confidence in *your honour* and *generosity*, you leave her—to *perish*!—I would not stand in your place for all the world!—You ask my *opinion*, and I give it with the *freedom* and *candour*, which I trust I shall always shew to the end of my life. Think that the day may come, when these very stones “will prate of your misdoings,” and your pangs be as *sharp* as a two-edged sword. Perhaps you do not know what *mischief* you have done!—I have heard her mournful tale; I have seen the rising fobs which shake her soul: her *father's* pillow is wet with briny tears; and her *fond mother's* cheeks



cheeks reddened with shame, whilst indignation prevents the utterance of her griefs! Reflect on your conduct: if you had no *base* meaning, was all the profusion of the *love* and *tenderness* you expressed in your *letters*, to purchase the transient pleasure of the possession of her injured person? O *shame!* *shame!*—that man should *flatter* and *mean*—what shall I say?—mean to be a *villain!* You will pardon me, Sir—That some men, in such cases, act like *villains*, you must grant. Cursed be the pleasure which is dyed so deep in guilt, and creates so much *pain* and *sorrow!*”

D. You spoke in good earnest. Surely this was enough to melt *his heart*, and awaken it to a sense of his misdeeds, if he *had* any *heart* or *understanding*.

F. So the *generosity* of *yours* may incline you to think: it certainly made some impression on his mind, for he shed a tear; but went away, like the young man in the gospel, sorrowful, *for he had great riches*; and therefore—not resolution enough to *act right*. There are some men, who are so little acquainted with themselves, as not to distinguish the dictates of their *reason*, from those of their *passions*. He might think, *upon the whole*, that of two supposed evils, *marriage* would be the *greatest*: whereas, the contrary was so apparent to me, that I believe he would have been made *happy*. The more we distinguish reason from passion, the wiser we are: and the closer we follow reason, the more virtuous we become. In the present case, this young man had gratified his sinful desires, at the *dreadful cost* of a *young woman*: and having so far beaten down the barriers of virtue, his next strong passion was *avarice*, *pride*, or *ambition*; whichever it might be, it seized his heart: and when he should have repaired the injury, and done justice, his understanding was blinded; he chose the contrary part; he considered what was most *pleasing* to *himself*; and not That which was right in the sight of *God!*

D. I suppose he called it *prudence*: and his parents and friends might think, every *woman* that trespasses, no matter who the tempter is, deserves *such treatment*;—though *men* pass *unpunished!*

F. You shall hear the event: it is probable his parents acted upon the principle you mention, “*That the children of this world are wiser in their generation, than the children of light;*”

they act *consistently* for this world: and supposing there is *no God*, or no account to be given after death, they regard not the misery of others. But this not being the case, what breast-plate can he wear, whose *quarrel is not just?*—Though he should be fortified in tempered steel, yet still his bosom will be open; and his name blasted by mortal breath. May it not be called *high imprudence* to trespass against ourselves? Is it not folly, or madness, to suppose our actions are not as open as the sun’s beams, when darted forth in all the glory of meridian brightness! Can they imagine that the *Almighty* will be an *idle spectator?* Will they say, “*Trust!* God careth not: nothing will happen: that which we see with our eyes to-day, will be the same to-morrow!”

D. The contrary is so true, we are absolutely ignorant what to-morrow will bring forth.

F. The continual changes and chances of this life, give daily proof, that there is no security, but in *thinking well*, and *doing right*; and according to That measure, which we believe to be the rule of *eternal justice* and *mercy!*—That shame-faced spirit, which mutinies in a man’s bosom, will not suffer him to do wrong *unpunished!*

D. Did this young man make no concessions?

F. No other than that he would make her a *proper allowance*, but could not *possibly* think of *marrying* her, as he should *disoblige* his friends, and mar his fortune. She, on the other hand, was in no want of a decent support, such as *virtue* is always contented with; and therefore would not accept his offer. Grief for such ill treatment, threw her into a *consumption*, and she died in a few months after; leaving a lesson to young women, to be cautious whom they trust; and particularly when they love the man that woos them.

D. O mercy!—What is become of *him?*

F. He was the most unhappy of all mortals: he considered himself as the *murderer* of this young woman, in return for the love she bore him.—Well may you look sad, *Mary!* I hope you will learn both *fear* and *caution*: and where *you* are most partial, there to be most on your guard.

D. You say, he *was* the most unhappy of men! Is he *dead?*

F. He was almost raving, with a consciousness of having acted basely. When I saw him, a few months before his death, he said, “*O my friend, how shall I banish from my heart, the remembrance of my dear Caroline!*—How shall I

forget the parting scene! The recollection of her bosom heaving with sorrow, when I took my last farewell, has plunged a dagger into my own: my hard heart hath broken hers. Her words still found in my ears, "It is but to die," says she, "though it be a death of torture!—Though you will not be my husband, I will be your friend! yet never to see your face again, upon any terms but those of justice and honour. With my last breath will I pray for your prosperity! If it is the decree of Heaven, that I should be thus chastised, thy will, O God, be done!—I bid farewell to all the charms of blooming youth, and all this world's joys?—May the remembrance of my sad fate, never disturb your breast, unless it should bleed with penitential sorrow, to wash away your guilt, and prepare your soul for heaven!—Farewell—my unkind, cruel Francis, farewell!" In relating this story, he burst into tears, and after some time went on, "Her sorrows streamed from her eyes, whilst her fond heart swelled high, and forbade the utterance of more. Such, my friend, were the blessings which this generous girl bestowed upon me, ungrateful and criminal as I am!—O what a falling-off was mine, from her, whose love was of such constancy and gentleness! Would to God I had taken your advice! The remembrance is now armed with arrows, which pierce my soul: and where shall I fly from the torrent of my troubles! I hear she struggled with her sorrows, as if she meant to live in spite of my unkindness; but so it could not be. Soft was the music of her tongue: there was melody in her grief, which charmed the standers-by: it was expressed in such charitable terms, taking all the fault upon herself, whilst they listened to her sorrow, it became their own! Her parents now droop and hang their heads, cursing the cause of their dear daughter's death! O how dark is my bosom! A murderer condemned by law, by law is executed: so far he makes atonement. What then am I? How shall I do justice? How cleanse my mind from this foul stain? O what infatuation seized me, when I might have saved poor Caroline from the grave! Shall I complain of parents! Alas! they saw my fault with partial eyes, and could not judge of the severity which my sensations might create hereafter. She is gone! irrevocably gone! The proudest trophies of monumental praise, can but faintly describe her fidelity and truth. Her soul seemed to have

no blemish but her excess of love for me. Surely she hath made an offering which Heaven accepts: and grant me, O merciful Father of mankind, the repentance which her last sweet words implored on my behalf, if there is mercy in heaven for such a wretch as I am!"—You weep, Mary! You must not be surprized that he should talk thus: this poor man was so much shocked, his reason was soon after impaired. He was often seen walking by himself, and bursting into an agony, crying out, "O Caroline, Caroline! I was thy murderer!"—Then he wept.—He seldom slept for above two hours at a time; and as certain as he awoke, the same thoughts recurred to his mind. His eyes looked hollow, his lips wore a livid paleness, as if he withered at the heart. His friends carried him into scenes of merriment; these made him sigh the more. What could they do with him, or he with himself? He soon after died with melancholy.

D. This was a serious business indeed, and should be a lesson to young men, how they act in such circumstances, seeing there is *One* above, whose judgment cannot be bribed. Alas, my father! my heart bleeds for them both. She early paid the debt due to Nature and penitential sorrow: he was tortured with the anguish of a double guilt: first, for seducing; next, for deserting the object of his love: and it was right that he should be doubly punished.

F. All offenders are objects of compassion as well as reprehension. His sorrows we may hope worked out his repentance. I fear there are some, whom the death of half a dozen women in the same way, would scarce produce a sigh. You see when virtue is forgotten, how little dependance can be made on any supposed generosity, either to prevent evils, or to cure them: though it is to be presumed, that this gentleman did not really apprehend, at the time of his transgression, that he was acting as the murderer of this young woman.

D. But when he refused marriage, he was not concerned for the event, whether she died or not.

F. It is one thing to think of a particular evil of such a kind, and another to stifle the thoughts of what may happen! Even the threatenings of eternal punishment, do not prevent us from sin. O Mary, how strangely are we fallen!

D. Would to God that this were not true.

As to the young woman, would it not have been far better for her, if she had followed the advice of her Saviour, “Go, and sin no more,” than have rested her confidence in a *wretched mortal*, who had acted so base a part in taking advantage of her weakness, to leave her, as if she had been a common mercenary harlot! O shame!—It is true he *suffered* severely.—What melancholy events attend the lawless commerce of the sexes!

F. Most truly melancholy they often are! If sin had brought no death into the world, but That which is temporal, it would not have worn such a dreadful visage: but if eternal misery is the wages of sin unrepented of, let us view it with a double horror, and guard ourselves with care! The passions often assume the character of virtue: and when the heart is subdued by tenderness, *good* is often done; but if such tenderness apparently leads to sin, or submits to a criminal action; it is not in the nature of things, for the event to be happy. Repentance or punishment must follow guilt. The *Spanish lady murdered her seducer* (a): *Caroline died* for the love of hers. Whether it was from a consciousness of her own transgression; the impression she received of the perfidy she had experienced, or a high sense of honour; still she could not think of giving herself in wedlock to any other man, but yielded herself up a victim to death.

D. In the last case, surely she was to blame.

F. You find in the issue as much sensibility on the part of the man, except that he repented when it was too late to save her from the grave. We may hope, however, that his repentance saved his soul from that perdition, which ingratitude in love, aggravated by artful seduction and falsehood, may lead a man to expect. Alas, my dear Mary! how seriously soever you and I may talk of such matters, offences of this kind are not rare: too many, who should know what *good* and *evil*, *mean*, give themselves a boundless latitude without remorse: and yet, as I have told you, they are not *hunted out of human society*, but sometimes received with high marks of distinction.

D. Is it possible that virtuous women can shew a sincere regard to such wicked seducers!

F. I am sorry to tell you, it is more than possible. Many women act, as if men the most daring in iniquity, with respect to the lawless

commerce of the sexes, had the better title to their countenance and favour on this account.

D. You mean *foolish women*.

F. Some, I say, are such bad interpreters of men's actions, as even to *prefer* him who has trespassed most; as if it were enough that he had been a *lover*, however shameful his conduct might be towards the object of his love. There is also another reason; the vanity of some women is such, it leads them to think, they can fix the *devil* himself to truth and constancy, though they have not sense enough to know, that next to the *practice* of evil, is the giving it *countenance*.

D. Can they be called *christians* who judge after this manner? Have they just notions of *reputation*, *honour*, *humanity*, or any thing else that is *sacred*?

F. You see the force of custom and opinion, joined to a corruption of heart. These depend on a right sense of *good* and *evil*, and the sacrifice of a contrite heart. If the fair image of *virtue* stood in every corner of our streets, smiling with all the force of the most enchanting beauty, chastening by her precious attribute of *modesty*; the respect we should shew her, would be only in the degree that our *manners* were *candid*, *just*, *sober*, and *temperate*. Where *avarice* or *ambition*, *vanity* or *splendor*, is the ruling passion, our being *capable* of enjoying the glorious prospects of immortality, avail but little towards paying the honour due to *virtue*. It is not rank nor condition which exalts the mind: How often have I contemplated a *brilliant equipage* with sorrow and compassion, knowing the possessor to be cruel and unjust; a slave to his appetites, or devoted to his pride and folly. These being deeply rooted, even the *advantages* of *poverty*, and the  *blessings of affliction*, can hardly restore us to a just sense of our own *unworthiness*.

D. *Advantages* of poverty, and  *blessings of affliction*, my father!

F. Yes, *Mary*: do you not perceive, that the lessons which virtue teaches, and on which a happy eternity depends, are oftentimes best learnt under the *chastening* hand of Heaven? The gentle smiles of Providence, that cheer the hearts of the virtuous poor, are often denied to the rich. If the happiest country is That which has the most virtue in it; those who have the greatest portion of virtue, stand most distinguished,

guished. Whatever *time* produces to light, the ways of heaven are past finding out, though we have the strongest evidence that the government of the world is in the hands of the Almighty. The true children of God aspire at glory: Some reach it by the distribution of their plenty, and their care for the preservation of their fellow-creatures: others by their *virtue in humble life*, and their submission to the pleasure of him who is the father of us all. It is the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which war against us. *Evil habits* destroy in our minds, the very ability of distinguishing *good* from *evil*. It is the property of splendor to dazzle the eyes; and poverty frequently obstructs the sight: virtue may be assisted by both, though she depends on neither: Her throne is seated in the heart, whether of the *prince*, or *beggar*. Those who have seen, and heard, and thought as much as myself, find it no very difficult task to strip the world of its *disguises*. Court *truth* with an honest heart: she will cheer you with her smiles; and by the bright rays which surround her, guide you in the paths to everlasting peace.

D. But how, *my dear father*, am I, being so young and ignorant, to acquire such a superiority over the world, when *you* confess that your knowledge is the effect of much thought and experience?

F. In the bustle of resort, and the various commerce of mankind, while we acquire expe-

rience, a thousand evils invade us: the arrows of iniquity fly around, and the aged receive many, a wound, which youth hath yet avoided.—— If, in the early season of life, the seeds of *virtue* are duly sown in the heart, and we water the plant, it will take root, grow up, and shelter us from the storms of life. It will defend us from the follies and iniquities to which advanced age is subject. To learn how to avoid *evil*, and to do *good*, is to enjoy the choicest gift which Heaven bestows on mortals. It is a prelude to *That sweet security, and uninterrupted peace*, which flows from the pure fountain of *forbearance from all sin*. He who arrives at this, makes his *age honourable*, and stamps his life with a mark of *glory*! Learn, O my daughter, to think that youth is as much the time of virtue, as the season of grey hairs. Submit gracefully to evils you cannot remedy; and rejoice in hope the time of reward is drawing near, when all the fond distinctions we now see, will vanish like a cloud before the morning sun. Think of the *scorpion stings* which tortured the heart of poor *Caroline's* treacherous friend, who so far from being *generous*, was *ungrateful, unjust, and cruel*. Thus shall you avoid the melancholy end of either of them.

D. Both paid the debt of penitential sorrow: and we may hope those bitter tears pleaded at Heaven's high throne, by the mighty Intercessor and Redeemer of the world, have obtained their pardon.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N II.

*Chastity and the love of liberty displayed in the story of Virginia, killed by her father. The calm resentment of a gentleman who knew his wife to be false. Story of a Galatian princess. Conduct of Scipio towards a lady, whom he had taken captive. Chastity of Antiochus under an impression of love. Fidelity of one of the kings of Solamin. Henry VI. of England his dislike of the female dress of his time. Chastity of a yeoman of the guard to Charles II. Story of the chastity and resolution of a primitive Christian. Story of the daughter of a clergyman distinguished for chastity, honour, and candour.*

D. I Cannot heartily reconcile myself to the opinion, that a *modest* woman can countenance an *impudent* man. Can she preserve her character pure in one instance, and wound it in another?

F. I do not wish you should know so much of

the world as I do: yet, the more you know, the more guarded you may be, not only to avoid the offence in your own person, but to judge of it properly with regard to others. You remember with what calumny *Margaret's* father behaved.

D. I do not mean that a woman should be  
out-

*outrageously virtuous*; but as a *Christian* in heart, consider a *vicious* man, as an object she ought to shun, and not court his acquaintance; and endeavour to reform him, not shew him any countenance.—

*F.* Moderation and *forbearance* are essential to *our* religion.—An ancient *Roman* (*a*), once slew his own daughter (*b*), rather than deliver her up, lest she should have been a prey to lust?

*D.* Slew his own daughter!

*F.* It was the effect of *despair*; for the judge on the bench (*c*), was the party who sought the maid as the object of his desire, and had given sentence that she was born a *slave* to a certain man, a creature of his, who claimed her as his property. This was the stratagem used to get her into his hands.—Do you think the father did well?

*D.* Can it be well for a man to kill his own daughter! He might act right according to his *heathen* notions.

*F.* He was an *heathen*: but you see he had high sentiments of honour; and his indignation, excited by such a violation of liberty, drove him to this sad extremity.

*D.* I see that women have been the cause of much mischief in all ages: but what was the consequence of this murder?

*F.* It cost the judge his life, and brought about one of the greatest revolutions the *Roman* state ever knew. Such was the virtue of those ancient people at that time. How might the same spirit, regulated by the *Christian* law, accomplish a reformation! You see what a high opinion has been entertained of chastity, even in the *pagan* world; and what resentments the vile attempt of a great vicious man, raised in a father's breast. You may also consider the sacred love of a virtuous father, for a *good* daughter. This conduct proceeded from the *innocence* of the oppressed; and if this sense be worn off the mind, *incontinency* may become as familiar as any other sin. The known *viciousness* of a woman, or the *cool temper* of a man, may operate in a very different manner. I have heard of a husband, who finding his wife in bed with his *acquaintance*, improperly called his *friend*, cried, “*Jack*, is it

you? Do not disturb yourself: I knew she was a *whore*.”

*D.* But I suppose he would never receive her again as the wife of his bosom.

*F.* He cast her off as spittle.

*D.* He must have been acquainted with her wickedness, and lost all regard for her, before he could treat a matter of such a nature so ludicrously.

*F.* So one would imagine. Another gentleman having discovered a wicked correspondence carried on by his wife, treated her as a harlot, with equal *contempt*, though in a different manner.—He was not constantly at home; but when he slept with his wife, he always left a guinea on the table. Having done this very often, she asked him, “Pray, my dear, what is the meaning that you always leave a *guinea* on my dressing-table?” He calmly answered, “*That is the price which I usually give my mistresses*.” at once discovering his knowledge of her evil practices, and his contempt of *her*; no longer regarding her as the partner of his joys and sorrows, the virtuous wife of his bosom; but the creature of his gratification; a mere *prostitute*.

*D.* This reproach must have stung her to the heart, if she had any heart to feel a sting.

*F.* She confessed her guilt: and after much repentance, made her peace; desiring to live a *recluse* life, as a token of her *sincerity*.

*D.* It is well if she remained sincere.

*F.* Such instances prove the coolness of some men's tempers, on these trying occasions: with others it operates very differently. I have heard my master say, he had daily seen two or three persons lying dead in the streets of *Lisbon*, supposed to be killed on occasion of criminal correspondence (*d*). These murders were committed by husbands or relations, in defence of their rights and honour; though perhaps the murderers violated other men's rights. The conduct of a *Galatian* princess (*e*) was braver. She was much distinguished for chastity, as well as beauty. Being taken prisoner in war by the *Romans*, the *centurion* (*f*) into whose hands she fell, tried all the arts of persuasion to gratify his wicked desires: these proving ineffectual, he  
made

(a) *Virginius*, a *Roman* soldier of renowned probity.

(b) *Virginia*.

(c) *Appius Claudius*, the *Roman* decemvir.

(d) About 1729 this was the case.

(e) *Chiamara*, the wife of *Oriagon*, a prince, or great man, among the *Gallo Græcians*, or *Galatians*, in the lesser *Asia*.

(f) A captain, or commander of an hundred.

made use of force. Soon after, an opportunity offered of the lady's being sent home, and the centurion attended her to the place where the price of her *ransom* was to be paid. While he, with a slender guard, was *weighing the gold*, she commanded her attendants to draw their swords and kill him. This being done, she cut off his head with her own hand, and hiding it under her robe, she carried it to her husband; and expressing her *indignation* for the outrage which had been done her, threw it at his feet, thus barbarously though nobly sustaining the honour of her sex.

*D.* If such a fierce resentment were permitted by the laws of *Christ*, every woman of virtue so offended, would have better reason for it, than for a *man* to kill his daughter, to *prevent* her falling into bad hands.

*F.* *Christians* are warranted to slay in their own defence, as some *Christian women* have done on such occasions. A husband, who kills a man, or even his own wife, when taken in adultery, is generally pardoned; the act being supposed the effect of the highest wrath, and sudden provocation. As for the rest, many a man has been hanged for a *rape*: and therefore we stand in no need of such private vindictive justice as the *Galatian lady* fought.—Another *Roman* leader, of greater note (*a*), did not assume the *right of a conqueror*, with regard to a young lady of great beauty: on the contrary, he is extolled to the skies for not doing that, which if he had done, he ought to have been branded with infamy, as an execrable villain. Many have acquired fame for actions merely not criminal.

*D.* You talk of the *right of conquest*! Can any thing make *wrong* to be *right*? If instead of a great lady, she had been the daughter of a peasant, I think the case would have been exactly the same.

*F.* I agree with you that the *rights of human nature*, and the respect we owe to each other, as required by the laws of God, are prior to all considerations of rank or condition. If people had wit and virtue enough to think so, *Mary*, we should soon see the world reformed. At present, riches abused on one side, and poverty not patiently submitted to on the other, are frequent causes of the lawless commerce of the sexes.

*D.* O cursed power of gold!

*F.* A curse it often proves. I have read of

many instances of great continence, among the first and most renowned persons of the earth, the memory of which is preserved, and set up in a more exalted view; as such persons, from the unbounded power which their situation gave them, have been under so much the greater temptation to transgress. A *Grecian king* (*b*), perceiving in himself a strong passion for the priestesses of *Diana*, retired for a time that he might the better restrain himself. You have read in the sacred writings of such an imaginary deity as *Diana*, to whom the heathen world paid divine honours. They called the moon by this name also, probably in opposition to the *sun*, which creates a *burning heat*. You remember my master's verses on occasion of his walking on the side of the lake, some lines of which allude to this subject. The heathens, ascribing to this supposed being this peculiar attribute, paid her divine honours, proving how highly they revered chastity. This king left his palace, lest he should be tempted to violate the purity of that *sacred order*.—They also give an account of one of the kings of *Solomon*, who used to express his astonishment, that any *man* should violate his marriage vow, when if the wife were to be guilty, it would throw him into rage and torture of mind.—In later times, we find that our King *Henry VI.* was remarkable for his *chastity*; wishing at least that it should be supported as a virtue. Observing some ladies at court with their bosoms uncovered, he reprimanded them.

*D.* Few kings, I believe, in these days, are so reserved as this prince, and your master's friend, whom you mentioned to me (*c*). What particular instance have you heard of in common life?

*F.* Virtue doth not proclaim her own deeds at the house-top. A *yeoman of the guards* to *Charles II.* was tempted by a great lady, one of the king's mistresses, who was very importunate with him: at length he said, "*Madam; I am married*:" as if he had concluded, that this consideration would be sufficient to restrain *her*, as it did *himself*.

*D.* Might he not have said, *Madam, I am a christian*?

*F.* And have added, *and married*. This affair reached the ears of the king, who was not renowned for his *chastity*: but he sent for the man; com-

(*a*) *Scipio*.

(*b*) *Antiochus*, the third king of *Macedon*.

(*c*) See page 52.

commended him highly; told him, that he respected the virtuous; and advanced him to a superior office.—In *Scotland*, the people were wont to be awed in a high degree, on a religious principle. In ancient days, in *Sweden*, they thought of *adultery*, as we think of *parricide*, or murdering a father; something shocking beyond description. The *Danes* were formerly very strict, especially in obliging a man to marry the woman he had seduced. There are nations in the world, in other respects less polished than ourselves, whose lives are never stained by *adultery*. When once their hands are joined, it is such a token of mutual fidelity, that no instance is found of its being violated. Such virtue, *Mary*, gilds the roof of the cottage, and makes homely fare sweeter than all the viands which cookery has invented: it beguiles the hours of *life*, beyond all the laboured inventions of modern amusements; and takes out the sting from the expectation of death.

*D.* Is it not wonderful, that any should be ignorant of this advantage?—But among all these stories of *kings* and *princesses*, *yeomen* and *cottagers*, do you think that any stand upon such honourable record as the celebrated *Joseph*?

*F.* He acted, indeed, like a faithful servant to his *master*, and his *God*: he proved his title to the confidence reposed in him: he was favoured beyond the common race of the sons of men; and lived and died under the smiles of Heaven.

*D.* Were the first *Christians* distinguished for their *chastity*?

*F.* Very highly. I have read of a plot which some heathens formed against the chastity of a certain young *Christian*. They bound him with silken strings, in such a manner, that he had but one way left to extricate himself.

*D.* May I ask what it was?

*F.* He bit out his own tongue, and spit it in the woman's face. Imagine what the torture was on his side, and the horror on hers!

*D.* Good God! Surely a *Christian* only could have thought of such an expedient, or executed it with resolution, in the defence of his chastity, which no doubt he prized beyond his life.

*F.* The admonitions given us in regard to this true virtue, are numerous: “*Make a covenant with thine eyes, not to look on a maid*;” understood to be with evil desires; and we may construe it with respect to both sexes: *look not on beauty, lest thy desires should be evil*: we are

accordingly admonished, *not to gaze on another man's wife*:—*nor stumble at the beauty of a woman*.

*D.* These are strong expressions.

*F.* They are founded on a knowledge of the human heart, and calculated to prevent the folly of it, which *leads* to sin and sorrow. We are taught by the Christian law, “He who looketh at a woman *to lust after her*, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart.”

*D.* This, I presume, is to be understood of intentions or evil designs.

*F.* It is not my business to guard you in one instance only; but I remind you, that if in *this* you fail, you beat down the barrier, which guards all the *other virtues*. Experience has taught mankind, that where the fences of *chastity* have not been preserved, the soul has been despoiled of its greatest treasure: and in this case, what virtue can be *expected*? I remember the daughter of a clergyman in this neighbourhood; her name was *Diana Pure*. She had been well educated, and steadfastly believed in the religion of *Christ*; nor was she less amiable in her deportment and address. She was a mistress of her needle, and understood the arts of housewifery. Her father's *living* was but a bare support; and he died without making any provision for her. After a series of cross accidents, she found herself in great distress, inasmuch that she would have gone into *service*, in any reputable family; but her education, and the delicacy of her person, were exceptions to her supposed ability for doing any kind of *drudgery*. In this situation she took the resolution to apply to Mrs. *Felix*, a neighbouring gentlewoman, and a relation of Mrs. *Bliss*, your lady, and implored her mercy. Mrs. *Felix*, who was a widow of some fortune, heard her story with attention; and after making enquiry into her behaviour, where she had lodged, admitted her into her family. She engaged to work with her needle, and perform some offices in the province of the housekeeper, at whose table she was to eat. In a short time, by the kindness of this lady, *Diana* was assisted with proper clothes; her health was restored; and her beauty, which the cloud of her poverty seemed to have obstructed, began to shine forth. When this lady's son, a young man who was a student at *Oxford*, returned home to his mother, she told him the story of the young woman.

Curiosity

Curiosity soon led him to see her; and her tale found a way to his heart: her conversation afforded him delight, at the same time that it excited his compassion. The tenderness which accompanies this good-natured passion, when a woman is the object of it, easily changes into love, the control of which can depend only on our principles, and habit of self-denial. It is always supposed, that *want* befriends *desire*; and that the wealthy may, in some measure, command the persons of the indigent: so, alas! it often happens. This proved such a temptation to young *Felix*, as vaulted over the sacred bounds of the hospitality, within which his mother had received *Diana*. The consideration of her benevolence, was not a sufficient bar against her son's evil designs. He often conversed with *Diana*, and was profuse in his flattery: but this made no great impression on her mind, except to render her the more watchful of herself. At length he made her one of those proposals, which furnished us with so much conversation in relation to poor *Margaret*. *Diana* rejected it with the same disdain. "I forgive you," said she; "for I am sensible the consideration of my poverty, has betrayed you into a false opinion of me. My father early taught me not to faint in the day of adversity: and I thank the great Giver of all good, that when I have most needed *strength*, I have found it. I have been acquainted with sorrow; and I know what it is to abound, as well as to be in want: I am not so poor as you seem to imagine: I am *rich* in *resolution*; and you shall find that I have enough to act up to my own principles. Your good mother certainly never intended, when she received me under her hospitable roof, to render me a prey to your lawless desires: and it would add to my distress, were I the cause of a moment's disturbance of her peace. Have compassion on me, till I can see which way to steer a *virtuous* course!"

*D.* Charming girl! Yet methinks she should have fled from the house.

*F.* What! like some *heroine* in *romance*, retiring to the woods, to die in a *hollo* tree, or expose herself to some other calamity, when she knew so well how to employ her *resolution* in her own defence:—such resolution as every woman of virtue must have, knowing not how she *may* be tempted. Noble as her conduct was, it did not cure this young man of his passion; nor at that time give it a *generous* turn. He soon after seized

an opportunity, when he thought he had her securely for his prey: she took up a long sharp-pointed pair of scissars, and said, "For Heaven's sake, Sir, retire, or by the living God whom I serve, your fate will be a *dagger* or a *halter*." She uttered these words with such a tone of voice, as frightened him. His cause was bad, and he durst not pursue his purpose.

*D.* She was a spirited girl. This was being armed in "*complete steel*;" and if oaths are warrantable on any occasion, this seemed to require it.

*F.* The *poorest instrument* may do the noblest deed; and when the glories of immortal virtue are at stake, the gentlest female may become a *Hercules*. Her resolution brought him to his senses; and he did not chuse to hazard the event. *Lust* is oftentimes as *cruel* as the evil spirit which prompts its wretched votaries to lawless gratifications. This young gentleman, when he saw her the next day, kept his distance: he shewed no sign of anger: far from threatening revenge, he seemed to be penitent, yet silent as the grave. She did not depend on his *generosity*; though you may imagine, she secretly triumphed in the victory she had obtained. Not knowing what course to take, nor whom to advise with, this adventure made no other impression, than the melancholy reflexion that misfortune seemed still to pursue her. He saw her distress; was conscious of his own baseness; and *pitied* her. During this perplexity, he made her an honourable proposal. Unworthy as his conduct had been, as she had entertained a partiality for him, you may imagine her forgiveness was not difficult to be obtained, especially upon mention of an *honourable contract*. Happy in presence of mind, she made a ready answer. "I think you are not so cruel, as to insult me in *this offer*; and I should esteem myself the happiest of women in being the true partner of your joys and sorrows: and I hope I shall be as watchful of your honour, as you have found me of my own: but there are *three conditions*, without which I cannot consent to favour your suit. The first is, that you acknowledge you have not, in two instances, acted by me as a man of honour. The *second* is, that my generous friend and benefactress your mother, shall give her consent. And the *third*, that you *wait three months*." At this he started—and she continued: "I mean that *you should consider*;—perhaps you may alter your mind. In the mean



mean time, I beg that I may leave this house ; though I will accept of the smallest pittance at your hands for my support. If, in this interval, your good intentions towards me, should be blown away, in the hurricane of a new passion for some other woman, I shall still hope, that Divine Providence will give me the bread of *virtuous industry*. If I should *live* comfortless, yet I hope to *die*, in sure and certain hope of bliss immortal !”

*D.* My dear *Diana* ! This conduct was charming ! It was generous, prudent, and like a *Christian* ; nothing romantic or absurd, nor done in pride or affectation.

*F.* She saw the young man’s conduct with eyes of compassion, at the very moment it deserved the severest punishment.

*D.* What was the event ?

*F.* The conditions were all punctually complied with ; they were married ; and are now a happy pair. Had she complied with his lawless desires, think of the misery which a girl of such a generous, intrepid spirit, might have involved *herself* in, if not the *man* also, who would have been the guilty cause of her violation of the laws of *Heaven* !

### CONVERSATION III.

*Admonitions with respect to chastity. The danger of falling into the hands of women who make a trade of prostitution in great cities. The triumph of English chastity, in the character of English ladies. The general disposition of thoughtless young women who become a sacrifice to incontinency.*

*F.* **N**O *vice* is so expert as this, in disguising itself : none can so easily put on the garb of virtue : if we saw *vice* in her true colours, we should *fly* from her ; she could not ensnare so many of the *unwary*, before they knew their danger. We *Christians* cannot be at a loss to know how we ought to conduct ourselves : Christianity requires nothing at our hands, in stronger or more emphatical terms than *chastity*, which extends even to the correction of our thoughts : And purity in this instance, is often attended with the happiest effects, with regard to all the other virtues.

*D.* All *Christians* I suppose are sensible of this.

*F.* A *Christian* fixes in his mind an abhorrence of all forbidden sensual indulgence : he abstains from the most distant occasions of lust and wantonness : he keeps a watchful guard over his thoughts : he habituates himself to the government of his *passions*, that his *appetites* may not hurry him into sin.

*D.* These duties certainly belong to christianity.—

*F.* Cherish in your breast a deep sense of the perfect holiness of God, and of his being present every where. Entertain a thorough conviction of the great truths of our religion ; and that there can be no hopes of salvation, where chastity is disregarded. Be assured, that if you are entangled in *deceitful lusts*, they will *war against your soul* ; and if you bring this into slavery, all is lost. Among the *Jews* of old, when they forgot their duty to God, the prophet complains in very emphatical terms : among other accusations, he reproaches them for forsaking the glory of their moral nature, meaning their reason and religion, by acting like brutes ; for he tells them, they were like *fed horses*, every one *neighing* after his neighbours wife.

*D.* This is a strong description of the state of those who follow their appetites, unawed by any considerations of a judgment to come.

*F.* What is it restrains us, but such considerations ? Human laws keep some in awe ; but where there is consent of parties in wickedness ; when religion fails of its due force on the mind, mankind grow wanton in iniquity.

*D.* Is

D. Is it not common to shelter themselves under the *slimy* covering of *numbers* committing sin, in this instance?

F. Ay, *Mary*: *slimy indeed!* You have given it a very proper name, for it is a very *slimy* covering, and serves as little to conceal the guilt, as to furnish any excuse for it. He that says, "Lord, have mercy on me a sinner," and actually intends to sin on, it still carries an acknowledgment of an *offence*: but in the other case, it is a plea of right, as if the guilt must be pardoned, on account of offenders being so numerous. They argue as if the power of the Almighty, which once destroyed a world, could not be extended to a host of rebels. Or what would you think of him who should pretend, that corporal punishment, or ignominious death, is the less evil because crowds of malefactors are condemned to a loathsome prison, or the gallows.

D. I hope there are not so many guilty of *incontinency*, as is generally imagined. I have heard, that the women in *England*, are more distinguished for *chastity*, than those of any other nation.

F. I believe they are: but good women in all countries, have nothing so much at heart, as to act in character; and knowing themselves to be accountable to God, they *conduct* themselves as if they knew it.—Whatever our condition may be, let us stand firm in a persuasion of the great truths of our religion!—You know not, my daughter, what a bad world we live in!—Provision for incontinency is a *trade* in great cities!

D. A trade!

F. Yes: there are many evil spirits who walk about the earth, in human form, as the ministers of the prince of darkness: they seek occasions of profit, at the dreadful cost of unthinking young women. Whether such ministers pass under the harsh name of *broads* or *pimps*, who are hired to ensnare, and sell their prey, it matters little. I am constrained to tell you, what is shocking to them who bear the name of *Christian*, as well as those who only challenge the prerogatives of humanity: but it is necessary you should know the truth; and knowing it, become the safer guardian of yourself, and your own honour. There are many vile wretches of both sexes in the world, who make the heavenly face of modesty blush to think of them.

D. Of both sexes!

F. Yes: and in *high* life, as well as in *low*: they lie and flatter, promise and swear as prodigally, as if they were to gain *heaven*; and are as false as *hell*, from whence their deceitful speeches come. They present a flattering view of *pleasure* before the heedless eyes of women, and draw them on till they fall into the pit of destruction. These enemies to virtue, attempt to prove, that things which are really the *worst* in the world, are the *best*: And drawing a deluding picture of human nature, would persuade us, that the obligations to virtue, depend on fear, and the humour of mankind, not the *eternal laws of justice*.

D. Is it possible? they must be *felish* or *mad* who believe them; or if they do not acknowledge the being of a God, and the eternal difference between good and evil, and the rewards and punishments of a life to come.

F. I have met with men, whose fortunes were large, and their wit abundant; whose *ingurs* were gifted with the arts of persuasion, but their *hearts* not right with God. Some boasted that no woman could resist their wiles; though I knew this to be an abominable lie, by the repulses which themselves had often met.

D. Did they mean to depreciate the *weakness* of women, and boast of their own *strength*, while themselves were acting like *fools* and *cowards*, taking the part of the devil himself, seeking whom they could *devour*?

F. Such rank absurdities do wicked men maintain. This was the case of *Jack Smart*. *Jack* had a freehold of near *two hundred a year*, the greatest part of which, principal and interest, he spent in debauchery, and corrupting of young women. He had studied the *world*, but it was the *deceitful part of it*. As he had only a superficial sence of virtue himself, he had a mean opinion of others, particularly *women*; treating *sincerity* of heart as a *chimera*. In attempting to disgrace human nature, he stained his own reputation with the foulest spots.

D. As he squandered his fortune, it is probable he threw his health into the bargain.

F. Ay, and his soul also. When *he died*, he made no sign of *hope* in heaven's joys.

D. Wretched man! Where is he gone!—

F. As a *contradiction* to his principles, and for the honour of your sex, I can tell you, that not many years since, an *English* duke brought from *France* a lady, who, it is said, had been married

married against her will, to a man she disliked. She behaved, in this country, with the utmost propriety, and was in all respects, adultery excepted, an amiable woman. The Duke took great pains to induce the ladies in the neighbourhood of his seat, to visit her; but not one of them would submit to it: they thought it disgraceful. *Jack* might have imputed this to affectation, pride, or any thing but the love of

virtue, which I am persuaded was the ruling principle of their conduct.

*D.* I am glad to hear there is such a spirit amongst our *gentry*. What became of this *French lady*?

*F.* After living some time in *England*, she retired to a nunnery in *Flanders*, where she lived in penitence, according to the *Romish* faith, and, as far as I know, died in peace.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N    I V .

*Danger to farmers daughters going to London to service. Remarks on register-offices.*

*D.* YOU was speaking the other day of those abominable creatures who make a trade of infamy, and sell young women for prostitution; are not these wretched miscreants often hanged when they are found out?

*F.* Found out, child!—they are better known than most honest people; and no wonder, for they carry on a greater trade. If they are discovered to have used any force, of which witness can be produced, they are subject to swing: but considering the silly animals who are the objects of their traffic, they contrive to keep their necks out of the halter. In several *popish* countries, and even in some protestant ones, these houses of prostitution are so far countenanced, as to be under public regulations, as necessary evils.

*D.* How abominably wicked are mankind become!—No regulation of this kind can be allowed of by the law of *Christ*.

*F.* That is very true: if men were to obey the law of *Christ*, we should see things restored to their true standard. Marriage would be more in esteem; and *chastity* regarded as the precepts of the gospel require. It is the departure from this, which introduces such depravity of manners.—As to the women I have been speaking of, they practise the arts of the devil, when under a specious disguise he deceived our first parents: like the same evil spirit, they go about, seeking whom they can devour; and when they have accomplished their foul ends, they laugh at the misery they have created, and spurn

at the objects they have deluded;—leaving them to die like dogs. Thus this fairest transcript of heaven, is blotted with such hideous stains, as might draw tears from tygers.

*D.* Do you say this from general considerations of caution to me, who am young; or from real misfortunes which have happened to any of your acquaintance?

*F.* Too well do I remember some of my good neighbours daughters, whom nothing could satisfy but going up to *London*, as if they were sure of making their fortunes. Some of them have lived virtuously, single: others have succeeded by marriage; but with several of the most comely, it fared very ill. They fell into the snares of those abandoned *procuresses*, who trade in sin; and under a pretence of getting them good places, brought them like birds to the net, or lambs to the slaughter.

*D.* Did those girls use no precaution before they left their parents, to correspond with such friends in town, as they might trust themselves with, till proper places could be provided for them?

*F.* Their neglect was their misfortune. No country lass can suspect half the wicked arts which are played off to seduce young females, in that scene of iniquity, *London*, where live the worst, as well as the best people in the world! Great caution is necessary in going to what they call their public register-offices, where those who want service, apply: it is particularly necessary for a young woman to inform

herself of the true character of the person who proposes to take her as a servant, which is sometimes difficult to be done; for she may be recommended for information, to persons of the same stamp. I had many opportunities of hearing of numbers of young women, who, forsaking the guides of their youth, fell a prey to destruction. And many a one have I seen in the streets, so deeply stained with guilt, the virtuous scarce knew how to be acquainted with their misery, or in what manner to afford them relief.

*D.* Are the *vicious*, who are the cause of the misery, the most ready to succour it?

*F.* This by no means follows: For the very reason that they have *less virtue*, they have *less compassion* than innocent persons. My master thought it the duty of a *man* and a *Christian*, to succour the wretched of *every class*, to the utmost of his power, in the manner best suited to their sad circumstances. Many a time have I heard him sigh and say, that few of the miserable beings, who give themselves up to prostitution, escape an early death in the career of their iniquity. Either intemperance, or the foul and horrible disease which they bring on themselves; or the consumptions and decay which often follow the medicines taken for the cure of that disease, make them old at the age of twenty-five; while the major part die at an earlier time of life. This is the deplorable condition of those, who offer themselves up as sacrifices at the altars of impurity.

*D.* Surely these unhappy wretches never had

any education, and do not know the difference of *good* and *evil*!

*F.* You are much mistaken, *Mary*: Some are ignorant; but many more have been instructed: and yet, the carelessness of their parents, or their own disobedience to them; their loose behaviour, and inattention to serious things, joined to a fondness for *dress* and *amusement*, have rendered them an easy prey to their own inclinations, or the arts of wicked men. Did they but consider, how absurd it is to expect *wisdom* from the *foolish*, or *justice* from the *profligate*, they would not fall into the gulph of misery!

*D.* One would not imagine, that these wretches! women made any reflexion on what was to happen to them here, or hereafter. You say they are tempted by the show of gaudy dress! Good God! To sacrifice the *soul* for a flimsy covering of the *body*! To lose that, which is to *last for ever*, for a gown, that may be spoiled by a *day's wearing*! They must be lost indeed, who can make such a sacrifice to vanity!

*F.* Your remarks on them are very just.

*D.* I observe, that the greater part of your stories relate to the chastity of *men*.

*F.* There is one reason for this, which does honour to your *sex*, for it supposes that women very rarely make the first advances, which produce so much misery to themselves; their NATIVE MODESTY, and a habit of reserve, operating stronger on them, than a bare principle of *honour* or *conscience* among men. Hence arises the greater propriety of those moral addresses, which suppose men to be in most need of a monitor.

## CONVERSATION V.

*The civility and absurdity of those who use words of a double meaning, conveying loose ideas, to the injury of religion. In what true modesty consists. Impudence and assurance defined. The advantage of knowledge and presence of mind. In what true and false shame consists.*

*F.* NOTHING is more dangerous when it takes a vicious turn. Your *sprightly* people, who are perpetually intruding their loose ideas, and call them *wit*, are a pest to society, and ought to be driven out of it.

*D.* There are too many of both sexes, who,

in the turn of their *conversation*, have not a constant fear of God before them.

*F.* It is at best abominably *trifling*, and oftentimes wicked, to use such *insinuations* in conversation, as one often hears. You see how it is with the lower kinds of reprobates; these

these will not suffer doors and windows to remain unfulled, where chalk or diamond pencils are to be found. Nor is it, I say, only among the vulgar: I have been put to the blush, by *flippery*, or as some call them, *gay gentlemen*, who have the presumption to think themselves authorized to give utterance to conceits, of which the meanest of mankind ought to be ashamed. They deal in what they call the *double-entendre*, or words of *two* meanings; though from their tone of voice, and gesture, and the occasion of introducing them, it is very plain they have but *one*, and That is *shameless*.

D. Are not such persons avoided by all genteel people and sober *Christians*?

F. Some of these, who set up for *wits*, and have the talent of flattering the corruption of the heart, formerly were countenanced, by persons otherwise well-inclined.

D. How are we to reconcile their conduct with the admonitions found in so many parts of the sacred writings?

F. *Reconcile!* it is absolutely irreconcilable upon any principle of *religion*, or *good manners*. Some men happily possess that *native modesty* I have just mentioned, which keeps them in awe: and modesty arising from education, reason, or religion, is always a strong guard against such *irregularities*, as well as *temptations* in general.

D. Nothing is more amiable, or a greater blessing, than a *modest* deportment in *women*.

F. Nor can there be a greater curse, than when either man or woman is delivered over to an *impudent mind*, or a shameless neglect of religion, whether the matter relates to the *sexes* or not. The difference between *impudence* and *assurancè*, or confidence in what we say or do, is as great as between *bashfulness* and *modesty*.—The world often confounds this distinction: the Wise Man tells us, “Be shame-faced *according to my word*; for it is not good to retain *all shamefacedness*, neither is it altogether approved in every thing.” Though *modesty* has many charms, *bashfulness* is but weakness and incapacity, except when applied to *chastity*; and in this, *resolution* to defend, is a much *safer guard*: a *blush* can avail but little, as a rampart against the assaults of vice.

D. *Resolution* should be the companion of *modesty*, as it is the truest and most faithful friend to *chastity*.

F. Well observed: With respect to the affairs

of life, in general, those who desire to do what is commendable, and shrink away in *bashfulness*, cannot shew their merit to the world; and therefore ought not to be angry with it, if others less deserving, are promoted in preference to themselves.

D. But we cannot always go just so *fast* or *slow* as we would: doth not much depend on *knowledge* and *presence of mind*?

F. To preserve such presence of mind, it is as necessary to be accustomed to *company*, as it is to be *innocent*. The mind ought never to be disturbed, so long as it is not conscious of *guilt* for whatever noise may be made amongst one part of mankind about *honour*, nothing is *truly shameful* or *dishonourable*, but what is in some measure *wicked*: and nothing less than the highest depravity of heart, can totally blot out a sense of *shame* from the mind: This is so powerful a check to *vice*, it ought to be preserved as a jewel of inestimable value: a modest man blushes in secret, even at a thought which his reason or religion condemns. There are many occasions, in which *modesty* is essential to *virtue*, where *chastity* is not concerned. You may observe, that women who are really modest, never make a boast of being so; for That in effect is being immodest. I hope you will never *offend* by any word or action; or give any smile of approbation to *jest*s, which are contrary to the rules of good manners.

D. I should rather wish to be *useful* to my companions, than merely to *divert* them.

F. You judge well; upon the common principle, that an ounce of *solid sense*, is more valuable than a *pound* of *wit*. In your commerce with the world, remember what the Wise Man says, “If you be invited by a *mighty* man, withdraw yourself, and so much the more will he invite you:” intimating, that modesty towards superiors, is the ready way to be treated with respect. In the same manner, when you are conscious of ignorance, or when prudence forbids you to speak, *talking* will at once discover your want of *sense*, as well as *modesty*. Our great philosopher says, “A man that hideth his *foolishness*, (understood to be conscious of his *weakness*) is better than he who hideth his *wisdom*.”

D. This advice doth not hinder our doing justice to ourselves.

F. No: “Too great a distrust of ourselves, produces a *base fear*, which depriving the mind

of its liberty and assurance, makes our *reasonings* weak, our *words* trembling, and our *actions* faint." Among things most shameful, our teacher bids his son "to be ashamed of *theft*; want of regard to the place where he sojourns; respect to the *truth of God*, and his covenant; to lean with his elbow upon his meat; of scorning to *give* and *take*; and of *silence* before them that salute him."

*D.* This in effect is marking out instances of dishonesty, impiety, indecency, and pride.

*F.* True: he bids us also be ashamed "to turn away our face from a kinsman; to take away a portion or a gift; to use *upbraiding speeches before friends*; or after giving any thing, to *upbraid*." He charges us likewise, "to be ashamed of *speaking again* that which we have *heard*, (understood to be imprudently or mali-

cioufly) and of revealing secrets." He says also, that we ought to be "ashamed of an offence before a judge, or a ruler." And with regard to the subject we were speaking of, he bids us to be ashamed of "looking upon a *harlot*, and of *gazing* upon another man's wife." After warning us to avoid such evils, he says, "So shalt thou be *truly shame-faced*, and find favour before all men."

*D.* These objects of shame, are not, for the most part, punishable by the magistrate.

*F.* No: they are not all reprehensible by human laws, but they are objects of *great shame*: and perhaps for the very reason that they are not chastisable *here below*, except by the contempt which follows them, those who are thus *shameless*, will be the more punished *hereafter*.

## CONVERSATION VI.

*Contentment the source of true religion, as leading to a submission to Providence. The state of mankind with regard to the gospel purity. Anecdote of a duel, and the formality of conducting it upon a system diametrically contrary to the clear precepts of Christianity. Learned men, not being clergymen, eminent for their zeal in the cause of Christ. Professed infidelity, more the effect of pride and vicious habits, than of a real disbelief.*

*F.* **C**ONTENTMENT is the sovereign bliss of mortals, and only in the gift of virtue; or, to speak like a Christian, it is an effect of the grace of God. Let the great world act as it pleases, the necessaries of life will always be of greater value than the ornaments of it; and labour, superior in merit to art. So with respect to religion, honesty of heart, and rectitude of will, are of much higher value than learning. The bulk of mankind can do very little more, than follow the path which nature hath pointed out: would to God they did follow it! we should not then see such distraction in the world: I mean, that we should live more in rural simplicity, and pass the days of our years in greater harmony and contentment. Under the glorious light of the gospel, which we enjoy, reason is improved by instruction, as nature is corrected by grace: all is the effect of labour and vigilance to do the will of God, and of the aid which we

receive from heaven.—We have, in these latter years, made vast improvements in the art of living, with respect to the pomp and conveniences of life, inasmuch that they are become, in a great measure, a kind of substitute for moral and religious obligations.

*D.* You mean, that people are apt to esteem them as substitutes.

*F.* External decency or civilization of manners covers many a foul stain: and there are great numbers lost and bewildered in trifles; ignorant of the chief glory of their nature; and so absorbed in the business and pleasures of this world, they forget that they are immortal!—Are we to expect from persons of this turn, such an example as will teach us substantial piety, and the fear of God?

*D.* When we discover that *they* err, do we perform our own duty the better for it?

*F.* Rarely, I believe: few have courage and

and resolution enough to live up to the dictates of their own minds. No one can know what he was never taught: and when all is done, example will be more prevalent than precept. The scriptures always lie open before us: We frequent the house of God; we worship him, and we hear his word explained from the pulpit; the rest depends on *sincerity* of heart; and where we find the example bad, we must fly from it. I have sometimes met with gentlemen, who were under terrible apprehensions of *our* knowing too much; but, with their leave, I must say, my experience inclines me to the opinion, that the contrary evil prevails. How many thousands, and tens of thousands, are not even acquainted with the scriptures; and totally ignorant, not having been taught to read. Where this hath been the case, I have often found a whole family plunged into gross wickedness; theft, falsehood, and lewdness, becoming familiar to them.

*D.* We frequently hear it said, that the *middle* ranks of the people are the best.

*F.* So it generally appears; and the reason may be traced out: they are not so haughty as to despise religion; nor so ignorant as to neglect it, from knowing no better. Not being so distressed as to offend through the temptations arising from want, they pass their time in greater freedom from gross sins.

*D.* For my part, the more I know, the greater my pleasure is, because my hopes are so much the stronger; the world sits the lighter upon me; I am the more sensible of its joys; yet they appear as little, in comparison of my expectations in the life to come! The thoughts which you suggest to me, render my labours chearful; and like a sweet companion, guide me in a *pleasant* path; and I think they would render even a dreary road delightful. I hope, upon every occasion of trial, I shall be convinced of the sincerity of my own heart.

*F.* I always rejoice when I find my lessons make an advantageous impression on your mind. The end of all enquiry and instruction, is to make ourselves, or others, happier than we were before. We see instances enough, how it fares with mankind, to be fully convinced of the *mercy* and *justice* of God. If there is a God; if wickedness frequently prospers; if virtue goes unrewarded *here*, what doth it prove, but that an account will be required *hereafter*, and that we

shall be rewarded or punished, according to the eternal wisdom of the Almighty? If nothing is so important to us, as our state and condition after death; nor any subject capable of filling the mind with such pleasing wonder and amazement, as the thought of *eternity*, where would your *reason* be, if you did not employ it in *thinking of this object*? You have seen, in your *few years* of life, that we are exposed to the influence of many *bad examples*, and to various *uncomfortable* and *sad accidents*, which we can neither *foresee* nor *prevent*: and where can we find *strength* to encounter the one, or *wisdom* to fly from the other, if we do not seek for them in our religion?

*D.* The true use of the consideration or assurance, that there is a state of rewards and punishments in another life, will poize us against the evils we are subject to in this world.

*F.* This is a truth which seems to be granted, even by *heathens*, ancient and modern, who never had the benefit of a divine revelation.— And what *good* is equal to the longings of the soul, but such as will last for ever? The *wise* have always given their testimony, that they have found every condition of life, when supported by *virtue*, calm and free from disquiet, if not delightful; but that every condition mixed with *vice* or *folly*, must become *distasteful*, though accompanied with pleasure, and all imaginable greatness.

*D.* When the interest of the *soul* is neglected, it is a vain thing to seek for *temporal* happiness.— Can there be a rational, consistent faith, but as we refer ourselves to *immortality*, and make this our constant companion, and our darling friend?

*F.* None: but we must throw ourselves on the mercy of the eternal God, or what will avail the assurance of the certainty of a life to come? How can any man hope to be happy, whilst he is  *vicious*? God being the author of all that is good, and in himself perfect, cannot bestow his favour on the *undeserving*: They may conceal their wounds from the world, but their *reason* will torture them when they disobey it: in vain do they appeal to it for relief; it hath not power to administer comfort *against itself*. Hence you may easily comprehend, that *peace*, can be the reward only of *virtue*; and that obedience to the laws of God, is the sole support of our hopes of *immortal* happiness after death.

*D.* With regard to the *trials of faith*, I have read

read, that the first *Christian* emperor made use of a device in order to discover, who among his subjects and servants were real Christians. He offered honours to those who professed a disbelief of Christianity.

*F.* Worldly glory is generally the test. If the true *policy* of states and *godly wisdom* were duly attended to, we should see nothing but *peace* among nations; but statesmen, like other people, judge of what they are to do by the opinion they entertain of the evil propensities of mankind. This is not the readiest way to make them better, but rather establishes principles destructive of virtue. Still we find such persons are subject to like passions with ourselves: and how are we to judge of the world? If they are not the best men, nor show the best example, whose influence makes the *deepest* impression, where is our remedy? We have no ground to stand on, to maintain the cause of Heaven, but as we suppose human nature not sunk so low, as that it cannot be corrected. Though *dissipation* and *irreligion* are prevalent among those who are distinguished by their rank and fortune, we have equal reason to believe, there are considerable numbers of the wealthy, whose hearts glow with *piety* and *humanity*, and carefully improve their talents.

*D.* When pride doth not tempt them to triumph over their humanity.

*F.* What do you mean, child?

*D.* I have heard of *another duel*!—There is no end to this gross offence against the laws of *Christ*!

*F.* How can there be an end, till offenders are treated as criminals?—Your resentments seem to be levelled more particularly against transgressors in this way: there are many others as loose in their principles who do not fight *duels*. The divine command, written so strongly in the heart, respects the eternal law of *temperance*, *chastity*, *justice*, and *mercy*; all of these leading equally to a judgment to come. To live as believing there is a God, and to make ready to appear before him, is one of those circumstances, which men never totally forget; but the *substance of belief*, which is the foundation of the preparation for *eternity*, is by some refined away; by others lulled asleep, or violated.

*D.* Unhappy those who lose the *substance*, for the *shadow of truth*. Yesterday I heard the cir-

cumstances of the *duel*, of two gentlemen, who quarrelled some months since.—

*F.* The combat was the more criminal.

*D.* Would you think it possible, that in so important an affair as *life* and *death*, no *christian* interposed, to make up the difference: or that the gentlemen themselves, professing to believe in *Christ*, and pretending to high notions of *truth* and *justice*, should have such savage minds as to live several months, intending to *hazard* the spilling each others blood? The ceremony of the combat rather proved there was no *rancour*, as vulgarly understood; yet pride did not permit either to yield to the dictates of *reason* or *religion*. Their names are *Wildman* and *Lion*. Twelve paces were marked out; the combatants standing back to back. The *seconds*, who attended their respective friends, presented each a pistol: they turned about, but *not to take aim*, (observe the absurdity) yet *Wildman* shot *Lion* in the thigh; it was not a bad wound, nor immediately discovered: *Lion* snapt his pistol; it missed going off.

*F.* Did not the *seconds* interpose? A sufficient proof of courage had been given to satisfy the world, which is generally the first consideration in these cases: *religion* is out of the question. Surely they ended the quarrel!

*D.* No: these very *honourable* men, with the highest pretensions to *humanity*, must have another trial. Their eyes of *faith* were shut, and their hearts darkened; they saw not the *frowns of Heaven*!—The parties coming to the centre of their ground, were again presented each with a *pistol*. Then advancing the distance as before, that is six paces each, they turned about and fired: happily neither shot took place. After thus twice offending against God and the laws, hazarding all that is sacred in both worlds, it was left to *Lion* to declare whether he was *satisfied*: he answered in the affirmative, and the parties separated with mutual civility. Thus terminated a dispute, which had subsisted for many months; the decision of which, by a variety of circumstances, had been prevented.

*F.* You see how *religion* is made a *stalking-horse*, to be used according to the *caprice* of mankind. Let us thank God, that sin can hardly reach us, in this shape, whatever form it may take to bind us in chains. *Common-sense*, in this case, required the mediation of *friends*: alas! their friends knew as little, or were as *rebellious* against God,



God, as themselves. *Heaven and hell* were set at defiance. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord:" but these children of pride, attempt to wrest it out of his hands, and to punish, *according to their whims and caprice*, in the greatest concern of men, even in *life and death*.

*D.* The frequency of duels might incline one to believe, that our gentry have forgotten their religion.

*F.* The best that can be said of such rash men is, that they are a degree less criminal than self-murderers. In general, we may suppose no duellist means to destroy another, or himself. Neither of them throws his own wealth, or the riches of another man, into the sea; but they do the next *foolish* thing to it: each party goes with a rich jewel, of which he has not the right of disposing, to the *gaming-table*: there he plays so desperately high, that sometimes he loses this jewel. As we are taught, he *falls* in an act of rebellion against God, and stands condemned to everlasting torments! And how does it fare with him who *succeeds*? Though he should come off the field with life and limb, his sin against God is *registered*; and he must repent in bitterness, or perish.

*D.* But both these *gamesters* may finish their *play*, and come off, as they begun.

*F.* Ay, *Mary*: but the *dishonour*, the *dishonesty*, the *injustice* of hazarding what was not their own to dispose of, will stick to them. In this light, the *Christian* must behold *duellists*, stript of all false disguises; and partial regards to pretended valour. Mankind are apt to see things in so delusive a glare of light, and particularly in this instance, the action which ought to be branded with *infamy*, as *unjust* and *cruel*, is rather considered as a deed of gallantry, expressive of a generous mind. Thus the glories of *Christianity*, displayed in *humility*, *forgiveness of injuries*, and the exercise of *mercy*, the choicest attribute of Heaven, are treated as fit only for the *vulgar*. There can be no change in this sad business, *Mary*, till a new law is made, more explicit, with respect to the forfeiture of life, for a premeditated attack, or an actual *combat by consent*. The prince, being a true advocate for *Christianity*, may disgrace his offending subjects, not according to a political opinion, or the caprice of the people, but his true sense of the immutable *laws of Christ*; shewing an ex-

ample to all the world, that he is zealously bent on the maintenance of these divine precepts, by which mankind are to stand or fall forever.

*D.* They might thus come to a right understanding; and the force of the example extend to us in *humble life*. We should have a stronger assurance that our superiors *are in earnest* with regard to religion; and this would make a suitable impression on our minds.

*F.* So I think: in the mean time, let us, who see the light of the *gospel*, not extinguish it, because others are disposed to wander in darkness. No nation hath exceeded ours in the study and practice of the great truths of *Christianity*: Whether things continue the same in these days of *worldly politics* and *pursuits of pleasure*, I cannot tell; but I have heard my master often speak of great philosophers and learned men, no less distinguished for their conversation and manners, than for their writings in praise of *christian duties*. Every age doth not produce such extraordinary persons, as to be at once celebrated for great talents in *science*, and *worldly business*; and equally excelling in *piety towards God*. The most devout are generally modest and reserved: a *manly courage* is necessary to true piety: *infidelity* is often so bold and daring, as to leap over all the bounds of common decency.

*D.* By learned men, do you mean *divines* who were so zealous?

*F.* Not by profession; they had studied how they might best serve their Maker, or they could not have written so clearly as they have done (a).

*D.* We all study religion, so far as to know, what is required.

*F.* These *laymen* wrote their books on the authority of the holy scriptures, these concurring with their researches; and they communicated their thoughts for the good of mankind: such men are the "salt of the earth."

*D.* What is meant by this expression in the scriptures?

*F.* You know that *salt* prevents *corruption*, and promotes vegetation. In both these senses it is applied to the corruption of men's manners, and to the fertility of gospel truths. When our Saviour came into the world, it was over-run with *idolatry* and *superstition*: Even among the *Jews* the *spirit* of religion was lost in the *ceremonials* of it. He who first taught us to worship

God.

(a) Alludes to Boyle, Locke, Newton, Nelson, &c.

God in spirit and in truth, gave us clear ideas of the Being of That God, and the immortality of the soul; and to his doctrine we must appeal, under all doubts and difficulties. This alone can *purify the soul*; and this only can preserve it from being tainted, and make it bring forth the fruits of *repentance*. This is the *salt of the earth*; and “if it be lost, wherewithal shall it be salted?” How can men be preserved? will they not corrupt and perish? In the same manner, you know the gospel is called *light*: if you withdraw *light*, *darkness* will ensue.

D. I perceive the force of both these expressions; and very beautiful they are.

F. Although the arguments which those *laymen*, in conjunction with divines, maintained in defence of the gospel, are sufficiently convincing to every candid and impartial enquirer, yet you are not to imagine, but that all ages have produced *infidels* and vain disputers, who have cavilled about *mysterious* points, of which God never made them the judges. And many, at all periods of time, have even scoffed at the words of *eternal life*!

D. Do you think they seriously believed what they said?

F. In good truth, I apprehend the hearts of many of them secretly gave them the lie, and revolted against the opinions they pretended to adopt: and that it hath not been without great labour, they have offered incense to their own *pride* and *self-conceit*. I have told you of the sad effects of *superstition*: this makes a man a *fool*; but *infidelity* makes him *mad*. Few infidels have *publicly* recanted, or owned themselves to have been in the wrong.

D. Which is the worst, an unbelieving *learned*, or an unbelieving *unlearned* person?

F. I see no great difference: they both talk like *fools* or *madmen*, though in very different words: I have always kept out of the com-

pany of both, observing that their unbelief has nourished an infectious disease in their minds; for they are generally as debauched and wicked in *practice*, as they are erroneous in *opinion*. If *knowledge* without *virtue*, and a just sense of religion, were valuable, the devil himself might be in high esteem: he had *wit* enough to *believe*, and he trembled; but he had not *virtue* to practise what he knew.—Those who make no distinctions between *good* and *evil*, condemn themselves without any further trial. Such as bid defiance to the common-sense of mankind, ought to live among themselves; and they will soon see how *impossible* it is for their *plan of life* to render them *peaceful*, or happy in their agreement with each other.

D. The more we know, the worse, if we do not consult the glory of God. It is no wonder those should quarrel, whose minds being estranged from God are never at peace.

F. The history of mankind, in all ages, and in all countries, proves this great truth. Do you not observe in common life, that whoever looks on himself as free from the obligations to obey the *laws of the Almighty*, hardly shews any just attention to the *laws of man*: is he fit to be trusted? I hope you will have wit enough to be on your guard; and always consider how to render your life useful to others, by every means you can devise; for in this we shew the *love of God*: by loving each other we prove our sincerity.

D. It is very apparent, that the whole duty of life consists in the exercise of piety and humanity; for if every thing is to be done to the honour of God, all our labour, and all our rest, must be consecrated to the same great purpose.

F. This is the true end of living; and without it, life is but a puerile amusement, a mere rattle for children.

## CONVERSATION VII.

*Religion essential to happiness in this life. The folly of building on any hope of happiness after death, but as it is founded on the Christian religion. The state of mankind through all ages, with respect to religion, and their natural propensity to offer sacrifices to an offended God.*

**F. POOR Humphry!**—He used to travel about, to buy up corn. He was what they call a *drunken honest fellow*: but as *honest* as they were pleased to call him, he wasted the substance which belonged to his family. At length, falling off his horse, he broke his leg; and the humours of his body being in a corrupted state through his intemperance, the fracture threatened a mortification. In this extremity he sent for a *physician of the soul*; and to him he unburthened his mind, and asked spiritual counsel.

**D.** And was he capable of receiving and following it?

**F.** I never heard much more of him: but this I know, that under a consciousness of *disobedience* to the law of righteousness, the soul cannot be at *rest*. We may flatter ourselves, *Mary*, and try to compromise, as if we might pay a certain portion of *obedience*; that is, *obey*, and *not obey*, at the very same time: but it must come to this conclusion; as the wind blows, the vessel will be tossed by the waves; the mind which is troubled, cannot at the same time enjoy the calm of peace. He whom the winds and sea obey, will not dispense with the *disobedience* of man. Whoever hears the *word of God*, and does not attend to the *works* required by *that word*: if he that goes to *church*, goes also to the chambers of *drunkenness* or *lewdness*: if he who acknowledges the necessity of *repentance*, does not *amend*—what will the good part of his conduct avail?—He who labours hard for the things that *perish*, though entitled to the character of an *industrious* man, if he takes no pains to acquire That *faith* and *hope*, which are necessary to glory everlasting,—can he expect to possess it? If he gives so great a preference to the transient hours of the present life, as to shew little or no regard to *eternity*, can we pronounce such a man to be in his *right mind*? To the *gospel* we owe

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the *power* of discerning what belongs to our everlasting peace; and to this rule we must appeal.

**D.** Many profess a belief in all that the *gospel* declares against sin, and the happiness which it promises to the obedient; and yet they go on sinning, as if they did not believe a word of either.

**F.** You say they *profess a belief*: If they considered well the threats and promises of the *gospel*, it would be difficult to understand how they could act such a part: but alas! some behave with as little consistency, as a dumb man might do, whose tongue being loosened from the bonds of silence, should employ his speech in blaspheming the power by which the miracle was wrought. Do you not perceive that the whole tenour of the *gospel* is a miracle, extended in every possible shape to the whole race of mankind, though the Almighty hath not been yet pleased to communicate it to them all.

**D.** Is it not wonderful it should not be spread further over the earth?

**F.** A thousand years, in the sight of God, are but as one day! We must not wonder, that in seventeen hundred years, the *gospel* should not be more universal: but wait the appointed time. You see in how many, who are acquainted with it, the active spirit of righteousness is lulled asleep; and what numbers revolt against the religion they profess, as ungratefully, as if the *withered hand*, restored to use by a miraculous intervention, should lift itself up against the person who miraculously performed the cure.

**D.** The whole *economy* of the *gospel* is marvellous; and those who, acknowledging the truths of Christianity, disobey the great Founder of it, act as inconsistently as the character you represent.

**F.** We acknowledge the power of God over every part of nature, the *visible* and *invisible* world,

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from

from the crawling of an *insect* to the motion of the *earth* and *heavenly bodies*. No less do we behold him in the earliest dawnings of our *reason*, to the full maturity of the soul in *knowledge*: yet how few of us tremble with awe and reverence before him; or fear his justice; or adore his mercy, in any degree equal to our obligations!

*D.* Those who pass their days regardless of the awful hour, when they must yield up their fleeting breath, and are unmindful that there is *no repentance in the grave*, certainly act most unwisely.—How is it that some pretend Christianity is as old as the creation?

*F.* I do not well comprehend what they mean. The *moral law* was made *with man*; it is a part of his frame and composition: But whether it be true or not, that Christianity is as old as the creation, we are sure that *Adam* acted not the part of a *true christian*; but by him, and through his offence, his race *all die*; but in *Christ*, and through his merits, *all are made alive*. You understand *how* they are so.—I believe it is generally acknowledged, that *Adam* was made immortal; but only in *Christ* is *immortality brought to light*, through the gospel. To this let us adhere with all our strength and might. Reason, I presume, was ever the same: *Adam* certainly knew what was right: *God* revealed himself to him; and he must have formed just ideas of an all-perfect Creator; yet, by his transgression, his mind and frame were so vitiated, his descendants gave themselves up to work wickedness; debasing their reason to such a degree, that, to speak as a man, nothing less than their total destruction could support the moral government of rational beings in the world. *Noah* and his family, were the only persons whom *God* thought fit to preserve. However confused the ideas of men in succeeding ages might be, concerning the union of the Godhead, and of the atonement required for sin; notwithstanding so many absurd notions prevailed, the most part of the *heathen* world believed in a power supreme; and that something was to be done, to appease the anger of *That power*.—They had corrupted the image of *God* impressed on their hearts; and by giving themselves up to their *own inventions*, made *religion* abhorrent to *reason*. They were plunged into *darkness*; and to speak as a man, knowing only what is revealed, in darkness should we have all remained, were

it not for the glorious light of the gospel, which we enjoy.—You see how prophaneness is checked by human laws; and confusion prevented by the piety which yet prevails. The knowledge of the religion of *Christ*, keeps us out of *That savage state*, by which many parts of the earth are still distinguished.—

*D.* We may suppose the people before the deluge were universally abandoned, and gratified their passions and appetites in a manner more shameful to the dignity of human nature, than any thing now practised, or that we read of in the present state of the world.

*F.* I suppose they were more wicked: but it is the mercy of *God* which *now* sustains the present generation, and prevents their being totally cut off. That they are punished by a long catalogue of evils, particularly the *sword* and *famine*, *epidemical diseases*, and *earthquakes*, besides the tortures of body and soul, which invade the vicious, needs no proof. We see how one country differs from another in knowledge and moral rectitude; and how the same people often differ from themselves, at different periods of their history. In every instance, we behold the mercies of *God* displayed in their preservation!—The *learned*, who talk of *nature*, must turn *atheists*, or allow of a First Cause.—They may amuse themselves with fine-spun notions; but what greater than the *God* that governs the world, is the Lord of *nature*; and gives man laws how to use his *reason*, and govern his passions and appetites? Where shall you or I seek for *That law*, but in our *New Testament*?—In what state things might be, in the beginning, is a subject of curiosity; but the faithful guide of nature is the gospel of *Christ*: whenever we forsake it, our nature is as “unable to support itself against error and superstition, as it was to deliver it from them:” Left without this guide, it would certainly, by degrees, fall back into its original blindness and corruption. We see that the wanderings of human reason are without end. *Reason* being often bribed by the appetites of the body, makes a *false report*; and the mind warped by *vanity*, deceives; and being perverted by *evil affections*, often gives a partial sentence, at the tribunal of a man’s own heart.—

*D.* I am well convinced, that whatever some may pretend, if it were not for the *gospel*, we should

should deserve another deluge.—But deceitful as the heart of man is, his *conscience* will not suffer him to be at rest if he does evil.

F. The trial among Christians must be referred to the gospel dispensation. We have the *unchangeable* word of God, concerning the existence of the true object of our *faith* and *hope*. Here we anchor: here we ride safe amidst all the storms of life. We know in whom we have believed; even in *Him*, who can neither *deceive*, nor be *deceived*: and, poor as our services are, we have *his* word for it, *that our labour shall not be forgotten*.

D. Those who talk of *reason* and *nature*, as if they could do without a *revelation*, are equally *ungrateful* and absurd.

F. They had much better be silent, for such discourse implies infidelity: Can they find out, by reason or nature, whether any *future reward* shall attend their religious service? And what kind of religion is That, which promises no reward to virtue? In this you perceive the superiority, and the truth of *Christianity*, which darts forth its glorious beams of light, and cheers the heart with joy.

D. St. Peter says to *Christ*, “*Thou hast the words of eternal life.*”

F. I never *read* that sentence, or *think* of it, without an awful emotion of gratitude, praise, and adoration! Whither, indeed, shall we go from *Christ*? To whom shall we seek for *succour*, if *He* only has the words of *eternal life*? If his religion alone gives security of life and happiness to the followers of it, what account can we make of any whims or fancies of presumptuous men? Or what shall we say of those who profess to *believe*, yet are *negligent* or *disobedient*?

D. I have sometimes thought it wonderful, that after so great a judgment as the *deluge*, men in succeeding ages, were not prevented from going into such abominable wickedness.

F. Wonderful, my dear child! Is it not a greater wonder, that we, in this age of the world, receiving the *Messiah*; believing that *Christ* came into the world; acknowledging that he has left us a law, as contained in the *New Testament*; should, notwithstanding the clearness of this evidence, see it work on the minds of many, as if it furnished a reason for *disregarding* it?

D. Indeed it appears, as if the better acquainted we were with the thing, the less we attended to it.

F. Even so: That *virtue* is our supreme good, the *wickedness* which prevails in the world, and occasions so much *misery*, is such a convincing argument, it is impossible to reject it. What virtue *is*, its contrary, vice, abundantly proves. If it were not for *vice*, should we hear such complaints as the world abounds in? And if it were not for *virtue*, would the name of *happiness*, as applied to *rational beings*, be known amongst us? With regard to the comparison: is not what we see with our eyes, agreeable to what we read and understand? In succeeding ages, after the *deluge*, when the earth was re-peopled, as the inhabitants of it became numerous, and were dispersed, some *corrupted* the knowledge of the *true God*, as if they were attempting an impossibility; *that is*, to make *vice* acceptable to him; or if *reason* revolted against so strange an absurdity, then to try to appease his resentments of their offences. And what measures did they take? They offered pompous and costly sacrifices of *bulls* and *goats*. Some went further, and made their altars reek with *human blood*: they gave up their first-born, the “fruits of their body for the sins of their souls.”

D. A strong proof of *perverted notions*, *conscious guilt*, and *fear of punishment*.

F. To this day, what strange and cruel practices are found among men, in countries where the light of the gospel hath not shone. In some *Mahometan* countries, they murder without remorse, at the capricious will of a tyrant. And it is but few years since some, *who called themselves Christians*, imagined they should do an act pleasing to Heaven, by slaughtering vast numbers of their fellow-creatures, in cold blood; because forsooth they happened not to believe just as they did; though both sides allowed *Jesus Christ* to be the saviour of the world; but the *papists* maintained that the *Virgin Mary* should be adored as a deity or a mediator. *Avarice*, *ambition*, and *folly* occasioned this *strange work*! It were happy if we could wipe off such stains from the annals of Christianity!

D. We read how mankind corrupted the knowledge they received from *Noah*, concerning the true God; others totally forgot it: and although there was to be no *second deluge*, yet the arms of the chosen people of God were employed to destroy, from off the earth, many idolatrous nations.

*F.* The *Jews* themselves were, for the same reason, punished in their turn. How often were they ripened for destruction, by swerving from their obedience to the great *Jehovah*, the *God* whom all nations ought to serve and worship with an upright heart! Notwithstanding the intimations given the *Jews*, of the immortality of the soul, yet we find, when *Christ* came into the world, many of them denied it. Their prophets, through a succession of ages, down to *Malachi*, the last of them, explained what God required of them in the clearest manner. They expostulated, in the strongest terms, on the phrenzy of their conduct, who so evidently violated the law, which was written on their minds in such legible characters, and confirmed by the miraculous intervention of the great Lord of nature. *Malachi*, the last of them, foretels the return of *Elijah*. It was the belief of the *Jews* that *Elijah* should appear before the great Son of *David* came into the world to restore all things. To this day, they pray for his coming, hoping that the *Messiah* will immediately follow him. Our *Saviour* tells us, that the person meant by *Elijah*, is *John the Baptist*, who resembled *Elijah* in his office, of reproving the *Jews*, in the austerity of his life; and also by exhorting the people to repentance, before the “coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

*D.* Does he mean the day of judgment?

*F.* These words import the utter destruction of the *Jewish* people and nation: and they are also applied to the general dissolution of all things. You are sensible, as far as your reading goes, how the *Old* and *New Testament* correspond.

*D.* Yes: and I see how the corruption of the heart, in the earliest time, required an instructor from heaven to teach us, that obedience is better

than sacrifice; obedience shewn by faith in the sufferings of *Christ*: and that without it, all the wealth of the earth cannot purchase an offering, to appease an offended God.

*F.* We know, that to worship him in spirit and in truth, is the condition of eternal happiness. To exercise our reason and our faith; and shew our faith by our good works, and our zeal for the honour of that Being, who gave us our existence, is the sum and substance of religion. And what a plain and simple thing it is!

*D.* What doth the prophet say God requires of us, but to do justice—to shew mercy—and to walk humbly before him?

*F.* In regard to ceremonial observances, he requires but two rites; baptism and the supper of our Lord. The first, to renew his covenant with every man that comes into the world; and the second, that he may hold Him in constant remembrance, by whom the worlds were made, and who redeemed him from death eternal—even *Christ*, the Son of the living God!—As to the changing scenes which make up the eventful history of human life, in every period, from drizzling infancy to drizzling old age, through all the follies, and the play-games of the passions, the great source of misery, next to vice, is discontent; and the great fountain of comfort, a mind resigned to Providence.

*D.* Of this I am persuaded: though I apprehend we may endeavour to mend our condition, in any way consistent with our religion.

*F.* Certainly: but that which is most religious, is the most eligible; as they who keep their mind's eye most constantly fixed on the glories which will be revealed, have the fairest prospect of them, and the best-grounded hope of admission into the regions of immortal happiness!

## CONVERSATION VIII.

*How far the poor are more exposed to temptations than the rich, particularly in the persons of females. Anxiety and zeal of a father in behalf of his daughter's chastity. Danger to young women of the inferior classes from a fondness for dress. Cleanliness essential to virtue. Self-denial a part of Christianity. Prayer for chastity.*

D. DO you think that *our condition* exposes us more to temptation, than that of the wealthy?

F. I have told you already, that great *plenty*, and great *poverty*, operate as temptations: carry this ever in mind; that people of fortune observe a more strict decorum, than a state of servitude will for the most part admit: domestics therefore stand in need of the *more virtue*. And why should not our condition encourage us to make up in *virtue*, and the *fear of God*, what we want in *wealth*? If numbers of the rich are vicious, by their riches proving a temptation to vice; by parity of reason, *poverty*, not being in the extreme, will *secure our virtue*. If you would enjoy the advantages of the *wealthy*, without the *dangers of riches*, observe the decorum which *they* practise, and be watchful of your *words*. Unguarded conversation, in all conditions, opens the door to *mischiefs*: it looks like a design to throw down the barrier of *chastity*.

D. Do you think it prudent for a *young woman* to admit any *man* as a confidant, or allow herself to converse with him alone, unless there is an honourable and suitable treaty, approved of by her friends?

F. It is most natural to conclude, she would wantonly expose herself to danger, if she did: and let a treaty be ever so honourable, *reserve* will still be *necessary*. On the other hand, the proper exercise of reserve, requires some skill not to appear *outrageously virtuous*. Observe at the same time, that you had far better be *over- wary*, than become a *prey* in attempting to avoid the imputation of being cautious above measure. Let prudence be your guide. Do not forget, that there are "four excellent mothers, of whom are born four *unhappy daughters*: truth frequently produces *hatred*; prosperity, *pride*; security, *danger*; and familiarity, *contempt*."

D. I will endeavour to remember this excellent *sentence*, for I am sure it often happens so.

F. You see in these instances, what belongs to your condition; and how even *virtue*, not rationally exercised, may produce evil to yourself and others. If your *chastity* be firm and steadfast as the foundations of religion, and dear as your hope of heaven, you will practise a *decent* and *reserved behaviour*, as a necessary precaution to preserve your *peace*; and the most fit temper for the entertainment of *virtue*.

D. Such a rule of conduct, need be in nothing contrary to the duties of *cheerfulness* and *humanity*.

F. These qualities of the mind are essential parts of our religion as *Christians*. The great object is to consider the turn of your thoughts: what is "the sin which doth most easily beset you;" and the means of subduing, or reducing yourself to *obedience* to the law of *Christ*: to shall you *live* as one that prepares to *die*, taking a true view of both worlds with a calm and steadfast hope.

D. It may be more easy to discover the sin which doth most easily beset us, than the means most effectual to reduce ourselves to a strict obedience.

F. No one will dispute this point with you. As foes in some bodies are apt to break out at certain seasons, or changes of weather, the peculiar disease of the mind breaks out as certain objects affect the senses: happily the impression doth not remain *long*, at all times; nor is it constantly made equally deep; but wears off by a succession of other thoughts and objects. Still the *lightness* may remain: and it is upon this principle we are so emphatically warned, "let him that standeth take heed lest he fall."

D. With regard to the unhappy young women, who a *word* mentioned the other day, they

know but little of *themselves*, or of the danger they were exposed to: yet one might imagine a small portion of sense and reason would have shewn them the extreme fallacy of all *arguments, hopes, and expectations*, contrary to the support of *modesty*, which is the glory of a woman!

*F.* True, my daughter: but *virtue* is not free from danger: it is as essential a part of religion to *watch*, as it is to *pray*: in many cases, which regard the passions, there is no safety but in *flight*: It is therefore said, *that for a rub ventures to parley, is near a surrender*. The conduct which is indifferent, in one circumstance, may be dangerous in another: but those who go to the extent of what is lawful, seldom know the length of the line of true liberty; but suffering *virtue* to come too near to *vice*, it catches the infection. The vanity of a great part of my sex, joined to their evil inclinations, leads them to continue on the vicious side, every thing a woman does, which has the appearance of levity: and *some levities*, let me tell you, cannot be construed otherwise. Be assured, that it is more easy to prevent the *forwardness* of men, than to repel the attack which hath been made: even some kinds of *civility* are mistaken for invitations: and *rich* men, as I have told you, are apt to presume, from the humble condition of *poor* young women, that they may mark them as their prey.

*D.* I am afraid this is as true, as that it is a tyrannical and insulting conduct; as if Heaven were less the guardian of the poor than the rich.

*F.* Without any comparison of conditions, build your caution on these great principles:—That *human nature is frail*—That religion doth not keep the generality of *men* in awe, in any degree equal to what might be reasonably expected—and That human laws cannot rectify all injuries, *however great they may be*:—All which I have sufficiently proved, in the several melancholy instances I have related to you.

*D.* I am sensible I ought to avoid giving the most distant suspicion, that any *temptation* would prevail with me.

*F.* This may render you more reserved, as well as habitually modest. Every *distinct virtue* depends on another. As *incontinency* lays waste the soul, *purity* guards the avenues by which all that is graceful in the human mind may be assaulted. The only true way of

repelling *danger*, is to keep out of the way of it. Though men's notions of beauty depend on the *fancy*, yet *all* delight in it; and some grasp at it when they can, in defiance of all laws. Forget not, my daughter, that you are promised a *vast inheritance*, even by *God* himself. Wait for it *patiently*: the time will certainly come; *it may be very near*. You will not be blind to the *light*, and prefer *darkness*; nor, being satisfied that *heaven* is offered to you, in wantonness or folly, plunge yourself into *hell*!

*D.* I hope that I shew nothing in my conduct, which inclines you to believe, I should ever consult my interest so little, or be so lost to a sense of virtue, as to forfeit *eternal* happiness, for the wages of sin, which are but for a moment.

*F.* I am well assured of your innocence, *Mary*: I see you in pain whilst I am talking: I perceive your heart fired with *resolution* in the cause of virtue. But I am *anxious* for your safety, and you will *forgive me*, if I say *too much*! We are about to *part*, and it is fit I should communicate to you my knowledge of the heart; of the ways of the world; and the means of shunning the evils which surround us. Nor is it less my duty to declare, in the awful presence of the God whom I adore, that though I should not act the part of the *Roman* soldier, from suspicion or despair of *right by law*; yet I had rather see your blood stream from your bosom, than behold you in the arms, even of a *king*, on any terms but an *honourable marriage*; such as divine and human laws appoint for the *virtuous*. And if you were to stray from virtue's sacred paths, though floods of briny tears were to flow from your fond father's eyes, these could not wash you clean; but the day would come, when they might rise up in judgment against you!

*D.* I know with what a lively flame your piety and zeal burns in your breast: I hope mine hath caught the fire, and will increase in brightness. I should indeed think I had planted a dagger in your bosom, were I, in any respect, to abandon your wholesome and *affectionate* counsels.

*F.* All this is *well said*; and I trust will be *well done*. If a General means to defend a town, he guards the *outworks*. As to a *female fondness* for GAUDY ATTIRE, I consider it as a *poisoned sugar-plumb*, which operates to the destruction of *health* or *life*. It begins by making us forget our condition, and aspire at promotion, which oftentimes costs us no less a price than our *souls*. If

you



you should feel your heart incline to this *vanity*, I hope you will treat it as the *plague*: get yourself cured of it as a disease, which if neglected will prove mortal. *Chillish* as this passion is, it hath been the ruin of many; and may *tempt* you to forget the lessons which I have so anxiously studied to imprint on your heart. From the moment you fix your fancy on *dressing* to imitate *gentlewomen*, I shall tremble, lest your destruction should be at hand.—What hath been the sad fate of those who enjoy the trappings of folly, obtained by the wages of sin? That which subdues the heart, and makes people *think* wrong, will likewise make them *act* wrong. Numbers of young women, without any other inclination to wickedness, have been undone by a fondness for *dress*; and particularly, when it hath been attended by its *usual companion*, an *immoderate love of pastime*. If all the treasures of the earth are not to be compared to the *least* virtue of the soul, what is a little *gaudy apparel*, which at best can only draw the eyes of the *vain* and *foolish*? Let not *admiration*, *show*, and the *vanities of life*, about which there is such a pother in the world, move you in the least degree from your duty. May you, *my dear child*, stand firm on the rock of your salvation, and grasp *heaven* as your *dear and bright inheritance*!

D. Amen, with all my heart! *Fine deaths* are apt to turn the brains of *girls*, in humble life: how do they affect women whose fortunes enable them always to dress in the richest manner?

F. It is because *they* can come at them easily, they are the more *indifferent*; not but that *fine things*, of one kind or other, make strange impressions on the hearts of *fine folks*, as well as on the *fancies* of the *poor*. There are some women of rank and fortune, even in *Christian* countries, and in these days, who have been bribed by *trinkets*; and not having been used to *early discipline*, have held their honour cheap! But strictly considered, *riches* and *worldly glory* are out of the question; these cannot preserve from *insanity*, in this world, much less from punishment after death.

D. You do not mean, that *servants* should not be as *cleanly* as possible.

F. No: I consider *cleanliness* as a *virtue*; and have often observed, that as among men, filthiness and drunkenness have walked, or *straggled* together as companions; many of your sex, being *stuttish*, are become *harlots*. The *industry*

which keeps people cleanly, may preserve them from *vice*. In all these cases, there is one great object which is to be taken into the account; I mean, that ours is a religion of *self-denial*.

D. It is no great virtue in me, to be contented with *homely clothing*.

F. You have not yet seen any other; nor tried the force of your *vanity*. What *silly grandeur* intoxicates this poor world!—What was it which rendered the Jews so reluctant to receive *Christ* as the Messiah? They were a vain, proud generation; they conceived, that the Messiah was to be a temporal prince, magnificent in power and glory, and his subjects to be great and pompous, and to trample down the rest of mankind. How inconsistent was this with the genuine marks of his character, who was *a man of sorrows*, and *acquainted with grief*! You perceive, that “the great scheme of God, in the universal redemption of mankind, was to be laid open to his followers, by their subduing many *human affections*, *reluctances*, and *terrors*. Their hearts were to be fortified with *courage* and *constancy*; a disregard and contempt of *hardships*, *perils*, *pains*, and *death*.” We are not tried in the same degree as they were; but still we are to combat all such trials as, in the conduct of divine Providence, shall happen to come to us; and if an eye offends us to pluck it out.

D. Those must be very *weak*, or *untaught*, *Christians*, who do not know, that it is the doctrine of *self-denial*, which alone can stop the career of *youth*.

F. Ay, *Mary*, and of *old age* also. It is but a change of objects: *Sin* and *folly* hold so many lands and tenements, it is very hard to dispossess or eject them. You know not how the world goes: Think what a glorious conquest it is to subdue the host of *vile* or *vain desires*, which continually invade the soul! To war against his own affections, and to reduce them to the yoke of reason, is more worthy of a *man*, than to give laws to nations, by right of conquest. When our desires are impure; and when our understanding and experience warn us to beware of them: when our lusts take arms against us, to decline the combat, and give ourselves up as *possessors*, is in effect to sign *our own death-warrant*. The Almighty hath great mercy in store for those who strive to acquit themselves acceptably in his sight: but who can entertain a *holy and upright wish*, yet follow *unholy* or *unjust* practices.

D. There

D. There is no accounting for the madness or extravagancy of the *thoughts*. If we abstain from *evil deeds*, it may be hoped our reason will correct our hearts.

F. *Faith* in *Christ* requires *self-denial* in thought and action: whatever struggles it may cost, it will abundantly repay itself by *joyful hope*, and the dissipation of all *fear* and *sorrow*.

If it requires *purity* in the inward parts, such purity we must obtain; *impurity* we must resist; and till restraints, even in thought, become habitual, it cannot be said, that we are in a *true Christian path of life*. Be it your business therefore, as a part of your worship of the true God, to pray for heavenly aid, particularly to guard your *chastity*! (a)

## CONVERSATION IX.

*Repentments arising from jealousy. Danger of credulity. Fable of the wolf and the lamb. The force of prejudices and prepossessions in favour of persons and things. The folly and iniquity of encouraging gypsies, or consulting fortune-tellers.*

D. **A**LAS, poor *Louisa*! What do you think, my father? After we left home, *James* was *twice asked at church*; but before the *third* time, he left the country, and has not been heard of since. A thousand bad stories are told of him: *some say*, he has been guilty of a *highway-robbery*; but I do not believe it is true.

F. *Why* then do you repeat it? Those who are the echo of evil rumours, are but a remove from the inventors of such stories. A man may be changeable in love, yet it doth not follow, he is abandoned in every other respect. *Constancy* will not make a *faint*, without any other good quality. Guard your tongue in such cases: rather make a sacrifice to silence, than gratify an inclination to relate stories to the disadvantage of others, or load them with crimes they are strangers to.

D. My dear father, I stand chastised: but I fear there are more deeds of *evil*, than of *good*, which come to our knowledge, and therefore the best of us talk of evil.

F. The more *caution* is necessary; especially as you find such an evil propensity to talk of *evil*, that the good part of bad characters is often suppressed.

D. *Louisa* now finds, that it was not me, but the inclinations of her lover, which led him astray.—Her jealousy still burns, but the flames of it take another course. She considers herself as his *wife*, as bound in conscience to him, provided he would be bound to her.

F. *Provided*—this is well put into the *deed* of conveyance of herself: It may be happy for her that he is gone off.

D. Her heart is tortured. She laments her situation in mournful terms, still flattering herself, and hoping as it were against *hope*.—She says, “ I think he is honest—and then I think he is *not honest*—O torture to the soul which doubts!—To love with tenderness, even to part with life, rather than the object of my love, and at the same time to believe him false, treacherous, unworthy even of my esteem! What racking

(a) *For Chastity*.—Most holy, pure, and righteous Father! I beseech thee, let thy Spirit descend upon thy servant, that my *soul* may be untainted, and my *body* undefiled. Let no unchaste word pollute the tongue, which thou hast given to be an organ of thy praise; but in all things grant me grace to conform my life to the laws of thy gospel, that I may dispel all the impure thoughts which invade my mind. Seal up my senses from all vain objects, that being fortified against the assaults of the prince of darkness, I may possess my soul in true holiness; free from the blandishments of the world, the entanglements of sensual desires, and the dark slavery of sin.—Inspire me, O God, with firm resolutions of obedience to thee, that I may lead my life in thy faith, and devote it to thy glory; and at length resign myself to death, in steadfast hopes of a joyful resurrection! This I beg, for the sake of thy spotless Son, who died to redeem the world.

racking pains must that poor girl endure, whose mind is thus agitated !”

F. If she has *reason* to be assured he is *false*, in this assurance she might find rest.

D. Yes : but she knows not the worst — for though her love should be weaned by degrees ; like a poor infant, she may sicken and die in the experiment.

F. I hope a better fortune will attend her. Let her consider how she might have fared, had she been married to him. I have known some men so inconstant in their temper, and so insensible of the pain they give to others, they are as little fit to be yoked in *wedlock*, as to *draw a plough*. They think themselves well inclined ; they feel the force of *female charms* ; they mean *no evil* : but they are not masters of their own meaning or resolution, for a single hour. Such persons wander from one object to another, and make *fools* of themselves, as well as of those who *listen* to them.

D. It would be a kind of *justice* to the rest of the world, upon proof that such a man had pretended love, if he were ever after excluded the privilege of *speaking* to a woman.

F. Gently, *Mary* ; you would not be so severe, if you were in *Louisa's* situation. If *James* were to return, and beg her pardon, and complain of the evil spirit of inconstancy ; but that *now* he was *resolved* ; and let him add a few promises of everlasting love, and if I have any skill in hearts, she would accept of him.

D. Perhaps she might : but do you not think these triflers in love are arrant cowards ; and rather than hazard their own safety in *wedlock*, commit the vilest trespasses upon the affections of *women*, and the *justice* due to my sex ?

F. They certainly want *resolution* ! There are some men, who hardly ever see the face of a woman, which has not, in their eyes, some charms. “ If she is tall or short, fair or brown, in the spring or summer of life, witty or dull, the picture of plenty, or grown lean by disappointed love ;” *for the moment* they receive a *tender* impression : “ but like an *ague* reversed, the hot-fit comes first ; this minute melting in the furnace of desire ; the next, *cold* as ice.”

D. Do such hold inconstancy in love as a right principle ?

F. It seems to be their only regular passion, in relation to women. If by a miracle such a man were true for one *short month*, you might

wonder as much, as if you beheld a corpse appear with the same colour and lustre of eye as when living.

D. You paint strongly. Such men are self-tormentors : as they find no constancy in their own hearts, it is a pity any woman should expose herself to be trifled with. Poor *Louisa* had no experience : *James* was her *first* lover.

F. Her second may perchance be made of different stuff, or have better ingredients in his composition. Those who are virtuously inclined with regard to women, having once made professions which have been listened to, are *awed* by a sense of *gratitude*, or of *duty*, and keep within the bounds that *religion* and mutual *justice* require at their hands.

D. Do you not reckon people of *James's* volatile turn, to be so far wicked ?

F. Not strictly for being *volatile* ; but when they are false to their engagements, or do unwarrantable actions. For the rest, *inconstancy* and *irresolution*, are *weaknesses* which generally chastise themselves. I was always apprehensive what *Louisa's* fate would be. She was *CREDULOUS* ; and in spite of the many proofs *James* had given of his wavering temper, she still persisted. The proverb says, “ Fair promises make fools fond :” but where the *promise* is not supported by any equality of behaviour, it is amazing that a person, capable of reasoning well in other respects, should be so grossly deluded in this.

D. How is it to be prevented ? In common life many err.

F. By the exercise of reason only can we discover the *intended*, or the *involuntary* probable deceit of the heart. Men's characters, after a little time, are generally known : but whenever the young and artless do not make *caution* supply the place of *years* and *experience*, they will feel too late, how they may deceive themselves.

D. One may be also too slow of belief : to *distrust* the *upright*, seems to be as criminal, as to *trust* the *wicked*.

F. Your argument is not a safe one ; for the upright do not easily take exceptions ; they know that human nature is frail ; and that the best characters sink, when raised above belief. We often trust in common life on the foundation of a *good name* ; but listen not to one whom you have good reason to believe is not attached to you from just and proper motives : in all cases, act with great caution. As to *report*, how often

do we hear men praised by the multitude, who are sound light in the *balance*! I have known a man set up as a *leader*; I have seen him followed, as if his banners were the emblems of *truth* and *justice*; and at the same time, knew he had little more in his composition than *vanity* and *vice*. There is no proposition so monstrous or absurd, but some men will adopt, or pretend to adopt it; nor any thing, which the *credulity* of others will not swallow down: therefore we often see them a prey to an impostor, who is disposed to play with their passions, and draw them up like fish upon a hook.

D. I fear this is often the case in love.

F. The innocent silly lamb in the fable was so credulous, that the wolf persuaded him he did not feed on flesh, as was vulgarly imagined, but on green pastures. "Why then," says the lamb, "we may as well feed together:" and creeping from within his inclosure, joined the wolf,—to be devoured, as you may easily imagine.

D. Such events can happen only to the *ignorant*.

F. Aye: but the *ignorant* comprehend a much greater number than you are aware of. The *virtuous*, who have a *reputation* to guard, do not depend so much on their *knowledge*, as their *caution*, not to mix with the multitude, lest they should make dangerous acquaintances at a hazard. He who pretends to conduct us to the *land of promise*, may easily lead us into a *wilderness*; but how shall we get out of it? Credulity is the grand engine of impostors: without this, they could not carry on their designs; nor without it would the *fool* yield to the *knave*, as too often happens in *love*.

D. *Truth* being a plain homely thing, and fitted to the capacity of every one, is it not astonishing that *falsehood* should so often prevail over it?

F. Not in the least. What has been the case of mankind in all ages? Are we not generally more pleased with what is *new* and *wonderful*, however improbable the representation may be, than with that which is plain common-sense, unattended by any circumstance which agitates either our *hopes* or *fears*? *Truth* wears but one face and dress; *Falsehood* has a thousand. Have you ever observed, how the *ploughman* stares at the *tinker's* story, and seems delighted with some *monstrous tale*; and when he is told *it is all a lie*,

he is chop-fallen; not because he was a *fool* for believing, but as if he were angry for being undeceived in a matter that afforded him entertainment, and with which he might entertain others.—It is a fondness for *variety*, and of things *marvellous*, which captivates.

D. I have often observed it, not of *ploughmen* only, but of most other people.

F. Learn from hence, to be guarded against *love tales*, as well as all other *foolish* stories, with which the world abounds. To combat the prejudices of mankind, hath been the most arduous task of *statesmen*, *philosophers*, and *divines*, in all ages. Do you remember how the great apostle St. *Paul* was treated by the craftsmen at *Ephesus*, on occasion of his teaching the doctrines of the *Messiah*? They were *interested* to support *idolatry*; and because they made *images*, and received great profits from their labour, they really supposed it to be the *best religion*. You find how the people were led, as we vulgarly say, *by the nose*, against the clearest demonstration of their senses. St. *Paul* continued among them for some time, and spoke boldly concerning the kingdom of God: and by the power of the Almighty, he wrought many miracles; insomuch, that even an handkerchief or an apron being carried from the sick to this great preacher of Christianity, the diseased were made whole, and the evil spirits went out of them: notwithstanding which, the mob could not be persuaded that the *craftsmen* were in the wrong. Such were their prejudices and credulity, which extinguished the light of their reason: Their minds were not prepared to receive the truth. The voice of the people, in a just cause, is said to be the voice of *God*: here you see it was the voice of the *devil*; for they maintained idolatrous worship, in opposition to a teacher sent from the *true God*.

D. How can we guard our minds against such delusion?

F. Consider *what* is said, and by whom it is said; compare it with your experience; examine how far your belief may concern your true *interest*; how it may hurt your charity, or affect your *person*, or the good of *others*; and in all doubtful cases, adopt the rule best calculated to preserve your *truth* and *justice*, and the love of *peace* and *concord*. In common life, nothing sooner induces a young woman to believe a man, than his commendations of her person; but nothing ought to alarm her more. Many a poor girl has become

become a sacrifice to the ready credit she gave to the high praises of her personal charms. If we examine the nature of *praise* in general, the partiality of some, and the inability of others to judge properly, there is great danger of its being bestowed in a wrong place, and sometimes does mischief to those on whom it is bestowed.

*D.* This should comfort them whose real virtues are either misconstrued, or lie concealed.

*F.* True, my daughter.—

*D.* You talk of the flatterers of young women, what think you of *fortune-tellers*?

*F.* That only days of the grossest ignorance and superstition, could have ever given them a *name*. These people live on the *credulity of fools*. The girl who seeks to know what is to happen to her, in regard to her lover; or the cook-maid, to discover by magick the silver spoon that is lost, ought to be whipt at the cart's-tail, for a couple of wicked jades. They should consider the fortune-teller as an impostor of the most abominable kind. Whether she pretends to derive her power from *God*, or the *devil*, her *cant-phrase*, and peculiar jargon, are not the less deceitful. You may imagine the old hag has tried experiments, how she can deceive *filly girls*; and will endeavour to make as great a fool of one, as she has done of another. The *gipsy* may shrewdly guess at some probable events, and gain a reputation: she may foretel a *marriage* or a *death* which may happen: She may cheer a foolish heart, or depress it: but it is wicked to lend an ear to her. Some have been so weak as to imagine, that a *dumb person* can foretel future events by *signs*, better than her who can speak: and if a person were *deaf*, as well as *dumb*, the more mar-

vellous prophet! I have been told that the *Turks* have a superstition in behalf of *ideots*, as if they were inspired persons: This is an instance of their *gross credulity*. Our ancient prejudices, in behalf of wandering vagabonds, who call themselves *gipsies*, or *Egyptians*, are not entirely worn out: In some parts of the kingdom, a few fools yet remain, who shew them countenance. Do you not think such credulous persons themselves ought to be chastised?

*D.* I have no opinion of *gipsies*, but as artful misereants: the wonder is, they are not totally suppressed.

*F.* Such is the force of deceit, when it is pleasant: most people are inclined to *pay* for it, rather than their *vanity* should be starved: *gipsies* are the flatterers of *country girls*; and sometimes employed to lead a young female into a snare. But it goes much further: in the earliest ages of the *Messiah's* reign on earth, we find the *fortune-tellers* and *magicians*, convinced that their art was not derived from *God*, brought forth their books, and burnt them, as a public renunciation of their devilish practices. Would you, who are a disciple of *Christ*, countenance the wretched remains of such *vile practitioners*?

*D.* I never considered this matter in so serious a view: but I have thought it wicked to question these *gipsies* about *things to come*, as if they could intrude on the power of the Almighty.

*F.* It is wicked to *listen* to them.

*D.* We are all open to *flattery* in some degree or other: and we find silly country girls go as low as appealing to *gipsies*.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N X.

*The dangerous effects of flattery: Its appearances in different characters: Its power and efficacy. Ridiculed by a Roman emperor. Story of Canute, an ancient sovereign of this country, at Southampton, exposing the wantonness of praising poor mortals in exalted stations.*

*D.* **I**T is the general art by which *knaves* amuse *fools*.—Yet some *flatterers* I believe mean *honestly*.

*F.* There are as many distinctions of flatterers, as there are kinds of men. The *great* are most exposed to the poisoned breath of flattery.

*D.* Are not all men flatterers?

*F.* In one obvious instance, which intimately regards a life to come, they are so: “All men think all men mortal, except themselves:” and in general, self-love prompts all men to be

flatterers of themselves or others : and I am sure that *all* young women are subject to be flattered. Have not *you* often heard very fulsome praise ?

*D.* Indeed I have.

*F.* I am glad you thought it *fulsome* : but I dare say you found it more difficult to stop your ears, than to hear it with some kind of delight.

*D.* You suspect my weakness.

*F.* Flattery is employed for various purposes. Many a time have I been shocked at hearing persons of both sexes in high life, *flattering* each other, when I knew they entertained a mutual contempt, and *meant* nothing by what they said, but as mere words of discourse, or a design to amuse.

*D.* Is it possible that *Christians* can talk in this manner ? If I cannot speak the language of my heart, I will keep silence, though I should be *uncivil*.

*F.* This is the part of a *Christian* ; and you need not be afraid of rudeness, for not being a *flatterer*. The foundations of *real good manners*, are laid in *truth* : the rest is but a *fantastic appearance* : like false coin, it may deceive for a time, but in the end its *baseness* will appear. The world, bad as it is, will generally do justice to those who are really friends to mankind. — Every one cannot express his meaning in the same terms ; but there is a noble freedom dwells in the breast of the *generous-hearted*, unknown to *flatterers* : and whatever advantages some may derive from being liberal of their commendations, we should not forsake our integrity to gain the world.

*D.* How are we to live with those who are so fond of *flattery* and *deceit* ?

*F.* If they will not receive *truth*, it is in vain to intrude her upon them : but there are many ways of expressing our disapprobation of what we think is not right. We may appeal to the good qualities and better judgment of the parties, with regard both to their words and actions ; and render the advice *palatable*, if not *delightful*. To make an offender a judge in his own cause, is often practised among persons of the *best breeding* ; and it is the surest method, not only as it is *honest*, but *imitable* by persons of all conditions, who mean to live in peace.

*D.* This seems to be converting flattery into a *blessing*.

*F.* If we tell people what they *may be*, if they apply their talents properly, it often succeeds in

making them what they *should be*. If I commend you for a particular virtue, would you not be the more *watchful* to guard it, and the more *ashamed* of forsaking it ? The greater value we set on our *good actions*, provided we are *humble* in the sight of *God*, and avoid talking of them before *men*, the more attentive we shall be to the virtue which produces such actions ; and the more steady in our principles of *right*.

*D.* This cannot be denied : but may not this create pride ?

*F.* Do you imagine we can be *proud* and *humble* in the same instance ? The first object is carefulness to *do well* ; the next, not to be solicitous of *praise*. This will guard your heart against those, who would make you think *highly* of yourself. Consider those who feed your pride, as *false friends*, and *deceivers*. The difference between the *liar* and the *flatterer*, in many instances, consists in this : The liar offends you behind your back ; the flatterer commits the injury before your face.

*D.* I believe there is nothing so wicked or absurd, that hath not been attempted by *flatterers*.

*F.* The devil was the *first flatterer*, when he tempted *poor Eve*, and she fell from her state of *innocence*. There is no doubt but that he spoke of the heaven of her smiles, as *James* did of *yours*, or the *young nobleman* of *Margaret's*. There is a very old saying, *Mary*, that “ *flatterers* never lift any one up, but as the *eagle* doth the *tortoise*, to *gain* by his fall.” Those who believe all the good that is said of them *to their face*, will soon find they are not so well spoken of behind their back.

*D.* Fools have often wit enough to flatter.

*F.* Aye : But what a wretched thing it is to be *deceived* by a *fool* ! A woman's greatest danger is, when she is in the bloom of youth, with personal charms, and not under the protection of a good mother. Under every circumstance, she may be quick in discerning the impression which she makes on a man ; but not aware how she may ensnare herself, by notions of *generosity*, whilst she is exposed to the *stratagems of love*.

*D.* I am afraid this is true, or we should not hear of so many complaints in the world, of the cruelty of men towards women.

*F.* The greater the praise, the greater the danger of falling a sacrifice to it ; for though it should contain some *truth*, it may not be the less empty, as to the *good effect*.

*D.* You will not be surprized that *women* should love flattery, when you consider that it is the proper food of *vanity*.

*F.* In this respect, *Mary*, the sexes do not differ much from each other. You are candid however in your declaration, with regard to your own sex. The vain are the most open to flattery; and the reason is obvious; they think themselves best entitled to applause; but do they not thus diminish the merit which the world might otherwise allow them?

*D.* Is not some degree of flattery necessary to the happiness of mankind?

*F.* There are *three* kinds of people in the world, of whom *two* stand in no need of flattery; and the *third* will not hear it: I mean the *wzak* and *ignorant*, who are self-satisfied, from not seeing any thing in themselves, but what is *very right*; and the *wise*, who seeing things as *they are*, and sensible of their own imperfections, cannot bear to be *flattered*: they behold their past errors, and resolve to be watchful of themselves not to offend for the future. At the same time, I apprehend there are but few people so wise, but at some unlucky hour they feel a gratification in being praised. Nor is it in the nature of things entirely to withhold praise from those who are truly distinguished, as the friends and favourites of mankind.

*D.* Are there not also some, whose humility requires encouragement?

*F.* It is an arduous task to serve mankind in despite of themselves; and though virtue will find its reward in the consciousness of uprightness, and hope in a life to come; yet where there is great virtue, there will be great humility: this may sometimes need encouragement.

*D.* Some professions of humility favour of vanity.

*F.* There seems to be another class of people, whose weakness of judgment, or humility of heart, leads them to be too much out of conceit of themselves: these stand in need of *commendation* for their *good qualities*, and *palliatives* for their *bad ones*; for it behoves us all to compassionate each other, and to keep ourselves in humour, so as to prevent *despair*; that we may not grow mad either with *melancholy* or *disgust*, more than with *pride* or *vanity*.—Seeing that such legions of calamities often invade us mortals, it is our duty to preserve each other, by all the means which *humanity* dictates, and *truth* will warrant. The *flattery* by which so many

deceive each other, naturally raises the indignation of a man of sense; yet you may perceive there are many kinds of *soft words*, seeming to partake of it, without which life loses its chief charm. As liberty, life, peace, and harmony, and every thing that is sacred, hath been often destroyed, by flattering those who being in power, have exercised it tyrannically, the happiness of life may be promoted by the judicious use of kind and gentle words. We often flatter, without knowing that we do so. “In the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Many kind and tender words fall from honest tongues, which if not strictly true, do not the less proceed from the *heart*. Some flatter from hatred or evil design; others are partial in their affections. Our enemies often endeavour to *humble us by unjust reproaches*; our friends strive to encourage us in a course of virtue. The best of men judge on the *tender side*: nor ought we to be offended, when *flattery* proceeds from the *ignorance* and *simplicity* of those who bestow it on us.

*D.* We certainly ought not to resent the praises of such persons as we have reason to believe are our *friends*, though we should be guarded where we may justly suspect *evil designs*. I remember a saying, which pleased my fancy much, “Sweet discourse makes short days and nights.”

*F.* This is meant of the sentiments of our *friends*, which only can properly be esteemed *sweet*; for even *their reproaches* are sweeter than the *kisses* of an enemy. Be as grateful as virtue requires, for the kindnesses, and even the civilities of others. You observe how people who see each other often, contract a mutual regard in friendship, as well as in love. If you esteem those you converse with, fear not to rebuke them when they trespass upon *truth* and *virtue*.

*D.* Would you have me endanger *my own security*?

*F.* It is for *your security* I give you this advice: not wantonly to intrude your opinion upon others; but modestly to express your disapprobation of evil, with a view to the happiness of others. Upon this principle of charity, according to our religion, your own eternal welfare depends. We should not indulge a severity of manners; for though *righteous* in itself, it may clash with the *goodness* and *humility* of heart, which appear as the brightest jewel in the christian's crown.

*D.* I grant this: but the generality of mankind being

being flatterers of themselves, I apprehend seldom chuse to hear of their faults; besides, "commendation is really as much the duty of a friend, as reprehension?"

F. True: and it is no flattery to give a friend or foe their true character; but this must be done with decency. Those who have not sense enough to be honest; or knowledge enough of the world to know when, and where to apply their commendation, often make a sacrifice of the best thing in the world, which is praise in due place and time: yet "he that rebuketh a man, shall afterwards find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue." We are apt to pay homage to greatness; that is, power, wealth, and title: but the same Wise Man informs us, that "he who sayeth to the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse; nations shall abhor him: but to them that rebuke, shall be delight; and a good blessing shall come upon them."

D. This is a glorious commendation of that integrity of heart, and strength of understanding, which enables us to commend or reproach in proper time and place: but the generality of mankind being flatterers of themselves, seldom chuse to hear of their own faults.

F. Very justly observed: and it is no less true, that the wanton love of praise, is weak and foolish. In proportion as flattery gains admittance into the heart, you will see it banish common-sense. I have told you, that one of the greatest acts of kindness is to tell our friends of their faults in a proper manner, that they may correct them: this is an act of true generosity, and Christian charity: it may save a soul from death. The flattery bestowed on superiors, is sometimes carried beyond all bounds of common decency. What think you of flattery to the *living* making *dead* men, gods?

D. Reason and probity must be sunk low indeed! In what instances could any creature be so absurd?

F. In some of the later ages of the *Roman* empire, the senate had a set form of transposing the *dead emperor* into a creature of their fancy, which they called a *god*: they might as well have called him a *devil*; for some of these deified men, had been as wicked fellows as ever saw the sun. One of them, not of the bad kind, considered the absurdity in its true light; for being

dangerously ill of the flux, and viewing the contents of his closetool, he humorously observed, "I find I am near being a god."

D. How ignorant of the *one true God*, were those besotted heathens! *Flattery* in all ages, I suppose, has been practised more at courts than in other places?

F. *Courts* furnish most objects to gratify *ambition*; and most candidates for such objects. One pays homage to the other, by *honest*, or *dishonest arts*, as it may happen for the ends of *profit* or *honour*: and therefore it is no wonder *flattery* should be most practised there. As to princes, it is supposed they *never* hear any *truth*, but such as is *agreeable* to them: but I think, *Mary*, we take care that our good king shall hear of every thing; sometimes in terms not altogether so decent. We read of a noble instance of chastising *flatterers*, in the story of one of our ancient kings. It is said, that *Canute*, walking with his courtiers on the sea-shore at *Southampton*, was saluted with fulsome praises, as if his power were more than human. The king, intending to chastise their folly, called for a chair, and sat himself down, and with a majestic air, commanded the waves not to approach him: but his robes were immediately wetted, and himself covered with the spray of the water. Upon this, he rose up, and harangued his attendants on the *vanity of their ridiculous flattery*; expatiating on the scanty limits of the power of the *greatest monarch*, who in the sight of God is but a worm. You have seen a famous picture in *Sir George's* hall, representing this event.

D. Princes may be told, that they are *more* than human: and some have been weak enough to believe it: but sickness, and the approach of death, open their eyes, or instead of being so much greater, they are *less* than common men.

F. Very justly observed. I hope you will ever remember what flattery means, and not be a prey to vanity, as the vain and foolish sons and daughters of men frequently are.

D. I have often laughed at the girls of my acquaintance, who, for no other reason than being *handsome*, are told by young men, that they are *angels*: but it is no laughing matter to see *flattery* make them as proud as *Lucifer*; or their vanity induce them to pursue such courses, as render them fit only to be *angels* of darkness.



## CONVERSATION XI.

*The effect of artfulness in children, compared with the virtuous and generous minded. Story of Sir William Shallow. Sincerity essential to friendship and peace of mind. The force of true generosity in conduct, expressed by the Roman General Camillus, in disclaiming to take advantage of the treachery of a villain towards innocent children. Remarkable character of a generous and virtuous man, particularly in correcting the evils created by false resentments of marriage. The miserable effects of want of candour, in the fable of the two travellers.*

F. IT wears as many forms as *cunning* can devise :—but of all its evil effects, I know of none more distinguished, than That which was played off against an old *rich man* : *poor* he was in one sense, for he was in his second childhood. Sir *William Shallow* had two daughters : the eldest a woman of a proud and unruly spirit ; and, if fame is not a liar, of a *vicious* disposition : but withal so *artful*, she flattered her old father out of the little wit which age and infirmities had left him : and he made a deed of gift of *all his estate to her*, in prejudice to his youngest daughter ; reserving only the use of a *coach and pair*, with a *coachman*, a *footman*, and *two chambermaids*, to attend him.

D. And what was the consequence ?

F. When this wicked jade got possession, and thought herself *secure*, she treated the foolish old man so *cruelly*, he died of a *broken heart*.

D. Good God ! what a monster of ingratitude, cruelty, and undutifulness ! She will have a sad account to give of herself at the last day ! But why was the younger sister so harshly treated ?

F. Because she was *sincere*. She honestly told her father the *truth* : she warned him of his danger : she represented the absurdity of his living on another's courtesy ; but nothing prevailed against her sister's arts. The event proved that she had a good judgment, and was true of heart ; therefore in humble affection for him, and piety towards her *heavenly Father*, she never parted from him in his *affliction*.

D. Excellent young lady ! Her *tears* were more precious, than the most costly drops of *pearls* or *diamonds* which ever graced a *queen*.

F. My dear *Mary*, your words are *comfort* to

my heart !—Heaven was indulgent to her ! The *attorney* who drew up the deed, happening to be in love with her ; or as some say, thinking the old man *mad*, purposely made a *flaw*. The writing, upon a revision, was accordingly set aside, and the virtuous sister had her just share of the inheritance.

D. How happily Providence brings *good* out of *evil* ! Did the wicked daughter prosper ?

F. The rain which falls on the *just*, falls also on the *unjust*. The wicked, however, are often chastised in this world. The daughter, who had acted so *unnaturally*, lived *despised*, and died *unlamented* ; whilst the other continues to be a shining proof, that DUTIFULNESS TO PARENTS, is highly acceptable in the sight of God : and that the good are often rewarded with happiness, and length of days, in the land which the *God of their fathers* hath given them. What ever befalls you, *Mary*, be *sincere* ! A habit of sincerity towards your fellow-creatures, will make you sincere in your piety towards God ! Would you know the hearts of others, with regard to your expectations of happiness from their conduct ? Consider that “ nothing can give us so just a notion of the depravity of mankind in general, as an exact knowledge of our own corruption in particular.”

D. Few persons, I fear, are well acquainted with themselves : This consideration also ought to teach us to forgive those who are sometimes deficient in their SINCERITY towards us.

F. The Wise Man tells us, that “ *open rebuke* is better than *secret love* :” yet only a small part of mankind deals so openly with us, but that sometimes they are *insincere*.

D. Is it possible we can be *always* sincere ?

F. The

F. The true notion of sincerity, seems to be *uprightness* and *freedom from disguise*; or in other words, to treat mankind with *candour*; correcting them, when we can do it with *prudence*; but always avoiding to make declarations of any thing we do not think. This is the best preservative against falling into a snare; and it acts as a guardian to *uprightness*. If your companions find you will not consent, or connive at any thing that is unjust, it will lead *them* also into the paths of integrity, and promote the domestic harmony, which is the true fountain of convivial happiness. Sincerity among those who live together, being equally a friend to fidelity and gratitude, will naturally engage them in the *common cause of virtue*. These three good qualities, *sincerity, fidelity, and gratitude*, becoming one strong united virtue, can hardly fail in the issue, of being an overmatch for all the evil devices of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

D. I feel that there is no living self-satisfied and contented in mind without *sincerity*: but neither is it easy to live peaceably with others, whilst I indulge my natural disposition to it.

F. Not unless you mix it with *prudence*: but there is another virtue, which will supply all the *unavoidable* defects of sincerity; I mean *generosity of temper*; which though it has great affinity with sincerity, is a different virtue. It falls far short of that universal charity, which raises us so near a level with angels: it is still mixed with so much *self-love*, that we are more inclined to serve and oblige our equals, or superiors, with whom we associate, than our *inferiors*, who call for our *mercy*, or demand our *compassion*.

D. Still you give it the name of *generosity of temper*. You have told me often not to trust to *generosity*. I believe your representation is a just picture of the heart: but when we come to judge in the great cause of *religion*, and add *charity* to our generosity, then we shall see all the glorious effects of *sincerity*.

F. You say well: *generosity* towards inferiors, takes another name: it is *humanity*, if it is not *charity*.

D. But how comes it there is so little true generosity in the world, that when a *generous action* is done, it is talked of as a *strange thing*. Should not all the days of our life be employed in a continuation of *generous and useful actions*?

F. They should indeed be so employed: but

*generosity*, like other virtues, derives its strength from *imitation, emulation*, and the exercise of *gratitude*: the greater the number of generous actions done, the more we may expect to see.—It is the *motive* on which we act, that stamps the action with a mark of *glory*: but this cannot be known so truly of others, at the time of doing it, as when we are informed of the circumstances which give it a lustre. There is a peculiar charm in actions which are disinterested, honourable and humane. Have you ever read the story of *Camillus*, a general in the ancient *Roman* state? He was sent against an enemy (*a*), whose custom it was to commit their youth to the care of a *master*: he was to teach them the arts, and walk out and converse with them. The *Roman* camp was yet at some distance from the city: but the *master* who had the care of the sons of the principal citizens, walking out as usual with his scholars, determined to deliver them up as *hostages* to the *Romans*: and a favourable opportunity offering, he continued his walk, and led them to the tent of the *Roman general*, and delivered them up to him; declaring he might now command the city. This would probably have been the case, as the parents already most ruefully lamented the loss of their dear children.—The general, disdainful a conquest on such terms, after accusing the *master of treachery*, and telling him that the *Romans* made war against *men*, armed like themselves, and not against *harmless children*, he commanded him to be stripped, and his hands to be tied behind him. The General then armed the young scholars with rods, and bid them drive him back into the city, and scourge him all the way.

D. This conduct was charming! I dare say the boys readily obeyed, and that the parents were much rejoiced to see them.

F. The sight of their children, for whom they had been inconsolable, raised cries of joy; and the people were so charmed at this act of generosity and good sense, they made peace with the *Romans*, preferring to live under a government conducted upon such principles.

D. A glorious instance of the power of a generous turn of mind!

F. A commander of an army in these days, could hardly answer the not taking advantage of such *treachery*.

D. He might disdain the traitor, yet benefit by

by the treason. But how is it possible for people in our circumstances to do such acts of exalted generosity?

*F.* Are none to be generous but those who lead armies, or take the helm of governments? What do you think of *Lemuel Swan*? His cousin *Frank's* son having disoblged his father, by matrying contrary to his pleasure, he left his fortune, being near *forty pounds* a year, to *Lemuel*. This *good man* informed himself of the circumstances of the case, and found the person who had given occasion for the harsh conduct of his deceased cousin, was a deserving young woman; her only crime being *poverty*. *Lemuel* made her and her husband a visit, and told them, with tears in his eyes, "I am sorry my benefactor judged so ill; but I will correct the mistake: I will take care of your children:" and after some time, he laid out the money in land, and settled it on the children of this marriage, the parents to enjoy the rents during their lives.

*D.* My good *Lemuel*, I shall love you as long as I live! It was acting a godlike part, to correct the prejudices of the heart, and defend the cause of *virtuous poverty*.

*F.* He is equal in all parts of his conduct, and knows when he should be *angry*, but never to the degree of *sinning*; and when he should be *pleased*: ever cautious to distinguish what the duties of a *Christian* are.—There are some few men in the world, *Mary*, and I think *Lemuel* is one of them, of such pre-eminence in virtue, and rich powers of soul, they seem to soar above the sphere of common mortals. *Lemuel* ever speaks in the spirit of truth and candour: and in saying this, I mean all that can be well applied to a man born in a *Christian* country, and believing the religion of that only perfect model which the world ever saw, *Christ*, the Son of the living God. *Lemuel* does not enjoy "the *soul's good fortune*," health of body; yet in frame of mind, he is so superlatively blessed, he triumphs over his grosser elements, and renders himself an object of envy to the greatest of the children of men. As a true believer, and *faithful soldier* of *Christ*, he looks on death with calmness, submitting *gracefully* to the thought of it. He is so resigned and equal in spirit, that when he was very poor, his industry and skill, joined to the smiles of Heaven, rendered him by far the richest man within the circle of my acquaintance.

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*D.* But do you think if *fortune* were to present him with all the pomps and pleasures that *pride* can suggest, or the *fancy* crave, he would not indulge himself in them?—Is his virtue so rigid, as to reject them all?

*F.* Yes, truly; I think he would reject them; I mean that he would use them so modestly, and with such caution, as not to hurt the health of his body, nor the purity and benignity of his soul. He has understanding to discover the *vanity* of such enjoyments; and his temperance of spirit by no means permits him to run into the improper use of any thing that Providence now bountifully presents him. He does not think that to a man born to die, any gratification is warrantable that prevents the exercise of humanity or charity, or wounds the purity of the soul. He was always *cheerful*; and remarkable in this instance, that he never "suffered fortune's finger to found what stops she pleased on him:" and yet, completely resigned to Providence, taking her buffets and rewards, with the sincerest thanks. I have been acquainted with him for many a rolling year, and have constantly observed, that he enjoyed a freedom from the tyranny of passion, holding on an equal course, honest and upright; yet never affecting a *saucy roughness*. He cannot flatter; yet neither does he use a *plainness*, under which *knaves* sometimes harbour craft, and obtain their ends, more corrupt than those who stretch their compliances to an unmanly baseness; *Lemuel* is always *civil*, I might say courtly; but as his heart is a stranger to interested views, his looks are an index to his soul, and give the world an earnest that he is a friend to virtue, and a patron to mankind. He knows the different degrees of their deservings, and sets their value accordingly. Never have I heard, that his soul hath been blown up by any tempest of impetuous passion, or melted into unmanly lamentations; yet he feels—he feels as a man acquainted with *misery*. His cheeks are not strangers to a *father's tears*; nor can his heart resist a sympathy of sorrow for the miseries of other men. Temperate and chaste; indefatigably assiduous in all he undertakes; knowing no pleasure but when he is *doing good*, or *preventing evil*: anxious for the common interest, he spares no pains to promote the general welfare of his friends, his neighbours, his country, and mankind.

*D.* Is Sir *George* acquainted with him?

*F.* Sir *George* values him very highly, and  
Z. consults

consults him often, with regard to the most interesting concerns of his nearest relations; and is happy when he can do *Lemuel* any kindness: and well doth he deserve it. Thus he goes on, waiting his *appointed hour*, in hopes of arriving at those glorious heights of virtue, at which the soul so naturally aspires.

*D.* You have given me much pleasure in the description of a man so worthy, who has done so kind a thing to a *poor virtuous young woman and her children*.

*E.* The humblest actions sometimes carry with them a greatness of soul superior to the bounties of kings. Providence may restrain us with regard to the *means* of relieving others; but while we retain a *readiness* to serve them, we may be as fruitful as the rain that falleth from the heavens. You are sensible that our virtues, as expressed in *action*, must be suited to our circumstances. *Generosity* ceases to be a virtue, when we are carried by it to the destruction of ourselves. He who falls by his own hand, is guilty of the murder of himself; as he who by one act of great kindness, deprives himself of the means of supporting his own life, or of doing further good for the benefit of mankind, acts *inconsistently*. *Lemuel* prospers by his generosity: I have often observed, that *disinterestedness* and *generosity*, mean nearly the same thing. Candour and generosity are also as inseparable, as *justice* and *charity*: How is the *Christian* to be *charitable*, if he is not just; or just, if he is not charitable? All the virtues of the soul are linked as a chain, one end of which is held by an *angel's hand*, which draws us up to heaven.

*D.* *Charity* and *justice* can never be divided from each other, more than *generosity* and *candour*, which seem to be preparatives for the exercise of *justice*. The fable of the two travellers, gives us a true description how generosity and justice may be violated by *covetousness*.

*E.* What is that, *Mary*?

*D.* Two persons travelling together, one of them casting his eyes on the ground, sees a bag of money; and taking it up, cries, "I am in luck to-day: I have found some riches." His companion immediately answered, "Do not say, *I*, but *we*; for as companions we ought to share in good fortune, as we should in evil accidents." The other insisted, that as he had found the money, he would keep it: but while he was yet speaking, they were alarmed by a hue-and-cry

after a *thief*, who had that morning taken a purse on that road: upon which the first said, "This is very unfortunate: *we* shall certainly be seized." "Good Sir," replied the other, "be pleased not to say, *we*, but *I*: for as you allowed me no share in the *prize*, you have no right to make me a partner in the *punishment*."

*E.* Excellent! This fable points out what it is to want *generosity* and *candour*. It shews us also how interest blinds the understanding; and self-love perverts the judgment and the heart. The *Wise Man* says, "Give and take, and sanctify thy soul, for there is no seeking of dainties in the grave:" as if he had asked, For what are you *anxious*? Consider how you may make the things of this world administer to the good of your *own soul*; and consequently, to the benefit of your *fellow-creatures*: This is true *wisdom*; as it is gross *folly* to make *good things* the instruments of evil, by grasping at that which neither reason nor religion allows to be yours, or which in the nature of things ought to be given to others. You perceive, that your possession of any thing can be but short: you cannot enjoy it in the *grave*: therefore, whether you *give* or *take*, be careful of your *soul*! Be generous in all your conduct: improve your mind in every god-like principle: be the parent, the friend, and to you, *Mary*, I will add, the *sister* of the human race!

*D.* My dear father, your words open the doors of my heart!—As to the *lawful* pleasures of this world, those who buy them with much care and assiduity, forfeit in a great measure the end and design of the *purchase*; but for the *unlawful* ones, which are bought with the price of innocence: how unwise is such conduct! And how shocking is the consideration of it!

*E.* Those who have experience, being accustomed to the examination of their own hearts, are truly sensible of this: and whilst they are acting a *necessary* part, on this *stage of the world*, they endeavour to do it *well*.

*D.* Your sentiments inspire me with such reverence for charity to mankind, as I hope will render me acceptable in the sight of God, which is the summit of our felicity.

*E.* Let the groveling children of earth, whether clothed in *velvet*, or in *linsey-wolsey*, indulge their eagerness for the world, it is but *for a day*: remember, that my counsel to you, extends to eternity!

## CONVERSATION XII.

*Reflexions on the changes and dangers of life, and the necessity of hope to support the soul of man. How to make company administer to happiness. The means and advantages of being agreeable to those with whom we converse. The great danger of evil communication. Fable of the dog and the crocodile.*

F. **T** I R E D of living! No: I have yet much to do before I die; and I live in brighter hopes of rendering myself acceptable to God. I have indeed seen more of the world than pleases me, and suffered much from the foolishness of my own heart, and the weakness of my judgment: nor have I escaped from being sorely bruised in spirit, from the *injustice*, the *folly*, and *iniquity* of other men, which perhaps I might have avoided. I have also escaped great dangers, which I ascribe to the mercies of God, who gave me understanding to direct so many of my steps to a right end. The course of human life is directed by Providence, when we are least sensible of it, and of the vast debt we owe. The great Parent of mankind is ever watchful for the preservation of his children. By his unerring wisdom the untoward accidents of our lives are often rendered instrumental to virtue, or prevent the vice which would condemn us at Heaven's high judgment-seat. You have often heard, that the world is a *stage*, on which we are to *act* the part assigned us. And it would be happy if we were to call ourselves to a more severe account, *how* we act it, agreeably to the character which is *cast* for us.

D. We may be sure at least of this, that we must never lose sight of our religion; and as life is so very *uncertain*, that we lose no time in performing the task which is before us.

F. Uncertain indeed! it differs from the real stage, for we know not what is next to come: the whole is not laid before us. As to the actor who is to strut, and speak the words which are put into his hands, he must learn them, or be cast out. So quickly do the scenes of life change, it seems "to serve for little more than just to look about us, and to die." The *good* which it furnishes, is so blended with the *hope* of something *that is to come*, that hope constitutes the pith and marrow of it. In the midst of our

most cordial enjoyments, *we look forward* for the *greater*, though more distant *good*, whether we expect it in the next hour, or day, or month, or year; in *time*, or in *eternity*: nor doth this *hope* leave us in the minute we expire.

D. No: if happily we hope in *Heaven's joys*! Doth not this temper of the soul convince mankind of their *immortality*?

F. It should do so: we can entertain no idea of *happiness*, but what is mixed and blended with hope. Nothing in this world fills up the measure of the desires of the soul. Hence I conclude, that the *present* is but the *shadow of things to come*. Whatever part may be assigned us, all the glories of which man can boast, are but a faint image of the lowest happiness the spirits of the just made perfect do, or shall enjoy in the regions of everlasting bliss! With regard to the *evils* which surround us, they are numerous and substantial; and the most effectual remedy against the malignancy of them, of what kind soever they be, whether of body or mind, is *hope*.

D. You still mean That *hope* which leads to *faith*, and is received by all *believers*. Happy were it if all men built on this solid foundation.

F. Most certainly: and let me add, that whilst you are wandering as a *pilgrim* on the earth, make your life as pleasant as *virtue* can render it; that when *death* makes you his visit, he may be rather welcome to your wishes, not terrible, as a treacherous guest, who robs you of *all your wealth*; but a conductor to the scene where only the object which you have so anxiously sought through life, is to be found. Try to imitate my good friend *Lamuel*, in *calmness of spirit*, *fortitude*, *resignation*, and the *love of God*. Consider, with close attention, what your duty is, not only with regard to the *virtues* which you ought to practise, but also in respect to the *vices* which

which you must shun, or perish. To do *good*, and shun *evil*, being the sum and substance of the life of a moral and accountable agent, every person that comes into the world, and arrives at the exercise of his reason, must clearly discern, that *not to do evil*, is as much a duty, as to do good.

*D.* But the much greater part of the *Christian virtues* are of the *active* kind.

*F.* Most certainly: *to do good*, implies *action*; but many of the Christian virtues are of a passive nature. What are the obligations of *not thinking, not speaking, not doing evil things*? To restrain his spirit, when conscience warns him of the approach of danger, by any *word* or *action*, which may be hurtful to another person, or corrupt his own heart; carefully avoiding all occasion of provoking others to the commission of crimes otherwise avoidable, must be considered as one of the chief excellences of a man. This I apprehend will be considered in the account which he is to give, as a *solid proof of obedience* to the great Lawgiver, by whose sentence he must stand or fall, *for ever!*

*D.* When people lament the narrowness of their fortunes, and talk as if their poverty disabled them from doing *good*, or acting charitably, they seem to entertain no notion of the portion of *good* to be done, by the evil which they may prevent. It is obvious, that the restraints of the mind, with respect to what we think and speak, constitute a considerable part of the *virtue* of the human soul.

*F.* It must be so: if you *think* well, and *speak* well, you bid fair to *act* well: but there are some notwithstanding, who speak, if not think well, but act very ill; and as to faith, which is essential to our religion, this can be known only by our *works*. If we think evil, and speak evil, we cannot possibly act a good part. Speaking is one active duty: and speaking well, and from the heart, must be acceptable in the sight of God.

*D.* "Refrain thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile," is one of the first lessons, as a *Christian*, which I learnt.

*F.* Much depends on the *COMPANY* you keep: such as your *companions* are, you will easily become: evil communication ever did, and ever will corrupt the best manners.—I will add to what I said, that *civility* is at all times necessary to preserve piety and humility.—Those who are not complaisant in company,

ought to have a very large share of merit to be supportable. A strong propensity to talk, is one of the most dangerous evils in society. If one considers how little trouble it costs, for any one to hold his tongue, particularly among those who delight in speaking, it is a strong proof of vanity to be impatient of an opportunity of thrusting in our opinion. Besides, if you hear patiently what others have to say, your own sentiments will be *improved*; and if they were erroneous before, they may be *corrected*. It has been very judiciously observed, that "our conversation should be such, that *youth* may find improvement from it; *women*, modesty; and *all persons*, kindness and civility;" remembering, that those who pretend to a right to *speak* what they *think*, should be very cautious, not wantonly to offend. Some people are insufferably rude: If the best did not pick and cull their thoughts for conversation, they would commit strange extravagances. Those who tell us they never disguise their thoughts, may speak truth, in regard to not saying what they do not think; but they certainly do not tell us all that they think: it would be highly improper they should, unless they were more than mortal.

*D.* Those who talk least, have generally the best opportunity of examining the merits of their own sentiments. But may one not be so little accustomed to speak, as to become disqualified to utter our thoughts gracefully? As some become impertinent by much talk, others may be rendered incapable of discourse, by too little.

*F.* This happens sometimes; but in general, "*Silence has not only the effect of authority*;" but we often give more pleasure by *hearing*, than by *speaking*. We may suffer the imputation of being persons of few words; but we cannot be deemed impertinent or silly babblers. To prove that much talking is not essential to virtue or happiness, it is constantly remarked, that persons of superior understanding say a great deal in few words; whilst the weak talk for hours, and afford no pleasure nor profit to the hearer.

*D.* We must take the world as we find it: I agree with you, that it is a less fault to talk too little, than too much.

*F.* There are two extremes against which we should be equally guarded; the one is, not to run *out* of the world, as in a monastic life, or visionary fit of piety: the other, not to run *into* it so far, as to lose a relish for the conversation

of our own hearts. Whilst we are in the world, we must *live in the world*; but we are by no means to live in it, so as to have no retreat; no conversation with our own hearts, in our own chamber, and the stillness of the soul. In your society with the world, you will soon observe, that novelty is so grateful, it is expected every one should bring something new into company, to add to the common stock. This cannot always be done; but what we have to say, may be always expressed agreeably, as to the manner. To talk of *things*, rather than of *persons*, is the safest way. If your reading extends no further than the Scriptures, to talk properly of what you read, will furnish a vast fund of interesting discourse. A fondness for novelty is often dangerous: and nothing is more common than to talk of stories which are not true; of things we do not understand; and of persons whose real characters we are not acquainted with. Let the world go as it may, do not give credit to half the stories you hear; though you must not always declare your disbelief; and guard your heart against falsehood and flattery. In all your conversation, make candour, probity, and generosity your chief aim: this will render you humane and charitable; and as an effect of these good qualities, *patient* and *pious*. Let no sordid, selfish principle take root in your heart: and be assured, that whilst you are anxious for the *good of others*, you will promote your own. Mark your favourite passion: be not eager to indulge it in discourse, more than in deed, lest your infirmity should take the deeper root: and consider what your friend or neighbour will feel or think for what you say or do.

D. That this is necessary, I am perfectly convinced; and that worldly prudence should join with the fear of God, to restrain me from associating with dangerous persons.

F. It requires but a small degree of experience to find, that those who venture into *bad company*, though they may not be abandoned in their own persons, must expect to suffer when *their* companions misbehave themselves. The acquaintance which is carried so high as to take the name of *friendship*, generally proves the most *pleasing* and *beneficial*, or the most *dangerous*. Every new-fangled notion, and pretty conceit, advanced with art or humour, makes an impression on most people, in proportion to the regard they have for the person. Mistake not an affection which

varies with every untoward accident, for that *good-will* which is constant. It is not sufficient to mean *no harm*: you should consider the good you ought to have in view, that you may not spend your days ineffectually to the great purpose of improving time, and in the cultivation of your charity.

D. Most people seem to judge of things with such a vanity of heart, as if they could not possibly think amiss.

F. Those who entertain no jealousy of themselves, are the least fit to be trusted by others. In the common course of life, the good part of mankind, who enjoy the use of their reason, consider how one passion often subdues another; and that with some, affection and esteem for individuals frequently wither away and die, not leaving even a name: but they do not therefore grow sick of the world, nor of themselves.

D. You mean such as are hot and cold in their friendships, and vary like the weather. I hope this is not often the case with those who have ever lived together as *friends*, or even as *companions*.

F. In the imperfection of companionship, the common misfortune incident to our *ordinary* connexions and acquaintance is, that we think of them only for so short a time, we receive no great *benefit* from the *remembrance*; though the *evil* part, when it falls in with the corruption of the heart, often makes a lasting impression.

D. If we expect to do any real good, and to be well spoken of, we must not conduct ourselves as fancy and opinion may dictate. As our lives are usually formed in a great measure by our *company*, and we stand or fall according as it is good or evil, is it not wonderful more attention is not paid to it?

F. Prudent persons have always a great regard to it. There are three kinds of people, *Mary*, against whom you can never be too closely guarded: the *passionate*, who easily take offence; the *revengeful*, who do not easily forgive; and the *treacherous*, who *ensnare*. The fable of the *dog* and the *crocodile*, instructs us to be watchful of our preservation. The *dog* was courting on the banks of the *Nile*, and grew thirsty; but fearing to be seized by a *crocodile*, only lapt as he ran. The voracious crocodile raising his head above the water, asked him why he was in such a hurry: "I have often wished," says he, "for your acquaintance, and should be glad to embrace

embrace the present opportunity." To which the *dog* replied, "You do me great honour; but it is to avoid such companions as you, that I make so much haste."

*D.* The dog might answer wisely; but is it not better, in most cases, to fly from danger without giving *any* answer?

*F.* Indeed, *Mary*, I believe it is; especially for *young women*, who cannot be too cautious how they parley with a doubtful companion.

*D.* Yet we are so naturally pleased with mirth and festivity, we court the society of persons of a lively turn.

*F.* Aye: but you hardly ever esteem them on That account. Profane persons are sometimes very jocose; but to be *merry* and *wife*, belongs only to the virtuous. Whatever is good in us, is generally heightened by the communication of it in good company: as on the other side, the evil of our hearts is called forth in the conversation of foolish or wicked persons. "In the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," whether it be good or evil. People naturally talk of such things as are most pleasing to themselves: but these not being the same to all persons, our company becomes pleasing or disagreeable, as we know what we should or should not say. We ought, as far as virtue permits, to accommodate ourselves to the taste of those with whom we converse: it is but common civility to observe what their taste is; and common prudence to court or shun them accordingly. Whenever you find the speech is impure, be satisfied that the *mind* is *corrupt*.—With regard to your companions, I advise you to consider, that nothing is more silly than an ill-timed laugh: and that many laugh at their own imperfections, seen in another. From the moment you begin to *snice* at some who are *present*, or others who are *absent*, you expose yourself to the *imputation* of ill-nature, if not injustice; and what is worse, to become *really* unkind, or uncivil, if not malicious. "It is far better, that conversation should not rise higher than *harmless trifles*, than be turned to *slander*."

*D.* I am sensible there are more subjects for compassion in the world, than for derision. But you make me think, that conversation, as generally conducted, doth not promote the cause of humanity, so much as might be expected.

*F.* Certainly not so much by a great deal as

it ought to do: but it is necessary, and may be rendered delightful.

*D.* I meet with some who are never tired of speaking, though I am tired of hearing them; for I learn nothing useful from them.

*F.* There are many in the world, who abound more in words than ideas. They affect to give reasons for what they say; though there is the strongest reason in the world why they should hold their tongues. I could mention to you a person of my acquaintance: "His reasons are as two grains of *wheat* hid in two bushels of *chaff*: you shall seek all day ere you find them; and when you have found them, they are not worth the search." As to the weakneses, and mere follies of mankind, they must be borne. Be careful of your religion and humanity; preserve *them* untainted: when the discourse is *wicked*, *indecent*, or *slandereous*, retire. If you have no acquaintance with the person reviled, you will hardly be able to discover, whether That which is said, be well or ill-founded: but seeing there is so strong an inclination in most people, to find in *others* as *many* faults as possible; and in *themselves* as *few*, you may safely conclude, that the *evil* is *increased* and *blackened*, and the *good*, *diminished* or *concealed*.

*D.* I fear that your remark is both just and true; and a melancholy truth it is. But it seems to be extreme folly, for people not to consider what will be said of themselves, for the very fault of speaking ill of others.

*F.* The proverb says, "He that speaks the things he *should* not, may hear the things he *would* not." In general, esteem your companions as good or bad, as they are tender or cruel towards their neighbour. Always endeavour to change the subject, when others are ill-spoken of: speak as fair as you possibly can of their good qualities. If you are satisfied from circumstances, that the party absent is injured, think it an honour to appear as an *advocate*, and plead the cause with a becoming warmth: soften the rigour of the sentence against her, and avoid injustice towards a good name. In acting thus, you will do as you would be done by, and set bounds to the folly and malice of your companions.

*D.* This is an *excellent* rule: I hope I shall be able to follow it. I am sure it will make me charitable, and *the better Christian*.

*F.* It is one of the great secrets of life to please



please those with whom we associate, when we can do it with propriety. — Those who have good hearts, and good understandings, know how to contradict with respect; and to please without flattery, or too much familiarity. — Endeavour to accommodate yourself to the capacity of those with whom you converse. — If they are in a higher condition than yourself, observe the more silence and respect; if in a *lower state*, be the more *affable*. — Never affect being so much above the meanest, as to treat them with insolence. Whether they be *superiors*, *equals*, or *inferiors*, if they are viciously inclined, avoid them: do it with as much decency as your circumstances will admit of; *but still do it*. Be not easily exceptious, nor given to contradiction; for this occasions contention; nor be rudely familiar; for “familiarity breeds contempt. If any thing be not *fitting*, do it not: — if it be not *true*, speak it not.” In a word, cherish in your heart a true love and respect for your fellow-creatures: this will at once make you *good-natured*, and agreeable to others, and pleasant to yourself: it will give every object smiles, and your prospect of heaven will be so much the brighter.

*D.* I have no reason to be proud, nor do I mean to be so humble, as to expose myself: I shall strive to make *your maxims* my own.

*F.* You need not be afraid, since the hatred of the vicious will do you less harm than their conversation. In a word, take care with whom you spend your time: you will find it safer to be alone, than in bad company. Aversion to company, proves that the mind is tainted with

*melancholy*; as being immoderately fond of it, according to the modern stile of the gentry, proves the heart to be in a *sickly state*; not strong enough to support itself. It is a peculiar happiness which some enjoy, to be able to furnish entertainment for themselves: and those who have such ability, are generally the best entertained with company that is really valuable. He who carries good-humour and affability into company, may be sure of a kind reception from those by whom he wishes to be kindly received.

*D.* To contribute a due share of good-humour must be one of the most acceptable things: but it cannot be the happiness of *domestics*, to have such a choice of companions, as others who are more at their liberty to seek them.

*F.* True: yet their chance, in this respect, depends much on the good order of families. If in general we are to avoid evil companions, the rule will hold as strong with regard to fellow-servants, who are not worthy of our confidence. In your intercourse with the world, rather seek to hear of your faults, that you may correct them, than of your virtues, which may tempt you to be proud or insolent.

*D.* This lesson requires a good portion of virtue to render it palatable.

*F.* Not if you consider, that the better you know yourself, the more will others esteem you: you will the sooner learn how to act under every circumstance, and qualify yourself for the high office of FRIENDSHIP; which of all things in this world, is the most desirable, and the most difficult to be found.

### CONVERSATION XIII.

*The benefits derived from the counsel of the experienced. Rules with respect to confidence in friendship. Fable of the hermit and the bear. The force and advantage of friendship. Story of Damon and Pythias. Modern refinements deface the purity, and extinguish the zeal of friendship. The friendship which Christianity teaches, superior to all others. Rules to be observed to entitle one to friendship.*

*F.* THERE is but one way to shield the heart from the arrows of *disappointment*. Many *double bosoms* seem to wear but *one heart*; but they are apt, upon trifling occasions, to burst asunder.

*D.* Young as I am, my loss in *Margaret's* early death, and *Louisa's* coldness, have snatched from me all hopes of happiness from *friendship*.

*F.* You do not talk like yourself: *All hopes snatched from you!* Do you mean to snatch yourself

yourself from all hopes? You have been fortunate in that your choice was good, though the object of it retreated early from life to receive the reward of her virtues. The last disappointment, is a very common one: love generally triumphs over *friendship* in a woman's breast. *Louisa's* misfortune may teach you to reconcile yourself to the inconstancy of a man, should it happen to be your own case.

*D.* I ought not to *despair*. Hope, you say, travels with us through life: I will indulge mine, or use it as a *pilgrim's staff* through the smooth or rough paths which I may chance to travel. Perhaps I may find as innocent a love, as That which I had for my deceased friend: we were both young, and both ignorant of the world.

*F.* *Friendship* being the strongest obligation to the practice of virtue, as it regards *particular* persons, and the greatest comfort amidst the calamities of life in *general*, whatever your fortune may be, I hope it will please Divine Providence to give you a *real friend*.

*D.* How shall I discover her to be really such?

*F.* You took *Margaret* to be your friend, and she was virtuous enough to be one: as such you loved her. *Real friends* mutually compassionate each other, and render themselves a mutual support. In making your choice, remember that a *vicious* person, or a *coward*, never can be a *true friend*: and that those are most to be respected, who are most forward in relieving us in *adversity*: "for a friend cannot be easily discovered in our *prosperity*, nor an enemy hidden in *adversity*."

*D.* I am afraid there are but few, who are worthy the name of a *true friend*.

*F.* We must be contented with the world as we find it, and not expect in others more virtue than we possess in our own hearts. We are sure, that if we are diligent in acquiring *virtue*, in order to be entitled to a friendship, though we miss our aim, we shall be *gainers* by the pursuit.

*D.* This consideration ought to encourage the most languid, even upon the common principle of *true self-love*.

*F.* There are so many degrees of what the world calls *friendship*, it is impossible to mark out all the lines with exactness.—Seek the counsel and advice of persons of superior knowledge and virtue: be ambitious of rendering yourself worthy of *their* esteem; for these in the issue, may prove themselves to be your *truest friends*.

Whatever may be pretended to, by self-conceited persons, in regard to their own merits, let it rather create distrust, till you see some better proof. Judge with candour and caution: Rarely do we find persons in whom no weakness need be disguised, nor any thought concealed; to whom we may lay open our hearts without reserve, and without *danger*.

*D.* This cannot often happen: and yet such only seem to deserve the name of *friend*. The Wise Man says, "A *faithful* friend is a strong defence; and he that hath found such a one, hath found a *treasure*."

*F.* If you wish to be *rich* in happiness, seek for a friend. Friendship, such as we frequently find among virtuous persons, though not in its highest perfection, lightens our *sorrows*, and increases our *joys*; warns us in *danger*; and delivers us in *distress*. The Wise Preacher says, "All flesh consisteth according to kind: and a man will cleave to his like."

*D.* Friendship seems to be another kind of *virtuous self-love*. The happiness of loving the friend that we suppose to be like ourselves, is loving ourselves.

*F.* Your observation is so far just, that *true self-love*, and *social*, are the same. Friendship is a desire implanted in our nature: we wish for a partner in our hearts: and the wealth of all the world cannot fill up the measure of That wish, when we find no object suited to it. *Friendship* is the best security against ill fortune, and the world: it guards us against the frowns of both; and hath been often rendered the more sacred by *adversity*. Those who have been tried so far, have even found a pleasure in death, in the service of their friend.

*D.* If the value of real friendship is so great, the danger of deceit must be great also.

*F.* Most undoubtedly: people who are lavish in their *words*, and niggardly in their *deeds*, cannot be friends. The good and wise alone can be friends, others are only *companions*.

*D.* But the good and wise do not always meet with such tempers and dispositions, as bind each other in the bonds of friendship.

*F.* In this you are also right in your apprehensions; and so far our happiness is imperfect. Friendship depends on many accidents: Good sense and probity are the first ingredients in the composition of friendship; but there must be a good temper and steadiness of mind, with such a degree

degree of knowledge, as may enable one to *give* and *take advice*; otherwise, even sincerity of heart, and freedom of behaviour, will not avail to the great ends of friendship. A slight acquaintance often leads the unwary into intimacies; but it is common to see them prove deadly in their consequences. Nothing is so dangerous as the *pretended friendship* of bad people. I have told you, that *true friendship* cannot exist upon *false principles*.

D. The Wise Man says, “ what fellowship hath the lamb with the wolf, or the godly with the finner ? ”

F. Here you see the matter set in its true light. You may be sure there is always great danger, when we take a liking to people for something foreign to *virtue*: for if your friend doth not contribute to render you the wiser, and more virtuous, it is hardly possible, but that you should become more foolish, and more vicious; for as she is, so will you be also. Upon this principle, “ *A faithful friend* is the medicine of life,” curing the diseases of the mind; and the *faithless* one, the bane of virtue.

D. They that fear the Lord shall find a faithful friend.

F. So says the *Wise Man*: and I believe no man, who doth not fear the Lord, can ever be said with propriety to sustain the shock of adversity: for how can those be *true* to each other, who are *false* to their God? They who do not consider how much friendship depends on an inclination to *virtue*, under all circumstances, might think I was fighting the wind, in talking to you of friendship; presuming that a *girl* at your age, and in your condition, cannot be capable of it: but this seems to be the effect of their pride and ignorance. If virtue and humanity are the foundations of friendship; and a sweet and obliging temper, candour, and a readiness to do good offices, the superstructure; wherever these are found, we may expect friendship: this blessing is not confined to *age* nor *wealth*.

D. I feel in my heart, that neither age, sex, nor condition, excludes me from this enjoyment: yet to acquire it, demands much care. Many a giggling girl has talked of it, who had not *sense* nor *virtue* sufficient to know what it meant.

F. Be assured, that in *friendship*, *maxims*, like *articles of agreement*, must be kept sacred.

1. That your friend can no more be *perfect* than yourself.

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2. That the blessing of friendship may be forfeited for want of care in preserving it.

3. That to say or do any thing harshly, when the fame, or nearly the fame, may be said or done with tenderness, is inconsistent with a mutual regard.

4. That all discourse in company, which undervalues your friend, especially if it exalts yourself, is giving a *stab*.

5. That to presume so far as to use words of *contempt* or *derision*, is giving wounds, which may not be healed.

6. That to make your friend *too cheap* to you, or *yourself* to your friend, is contrary to the rules of common-sense, as well as friendship.

7. That whatever fine things may be said of *sincerity*; *commendation* in things deserving praise, is as much a duty as *reprehension*, when any thing is amiss: and it is no more *flattery* to keep your friend in conceit with herself, in company, than to give her a due character in her absence.

8. That you cannot be too *generous* to a friend.

9. That “ when a friend asketh, there is *no to-morrow*.”

D. Most *admirable rules*! But how can the last be observed, consistently with our own preservation? Must there be a common purse?

F. Every such rule is considered in a qualified sense, according to circumstances, and accommodated to the state of human life. “ *Refusal* wears a very smooth face, when it bids us *come again to-morrow*.” This is a treatment often imputed to courtiers; and is not less instructive to those who expect too much, with regard to the supposed virtue of mankind. Those who have the least merit, frequently express the most impatience at the disappointments which they meet with. The *maxim* I have quoted, also supposes that no real friend will hurt another, if he can avoid it. Seeing how life is beset with dangers, where we least suspect them; and that many live and die without having ever found where to unbosom their thoughts with safety; it is more happy never to be in any great extremity, to have occasion to try one whom we esteem a *friend*, than to find a real friend in extremity.

D. I perceive the necessity of great caution, not to place an unbounded confidence, where I have not had sufficient experience and knowledge to be able to judge of the person: but if I have

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the highest reason to believe *my* friend is a sincere friend to *virtue*, methinks I should trust *even my life* without diffidence.

*F.* Among *friends*, That is the least object of confidence: I beg you will observe, that one of the lowest degrees of *Christian virtue*, is kindness and affection. Seeing that life is so much a scene of offences, those who are not forward to pardon, nor prone to forgiveness, their friendships, like their religion, are very uncertain: It is rather acquaintance or capricious companionship, than friendship.

*D.* Kindness and affection being so essential to friendship, it seems to be an indispensable duty, to avoid words or gestures, which have an air of petulance; and to be very slow in believing *evil*.

*F.* Most certainly: You know the *Wise Man* gives this wholesome advice: "Admonish thy friend: it may be he hath not done (what is suspected); and if he hath done it, *that he do it no more*. Admonish thy friend, it may be he hath *not said* (what thou hast heard); and if he hath, that he *speak it not again*:" and he concludes, "Love thy friend, and be *faithful* to him."

*D.* In every view, I see that *friendship* depends on *virtue*, good sense, and a habit of kindness.

*F.* This is the case: and we should know our own hearts, and discipline them well, before we think ourselves entitled to this blessing. We stand bound to this, whether we find a friend or not; whence we may easily discover, how *friendship* depends on purity of heart, and strength of understanding. All these admonitions hold in a great measure, with regard to the true harmony of life: for in our ordinary intercourse with the world, we are to attend to the measure of our zeal, whilst we consider *friendship* not only as a *cause* of virtue, but also an *effect* of it.

*D.* As friendship depends so much on the heart, whilst we are young and unexperienced, there is danger of being over zealous.

*F.* Our worst enemies cannot do us greater mischief by their *malice*, than is often done by an *indiscreet friend*. In the ordinary intercourse of life, we may take the liberty to acquaint the company, that the party applauded, or accused, is our friend: so far is necessary; but an officious zeal at certain times, hurts our own cause. The fable of the *hermit* and the *bear*, is a pretty allu-

sion to this practice. The hermit having done a good office to the bear, he begged to be admitted as the guardian and companion of his solitude. The hermit having accepted the offer; one sultry day, he laid himself down to sleep, and the bear employed himself in driving the flies from his patron's face. One of them unluckily settled upon his nose; and the bear, with the best intention imaginable, in attempting to demolish it, gave his benefactor a terrible bruise.

*D.* This was like a *bear*. But *bears* are not fit for *friends*, more than *lions* for *companions*.

*F.* So it happens: our zeal, I say, may betray the cause we mean to defend; therefore let me caution you to exercise your prudence. Young women, as you observed, are sometimes warm in their intimacies; and you may have remarked, that they are apt to shew more distinction to each other, as *friends*, than is consistent with civility to the rest of their acquaintance: such appearances should be avoided.

*D.* This is no part of mutual confidence.

*F.* The greatest wound which you can give a friend is, when you either carelessly or treacherously betray *secrets*. Then it is we are admonished, "follow no more after him; for he is as a roe escaped out of the snare." Shame, or the dread of such folly, will make a friend fly from you; or the fear of resentment, will furnish you with good reason to fly from *him*. No one can be deemed capable of *friendship*, who is not equally capable of *dying*, rather than disclose a *secret*, or speak of That which has been told in *confidence*. — The sting which is received by a consciousness of disclosing a secret, to some generous minds, not fortified by religion, has sometimes driven them into *madness*. It is not many years since Sir *George Friendly* had occasion to consult a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who was enjoined to keep the matter a secret. It happened at this time, that the gentleman was courting a young lady, with whom he was very much in love, and they were mutually engaged to be married. Her education, though she was a *gentlewoman*, was not so truly good as to teach her, that she could not depreciate the man she loved so much as by *tempting him* to disclose what he was bound in honour to another, to conceal. He, poor man, supposing her entirely devoted to his interest, upon being importuned to tell her what he had been absent from her so many days, by the little arts of tenderness, won upon

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his affections so far, that he told her the secret; and she being as foolish in her way, let it drop; or as some say, thought it her interest to divulge it. When the gentleman discovered how foolishly he had acted; that it had come to Sir *George's* knowledge; and that his *mistress* had behaved, as if she meant to *kill* him, he took the desperate resolution to shoot himself.

*D.* Good Heavens!—shoot himself? He had acted foolishly, but not wickedly; and ought to be punished; but not with death.

*F.* You see how the *consciousness* of discovering a *secret*, worked on an honest mind, tinged with pride, and perhaps with some degree of *insanity*.

*D.* Considering the infirmities of our nature, and the force of a tender passion, there may be cases in which a friend may pardon such an offence.—

*F.* This depends on circumstances: according to the general notions of mankind, a deep-wound of this kind is hardly curable. Great *charity* and *compassion* on one side, and great *penitence* on the other, might obtain a pardon. But this event carried with it an evidence of a disqualification for *friendship*.

*D.* It is no wonder, in the strictest view of friendship, there should be so *few friends*.

*F.* You are not to imagine, but that there are many people in the world who keep secrets, from various motives, which concern their own probability, and the love of peace, without any regard to those who have entrusted them.—The highest proof of friendship is for one man to die for another; but this difficulty does not seem to be so great, as to find a friend worth dying for. The most memorable story I ever heard, is of *Damon* and *Pythias*: *Damon* was sentenced to death by *Dionysius*, tyrant of *Syracuse*. He desired permission to go into his own country to settle his affairs, engaging his honour to return; and it was granted, on condition of his finding a *hostage*: his friend *Pythias* offered himself. The day of execution came, whilst *Damon* was detained by contrary winds, *Pythias*, thinking his life of less consequence than his friend's, rejoiced that the wind was not fair, that by dying himself, he might preserve *Damon*. Being already on the scaffold, surrounded by a crowd, he bid the executioner proceed to his office: at this moment a distant voice was heard, “*Stop the execution.*” The

crowd caught the sound, *stop*, and instantly appeared *Damon*; and leaping from a foaming horse, mounted the scaffold, and held *Pythias* in his arms, crying, “*You are safe; you are safe, my friend!*” *Pythias* in broken accents replied, “*Fatal haste! cruel impatience! But since I cannot die to save you, I will not survive you!*” The tyrant heard, beheld, and considered what was passing, with astonishment: his heart was touched; he wept; and ascending the scaffold, he said, “*Live, ye incomparable pair! Ye have borne unquestionable testimony to the existence of virtue; and that virtue equally evinces the existence of a God to reward it. Live happy! live renowned! and form me, by your precepts, as you have invited me by your example, to be worthy the participation of so sacred a friendship!*”

*D.* This was a sudden change in the heart of a *tyrant*.

*F.* You see he was not so tyrannical as to have none of the milk of human kindness in him. He saw; he felt; he repented; and he succoured the *distressed*.

*D.* If these stories of heathens interest the heart so much, what should the *Christian* say, whose Saviour expired for him on the cross? The story of these two persons, is a glorious instance, how far the love of a virtuous friend will carry a generous mind.

*F.* This did not go further than the two *Portuguese brothers* (a). The *Gentile* world having produced such rare instances of disinterested virtue, we may learn how strongly it is imprinted on the human soul. What might not *Christianity* accomplish, were mankind awake to the consideration of that excellency which peculiarly distinguishes our *divine religion*! But the refinements of later ages have effaced the more delicate features of the heart. If we set the *glorious doctrines of the gospel* in competition with the sublimest virtue of the *heathens*, we shall often have occasion to *blush*, and be the more ashamed of our trespasses. *Christ* is the Saviour of the world, *Jew* and *Gentile*.

*D.* Those who are most inclined to *virtuous friendship*, should be the most ready to fight under his banner.

*F.* Such as through him discover the glorious prospect of *immortality*, should be led, not only to die for each other, but to suffer all the pains

pains to which life is subject. *Virtue in distress* makes the worst of men to shudder, if they do not weep to behold it. The story which I have told you, warms the heart with a sacred tenderness and affection: Yet, how short was this of the conduct of the great *Friend* and *Saviour* of mankind! He wept over his friend already expired; and moved by his tenderness as a *man*, and his power as a *God*, he raised *Lazarus* from the dead; and at length submitted himself to a death of torture and ignominy, not only for his *friends*, but likewise for his *enemies*!

*D.* The story of *Damon* and *Pythias*, proves that there is something godlike in That *affection* and exercise of humanity, which we distinguish by the name of *friendship*.

*F.* In this there was an *affection of the heart*; a human passion. Our *Saviour's* conduct surpasses all wonder! All earthly glory is eclipsed in darkness, when compared to it!—You say well, that in whatever degree we practise such sincerity, uprightness, and zeal, as are necessary to the character of a *friend*, in the same degree we shew that we might be worthy the name of a *Christian*. No religion ever inspired higher notions of friendship than the gospel of Christ. Its first precept is the contempt of *death*, where the preservation of another is concerned.

*D.* How comes it there is so little mention in the scriptures of this extraordinary virtue of *friendship*?

*F.* You will find many passages, where *friends* are spoken of with the highest honour: but *Christian* charity is of so vast and comprehensive a nature, it includes all that can be said of friendship. The partial and distinguished regard which one particular person has for another, as in the case of *Pythias*; as *Christians* we can judge of it but imperfectly, because by our law, men are not the arbiters of their own *lives*. Those who are charitable in the true extent, are friends to all mankind: they so far secure the *noblest quality of the soul*. The *friendship* which depends upon the accident of meeting one like ourselves, agreeing in *manner of acting*, as well as *mode of thinking*, may not happen during the course of a long life: or it may be interrupted by *death*, or other casualties: but the rewards promised to good *Christians*, and the *punishment of vicious* persons, are fixed by the decrees of Heaven.

*D.* If I ever find a virtuous friend, I will strive to be steady.

*F.* So you ought: the loss of one you never suspected would fail you, will be of all losses the most *pungent*! There are three good maxims in friendship.

1. As the long-lived plants are not those which grow the fastest, the friendships which encrease by degrees, are commonly the most firm and durable.

2. In vain will you seek for *friendship* among the *ignorant*, the *vain*, the *profligate*, or the *selfish*.

3. It is impossible not to be ashamed of loving the person you cannot esteem.

*D.* These are good maxims. Supposing my friend should forget herself, and desert me without cause; how am I to act?

*F.* If you should happen to break with your friend for good reasons; or your friend with you, through any infirmity or vice, shew your sorrow by your *silence*; not like a silly thoughtless girl, blab out all you know of her. This would be as wicked as weak: you was trusted on your honour, without any condition. Whatever part she may act, be you, on a principle of *Christian* virtue, fixed as a *rock*, that stands the utmost force of dashing waves, or storms and tempests.

*D.* Is friendship to be found among *women*, in as great a degree as between *men*?

*F.* It is said that men excel women in *friendship*, as women do men in *love*: and as it is a manly virtue, requiring much resolution, I believe this opinion is well founded.

*D.* In regard to women of *fortune*, do you think they excel *us* poor folks, in *friendship*?

*F.* You know, *Mary*, I always contend for *virtue* in every station; but virtue of this kind arising from education, the ignorance of the unlettered will not so easily admit of it: yet nature works strongly in the human breast; and the lower part of mankind not having so many temptations to infidelity, may *occasionally* excel the higher.

*D.* Is not jealousy the chief cause of the breach of friendship among women?

*F.* Jealousy is a mortal enemy to *friendship*: and it prevails most among women; but it is found in weak or untaught minds, more than among persons of extensive knowledge and liberality of sentiment. It is folly in one *friend* to try another, if to be avoided, where there is danger of *love* invading his breast.

*D.* Whether I shall be so fortunate as to find a *friend* or not, I will endeavour to *deserve* one.

*F.* Ob-

*F.* Observe *these rules*, and I hope you will succeed in being happy.

1. Be courteous to all, intimate with few.
2. Let not jealousy disturb you with fantastic fears.
3. Slight none for their low condition; nor esteem any merely for their wealth and greatness.
4. Be slow in chusing, and slower in changing your friend.
5. Be not dismayed at hearing plausible excuses made by those of whom you may venture to ask a kindness, on the presumption of friendship.
6. In no case owe an obligation to one you believe to be wicked.
7. Do all the good offices you can; remembering, that it is a much greater act of friendship, not to suffer your friend to fall, than to lend a hand to lift her up.
8. Accept of courtesies, for they are necessary to promote and maintain friendship; and bestow bountifully, *when you are able*.
9. Never suppress that tenderness, with which a good heart naturally overflows, when those whom you have ever esteemed, are in real distress.

Many such instructions might be added: but if you observe these, you will be favoured of

Heaven. I have supposed your friend to be of your own sex; but I repeat to you, that if you should only arrive *at the happiness of living in peace* with the world, whilst you are young and single, thank Heaven for it: for this is more than falls to the lot of common mortals. Preserve yourself for the joys of *friendship*, till you can safely join *love* to it.

*D.* Do you mean till I am *married*?

*F.* Aye, *Mary*, if happily you should meet with a man, who hath sense and virtue enough to be your *friend*, as well as your *husband*. Whatever may be your lot, endeavour to *live in peace*: and if you reach to no higher degree in friendship, accept this as the reward of a sincere and honest heart.—The *manners of times*, by which a people become *virtuous* or *vicious*, never fail to have their influence on *friendship*, and to render it common or rare, as well among the *great*, as the *lower classes*. As for the *present times*, I know not if they be *better* or *worse* than the past: but let you and I endeavour to render ourselves acceptable to God, by the sincerity of our hearts towards him; and this will never permit us to be false to any human being, to do them any *harm* we can avoid, or not to do them all the *good* in our power.

## CONVERSATION XIV.

*The danger of friendship with a woman of doubtful character. The folly of love in advanced age. Fable of Death and Cupid. Necessity of caution with regard to friendship between persons of different sexes. Life, without friendship, devoid of happiness, if not of comfort.*

*F.* AVOID the friendship of a woman of a blemished character; shun her, or you will be suspected of entertaining the same sentiments. It is not but that there are such, whose affections and generosity may render them more capable of friendship than some others, whose chastity may be rigid: But where discretion is wanting; or the foul breath of slander hath sullied a woman's fair name, the tears and sighs which may flow from her heart, and justly move compassion from a friend, take off nothing from the imputation of her supposed trespass.

*D.* Is it right to proceed to condemnation, without any proof but hear-say?

*F.* In such cases people usually judge from circumstances; and your sex is generally the most severe. There is so much iniquity in the world, it is supposed that some who in the best circumstances are not very strong, when poverty pinches, if not well guarded, they easily become a prey. In such cases, *ill-timed visits*, and the assiduous regards of men, known to have no fear of God, soon reach the busy eyes of *slander*: and the more lovely the person of a woman, the stronger the conclusion to her disadvantage. If such a woman be “stately as the eye-train'd bird,” her features regular, and the rose blushes in her fair cheeks, neither immodest men, nor

modest

modest women will allow, that she can be a fit companion for *virgin innocence*; much less for such innocence to trust itself in her bosom.

*D.* Is it then with the *aged* and *ugly* only, that the youthful are allowed to contract friendships?

*F.* I have not said any such thing: I only mention, under what particular circumstances you are *not* warranted to cultivate a *friendship*.

*D.* I believe you are in the right. In regard to *men*, may not he who highly values and esteems a woman, delight in her company, and do her such services, as may justly entitle him to the *name of her friend*?

*F.* Nothing so common as the *name of a friend*: the fear is of his being her *lover* also, without honourable intentions; and perhaps without discretion in the management of his heart.

*D.* Doth not this depend on the *situation, age, temper, and persons* of men and women?

*F.* Most undoubtedly: it often happens, that great regards spring up, where one or both of the parties have a disagreeable person. But in giving you such a description as I have done of friendship, in that union of souls, which constitutes the essential properties of it, do you think that a *young man*, and a *young woman*, both amiable in person, can be *united in heart*, without painful longings to be united in person likewise?

*D.* You question closely. I yield to your knowledge of the heart.

*F.* Even the *old* must be guarded against the fooleries of *love*; as the young against the arrows of *death*: both *may come*; and the fact is, that both do come. When the *young* die, we are told by sound of bell: when the *old* love, they have *sometimes* the wit to disguise a conscious infirmity; or giving way to it, frequently act very absurdly. Others, who are by nature strongly inclined to kindness and affection, when they shew it to women, it is sometimes erroneously ascribed to love. There is a celebrated fable, which relates to this subject. *Jupiter* is supposed to have sent out *Death* and *Cupid*, or *Love*, into the world, and supplied them with arrows: *Death* was to do his business by removing those who are useless to others, and burthen-some to themselves. *Cupid* was to wound the *young* with his darts, that being thus smitten, they might be induced to *write* or supplying the race of mankind. In travelling they were fatigued, and asking themselves they fell asleep;

but being awakened by a sudden noise, in the confusion they exchanged some of their arrows; the consequence of which was, that the *young* were occasionally smitten with *death*; and the *old* with *love*.

*D.* A fine allusion to the state of mankind! We see every day that the young are not proof against the arrows of death; but I had no conception that the light-feathered shafts of love, could pierce the steady bosom of the aged, however fit they may be for the higher pleasures of *friendship*.

*F.* Do you consider that age sometimes produces a kind of infanity that may as well take a tender turn, as one that is *austere*? This is vulgarly called *dotage*, which is no uncommon thing.

*D.* There are *some exceptions* then.

*F.* Where years furnish experience on either side, we sometimes see a degree of happiness built on this foundation of friendship; but you are not to imagine it safe for you, in humble life; and therefore be on your guard. Whether a *young man*, or an *old* one, happens to call himself your *friend*, or gives proof of his esteem, be watchful of yourself.

*D.* You seem to think that the sexes should not trust each other, but under *certain cautions*.

*F.* Not beyond the measure which corrupted nature, or regard to reputation, and the well-known weaknesses of human nature, will warrant. Happy are they who are *successful in friendship*! But more happy the *fortunate in love*, when this unites with *friendship*! When *love* is supported with judgment and virtue, it includes friendship.

*D.* Where there is friendship between the sexes, I believe it has often a mixture of *love*.

*F.* Be the more watchful. Love is generally better understood by your sex, than the masculine virtue of *friendship*. Love and friendship, where the sexes are concerned, in many cases, particularly in *youth*, are much alike; but the expression, and effects of *real friendship*, differ materially. This you may more easily understand, than I can describe. A *young woman* of good intentions may deceive herself, as well as be deceived; therefore I put you on your guard.

*D.* I ought to be so always: but when people grow old, *love* must either be *dotage*, or refine itself into friendship.

*F.* Men differ much from each other. In the  
more



more advanced periods of life, the flame of *love* may become so gentle and lambent, as to change its name: as in old age, with the loss of memory and recollection, friendship itself expires; and we may suppose all sensibility of the distinctions of sexes ceases. We are often taught, in a regular gradation of decay, calmly to resign all our *friendships*, and *loves*, with every other interest in this world. The pleasure of friendship in good minds, for man or woman, as either may happen to deserve, is oftentimes the *last* that leaves us, except the *more solid satisfaction, the hope of happiness after death!* You will ever find this essential difference; that as in *love* the *affections* have incomparably the greatest share, in *friendship* the judgment challenges the superiority. One has a compound of the *animal* part; the other, allowing for human infirmities, is *angelical*: both contribute largely to the happiness of life; and both, when duly regulated, are under the protection of Heaven. Learn to distinguish; and as Providence shall lead you, reap all the good you can from both, and be contented with your share. Consider, how far what I have told you of the charms of *friendship*, may be applicable to favourite companions. When we meet with one who is *agreeable*, we grow partial to his infirmities: the pleasure we receive from him, makes the eye sparkle when he enters the room: and yet he may not be so valuable as the person of stronger judgment, or a better heart, though his ideas should not flow so briskly, and consequently not be so companionable. The *agreeable companion* is usually esteemed a treasure; but he may have *memory* and *fancy*, *knowledge of books, men, and things*; he may add judgment, and benignity of heart; yet if his principles be not sound, he is a dangerous person.—

D. A woman must be *always* guarded.

F. Condition in life, age, sex, and the satisfaction of those on whom she depends, must be taken into her account. The more you understand of your heart and condition, the less subject you will be to wander out of the paths of reason and religion. The better you command yourself, the more you will gain *esteem* among your virtuous companions, though they may not delight so much in your company, as in That of some others. Every event of life; every word or sentiment of the heart which wounds our native truth and simplicity, not only renders us less

amiable in the esteem of the discerning world, but likewise disqualifies us so much the more as candidates for heaven. The greatest trial of friendship, particularly for women, is in *marriage*; for let your good-will extend to whom it may, no one can be so truly your friend, as your husband; and no one should be received as your lover, but him who is proper as a husband.

D. How far the married state may inspire sentiments of friendship, can be best known by the experiment, which it may be my fortune perhaps to make.

F. This is the state which affords the best security. The sweetest charm of *love* may be comprehended under the name of *friendship*; but you may easily figure to yourself, a man whose person and accomplishments captivate your fancy: You may suppose him a suitable match, and to all outward appearance, exceedingly proper; and that he becomes your husband: you then find, what you may not have discovered before, that his moral character is so very deficient, he can be no object of your *esteem*, much less of your *friendship*.—That neither from shame, nor the love of *truth*; neither from a sense of duty to God, nor to his neighbour, you can place any confidence in him: should you not think yourself a wretched woman? This is the case of many in the world; so much doth friendship depend on virtue. Is it not a most unhappy reflection, that there should be so much reason to call marriage a *lottery*?

D. Unhappy it is! But if we are not taught when we are young, to understand ourselves enough to know that vice must ever produce misery, the event cannot be said to be in the least degree surprizing. Love might, for a time, disguise the infirmities of such a man, and plead for many of them, upon a principle of our general depravity; but it could not be of long continuance. I should think myself most unfortunately allied: I should wish the knot untied: and though at all events I would do my *duty to him*, and consider my children with so much the greater compassion: yet such a man might tempt me to wish, if he would not change his manners, that it might please the Almighty to deliver me from him.

F. The sexes are, with respect to each other, a *cordial drop* thrown into the cup of life, to render the draught pleasing; or *poison*, to kill all happiness, just as they behave. It is evident

dent from the experience of almost every person of sentiment, that *friendship*, founded in *virtue*, gives *Love* his power to make us happy: this constitutes the most essential part of the duty of married persons, as creatures accountable to God and society.—The parental, the filial, the fraternal love, all comprehend in them the common notion of *friendship*.

*D.* The affections and desires, which grow from social intercourse, generally lay the foundation of *marriage*, whence such dear relations rise.

*F.* In the same manner as the impressions of mutual regard, founded in virtue, make up the substance of *friendship*, and constitute the most lasting joys of life. These improve with the *enjoyment*, whilst the mere animal gratification, though it may keep reason undisturbed in a *good mind*, is but the satisfaction of a *brute* in a *bad one*. I have heard a libertine young gentleman speak in transports of the personal charms of the young woman with whom he had a criminal connexion; complaining at the same time, that her *ignorance* rendered her insupportable.

*D.* This was a strong proof that he was not a mere animal himself. But if she had been better acquainted with her religion, and exercised her reason, she would not have been subject to him in such lawless commerce.

*F.* She was beautiful; but totally incapable of society, so that as a man of sentiment, he could not do less than cast her off. Upon this he took the virtuous resolution of marrying a woman of education, good nature, and good sense: and though her features were not regularly formed, she soon appeared so far beautiful in his eyes, that he loved her with great tenderness, mixed with as great esteem.

*D.* He felt the force of virtue: and what solid joy can there be, but as the contract is agreeable to the laws of God!

*F.* Life without *friendship*, or something like it, which goes by the name, is comfortless. The communication of virtuous sentiments, is the purest, and therefore the most exalted alliance among the human species.

*D.* Yet some retire from the world.

*F. Aye, Mary: enthusiasm and superstition* have even suggested a plan of a community, in which the members are never to speak to each other.

*D.* Is there really such a fraternity upon the earth?

*F.* I must not say they *never* speak, for at certain times they are allowed to make use of their tongues; and in public they pray aloud. My master once told me he had been in a convent of *Carthusians*: There are, in most popish countries, some of this order: It was founded by one they call *Saint Bruno*, about the year of *Christ* 1086. These *Carthusians* are so remarkable for their austerity, *friendship* with them can hardly be deemed any *virtue*. Those who live in *silence*, live in *solitude*; and consequently without the performance of many social duties. These *devotees to religion*, as they understand it, are determined to mortify all sinful affections: and therefore, with a view not to trespass with their tongue, they do not speak (*a*). How they can reconcile their conduct with the example of the *great Founder of the Christian faith, who went about doing good*, I cannot discover. He was as much distinguished for his *friendships*, as his universal benevolence. The *Carthusians* abstain totally from *flesh*: their houses were formerly built in deserts; but this is not observed at the present time; though in general they keep up to their rules better than any other order among the papists (*b*).

*D.* Then they are the most unfociable, and consequently the most unfriendly creatures among the human race. They do this under a notion of religion! I presume there is no nunnery, where *women* can be made to observe a *perpetual silence*: but where there is neither *love* nor *friendship*, there can be no happiness.

*F.* The connexion between *love, friendship, and charity*, is more intimate than mankind generally imagine, or give themselves time to consider. It is the due regulation of *love* and true *friendship*, which prepares the mind for the Christian duty of *charity*, which is the bond of peace, and of all earthly blessings: furnishing the strongest assurance of everlasting bliss in the life to come!

(*a*) Some orders are permitted to converse publicly on *Thursdays*.

(*b*) The *Jesuits*, in their temporal concerns, and the externals of religion, are strict.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N XV.

*The uncertainty of life. The fatal prejudices of the gentry in favour of wine. Reflexions on drefs as necessary to health. Our drefs not generally suited to our climate. Numbers die of consumptions, through inadvertency in clothing. Necessity of a free circulation of air. Kitchen physic recommended in various diseases. The proper method of using milk recommended. Old kitchen books sometimes of great use. Different regimens for hot and cold, dry and moist constitutions.*

F. VERY uncertain! Yesterday I was in company with two persons of fortune, one a little younger than myself, the other a little my senior. To-day I hear they are both in danger of dying. One has the gout in his stomach; the other has fainting fits, supposed to arise from the same cause.

D. I presume they drink wine.—This wine is a charming liquor: it prevents old age.

F. How so?

D. It kills people when they are young. I have been very often told, the country people are so fond of wine, they will drink cyder, brandy, and turnip-juice with water, and what else you please, coloured with elder-berries, and made rough with flocs.

F. Such mixtures are often called wine: and it is well when there is no other ingredient. The vanity of drinking wine, and sending out our riches to purchase it, is very great: the people sometimes despise good *malt liquor*.—These gentlemen have been accustomed to wine; and will probably live the shorter time on that account. The heat and fermentation it creates, in some cases is death: in no case can be of use, except as a medicine or cordial.—But there are many people in the world, who chuse to indulge in this cordial, at all times, and create the disease of which they die. At certain times, in a small quantity, it may preserve the health, and keeps men out of the grave; at other seasons, or drank in greater quantities, it hurries them into it.

D. They catch their death sometimes from being too thinly clad. The gentry who wear fine things, are not so well protected from the weather, as them whose apparel is coarse.

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F. It is often the case of the *poor*, from necessity, not to have clothes enough; and of the *rich*, from *fashion* and *thoughtlessness*. In our unequal climate, it is hard to avoid being occasionally too hot, or too cold.

D. You think in general that we do not drefs warm enough.

F. My master often told me, that in the several countries, where he had lived, the people drefs according to their climates, generally warmer than we do in *England*: and that this, in his opinion, was in some measure the cause, that so few died of consumptions among them, and such numbers amongst us. *We* have much *cold* and *raw* weather, and do not always prepare to encounter it in a proper manner.

D. Young and old among us are troubled with coughs to an amazing degree!

F. How far our *diet* may have a share in producing this effect, I cannot tell; but *consumptions*, which are hardly ever heard of in many other countries, sweep off thousands of us annually: my master said, that foreigners call it the *English disease*.

D. I believe, as your master thought, that these consumptions are often the effects of cold, contracted by being too thinly clad.

F. We are an active people, and inclined to immoderate exercise: some live in rooms made very warm; and when they are chilled by cold, it drives back into the blood, the matter which nature means to throw off by perspiration. Others live uncomfortably for want of heat. The stoppage of perspiration seems to be one of the chief causes of fevers and consumptions.

D. Are you *physician* enough to know this?

F. I have often heard it said; and it seems

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reasonable to believe: the consequence of too thin cloathing is, that although some who are born very strong, are made the hardier by it; others of a more tender frame, are frequently brought to their grave, much earlier than they would otherwise have been. Young persons not enjoying *proper* warmth, are stunted in their growth, and look old the sooner; in the same manner as infants defrauded of the breast, or otherwise ill nursed, droop and die. The same thing happens among *brute animals*: and *vegetables* decay, if not properly sheltered from the cold, or not supplied with moisture. With respect to the *body* we are but *animals*: *Youth* may talk big, and brag of all their manly strides, and feats of activity; their love adventures, and the lasses who have drooped for their sakes: but I can tell you, *Mary*, I have seen a stout *young farmer* fall at *twenty-four*, by braving winter weather in a *summer's frock*, and catching cold: and another of twice his age, who seemed to be far gone in a *consumption*, recovered by warm *milk*, and a *flannel waistcoat* next his skin: this diet and clothing corrected his habit, and invigorated him, inasmuch that he recovered, and is now living in good health.

*D.* I have heard flannel objected to, as wasting the body.

*F.* Numbers of people wear it with great success: being over their linen, it can create no disagreeable sensation. *Women* seem most negligent of themselves; and therefore the greater part who die of *consumptions*, is of your sex. In the warmest countries of *Europe*, flannel waistcoats are in esteem. When their gentry wear their finest dress, they take care it be the warmest: with us the contrary is practised. Our *country-clothing*, which is more than can be said of their *rich apparel*, is warm: and I suppose it is for this reason, that ten of the gentry die at an early age, carried off by consumptions, to one of us. Perhaps we enjoy some advantages, by living more under the canopy of the heavens; though God knows, often exposed in the extreme, to hot and cold, dry and moist weather.

*D.* Do you think we generally enjoy a purer air than the gentry?

*F.* Their habitations are less confined; and they go abroad, or stay at home, as the season, or softness of the weather invites; this gives them a choice of air.

*L.* If they expose themselves wantonly in

midnight revels, they put themselves more upon a level, with regard to the *unavoidable evils* that we suffer. Would it not be more happy for them, to face a winter's sky, being fortified by proper garments, than expose themselves in hot rooms, and the night air.

*F.* It is but a small part of mankind, who live according to *nature*. The *necessities* of the *poor*, and the *luxurious* indulgences of the *rich*, amidst the infinite variety of the conveniences and ornaments of life, which arts have rendered as *necessaries*, make attempts of this kind, for the most part very difficult: nor is the exact measure which nature requires, so easily discovered. We know that *air* is *life*, or *death*, according to the *quality* and *quantity* of it.

*D.* If it is an advantage, that doors and windows should not be tight, the *poor* certainly have it.

*F.* Yet these are frequently kept shut, when they should be open. When the *poor* are sick, they imagine *warmth* to be so necessary to their cure, they frequently poison themselves with their own confined air. *Nature* is so indulgent, that half a minute will change the mass of air in a small room. Those who use *chimney-boards*, often hurt themselves, by obstructing the free circulation of air. Even in the extremity of cold, those who sleep in *small rooms*, with the chimney thus shut up, often hurt their health.

*D.* The poor suffer from *ignorance*, as the rich from *vanity*.

*F.* Even so: but *Nature* will hold on her pace, without any compliment to either. *She* works without proclaiming her deeds; the effects proclaim themselves. *She* feeds our spirits; guides our motions; and supplies all the channels of health and beauty; but if by some folly, or dire necessity, we press her to change her *course*, we droop and die!

*D.* It is necessary then to attend to her, that we may not go too fast, nor too slow.

*F.* We are made for the good of *others*, as well as our own, and in the pursuit of That *good*, *evil* sometimes happens; many a life hath been lost, in saving, or attempting to save the life of another.

*D.* Perhaps such a death is the most happy: where the intention is pure, and the ability powerful, so that we do not rashly go beyond our strength.

*F.* The greatest danger of shortening life, next to intemperance, is *ignorance*, or inattention

to the habits of our bodies, and our own feelings, in the early stages of the *disorders* we are subject to. When we arrive to a certain *advanced period of life*, greater consideration is still due to the means of preserving it.

*D.* But to lengthen our days, is not of such moment, as rendering them sweet in health, soft as the gentle breeze, and lively as the morning light.

*F.* True, my daughter; but he who knows what pain or sickness is, can easily judge of the value of health: this is a blessing bestowed on mortals, often more choice than life; for who would wish to live in *pain*? Where health *reigns*, to him who is sensible of the benefit, the *cottage* is a court: where it is *banished*, the smiles of kings can afford but little comfort.—I have been lately reading a little book, written by a learned doctor of the last century (*a*), who pleads the cause of the *poor*, and recommends *kitchen physic*, desiring his indigent patients to distinguish whether they are of a *cold* or *lax* texture; or *hot*, *dry*, and *costive* (*b*); observing, that if people take a cold diet, when their constitutions require a more cherishing aliment; or take the *hot*, when they should use that which extinguishes the fever in the blood, both will shorten their lives.

*D.* *Kitchen* physic seems to be of more consequence to us peasants, than the prescriptions of the learned in physic, who live in great cities. We generally commit ourselves to the care of *Nature*; and she is kind.

*F.* Those who eat and drink enough of plain common food, and do not over-load themselves, have a better chance of living long, and free from pain *without* physicians, than the intemperate *with* them.

*D.* But you think, that *physicians* are beneficial to mankind.

*F.* I have found them so on several occasions, when my life seemed to be threatened: and it is natural to suppose, they delight in doing good, independent of their emoluments, or the price of their study. As to the distinction of rich and poor, you will find so much of the mere *animal* prevails with both, they often over-load themselves. With regard to the poor, if their food is occasionally more pleasant than ordinary, they seldom know when they have enough.

*D.* This was the case, as I remember, at the last election of our representatives; for half a score people or more, actually died of fevers contracted by over-eating and drinking.

*F.* This generally happens to some unthinking creatures, who give themselves up to work a deed of the most brutish kind on themselves, by dying as a cow of mine once did, in consequence of breaking into a clover pasture.—The learned Doctor I have mentioned, who writes to the *poor*, is a great advocate for *milk*. He says,

1. If Providence had confined us to the use of milk and bread, and given us a sufficient quantity, we should have no reason to complain of its bounty.

2. This white blood, taken temperately and warm, nourishes like the blood of our bodies; but it is not proper in *acute* distempers.

3. He recommends asses milk, in many cases, as a medicine; being not so thick as to obstruct, nor so thin as to be without nourishment.

4. As to the colour of the cow, whether it be red or brown, black or white, it matters but little, provided she be in health, young, well-fed, and well-fleshed.

5. Milk should not be eaten raw and cold, when we are hot; nor on a full stomach; nor mingled with meats.

6. The worms often found in children, are generated by the injudicious use of milk.

7. Violent exercise or motion after eating milk, is also apt to disorder digestion.

8. Milk taken in bed, an hour before rising, in hot, lean, and dry constitutions, is justly deemed a sovereign medicine. Some require it to be tempered with a little sugar, or a few drops of brandy: others boil it with a portion of candied eringo-root.

9. Many poor persons have been cured of consumptions, by taking a portion of the fine fat of mutton kidneys, which being cut small, and well boiled and incorporated with the milk, it hath proved of great efficacy. It should be taken as the chief nutriment, a tea-cupful at a time being sufficient.

*D.* This account of milk is particularly flattering to me, who milk your cows. I have heard these *kitchen medicines* talked of by *experienced women*.

*F.* The *Doctor* observes to this effect:

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(*a*) Dr. Cook, in the reign of Charles II.

(*b*) Appendix, No. IV.

1. The world is not so knowing in general, as is vulgarly imagined.

2. The *present* generation is apt to lose the remembrance of the trials made by their fathers; or they preserve them in old *kitchen-books*; which, in process of time, are often condemned to the meanest uses.

3. We daily see things started as *new*, which were well known some hundred years ago.

4. The *patient* forgets his own experience; and how he was cured, two or three years ago, of the disorder he now labours under.

5. Among the *great*, the physician becomes the remembrancer.

6. With *us*, it is a duty of humanity to assist each other.

This *charitable doctor* makes distinctions of *constitutions*; observing,

7. That the same kind of food, cannot be good for all.

8. Those who by accident, or natural constitution, want heat, and become faint, weak, and rapid, require a warmer aliment.

9. Garlick and onions are taken as a familiar part of diet, by the natives of warm countries, who feed chiefly upon bread and water.

10. Among us, wine, brandy, mustard, radish, pepper, salt, and spices are taken, even by people who also feed very much on animal substances.

*D.* For the same reason we often *set-fire* to, and blow ourselves up.

*F.* Fevers are frequently bred and nursed by such means; but these *articles* not being used to excess, may tend to invigorate a *cold* constitution, better than *wine*: I am an enemy to *brandy*, except in *desperate* disorders. We daily see how inflammatory food brings men, particularly those inclined to heat, into fevers, gouts, and other disorders, which terminate in death. We even behold numbers of young persons hurried out of life by such means.—I therefore venture to tell you,

11. That *brandy* and *spice*, except in very urgent cases, demanding *sudden* and *speedy relief*, are dangerous.

12. The best kind of spice is *ginger*: This I have known to be of much service.

13. As to the *milk* and *Turkey figs* (*a*), of which the Doctor speaks so favourably, I have

long entertained a good opinion of them: and both are easily come at; though the *Londoners* sometimes send us their *damaged figs*.

14. The kitchen physic recommended by our Doctor, to such as are *cold* in constitution, is rather of the cordial kind (*b*). He recommends many things as medicines, which might also serve for a cold night's comfortable repast, not difficult to be procured.

15. Fuel is one great article of comfort among the indigent.

*D.* Is not eating oftener, and a less quantity at a time, best for *tender* constitutions?

*F.* The more tender, the less able to digest a heavy meal.

16. I recommend to you to avoid drinking a great deal, let the quality of the liquor be what it may. An undue portion of water, has often brought the body into decay.

17. Bad habits creep upon many of us, and shorten life.—

18. I plead for warm clothing, as necessary for people cold in constitution, as well as for persons who are subject to fevers.

19. Those in whom much heat predominates, generally suffer by being *costive*; as others do by being too *lax*: the former are burnt up; the latter melt away.

20. One part of mankind wonders when their acquaintance die; the other may be more astonished to see them live so long.

21. It is by the kindness of Providence, as well as the exercise of reason and experience, that so many of every denomination live to a considerable age.

*D.* What doth this learned Doctor say of our common food, *bread*?

*F.* After recommending a diet for *hot* and *cold*, *dry* and *moist* constitutions, he speaks of *bread* in the highest terms of praise. Yet I have heard some in great reputation, represent it only as *necessary* food, but from its nature apt to render the body *costive*, and create acrid humours.

*D.* If wheaten bread be well prepared, and made of good wheat, or a mixture of wheat and rye, it must surely deserve all the praise which can be bestowed on it; and may justly be stiled *the staff of life*.

*F.* So I esteem it: but there are some cases, for which rice, pearl-barley, and such kind of grain,

grain, do better.—*Mary*, I have a small book to give you : my good old mother, a little before her death, made me a present of it. It contains *recipes* for several diseases ; with some of which she said I might possibly be *afflicted* : and as she had cured many while she was living, she hoped

I might also administer to the cure of others after her death. I could not but receive it with gratitude : and I have tried some of them with success : but you are not to suppose yourself possessed of remedies that are infallible (*a*).

## CONVERSATION XVI.

*The notions of a heathen philosopher in regard to pleasure, as consisting in temperance. Complaints of the pernicious effects of excess. Bread, in different shapes, the common food of mankind. Caution against unripe fruits, particularly fleshy cherries. Rice recommended to be used with milk. Caution against inflammatory foods. Life often squandered away through carelessness. Expence of the table the least to be desired by those who possess great fortunes. Reference to a recipe for a dyspepsy, attended by a jaundice. Caution against strong drink as unnecessary to refreshment.*

**D.** I Have read the book of *recipes* left by my good grandmother, and apprehend it to be worth preserving.

**F.** If I had not thought so I should not have given it to you. I have seen a man (*b*) acquire a great reputation for the cure of various diseases, merely by his *recipes*. Alas, *Mary*! the same prescriptions will not always answer, even for the same person. We are not always in an equal habit of mind or body : and nature and time sometimes contribute so much to dissolve the frame, all the *art of medicine* is baffled ; how much more, the *recipes* handed down to us ; though *experience* should prove them to be oftentimes efficacious.

**D.** May the most part of *these* be trusted ?

**F.** Where assistance can be had, I always yield to *experienced practitioners*, unless I dread their killing me with drugs from the *apothecary's* shop. The good *Doctor*, of whom we were speaking, says,

1. *Bread* is so inseparable a companion of life, that neither sound nor sick can subsist without it.

2. If mankind could be made sensible of it, they would find, that with bread, milk, and water, or very little else, we might condemn all grandeur, and encounter death itself.

3. *Epicurus*, (that *cormorant* and *monster* of men) in his morals, tells us, that he could dispute fe-

licity with kings ; for that when he would entertain himself most luxuriously, he mended his cheer with a little milk ; and found so much satisfaction in it, as to bid defiance to the pleasures which the ignorant and *sensual world* so much admire, in magnificent feasts, rich wines, and costly meats.

**D.** Who was this *Epicurus* ? A *cormorant*, a *monster*, and yet by the force of temperance, looked down upon the happiness of kings, when he could indulge himself in *milk* ! This seems to be a contradiction.

**F.** I have heard my master talk of this philosopher, whose memory is preserved to this day amongst us : for we call a voluptuous man an *epicure*. He was born at *Athens*, about three hundred and eighty years before *Christ*. As to his notions of religion, he was a *heathen*. The *Doctor* calls him a *monster* : others say he was chaste and temperate, and taught that happiness consists in *pleasure* ; but from the imperfect accounts we have of his life and writings, it is evident he meant, that there can be *no pleasure* worthy of a *man*, where the body is disturbed by *intemperance*, or the *mind* by violence of *passion*.

**D.** If he was really *chaste* and *temperate*, whatever his motives might be, had he known the religion of *Christ*, it is probable he would have concluded, that the Author of it must have been

of

(a) Appendix, N<sup>o</sup>. VII.

(b) Dr. *Ward* was a remarkable instance : but he was acquainted with chymistry

of heavenly extraction, from the purity of his precepts.

F. Very well observed. It matters but little to us what *Epicurus's* thoughts were: But human nature being the same in all ages, and the health of the body, as well as the tranquility of the mind, depending on *temperance*, we must acquire a command over the passions. This *beathen*, prompted by a sense of *dignity*, apprehending that man is an animal so much superior to a *beast*, he would probably have agreed with the *great apostle*. Speaking of the gluttonous, who devote themselves to this kind of sensuality, *St. Paul* says, “*The belly for meats, and meats for the belly; but God shall destroy both it and them.*”

D. This admonition must have a terrible found to those who *talk* much of *eating*, and lay no restraint on their appetites.

F. We can judge of men only from their lives and conversations. If the ways of *Wisdom* are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace; sensuality and wisdom being at variance, *happiness* can never arise from *disordered passions* and *appetites*. Whoever pleads for *temperance*, must be so far on the right side of the argument. To do justice to our *Physician*, who was a *friend* to the *poor*, and shewed himself a zealous advocate for temperance; I must tell you what he says:

1. Those who have addicted themselves to *variety*, *extravagance*, and *excess*, either over-load themselves with new cares, or contract new vices; and become obnoxious to various and great troubles; and frequently violate *justice*, *faith*, and *friendship*.

2. That such persons dishonour themselves, and acquire grievous diseases, which by the force of temperance and sobriety, they might have avoided.

3. That *Nature* requires but little, *opinion* much: and he that hath not the faculty of restraining his desires, is like a vessel full of holes, ever filling, but never full.

4. That many, by high drinks and diet, riots, and luxurious indulgences, have died on their close-stool; or took their leave of the world, over a chamber-pot; or only out-lived the conflict, with a gout, surfeit, or other *ignominious disease!*

5. What great matter can be expected, in church or state, from That man, whose joints are enfeebled; his sinews relaxed; his head clouded; his eyes bleared; and his mouth full of curses and clamours, by reason of his debauchery, excess, and luxury?

D. I hope he was temperate himself: but is he civil to the rich, to call the gout an *ignominious disease?*

F. You are courtly in asking the question. We have had a vast increase of this distemper, since his time; and consequently learn to treat each others vices with more complaisance. He says:

6. No persons are more offended with crudities, worms, fluxes, and defluxions, than those who eat none, or too little bread.

7. All flesh, fish, and fruits that we can feed on, putrify, and convert to slime, or water, if eaten without bread.

D. He does not mean this exactly as he says.

F. He observes,

8. All nations eat bread, though some make it of *dried fish*; some with *roots of plants*, and *barks of trees*; and some with *seeds*, *nuts*, or *acorns* (a).

D. Is this true?

F. Many nations have not the good grain that we have; and yet provide a substitute for bread. Rice (b), as I have told you, is the common food over a great part of the earth; especially in all hot countries, where they can command water, though it will grow with little water.

The *learned Doctor* adds, what we all know,

9. That barley, rye, oats, misaline (c), and wheat make the *best bread*, the wheaten being preferable, *provided it be not too fine* (d), nor without leaven, nor *spoiled in making or baking*. The crumb is best for *choleric*, the crust for *phlegmatic* and *moist* constitutions: the newer it is, the more it *nourisheth*; the older, the more it dries.

D. He does not mean, that we should eat our bread *fresh out of the oven*.

F. No: nor to keep it too long, when we can conveniently provide ourselves with it fresher.

D. It is bad bread that is not more agreeable, as well as fit for use, the next day after baking than on the day it comes out of the oven.

F. Many people dislike new bread; but in general,

(a) In part of the highlands of *Scotland* they make bread of oatmeal and bullocks blood.

(b) It is remarkable, that the *Persians* call rice *brinze*; which signifies food without harm.

(c) Wheat and rye mixed.

(d) We have here the verdict of a physician of the last century, as it were in favour of the *standard wheaten bread*, as by act of parliament lately recommended.



general, much the greater quantity is devoured on account of its being new. He says,

10. That *bread* is good against the *rickets*. Most people agree, that *fluxes*, *surfeits*, *fevers*, and many other diseases, are common in fruit-time; but that if bread were eaten with it, the crudities would be tempered: few people in *England* have wit enough to observe this rule.

*D.* I have wondered to see parents suffer their children to devour even ripe fruit, without eating bread with it: but when fruit is *not ripe*, or very unripe, they who eat it, often experience sad effects.

*F.* With bread, fruit might be considered as food, or a part of diet, as it really is in most other countries. There are several kinds of fruit in *England*, which should not be eaten without being baked or stewed, others not till they become fully ripe. I reckon it one of the vulgar errors and barbarous practices of our country, that even young people of education and fortune, who can command what cookery they please, and as much variety as they like; yet from a mere perverse humour, or a *gratification of appetite*, which a modest young woman might well blush to think of, they will indulge this *capricious habit*. We may disguise things if we please, but a *liquorish mouth* has something in it so *fantastically wanton*, it deserves a very *severe reprehension*. Those who thus wantonly gratify themselves, often bring on disorders which end their lives.

*D.* I remember a girl who once ate such a quantity of *heart cherries*, if her mother had not forced her to swallow some *old Cheshire cheese* grated, it was thought she would not have lived an hour: this restored her, as it were by a miracle.

*F.* It is a good remedy in such cases. A little common-sense and prudence, go a great way towards preserving life. *Fruits*, *vegetables*, and *roots*, were the first food of mankind; but the *flesh* of animals, was eaten long before *bread* was known; notwithstanding which, I believe the opinion of the learned gentleman is founded on reason and experience. I can add,

1. In many of the uncivilized parts of the world, the people live chiefly on the flesh of

the birds and beasts which they take in hunting.

2. In some countries, they eat mutton, or horse-flesh, fruits, roots, or vegetables.

3. The most civilized nations of *Asia* live chiefly on rice.

4. Most *Europeans*, as observed, eat bread, made of wheaten, barley, rye, or oaten flour; and generally consume as much bread in quantity, as need be taken to support life.

5. With us, *butter*, *cheese*, and what is so much more to be prized, *milk*, often serve as sauce to our bread.

6. Some nations use oil (*a*).

7. Some make their bread savory by eating salt with it (*b*).

8. Garlick or onions give a relish to the bread of great numbers, who eat it in the sweat of their brow (*c*).

*D.* And each thinks his own the best food. As life depends so much on the quality of our food, what do you think is the *best diet*?

*F.* That which is the most easily come at, or the *cheapest*: the better it is of its kind, the more *wholesome*. You may perceive how Heaven is indulgent in the prodigal supply which Nature furnishes; and how thankful we ought all to be to the great Giver of *all things*!

1. There are some kinds of aliment, which we should take by *ounces*, not by *pounds*; and rather with a view to give a relish to bread, than as the material part of our meal: *for instance*, salted meats, and high-made dishes.

2. If you ever live in a great family, the remains of these may sometimes come to your lot; but avoid them.

*D.* I have heard it observed, that it is not the *quality* of our food, so much as the *quantity* which does harm to health.

*F.* I am persuaded of the truth of this.

3. Whatever kind of food inflames the blood, and creates fevers, head-achs, cholics, and indigestions, lays the foundation of other disorders also, with which poor mortals so often *afflict themselves*—by their indiseretion.—

*D.* You think that people in an *humble condition*, are less exposed to intemperance than the *rich*.—

*F. Pa-*

(a) In *Italy*, &c. where they are often afflicted with *ruptures*.

(b) This is the custom of the *Russians*: Whether salt be eaten with wheaten, or rye bread, it gives the relish of an animal substance, and seems to answer many of the good purposes of aliment.

(c) As in *Portugal*, *Spain*, *France*, &c.

1. *Poverty* is one kind of security.

4. Every one is a fool or a physician by forty. It is presumed, that by that age, we all know what disagrees with our health.

D. I believe there are more *fools* than there are *good physicians*.

F. There are more who act against their own experience, than observe it, though they offend against their reason.

D. Is it not strange, that for a few minutes pleasure of the palate, so many should hazard *hours*, and *days*, or *years* of pain?

F. When you grow older, you will wonder less that mankind are slaves to the present moment, and forget their solid interest. That which may be said of *temperance*, as a moral duty, holds in the same degree with respect to *health*; not only to produce pleasure in the *relief of nature*, but also in the prevention of *bodily* pain, which is the second great object of the human soul. "The pleasures of the temperate man, are durable, because they are *regular*; and his life is calm and serene, because it is *innocent*."

D. This is a glorious situation!

F. You are not to imagine, from any thing I have said, that I would countenance any fearfulness of death, or anxiety for life; but only to preserve it in a prudent manner: And to enjoy the exalted pleasure of conforming yourself to *reason*, than which there cannot be a higher delight to an *intelligent being*, except that of adding *faith* to reason, and a lively *hope* in Heaven's joys. You know *my sentiments*, that provided we live well, it is not the number of *years*, but *days well spent*, which give dignity and honour to life. To be prudent, and not throw it away wantonly, by extreme ignorance, or false indulgence, is the duty of every rational being, but particularly of a *Christian*; a great part of whose religion consists in the government of his appetites.

D. Moderation in eating, seems to be a much more *serious subject*, than the world is aware of. Life seems to depend on this, as much as on the quality of our food. What does the Wise Man mean, when he says, that "a cheerful and good heart, will have a care to his meat and diet?"

F. Just what I have been explaining to you. The greater part of mankind, are certainly not sufficiently on their guard, as to the quantity or quality of their food. But if the heart is *cheerful*, it is supposed, men wish to *live*, and will

use the means of living; and if it be *good*, the most delightful feast, must be That which leaves no pain behind it. The *philosopher* thanked his friend for the entertainment of the evening before; for this reason, that his temperate meal rendered his *sleep so refreshing*, he enjoyed the repast in reflexion.

D. How different is this from the conduct of those, who at their *merry-meetings*, injure their health by *excess*.

F. Aye, *Mary*; and by the same means, often expose their *chastity*! The proverb you have quoted likewise intimates, that the wealth by means of which the tables of the opulent are spread, often serve as *snare*s to them, when the *cheerful frugality* of the poor is *safe* and *innocent*. Of all kinds of expence, not absolutely criminal in itself, That of the *table* has ever appeared to me least an object to be desired; and that in general we eat and drink too much, whether there be any strong provocatives or not. I have observed, that the strongest of all animals, have generally the strongest powers of digestion, and consequently crave the largest quantity of food; still I am persuaded, in general, that if it were not for those who consume one third, or one quarter part, more than is good and proper for them, there would be much less distress in the world on the article of food, to support the indigent.

D. In this I agree with you entirely: and I wish people would consider the proper measure, more than they do, were it out of charity only. —What is the rule of judging of the effects of our food, whether it be of the wholesome or proper kind, and taken in due quantity?

F. The best rule, I believe, is generally found,

1. By our sleep being sound:—2. By freedom from pain in our digestion.—

3. By vivacity of spirit: 4. By strength of body.

5. When sleep is without pain or interruption, unbroken and undisturbed by *dreams*, and not drawn out to above *seven*, or at most *eight* hours, according to the season of the year; then I think myself in a right state.

D. But the seeds of mortality, sown in our frame, even from the womb, are still ripening for death.

F. Aye, *Mary*: yet those who feed on the simplest diet, have generally the most health: but

if they are in any degree weak in constitution, or frequently attacked with disorders, the least fallible way of living free from pain, is to observe the rules prescribed for health, with strictness. A remarkable instance (*a*) is seen in *William Turnwheel*, a miller in this neighbourhood. He is a man of *resolution*, and strong natural parts; but having indulged much too freely in eating and drinking, he contracted a dropsy and a jaundice. His strength departed from him, and he was hard at death's door. In this extremity, he resolved to live *without drinking*, and to eat nothing but wheaten flour made into a slack pudding, sometimes with water, and sometimes with milk. He took of this aliment, a little at a time, and often: and thus persevering, by the mercy of God, is become a healthy strong man.

*D.* It shews us what may be done, where there is real resolution, and strength in the constitution remaining: but there are very few, who possess such an inflexibility of temper. I have lately seen a poor man, a servant to one of our neighbours, who is far gone in a dropsy: he must die soon, unless some remedy is administered.

*F.* If he will try my *recipe*, I believe it will cure him: it requires resolution, and some degree of strength (*b*). As eating and drinking, without care, lays the foundation of bad passions and inclinations, as well as early death, my advice to you is this:—Go not to the utmost bounds of appetite. A habit of restraint, is a habit of virtue and pleasure. Every meal refreshes or fatigues, as it is *within* measure, or *without* bounds.

*D.* I believe there are many in the world, who would give it, were it at their disposal, to have been accustomed to such restraint.

*F.* I recommend the following *observations and rules of conduct* to your attention:

1. That he is most fit to sit down at the table of our Lord, who is moderate in the use of the creatures which God hath given him.

2. Those who *live* in excess, will probably *die* in it.

3. Avoid the company of the intemperate.

4. “Be not among wine-bibbers, or riotous eaters of flesh:” by which we are to understand,

food that inflames the blood, and stimulates the passions.

5. Some may impute their excess to a false shame, which hinders them from asserting that freedom, to which the meanest has the justest title, and from which they ought, upon *no invitation*, to deviate.

6. We are exhorted “to put a knife to the throat;” or in other words, to stand in fear of our lives, when we are in danger of exceeding That moderation which distinguishes a man from a swine.

7. There are many sad instances of people's dying suddenly by the quantity of the meat and drink they devour: and some, who have once lived soberly and regularly, have sunk into the most abandoned sensuality; and after feeding, as it were with *angels*, practised such excess as rendered them equal to *devils*.

8. Let me caution you, above all, not to make strong liquor necessary to your refreshment; nor in the course of your life, ever apply to it as a remedy against *care*: for however it may dissipate your thoughts by stupefaction, *affliction* never was removed by *vice*: the remedy is worse than the disease.

9. Cast your cares on God; he will support your burthen, and never forsake you!

*D.* I thank you, my dear father! Was it not a practice among the first Christians to abstain wholly from food on certain days?

*F.* I believe it was: there are yet many *Christians* and *Mahometans*, who fast till evening on certain days; on others, they abstain from all animal food. Some customs are carried to a superstitious height; though probably founded originally on the rational plan of keeping the body in obedience to the dictates of the soul.

*D.* The purity of our divine religion requires this in a very remarkable manner.

*F.* As far as is consistent with health, I may add, we ought occasionally to abstain.

10. Nothing can be more conducive to the virtue of temperance, than such an *occasional abstinence*, as will relieve the body, without giving it any shock.

11. By such means, a disease may be diverted, which would be otherwise nourished, and take full possession of you.

12. There

(*a*) I have lately seen the person alluded to, at *Chelmsford*, in *Essex*. He does not appear ever to have been very stout, and his countenance hath a meagre cast.

(*b*) Appendix, N<sup>o</sup>. XVIII.

12. There are few persons who pass many months without some call for the trial of this very simple expedient.

13. Our great Lord and Master, who was a pattern of the strictest moderation, occasionally attended at public entertainments; but he always taught sobriety, and made his cheerfulness contribute to the good of other men's souls.

14. As the body must speedily moulder into

dust, the indulgence of it is as absurd in this view, as injurious to the soul, which is *never to die!*

*D.* All of these *admonitions* are good! The apostle's advice is, "Be temperate in all things:" and it is dreadful, to think of leaving this world in a habit of intemperance; this being a state in which it never can be fit for us to meet the great and holy Judge of heaven and earth.

## CONVERSATION XVII.

*Expensive dress considered as destructive of morals. Caution to farmers daughters going to London. Danger of gaudy or distinguished dress. The miseries of the poor who have not any change of garment, and wear ragged and filthy apparel, through the fault of their superiors.*

*F.* **A**YE, *Mary*, they were sacrificed to the iniquity, to which young women are more immediately exposed in great cities.

*D.* I remember a particular charge you gave me against a fondness for DRESS, or gaudy attire; as if this were one of the chief allurements, by which these giddy unhappy mortals were drawn into the snares of the hunter. In what manner am I to act in this case? I had rather wear the meanest apparel in the family, than the finest, provided it were agreeable to my mistress.

*F.* It is for something, *Mary*, that gratifies our fancy, our appetites, or our passions, for the sake of which we are all rendered wicked, in a greater or less degree, in various ways. The vanity of the heart, which leads a girl to be fond of dress, I mentioned, as falling within the compass of my observation, to be one of their greatest temptations to forget their God. Nor must you wonder, if you consider that there are but two objects which interest the heart; the *body* and the *soul*: and those who are the least attentive to adorn the spirit, are for the same reason, often found most solicitous to decorate the body. We have all a right to share in the improvements which time, industry, and wealth have made: But the poor or *indigent* tread too close upon the heels of the rich. Many a young woman in service, now affects to dress like her mistress.

*D.* Not, I presume, unless it be in her mistress's old cloaths.

*F.* Yes: sometimes they *purchase fine things*: but what is the difference, if the cloaths be yet

clean and whole? If you wear to-day, the gown which your mistress wore yesterday, you may imagine yourself a gentlewoman. If it should be your fortune to have any fine apparel given you, consider what is proper for you to wear, and in what shape; what you should dispose of, as not suited to your condition; and not suffer your *vanity* to betray you. The most *simple* garb is the most *graceful*, being according to our condition in life. A comely *quaker* young woman, without a single flounce, or a grain of powder, with her hair glossy as silk, and her deportment suited to the simplicity of her dress, attracts the eyes of beholders. Even an abandoned prostitute, who plays all the game of allurements, shall sometimes mimic this outward simplicity. Supposing it to proceed from the heart, it hath really more charms than splendid attire, which may be less easy and commodious to the wearer; and as soon as known to be *out of character* appears preposterous.

*D.* According to this opinion, women who mean to deceive, defeat their own ends: as gay attire doth not please other people, so much as it does themselves.

*F.* Their meaning is to decorate their persons; supposing that fine feathers make fine birds, and attract admiration. Rich and lively apparel, by the consent of all nations, is in esteem; but a cobbler dressed like a prince, would make as absurd a figure, as a prince in the common garb of a cobbler. You will hear people talk of the advantages of promoting trade; as if this gave a sanction

fashion to all kinds of absurdities in dress. It is very difficult to draw the line between the different ranks of people, in a trading country, where property is always fluctuating; and where freedom gives every one a title to do as he pleases with his own: but still the virtue of individuals should guide them; for it seems to be a silly ambition to vie with our superiors, in regard to *external figure*. As to inward virtue, and goodness of heart, these may be cherished and gratified, without bounds! But our dress and deportment, often denote our characters, as well as our condition in life: and if we do not draw the line between *master* and *servant*, we destroy one material distinction in society. Among men, it is the servant *out* of livery, and *in* it. If it were so among female domestics, the distinction would be made; but as this seems to be impracticable, the more attention should be shewn to the propriety of their apparel, and the expence they bestow upon it. And there is this strong reason for it, that the more they save their money, the less danger they will be exposed to, when they are *out of place*; for I have known many instances of the fatal effects of necessity in this situation of female domestics.

*D.* The reasons you give are very strong; though I fear they are not such as will be much attended to: Virtue being duly guarded, it seems prudent in all situations to make a *decent appearance*.

*F.* Yes, as far as we attend to That sort of frugality which our connexions require. If I were a decrepid old man, and in want, would you spend fifty shillings on a gown, when five-and-twenty might decently serve the purpose? Believe me, my dear *Mary!* there are many in the world, who make an offering to their vanity, in the decorations of their persons, whilst every sentiment of tenderness and humanity is repelled, and no such thoughts suffered to take possession of the mind, let the miseries of their fellow-creatures be ever so apparent, with respect to the want of *necessary* raiment. This evil prevails much among the *great*, as well as That of eating and drinking too expensively. Such is the extravagance of some people in the article of clothes, they run in debt for finery, and hazard the being guilty of great injustice. Thus you see how pride and vanity war against the precepts of our great Lord and Master. We do not find, that he objected to any cloathing suitable to our rank and condition; but when he

required of us to be contented with food and raiment, he certainly could not allow, that any part of mankind should disqualify themselves for the duties of charity, by any wanton indulgence of pride or fancy in their clothing.

*D.* I am perfectly convinced of the truth of what you say; but I suppose that cleanliness, neatness, and health, are circumstances which the most virtuous ought to attend to in clothing their bodies.

*F.* What goes beyond this, in most cases, has an evil tendency, and wounds That charity, which is the high distinction of a *Christian*, is far more glorious than the splendour of a court. For the same reason, I lament, from the bottom of my heart, that in such a country as we live in, abounding in wool, and where every poor person may be taught to spin, almost as early as they are taught to speak, there should be any poor creature, who hath not wherewithal to cover his nakedness.

*D.* Doth not this arise from horrible laziness, or a strong inclination to wickedness and beggary?

*F.* So it happens sometimes: but there are many deplorable cases, which arise from other causes, as common sense may point out. Last *Sunday* I met in the next parish, several poor boys in rags, loitering about the road, not seeming to pursue any object. I enquired why they did not repair to church, and worship God on the sabbath-day. They answered, "We have *no cloaths* to appear in; our parents are dead; and the parish officers will not allow us any raiment." I replied, "My dear boys, do you consider that you are *Christians*, who stand bound to worship God, though you should go to church in rags? If you are *good boys*, the parish will have compassion on you; and the 'quire, or some of his tenants, may see justice done you: if you will be industrious, you may soon be in a capacity of providing yourselves with raiment." At the same time, I wrote their names in my pocket-book, intending to make further enquiry. I could not but suffer some portion of self-reproach, for *seeming* to put things so much to such an issue, when I *thought* that those who should be their guardians, had forsaken them. It is a reproach to our country, and human nature, that any fellow-creature, particularly *orphans*, should be left in such distress, as to be without a decent covering for the *body*, or suitable attention to the *soul*.

*D.* Is it not the duty and interest of those,

who are charged with the execution of the laws, that they promote industry ; and that there be no raggedness or nakedness, nor any cause for “complaining in our streets ;” lest their own characters should be called in question.

*E.* You might add, that it is the common cause of religion and humanity that there should not be any such misery, as I have been describing to you. If such boys belonged to me, I would provide them with such garden tools, as are suited to their strength ; that being set to work, they should be able to get bread, or raiment : however scanty it might be, every day would render them the more able.

*D.* How can the health of these poor boys be preserved without *clothing* ? Their limbs must

be numbed, and their growth stunted. To be cold and comfortless is the same thing.

*F.* Cold that produces shivering, of course produces pain ; so that we may with great propriety say, those who want clothing, are in a comfortless situation : but it goes further ; for in no season of the year, are they in a fit condition to earn their bread. Who will give employment to man, woman, or child, who is overwhelmed in filth and rags ? To be decently clothed, is a recommendation to *service* : and as a genteel appearance among the higher classes, gives a favourable impression of our virtue and sobriety ; change but the quality and price of the clothing, and the *poor* enjoy the same advantage, in warmth and decency, as persons in a more elevated station.

## P A R T IV.

*Civil Liberty dependent on the Moral and Religious Conduct of a People.*

## CONVERSATION I.

*The duties of religion essential to political freedom. The genius and temper of the people in regard to liberty. The nature of ill-founded jealousy, and political contests. Great riches the cause of great poverty. The indulgence of vanity, and the parade of life beyond certain bounds, productive of want among the inferior classes. The British constitution free from popular anarchy, and regal despotism. Wanton complaints of grievances productive of slavery. The origin of the names of Whig and Tory, and the practice of using them for political purposes.*

D. **Y**OU really think that we are the freest people in the world.

F. So far as I know any thing of freedom. How long we shall remain free, must depend on the quantity of virtue which we retain. So much strength in candour, justice, probity, and humanity, will secure to us so much freedom. No nation has such a well-contrived system of laws, to check the corruption of the heart, and prevent one man from injuring another.

D. But "laws are generally too strong for the weak, or too weak for the strong."

F. Who told you so? This is not generally verified in *England*; though it may be true enough to have occasioned this sententious remark. The *expense* of law, deprives some of their right. In forming our system, the wisdom of our forefathers was deficient in several points, which no succeeding age has rectified. The plan was intended to be reasonable, and to comprehend all the benevolent ends of justice and humanity; but the fear of making the remedy severe, or worse than the disease, necessarily left some defects, which perhaps cannot be supplied, but by the virtue of individuals.

D. And supposing no such virtue to be found.—

F. Then we shall feel the bad consequences. We see many evil doers pass unpunished, from the laws not extending to every case. Reviling of authority, for instance, seems to be left free; and we take great advantages of the defect; though by taking them, we hazard our freedom. It is more dangerous to punish without law, however faulty the offender may be, than to let some crimes pass with impunity.

D. That is according to the nature of the crime.

F. Let the nature of it be what it will, it is supposed that a punishment is provided for it; but many offences are punishable in a *pecuniary* way; so much money is to be paid:—and the jury considers the circumstances of the case, and the ability of the offender. Five pounds to one, is more than five thousand to another. With all its defects, ours is a frame of government so perfect, philosophers of all countries admire it. But they say it is too good to last long, as it requires a larger portion of virtue among the people, than can be reasonably expected. How

true this sentence may be, time will shew. It hath been also said by a foreigner of reputation as a statesman, that *if the English ever lose their liberty, they will be the most miserable of all slaves.*

*D.* He concluded well, that our tempers were very ill suited to slavery.

*F.* I suppose he imagined, that when we shall cease to be governed, in a certain degree, by *reason*, and a *sense of honour*, nothing but a rod of iron will keep us under any restraint. But he might forget, that the manners of a people alter with their government; and things change their very name with *time*. I hope the time will never come, to give us occasion to try the experiment what slavery is. A *turbulent* disposition endangers the safety of all states: and when a people can be curbed only by the apprehensions of the gallows, or by fear, they naturally fall under the yoke of despotism.

*D.* The honest and sober will always stand up in defence of liberty, against the wicked and capricious.

*F.* The honest are often timid or ignorant; and the prudent and wise too cautious to endanger their persons. Many of the most learned and politest nations are now under despotic governments. In these enlightened days, their sovereigns are restrained in some measure by justice, humanity, and reputation; but they sometimes do monstrous things. When a people become turbulent and vicious, to a certain degree, like an unbroke steed, they must have a bridle. We disdain the thought: and this makes us so jealous, that we frequently suffer from each other, as much as the people who are not free. After all that can be done, there is but one way to preserve ourselves.

*D.* And what is That?

*F.* Just what I told you before; by being virtuous. To distinguish good from evil: to do nothing which the conscience condemns, for the sake of any worldly gratification: to consider that to be free, with regard to life, property, safety, and comfort, compared with the contrary, answers to the being in health, instead of labouring under some afflicting disease.

*D.* I perceive that liberty does really depend on obedience to the laws of God.

*F.* Most undoubtedly: What is it brings so many to an untimely end, but disobedience to those laws. In these days, we do not hang peo-

ple because they are steady to their religion, provided it does not lead them to disturb the peace of civil society.—You may as easily comprehend, that every act of cruelty or injustice in your own conduct, prepares the mind to countenance the same vices in another: and what is this but tyranny? Few are apprehensive that tyranny can come from the lower classes of the people; but you may perceive very clearly, that those who act turbulently and capriciously, and insult authority, do so far call for a degree of violence, to controul them, that the transition from the mildness which is inseparable from a free government, may be easy to a tyrannical one. Government there must be: and they who *will* not submit to one form, *must* submit to another.

*D.* But all profess to love liberty.

*F.* Aye, *Mary*: the most restless part of mankind in all ages, have bellowed the loudest for liberty; at the very moment they were acting a part, so injurious to the cause of real freedom, they were plunging a dagger into the breast of their country. *Liberty* is as a handmaid to *laws*; and if these are not duly respected, she will grow dissatisfied, and leave their service; or what is much the same, stay and die with them.—

*D.* You consider liberty and virtue as sisters.

*F.* Even so: and those who are wise, *cherish* the one, because they *love* the other. It is agreed, on all sides, that our danger is from our *corruption* and *irreligion*: and how are *ministers of state* to do That, which ministers of the gospel cannot accomplish? To suppress our *infidelity*, and regulate our desires after wealth, requires the exertion of our strength and vigilance, that they shall not over-balance the remainder of our virtues. I do not say, *the poor remainder*; because it appears, I think, that we have yet a great deal. Within the compass of a *few hundred years*, this land hath suffered many *convulsions*.

*D.* By *earthquakes*.

*F.* No, child: by *civil wars*, created by our *impetuous* tempers, and want of *wisdom*.

*D.* Hath much mischief been done?

*F.* Much mischief!—Thousands have been slain by the hands of school-fellows, or fellow-citizens, relations, or perchance those who might once have been *friends*. So Heaven was pleased to chastise us: and we may learn by sad experience, the folly of *talking*, *writing*, and *reasoning* ourselves into a *political frenzy*. It can hardly be said, that at any time we have been in such

*happy*



happy circumstances, as at present; but some gigantic evils walk close at our heels (a). Some think the state is more in danger, by being overbalanced by numbers of persons of great property, than from any lawless authority, which can be exercised by the crown, or its ministers. It is not right that we should melt down any middling ranks of people; but if some grow very rich by their industry, or very poor by their extravagance and folly, they will change their condition of course. In the mean while, the produce of the earth is the common bounty of Heaven; and the poor, who are industrious, should never be in want.

D. But should there not be such consideration for the most indigent, as always to keep them in comfort, when they *will* work?

E. It is generally so: and now they talk of COUNTY HOUSES OF INDUSTRY, where work is to be provided, to supply the defects of the parochial economy.—As to the rich overbalancing the poor, in such a degree as to make one a slave, whilst the other lords it over his fellow-subjects, we are to remember, that the rich themselves are often as different in sentiment from each other, in their political principles, as they are in condition, compared with the indigent. Things are as equally poised here, I believe, as in any country in the most civilized part of the world. Misery there is, and misery there will be, here, and in all other countries!

D. But we may alleviate ours by new laws, and always live in hopes of domestic peace and tranquillity. If we are as happy as we can be, with the portion of virtue we possess, of what do we complain? That we are not angels, or that all our have not the command of the riches of the world?

E. Where there is most reason for complaint, it is chiefly of too much eagerness after gain; and their vanity is so liberally indulged, great riches produce great poverty.

D. How can that be?

E. By devoting too much time and money to the ornamental part of life, and luxurious extravagances among the higher classes, and too little to the necessaries and conveniences of the lower. When women are left widows, with numerous families; or the husband's la-

bour is so much short in value, to a supply of the necessaries of life for his family, they have scarce any thing to eat but potatoes; I mean, in such parts where this root is cultivated in abundance. It is true, the aid of the parochial charity steps in; but this does not always produce the good effects of a proper distribution of the bounties of Heaven, by the private care and attention of the wealthy to furnish the indigent with the means of supplying themselves. The parochial provision, in some cases, renders the poor less provident, and less able to provide the means of living, than when domestic industry is cherished, and the fruits of it become the sweetest food! Without entering deeply into the subject of parish rates, I must observe, that if fewer persons were employed in superfluous follies for the rich, there would be greater numbers working for the ends of the wise and merciful, to render the people in general more happy. The number of domestic men servants in the kingdom, who spend three quarters of their time in lounging about a house, and the other quarter in a way that women might supply their place much better, is very large: I dare say above an hundred and twenty thousand (b). Let us call it eighty thousand, and make them useful in their proper employments, and thousands of women will be provided for.

D. How would you divide the eighty thousand men?

E. Let them work in the field, or in the loom, from whence they came. If one third part were at plough, and one man can furnish food for eighteen men, as is generally computed; and two thirds manufacturers, if one manufacturer can provide for ten; they would provide for near nine hundred thousand.

D. Good Heaven! is it possible that food and raiment could be provided for such a number by those who are now idle?

E. But I have not yet computed the value of the land they are to plough, nor the raw materials to be manufactured. Let us set these as high as two thirds the value of the labour; and still we find provision and existence for above three hundred and seventy-three thousand persons! I will suppose many of them to be the aged parents, sisters, nephews, or nieces of the very footmen themselves, who might

(a) The American rebellion.

(b) This is near 1 to 40 of the inhabitants of England.

might also enjoy an independency far superior to parochial rates, or the splendid servility in which they now live.

D. I question much if they would all join in this opinion.

E. Perhaps not: but I could give them many reasons why it would be better for their souls and bodies. As an example drawn from real life, of persons industrious in their way: You have heard a great alarm spread among people, of certain tradesmen and artificers, lest an additional tax should be laid on *coach-wheels*. The reason they assign is, that it may induce some lords and gentlemen, who keep *two* or *three* carriages, to lay down *one*; by which means, say they, many *wheelwrights, smiths, carriers, clothiers*, with a number of *coach-painters*, &c. may be deprived of their bread. This comes home to the very case; for our misfortune is, that so many useful hands are employed to a useless purpose. Let us consider if the leather were converted into shoes; the *wood and iron* into *spades and ploughshares*; and the *cloth linings and hammer cloths*, into *coats and waistcoats*; whether the land would not abound more in plenty and comfort: and as to the *painters*, we may colour and varnish ourselves, till we know not what kind of creatures we are. I do not say but that we may have coaches, but not in such numbers. The *fine arts* may add to the grandeur of individuals, and the shew of a *great people*, which is in character to a certain degree; but if we go on indulging our *fancies*, we shall neglect the virtues, and the arts of peace, which increase our numbers; whilst the strength and stability of the state depends on being *usefully* employed: For how is the fine painted coach to give *strength* to the state, or *comfort* to the honest husbandman? May it not rather bring us into a lingering consumption? A fine gentleman may put on a fine coat, but it will not prevent a fever, nor a cough. If he catches cold, it may bring him the sooner to the grave, and the public lose a subject.—It is incredible how valuable a good ploughman, or husbandman, or good manufacturer, is to the state. By parity of reason you may also understand how necessary it is to have an eye to *marriage and increase*; and how hurtful it is to employ so large a portion of the flower of the nation, in the fruitless parade of equipage and the table.

D. But pride and vanity will have their share while *money* is to be found.

E. Very true, my daughter: we see the lust of the eye and the pride of life carried to such heights, in some countries, that little or nothing is to be seen but *grandeur* among one part of the people, and extreme indigence and misery among the other: and freedom being banished, the more despotic the government, the greater the number of the indigent.

D. Is it *always* so?

E. No: if a despotic prince happens to be a wise, humane, active man, and uses his authority to oblige his people to take care of themselves, and of each other, they are the happier. Whatever cause there may be to complain, in any country, *liberty* affords numerous advantages with respect to *mind, body, and estate*; but you see the more eager we are after money, as the means of gratifying ourselves in the *pomps and vanities*, and *sinful pleasures* of this world, the greater danger we run of losing our liberty.

D. And how is it when the higher ranks quarrel for the emoluments of office, and attempt to hinder the *public business* from going on?

E. This often operates very fatally: it creates such difficulties and perplexities, as sometimes prove the forerunners of the destruction of national freedom.

D. This confirms your doctrine, that if *virtue* is not cherished, liberty will grow sick. But I suppose, with regard to the common passions of mankind, we do not differ much from the rest of the world.

E. As a *commercial* nation, we seem to be too eager after riches: as a people enjoying *liberty*, we are frequently *too jealous*; and as having a *foolish* fondness for the reputation of oratory, we are apt to lose sight of common-sense, and idolize *words*. As an *understanding* people, we *refine* on our situation, much beyond measure: as a *spirited, free, daring* people, we are apt to work ourselves into a rage of *politics*; and every one pretends to judge and decide on That, which only a few understand. Upon the *same principle*, it is very displeasing to people of sentiment, to hear complaints at a venture, and their neighbours talk themselves into an ill humour.

D. This must be equally mortifying to a *good subject*, and a *good man*: but so long as we are peaceful, what signify our political opinions?

E. There we beg to be excused. We fight off not only our reigning fashionable notions of *measures* proper to be pursued for the present, but

but sometimes the jealousies which reigned among our forefathers.

D. What jealousies ?

F. Some of our kings in the last century, had imbibed notions of arbitrary power; and they had abettors. The opponents were for the destruction of *kingly* government:—both sides overshot the mark. The happy state which we now enjoy is *limited monarchy*, or *kingly* government controlled by law; the power being so divided between *king*, *lords*, and *commons*, as to balance equally for the common good.—But we find these two different parties for a long time loading each other with odious epithets; particularly those of *whigs* and *tories*; names which have been bandied about, in so undistinguished a manner, as to become ridiculous.

D. What was it which gave rise to these political names ?

F. Various accounts are given: but the most probable is, that *whig* is a *Scottish* word, signifying *wobey*; and *tory* an *Irish* word, signifying a *robber*, or *highwayman*. In the unhappy reign of *Charles the First*, the king's enemies charged him with favouring the rebellion then on foot in *Ireland*; and the name of *Tory* having been given to a *banditti*, who sheltered themselves in the little islands and bogs in That country, it was natural enough for the king's enemies to give his friends this name; though at the beginning of the civil war, the partizans of That prince had been called *Cavalliers*. On the other side, the *Oliverians*, or partizans of the parliament who had been called *Round-heads*, the name of *Whigs* was given to them by their adversaries, alluding to a sort of enthusiasts in *Scotland*, who living in the open fields and woods, fed much on milk: and this also is credible, because the *Scots* favoured the king's enemies.

D. This is a very probable account.

F. If at this time these words have any meaning, it is that *tories* are supposed to lean too much to the side of *kingly* government; or to throw too much power into the scale of royal prerogative; and *whig*, to restrain such power, the better to defend the liberties of the people: As times are circumstanced, scarce a protestant now remains, but thinks it was a right measure to call in King *William*, and to support the crown upon principles of *limited* monarchy, which means the control of all power which can injure the liberties of the people.

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D. Upon the whole, we seem to be an odd composition, whether we weep or laugh at ourselves, when we are humorous or facetious, to the hurt of our own peace. I fear we shew too much regard for this world, and of course too little for the next, to which every generation is travelling on very fast. With all our good qualities, are we not frequently not very deficient in reason and common-sense ?

F. There are many things in the world which depend more on *common-sense*, than on any other sense: but *common-sense* is not to be found in every *hovel*, nor perhaps in every mansion of the great.

D. Does freedom affect our religion ?

F. *Toleration in religion*, seems to work on our minds very differently from what it ought to do; for some treat it, as if it were a liberty of being indifferent whether they have any religion. Nations are sometimes at variance, on account of religious tenets; and the same people are foolish enough to disturb their own peace, on account of opinion or faith: But still we have *virtue*, *understanding*, and *humanity*, sufficient by the help of an admirable system of laws, to keep us together. You may perceive, that we have been sometimes a little out of our right mind about the politics of this world: but we do not contend about religion. I have heard my master say, that the *Turks* and *Persians* hate each other from generation to generation, for no better reason, than a difference in opinion who was the true successor of *Mahomet*. We have at present more different faiths, than there were tribes of *Israel*; but we say, "Suffer me to believe, and worship God, as I please, and I will not molest you!"

D. And is not this one of the advantages of freedom ?

F. Most certainly: when we make a proper use of it.

D. To be free, seems to require *good-sense* and *understanding*, as well as *virtue*: for if the people are inclined to give the *best* government the *worst* name, they will be apt to treat it with contempt, when they should honour and respect it.

F. This is the case with many good things in the world. Your remark is very just: but some expect a degree of perfection in rulers, beyond the measure of the virtue to be commonly found among men. When we talk of the *people*, however respectable a name it is, we are to consider, that they must have a body reduced to a small number to think for them. They are generally

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biased

bias'd by a few leaders ; and many are ill capable of forming any judgment.

D. Are there not many cases in which they may easily discover, that *good* might be done, which is not done ?

F. Ay : but it is easier to *find this out*, than to rectify it. All mankind are partial to themselves : and if one evil is removed by improper means, twenty may rise out of its ashes. This is what shallow politicians give themselves little concern about. We say that an evil *once known*, is *half cured* : but supposing this maxim to be in general true, we are to consider, that the other half of the cure depends on something more than the bare knowledge of the disease. This brings us again to the point whence we set out : it requires a degree of *virtue* and *resolution*, not commonly to be found. As a *free people*, we have this on our side, that the sovereign cannot be exalted, by any increase of his *power*, to a higher degree of happiness, than he already enjoys : and there is very little reason to fear he will make any attempt to disturb his own quiet.

D. *Power* they say is very apt to intoxicate : and the desire of it is very strong in the breasts of most men.

F. True : but our constitution is so happily formed, the temptation is checked in its first motions. The same temper and principle that may restrain you or me from resenting *small evils* committed against us, rather than hazard *greater* by resistance, may be supposed to operate on the mind of a sovereign, in a free country. According to times and circumstances, he will soothe the *turbulent* and *insolent*. I have lived to see many who have deserved *severe reprobation*, pass unpunished : How long such *temporizing maxims* will prevail, is more than I can tell you. At present the people keep their feet on *dry land*, and seem to stand secure between the *raging sea of popular anarchy*, and the *torrent of kingly despotism*.

D. You think the power is well balanced, and that there is no great danger on either side.

F. Were it not for the excellency of our constitution, and the proper power vested in the crown, we should see *once* and *fully* enough to set us all afloat in a *sea of adversity*. In this view, we are much in debt to the *benevolent* spirit of the prince on the throne, who looks with compassion on our *infirmities*.

D. In our turn, we also shew tenderness to our *bettors*.

F. *Perfection* is not the attribute of man. If the *great* would consider how we stand related to them : or if we were to make proper application for what we want, in the true spirit of our religion, and the understanding of good subjects, there would hardly be any *distress*. But if those whom Heaven has vested with *authority* and *power*, were to do *their* duty, do you imagine there would be no misery in the world ?

D. *There must be some misery*, you say.

F. If the rod of the civil magistrate were used with discretion, and *much* *often* applied, the follies of men's passions would be better restrained. What do you imagine occasions such *broils* and *contests*, *immoralities*, and even *bloodshed*, in the world, but *unruly passions* ? Our descent from one common parent, signifies but little, if we disregard our obligations to the great Father of the universe, and his unchangeable laws : if we run into monstrous excesses, as if we were formed by nature to *destroy* each other, we must perish at last.

D. I think that we are formed by nature to *preserve* each other.

F. So I apprehend. Let a man ask his own heart, which is the most pleasing to him, to *save*, or to *destroy* ? He only who has *deformed the beauty of humanity*, and the fair features of *mercy*, and supplied their place with the haggard countenance of *envy* and *crudelty*, can have any *pleasure* in *doing mischief*, or *destroying another of his own kind*. We are a very humane, ingenious, active, brave, intelligent people : yet often deficient in common-sense, disinterested public love, police, and religion !

## C O N V E R S A T I O N II.

*Probity the first duty in politics. The nature, end, and design of the combination, vulgarly called The opposition, as peculiar to the English. The effects of it on the minds of the people. The practice of ruling by kingly influence, as necessary to maintain any government.*

D. WHAT signifies this distinction of *whig* and *tory*? These names are unworthy of remembrance at this time: Can they make any difference with regard to a measure, whether it be good or evil?

F. True: but the *names*, if not the *substance*, signify, to this day, just so much as *parties* contending for *power* please to make of them. As to *hereditary* prejudices or connexions, our plan is settled: an admirable system is framed: it is proved to be excellent; and we have only to adhere to it, and be at peace. All the prudent and considerate part of the nation, who know when they are well, are satisfied with our present situation of *kingly* power, limited by law. This kind of government, is by far the best in the world: and whilst it is administered by a prince who considers the real interests of his subjects, we may esteem ourselves a happy people, though some things should not be exactly as they ought.—It is not in my power to describe to you half of what is passing: *court influence*, on one side, seems to be *necessary*; the combination called *the opposition*, on the other, acts as if it were to the last degree *dangerous*. Every man, and every *sect* or *party*, entertains certain notions: it sometimes happens, that such notions are *extravagant*, or *enthusiastic*; and if they are opponent to the *just* administration of government, however chargeable with *court influence*, they must tend to the disquiet of the state. Now, if I understand this matter right, *liberty*, or the *rights of subjects* is so sacred a thing, it cannot be supported long by *unrighteous means*. In all *states*, *power* is the companion of wealth, particularly where freedom reigns; and persons of certain conditions, especially *lords* of parliament, and the *commons* who represent the people, will thirst more after such power,

than is consistent with the public tranquility. Some of them, you may imagine, are poor, and others *covetous*, and know not when they have enough. From hence arise the temptations of *laying* and *doing*, against the officers of the crown, who are no less servants of the people, That which is not warrantable to *say* or *do* in common life. *Probity* is the only safe rule of government; and if those who are in office, and trusted by the people, are inactive, negligent, or fraudulent, so that the public is injured, such officers of the crown should be called to account, and answer for their conduct; being subject not only to the loss of *place*, but also to *penalties*, as the nature of the offence may be. If, on the other hand, they do their duty, let them be treated, not only with *civility*, but also with *kindness*. Those who *would be in office*, should be reprehensible, and considered as *offenders*, if they use any *unfair practices*, and perplex the affairs of the nation from *private views*.

D. But who is to do all this?

F. You and I are settling the *law of right*; and exercising our wits, by fitting in judgment on offenders of every kind, who have seats in the great assemblies of the nation. To adopt a *principle of right*, must precede a righteous conduct. Men do not act from chance. If no such unfair behaviour be considered as an objection to their being vested with authority, you may easily conclude, that a want in political disputation will be carried on, till perchance we may have nothing to dispute about. If small things increase by concord, great things will decrease by discord. Every one who does not esteem moral and religious considerations, as the pure duties, and most important obligations of life, but uses them as they conduce to *worldly ends*, will in the issue find, that if liberty stands her ground,

she is not indebted to him for her stability. No government can stand upon principles of freedom, but as the *majority* of voices in legal assemblies decide; and those who are repugnant to act according to the decision of such majority, and fight battles over again, *within* doors, and *with. ut*; however natural this may be, to men of warm complexions, yet they depart from the rule of freedom, and act as if they would be arbitrary if they had the *power*.

*D.* This must clog the wheels of government. Whether the *majority* be right or wrong, business cannot stand still.

*E.* You may easily conceive, that many occurrences are involved in difficulties on all sides; but if we do not abide by the decision of the *majority* of an assembly, we may as well have no such assembly; and consequently be ruled by arbitrary power in the hands of *one man*.

*D.* The *minority* supposes it shall get the people on its side.

*E.* To do what? Would you have the people overturn their own liberty? They must have *representatives*; and these must have a rule of decision; and this can be only by a *majority*: and let an assembly wrangle ever so much, it must come to this issue.

*D.* But if it should be by *court-influence*; and that it is a clear point the people are injured.

*E.* From the nature of our constitution, and mode of governing, the king being one of the three estates, and the first acting magistrate, must have his portion of *power*; and he must not *abuse* it: but with regard to the people, if there is the least foundation for petition, and they represent, they may be morally certain that judgment and justice will be administered. As to the *individuals* who are vested with authority, their wisdom, candour, and probity in private life, and their talents in public business, must be winnowed and sifted, before we can form a judgment of their worth, and how far they may be depended on, to administer succour to the people. We seem, upon the whole, to have such a crowd of statesmen, that the trade of statesmanship is overdone; and that it might thrive better, if the *quality* were mended, and the *number* reduced. There are many cases difficult to decide upon; but we must trust to somebody: and although in a multiplicity of counsellors there is safety; yet for the reason that confusion often attends it, we see governments

under arbitrary sovereigns, have sometimes, and in some instances the advantage. Such is the state of man; and such is their dependence on virtue for their *freedom*. This seems to prove that *the opposition*, as a tacit combination against an administration of a *government* which is *free*, can hardly be productive of safety to liberty; but rather destroying the *good* derived from *the multiplicity of counsellors*, renders the part dependent on the royal prerogative the most essential to *safety*, which is the *prime* object of government.

*D.* In addition to the parliament, the king has a council.

*E.* This is composed of the most experienced and respectable part of the nation. My master used to remark, that where *something must be done*, the obstruction of all measures, whatever the pretence may be, is subject to the highest objection; for the worst side a man can take, not being a direct enemy to his country, is that of being inactive, or *not doing any thing*.

*D.* If our situation, compared with that of other nations, is as good as you imagine, how comes it that we hear so much about *the opposition* in parliament.

*E.* *Ministers*, like other men, are subject to err; and some things are often untowardly situated; but the principle on which the *opposition* acts, appears to me as *false* as it is *dangerous*. I have always understood, that in every *community*, an *honest* man would declare *against* every measure that he thought *wrong*; and for every one he thought *right*; and consequently *oppose*, or *not oppose*, as his conscience might dictate. If a man ought not to give a vote, in a question *above* his comprehension, he surely ought not to give it *against* the dictates of his conscience.

*D.* And is the contrary a rule of conduct to the *opposition*?

*E.* Those who compose *the opposition*, reason thus: "The power is put into *wrong* hands; therefore we oppose all measures, in order to obstruct a *wicked* administration of government."

*D.* But what is to be the end, if *all administrations* are called *wicked* by those out of office? And who is the judge whether it be wicked or not?

*E.* *The opposition* itself is the only judge: they do not appeal to any other power; and they are previously determined what sentence they will give, before they hear the cause; and they give this reason for it: "If the persons employed

by

by the king are permitted to direct, they will run our vessel on a rock; they will destroy our constitution."

D. What rock?

F. The rock of which discontented people talk, oftentimes meaning nothing more than a difference in opinion, or the desire of being made the *pilots of the state*. This is the *pl. r.*; and it hath been the same for *fifty years* that I remember. *The opposition* is understood to go further, by saying, "If the means we use are occasionally *wrong*, yet, as the *end* is good, it gives a sanction to our conduct; and of course converts *evil* into *good*."

D. This argument also is too high for me. I can readily comprehend, that *good* may come out of *evil*; but not that I am warranted to do *evil*: and I cannot persuade myself, that any man is warranted to vote against a measure he thinks *good*, being obliged by the nature of his trust, to vote according to his conscience.

F. Yes: but the same language is *always* talked by those who compose *the opposition*, let the persons change ever so often. I apprehend this custom to be absolutely incompatible with the preservation of a free government. If some who are appointed *representatives* of the people, oppose others, not according to the dictates of their minds, but from *partialities* towards particular *persons*; such a conduct cannot administer to *stability*; it is not a *reasonable, upright* conduct.

D. Does not the pretence of *defigning good* by *doing evil*, undermine the foundations both of natural and revealed religion.

F. I fear religion is not thought of. In a political view, if I lean to the side of one, for no reason, but that *he is my friend*; or against another, because *he is not my friend*, I cannot be said to give my *free voice*: and whether the *friendship* or *partiality* relates to one man, or an hundred men, the case is exactly the same. If I *judge* or *act partially*, I am the more apt to judge or act unjustly, and so far subject to the imputation of *injustice*.

D. But will not this argument hold as good on one side the question as on the other?

F. With this material difference, that the majority is not under the influence of doing wrong from a combination against other men: and an imperfect administration of government, is better than *no government*. Our forefathers very wisely foreseeing what would happen with regard

to such *contests*, not only vested a considerable power in the king, but he is also as a kind of *umpire*: he can encourage his subjects and servants to do their duty, and go on fairly with *business*: and as all questions must be determined by a *majority of voices*, there is a supreme legislative power, ultimately as decisive as That of a despotic monarch.

D. But the national assemblies take care how they exercise their power.

F. They can never be supposed to act as *one man*, who may be foolish or capricious; nor *despotically*, as when *one* is vested with unlimited power, but as the necessities of the times may render any *extraordinary* exercise of power, expedient to the preservation of the people.

D. I perceive the distinction, and that such power must be lodged somewhere, as no mortal can tell what a day may bring forth.

F. You see that *the opposition*, from the very name and office which it takes, is to *oppose*, and in effect to *obstruct*. Instead of oiling the springs of government, and helping on its progress, it throws dirt and sand, and impedes its motion. My master used to say, "I consider *the opposition*, taken in a general view, as the *child of freedom*; but being begotten *in corruption*, and nourished at the *mother's breast*, it partakes most of her bad qualities." It is now grown up; and professing to be an enemy to all the measures which a *majority* shall think right, its ruling principle is *obstruction*, as if it were sufficient not to do any harm, and consequently *to be passive*, and leave all to Providence.

D. *The opposition* does not say so much.

F. No: but whether the measure be good or bad, it obstructs it.

D. Do not *the opposing members* mean to bring *offenders* to justice?

F. Their plan is the worst calculated imaginable for any such purpose; for where there is an *uniform opposition* to all measures, objections to any conduct really *hurtful* or *dangerous*, are not distinguished, but rather confounded. Besides, can those who act in this manner, gain any credit with the common-sense of the *king*, or the *people*, to bring a minister to a *fair trial*? If they oppose measures which are salutary, and measures that are pernicious, *advice*, though *good*, coming from such a quarter, is subject to be treated as persons who are given to falsehood; their words, though true, are not believed.

D. What

D. What kind of impressions do you find the people receive of *the opposition*?

E. You may easily conceive, that their hearts lean to the side of it, from an opinion, that *men in office* generally *abuse* their power: And being more conspicuous by station, their flaws are always most apparent: but observing how constantly they are told that all is lost; and that we are *undone*; and yet, in general, seeing no such thing happens, but that we go on as we did before; they suppose these declarations are much oftener the froth of *passion*, than the substance of *reason*: and yet, as there cannot be much smok without some fire, they conclude that all things are not as they should be. They know that the *king*, being the head of the *church*, as well as of *civil* government, and making *one* of the *three* estates of the realm, the united force of all three should be constantly employed to inspire their minds with a just sense of religion. They also know, that the fundamental principle of our faith, is *charity*, which comprehends the love of *peace* and *good order*: They are sensible, that no peace or good order

can be learnt from *fruitless contests*, founded on no better principle, than a constant, uniform opposition to government, let ministers act as they may, properly or improperly.

D. Does *the opposition* breed private animosity?

E. Among the weaker and less experienced part, a *coldness* often ensues, and *sometimes resentments run high, for the day*: but the *wise* consider the weakness of mankind in this instance, and the difference in political views, as mere opinion; and by this means, avoid private animosity. Seeing that there is more *folly* in the world than *wisdom*; and that the principle on which men generally act, is oftener the effect of *vanity, ambition, or pride*, than of *reason*; they may suppose the chance to be always against such a decision, as is totally unexceptionable.—We know that men are frequently wonderfully virtuous in *speculation*; but when they come to the *practical* part, they either find difficulties they did not apprehend, and flinch;—or their *passions* draw them into the same beaten track which they *so furiously* pretended to avoid.

### CONVERSATION III.

*The bad effects of indiscriminate opposition, with regard to the mutual respect of the representatives of the people for each other, and the reverence due from the people to them. Expulsion with a member in opposition, in relation to his conduct.*

D. **WHAT** is your opinion with regard to the part which *we in humble life* ought to act with respect to *the opposition*?

E. When it acts foolishly or wickedly, to be sorry that people are no wiser and better; and *mind our own business*.—I will add,

1. That if we are to do, or rather to *think* any thing, let us consider whether any evil really exists; and if it be not great, whether the attempt to remove it may not introduce a greater.

2. That all attempts foreign to our proper character, may expose us to evils of various kinds.

3. That if we undertake to condemn those who are in power *unheard*, let the power change hands ever so often, *murmurs* will never cease.

4. That the oftener ministers are changed, the greater number of discontented persons there will be.

5. That the more the sovereign is perplexed by the *change* of his servants in high offices, the more difficult will the administration of his government become; and the greater confusion will follow in the *executive part*.

6. That the passion of *condemning ministers of state unheard*, or upon *news-paper* evidence, is the way to turn the tables upon ourselves; and perchance to be, on our own part, condemned unheard.

7. That we may sport away our liberty, as if we were wantonly throwing about fir-brands, and



and with the fool in the proverb say, "Am I not in jest?"

8. That the meanest peasant, in this country, talks as if he thought himself born a *politician*.

9. That the wiser people are, the less they talk of things they do not understand.

10. That the better Christians men are, the more they will be inclined to peace.

11. That the better subjects they are, the more ready they will be to submit to the lawful rulers of the land.

D. These are your principles: I like them much; they may do for the *prince* or the *beggar*: they tend to peace, and must therefore promote virtue.

F. I am glad you understand them so well. People who *think*, consider all combinations as evil in themselves, unless they are the effects of a very severe necessity; but a constant combination of a party against the *administration* of our government, will more probably one day prove the destruction of government than the support of it.

D. This seems to be plain reasoning. But we have this consolation, that *the opposition* is not always *virulent*.

F. True: sometimes it carries with it such a degree of probity and candour, as to be of great service to the people; especially if the crown attempts any dangerous influence, or squanders the wealth of the nation wantonly. So far it obtains credit with the most intelligent and disinterested part of the nation: But to imagine we shall support such a purity of conduct as to be devoid of all passion and prejudice, seems to be a *vain thing*. Where there is sense and candour, *opposition* changes its name: it does not wear the face of a combination merely to turn ministers out of their places, but to preserve the *public* from being injured. So far it has the appearance of justice.

D. The parliament, I suppose, is sometimes mistaken.

F. Aye, *Mary*; men, and communities of men, are fallible creatures. In process of time, how many acts have been *amended*, and how many *repealed*, the execution being found impracticable or improper. There are so many political questions of such difficulty, *debate* is as necessary to weigh the merits of an argument, as *resolution* to bring it to a *decision*; or prudence on the part of the crown, to which the executive

part belongs, to act with propriety. But if the majority is assured the minority will oppose whatever shall be proposed for the public good, be it what it may, their *resolution* will of course be taken before the business is debated, instead of its coming afterwards. This will be called *ministerial tyranny*, *court corruption*, and an attempt to deprive the people of their liberty, and again furnish new matter for reproach, and support a *constant* opposition.

D. This may go on in a round: that all should be of one mind, ought never to be *expected*.

F. You see what situation those people put themselves into, who instead of correcting and endeavouring to reconcile the minds of partizans, and destroy so false a system of politics, listen to false rumours, and departing from the paths of candour and probity, *weaken* the state, which both sides *pretend* to strengthen and defend. If the majority, or governing party, were *really* an enemy to freedom; if the minority, or *the opposition*, loses its reputation for candour, how is the evil to be remedied? But if the majority is a *friend to freedom*, and freedom we still enjoy, though not in its highest perfection; then *the opposition* may be called enemies to freedom. Upon the whole, governing by party, is governing on a false principle, creating such perplexities and discontent, as may one day end in rebellion, and the destruction of liberty. If the fountain is impure, the stream will be foul.

D. But when we find a difficulty in distinguishing where there is the most vice, or the least virtue, what is to be done?

F. I should first examine, where there appears to be the most *candour*.

D. Upon the whole, you imagine *the opposition*, as now managed, contributes little or nothing to the support of freedom.

F. The *good* it may do is not so level to my comprehension, as the *evil*. The *liberty of men's devouring each other*, is not a *liberty I wish to enjoy*. It is the manner in which men think and speak, that creates *respect* or *contempt* for each other's opinion. The world being governed more by *passion* than *reason*, incivility is sometimes as offensive to *men*, as it is to *women*. If the *representatives* of a people forget the dignity of their office, and become scurrilous in their language, the people may easily lose their veneration for them, as their *representatives*; and what can follow!—Some of the people may be doubtful

doubtful concerning the propriety of laws enacted under such contests, and be tempted to think they have the better title to condemn them. Whatever wisdom may be occasionally displayed, men are at best *fallible creatures*; but those who treat each other with scurrility, or something very like it, must not be surprized to hear both sides abused by the people, who being also frequently betrayed into party prejudices, will join in giving a stab to liberty.

D. This must have an evil tendency, as it injures *mutual charity* and *good-will*.

F. And if it wounds the dignity of government, what will be the end of such folly?

D. How came this *custom of opposition* to prevail, and be fashionable?

F. It may be ascribed to the nature of our popular and complex government; to an impatience of control; to the corruption of human nature, and our particular *turn of mind*. Such causes combine to form contests for power, into a kind of *systematical opposition* on one side.

D. The more immoral we become, the higher will *party prejudices* rise.

F. Aye, *Mary*, till at length we may be unable to maintain our liberty; and invite arbitrary power to prevent anarchy.

D. That *may happen*: but are we more corrupt than we were in *times past*?

F. Alas, my daughter! *Time*, which brings all things to an end, changes the face of *folly* and *wickedness*. At one period, these act an uncivilized part; at another, they are more polite; but still they undermine the foundations of our existence as a *free people*. Of this we may talk more *hereafter*. It seems to be generally allowed, that success in *war* and *commerce*, and the inlet of wealth, have weakened the noble faculties, and sturdy virtues of the mind, which at some periods have reigned amongst us. As such virtues have given-way, a whole tribe of *effeminate amusements*, attended by pomp and parade, have made *inroads*, and pitched their tents amongst us; and we have been fools enough to quarrel who shall shew them the greatest respect. So it is that nations become ungovernable, except by *arbitrary power*; and a combination of causes work against *liberty*. We are reputed to be an *inconstant people*. Sometimes we play tricks with *liberty*, which her modesty and dignity will not bear. Some of our sovereigns

in former reigns, have also had a separate interest from the people, which hath induced them to employ such ministers, as would gratify their *private partialities* for *foreign dominions*.

D. But thank Heaven we have a *British king*.

F. True; and we ought to be thankful: but That which used to give birth to *changes* and *servile dependences*, has created a disease which requires time to cure; and I apprehend to be the secret cause of some late convulsions in our politics.

D. I hope we shall not hereafter squander so much time in *fruitless wrangling*, and finding faults, where there are none; or neglecting the correction of them where they really are.

F. So far you judge like a girl of *common-sense* and *christian virtue*; but these are two articles which make but a small part of the character of *opposition*. As we now manage, it seems to create a want of candour, if not a distrust of *probity* on all sides. It is not but that the *opposition* may search the wounds and sores of the *body politic*; but if it uses a *poisoned probe*, it will infect the whole mass, and bring on the more speedy dissolution.

D. You talk *poetically*; but I understand you well.

F. In plain sense: whenever the partizans of *opposition* indulge themselves in personal invectives, and are so deficient in candour, as to hunt men in office, whether the measures pursued be good or evil, we may conclude---

1. That when the members of a nation vilify each other by scurrility, they stab their own dignity, and hazard the life of their authority.

2. That the energy of government, and the safety of liberty, must depend on discipline.

3. That the adulation offered by a party man to leaders in the *opposition*, is generally more servile, than that which in our days is paid to the king, or ministers of state.

4. That there is greater danger of *rebellion* or *anarchy* being created by the combination of the *opposition*, than of *tyranny* or *oppression* from any thing there is to fear from the crown or the ministers.

5. That such opposition, losing its dignity, cannot answer the end and design of scrutinizing the administration of government, how necessary soever it be on many occasions.

D. All this you lay down as *your opinion*. If the

the people were of the same mind, would they disregard *the opposition* so much as perhaps they ought to do?

*F.* Their prejudices, and prejudices there will be, are generally *against* government; and vulgarly taken as a proof of virtue: this is one secret cause why there is such a thing as *the opposition*. When the people, not stimulated by *the opposition*, complain, I conclude they have some reason; but when *the opposition* influences them by personal application, I suppose there is, at the bottom, a design of *awing* the administration of government; which I apprehend to be contrary to the spirit of freedom, a strong evidence of the corruption of our manners, and threatening the corruption of our constitution. Of this we have lately seen many instances, in the persons of those who have bellowed the loudest for liberty. It cannot be expected that the people should clearly comprehend the tendency of their own conduct; for so long as they are taught by this vain custom of *opposition*, that whatever is *against* government is *for* liberty, however extravagant the conceit may be, this conclusion being actually drawn, and adopted as true, it becomes *very dangerous*. They do not consider, that if government were totally obstructed, all order would naturally cease. Nor do they see, that next to the total obstruction of government, is *opposing* and thwarting it. If this be the uniform task of *the opposition*, supposing the pilots at the helm of the state, to be *buffeted* and driven from their station, will not the vessel be subject to be run ashore, or founder in a *storm of contention*? And what would you say, if in the course of time, under a prince of a daring temper, *force* were to take place, to prevent such obstructions: should we not be put in the most perilous state with regard to our liberty? To prevent oppression, is a noble task; but to *oppress* government is the way to oppress the people. There is a *mutual tie*, and *reciprocal justice*, from which there is no departing without great danger.

*D.* I perceive that a balance must be preserved; and that politics is a mere difficult business to understand, than I had any conception of.

*F.* So I presume:—But you see there is nothing more in this, than what *plain common-sense* dictates to those who will give themselves time to think. As to our being all of one mind, it is not to be expected: nor can there be any

certainty that we should be in a safe condition, as to liberty, if we were. Our great complaint at present seems to be, that those who are the guardians of the liberties of the people, not being in *place*, often depart from That rule of *uprightness*, which should distinguish a free people. To talk of *virtue*, and not adhere to such probity, as must ever characterize liberty, can produce no good on virtuous principles. Such conduct must wound the reputation of these *real* or *pretended* guardians; and if in the end they become contemptible, who is to stand up for liberty in case of real danger?

*D.* You now seem to be pleading for *the opposition*.

*F.* No: I think the thing is radically wrong. Difference in opinion, maintained with candour, will always challenge respect, and give opponents a reputation with each other: This is the only means of searching into *truth*. *Opposition* to particular proposals, will ever be made, so long as we are a *free people*: but some propositions will not be understood by many of those who oppose them: Some will talk, as you and I may do, at a venture. When measures clash with the interest of individuals, they try to make their own cause, the cause of the *public*, though they should sacrifice the public. As some measures may be calculated for partial purposes in favour of the crown, others turn the scale too much on the different side; and by injuring the power of the crown, in the issue, hurt the people; for the king, considered as the first magistrate, is the chief guardian of the people. Such events will happen: But a combination against *all* measures which are supposed to come from the crown, be they ever so good and proper, appears to be destructive of liberty, as perplexing government, to the detriment of the people. Such combinations for the purposes of opposition, in the great assemblies of a nation, diffusing their spirit and influence in private life, to judge from what we see of them, will one day produce more mischief than I know how to express. They will operate like the division of a *kingdom against itself*; and if such kingdom falls, can the same temper reigning among the people, ever raise it again to its former beauty?

*D.* We have gone on for many years you say; may we not continue in the same way for many more to come? We love a little contention.

F. If it were but a little, I should not indulge a single fear about it; but when I see it carried to great heights, I think it more than possible the passions of men may involve a nation in great distress.

D. If the party called *the opposition* adopts absurdities, how can it hold firmly together?

F. It may hold long enough together to set us in a blaze, though it perishes itself in the flames. We are sure, that by the *present mode* the people, who must always depend on government, have the mortification to behold much time lost in fruitless debate. A thousand good things which might be done for their service, are unavoidably neglected or postponed.

D. But you say, that by debating, *truth* may be discovered.

F. By our present mode of *declamation* and *opposition*, *truth* is often involved and confounded. If men could drop their prejudices, truth would sit on our lips, and be ready to drop from them in a few plain words; but when invention is put upon the rack to find arguments accommodated to a favourite passion, the art of haranguing usurps the throne of *truth*, to whose cause oratory is not necessary. Long speeches never give a man any credit for *veracity*, merely on that account. I have read of a famous man among the *Athenians* (a), whose truth and fidelity gained him such a reputation, that they gave him a *peculiar privilege*, that his evidence should be *lawful* without swearing. And as it is justly observed, that an *honest man* is believed, without an oath, his reputation swearing for him, *truth without eloquence* is no diminution of its value; but *eloquence without truth*, is to the mind, what *delicious poison* is to the *body*: and however pleasing to the *taste*, if it be suffered to remain in the habit, it will bring on a political dissolution. As long as I have been able to judge of any thing, the fruitless contests occasioned by this strange principle of *the opposition*, has appeared to me equally *absurd* and *dangerous*. I have always entertained so much reverence for the government of my country, as to think it wicked to obstruct it in what I thought *right*, still maintaining my integrity, as to what I could do, to *prevent wrong*.

D. You could do no more. How do we stand with respect to *foreigners*?

F. I have often considered what kind of credit

we might be in with *foreign states*, when they see us with a *culture* always in our bowels. *The opposition* has worse effects than this; for if it be calculated to obstruct whatever is attempted, whether the measure proposed be good or evil, it is a *perpetual intestine war*; and the most effectual method that could be taken, were it *purposely* intended to counteract our own *prejudice*. It is no less pregnant with mischief, as I have told you in regard to *example*; for if the *lord* opposes at a *bazaar*, because he is not *contented*, the reason holds as strong for the *meanest peasant* or mechanic. If a man says, "I like neither king, lords, nor commons; I will oppose every thing they *do*, or *can do*, or *mean to do*, be it what it will:" such a person may as well decamp, and say he will no longer live under the government of his country,—unless such persons are in office as he chuses. This is the result of the unhappy system of our *undistinguishing opposition*. Each will talk to please himself; but *party prejudices* teach us blind attachments, which are admirable preparatives for *That slavery*, which is the very thing pretended to be the object of *detestation*.

D. *The opposition*, I understand, says it is necessary; and that it is designed to support liberty.

F. I have heard it maintained, that there can be *no government in England*, without *party*. That there is no *wisdom* without a mixture of *folly*, every one will grant; but that there must be such folly as the *opposition* amounts to, or we can have no government, seems to be reversing the argument; as if we would attempt to prove that a man must be a *fool*, in order to conduct himself happily. What is necessary to the rectitude of a man's *private* conduct, must be, in some measure, the same in *public*. The line of right is a very strong line: let it be the *only clue*, and the *end* will be found. Long experience has taught the world the gross fallacy of depending upon any other line: I hope the children of the present generation, will see the government of this empire, more permanent than it hath been; and every thing right and necessary, done in the time and manner *most practicable*: that whether *virtue* prevails by choice, or *necessity* stifles the perverseness of men's dispositions, government may be administered in a more consistent manner, and more beneficially to the people. Assiduity  
in

(a) Xenocrates.

in distinguishing the *propriety of measures*, will naturally tend to keep us *right*; but assiduity to oppose *all measures*, has as natural a tendency to divert the people from obedience to *all laws*. Let us suppose *the opposition* to declare in so many words, “*We think what is proposed is good and right, but we vote against it, because our party is not in office.*” Would not this be a very candid declaration, yet in its effects wicked and dangerous, in a high degree, to the liberty of the people? My master once spoke to an acquaintance of his, who was in *the opposition*, to this effect: “You are in *office as my representative*: You had my choice rather than another, because I thought you would not hunt after an *office under the crown*; and now you oppose a good law offered to you, in which my prosperity is concerned. Is it that you mean to make yourself considerable, and force your services on the crown? I hope that cursed trick will lose its magic force ere long; and that you will not succeed in getting into That state, vulgarly called *dependency*; which I apprehended you would not seek, at least not *by such means*. Whether you are in office or out, if I find you vote fairly, according to the best of your apprehensions, I shall not think myself in the least aggrieved: but if you sell your freedom to a *party*, no matter which it is, nor what your hopes or fears may be with respect to your *private views*, I shall think myself injured; and that you are not the honest man I imagined I had given my vote to.” The event proved, that this very gentleman got into a considerable office, and his sentiments were totally changed: the same measures

he had condemned before, were now *perfectly right*.

D. Perhaps he might leave the *wrong side*, and take the *right one*.

F. Aye: but his conduct carried with it a suspicion, that he had not acted upon a *fair principle*.

D. If interest has so great a share in the government of the world, and some questions are really difficult, we must not be surprized at any thing that happens.

F. Not surprized! but we must draw the line between him of whose honesty we have no doubt; and him who only *talks of uprightness*; or perchance laughs at the distinction, and maintains that *evil things* must be.

D. Is it possible any man can laugh at *virtue*? Evils will come; but woe to those by whom they come.

F. Let us wave this melancholy consideration. I always give my vote for him I think is most likely to judge best, and act the most honest part upon *national*, not *party* principles. Let the world go as it may, I know what I ought to do; and I *will* do it, though I *perish*. In all cases of difficulty, I would have my *representative* to lean to the side of those whom he believes to be the best informed, in relation to the business, and particularly if it is their immediate duty to attend to it, and not of those who take it up at a hazard, perhaps without information, or contrary to conviction: but supposing honesty and information equal, the surest side is generally That of government; for *this must go on*, though with some imperfections.

## CONVERSATION IV.

*Ingratitude to benefactors in a national view exemplified. Story of Mrs. Gaunt. Unmerited accusations dangerous to liberty. Obedience to government essential to religion. The importance of the mutual regard of individuals, as necessary to their virtue and safety. In what the love of our country properly consists. The necessity of moderation in our politics. Scotch and English compared. The enjoyment of peace the criterion to judge of the blessings of liberty. A peaceful disposition the characteristic of a Christian, and the most friendly to liberty.*

IF we dishonour our *governors*, we dishonour *ourselves*.

D. I readily conceive, that if we condemn them unjustly, we may be rashly condemned.

F. It is our duty as subjects to behave with decency, even to criminals, whom regard to the public safety obliges us to *punish*. *Respect* is essential to the administration of all government;

for if once we trample upon the dignity of it, the power of protecting us may be lost. When we stand in need of succour, we adore the hand that brings it. Shall we receive the benefit, enjoy the security, and spurn at our benefactor?

*D.* I fear this is the case in more instances than one. Oft have I beheld with sorrow, what poor reward the wounded or maimed man has found for all his perilous services in war.

*F.* This is the state of human life! When the soldier is necessary to our safety, he appears as an angel from heaven. When we do not want him, we think of him with jealousy or disgust. In all ages and countries, the greatest benefactors to the people have been occasionally the worst treated. To give you an instance what *ingratitude* can do, in the affairs of *party* and *government*, there is a memorable fact related of a Mrs. *Gaunt*, a woman of most distinguished benevolence and piety. Her character for humanity being established, a man who was in the Duke of *Monmouth's* rebellion against *James II.* being in danger, fled to her house, and implored her *protection*. She concealed him, and maintained him for some time. Upon his hearing of the *proclamation*, which not only promised an indemnity, but a *reward* to such as *discovered* any who harboured rebels, this *infamous wretch* betrayed his benefactors.

*D.* Good God!

*F.* And so little justice and equity prevailed at court, that *he* was pardoned and recompensed; and *she* was burnt alive!

*D.* Surely it cannot be—or he must have been an abandoned miscreant; and those *judges* who took his evidence, the *scandal* of the nation. I suppose she was known to be no friend to the king; and that That was her crime.

*F.* You may rather say, *no friend to the prevailing party!*—Yet, in regard to *ministers*, if any evil is done by them, they generally stand condemned; if any good, they are seldom applauded.

*D.* We ought to be as cautious towards them, as we would have them be tender towards us.

*F.* This is not the *common rule* of judging. When we run into extremes of reproach, and endeavour to inflame the minds of our fellow-subjects, we generally find that we are more indebted to Providence for our preservation, than to any foresight of our own. *Anarchy* and *confusion*, are the greatest friends to *despotic* govern-

ment: and this might as naturally take place, as that a wicked foolish man should govern a wicked foolish people. We hang together by mutual confidence, and the excellent frame of our constitution and laws; *king, lords, and commons*, assisting and controlling each other. If we violate the prerogatives of either, we destroy the plan by which we are rendered secure.

*D.* What is the reason these branches of the constitution are occasionally treated by numbers of the people, as if they were *distinct in interest* from that of the people?

*F.* When *virtue* becomes rare, every one grows suspicious of his neighbour. Some are really jealous to a degree of *phrenzy*: many more *act a part*, and pretend to be terribly alarmed. Whether this excites the *laughter*, or the *tears* of the *candid*, they will keep their eye on the straight line of their duty, knowing it to be the only safe one for them; and that they may as well hope for *universal righteousness* to spread her balmy wings over the land, as to see men *in office, or out of it*, to be without blemish. They also consider, that were they to indulge a *vain and foolish conceit of danger*, whether they comprehended it or not, they might act like a *madman*, who *fearing* that certain evil-intentioned persons meant to burn his house, at length fired it himself, in order to disappoint them: and so far it might be only a *madman's house*, but unluckily it set the *whole town* in a blaze. Do you, *my daughter*, learn to be silent upon subjects you do not *understand*; and shew as little regard to *Philly Prattle*, as to any *maggie* in the parish. Act the part of a *good subject*, and a *good christian*; that you may hereafter teach your children; for *humble* as your condition is, generations yet unborn may stand indebted to *you*, for their *liberty!*

*D.* I am always on my guard; yet desire to form some notion of what is in every one's mouth. I wish to know what is the reason we hear so much said against the *Scotch*: I thought we were both as *one nation*.

*F.* So we are, child; but you must allow *men* to act *childishly* sometimes; and as to national prejudices, they are found on all sides. The *Scotch*, who generally come to *England*, are well educated, hardy, and industrious. In a national view, *England* without *Scotland*, would long since have held down her head, and thought herself happy even to have been able to defend herself; and *Scotland* without *England*, might have

have been subject to *France*, a petty popish state of *bigots* and *barbarians*: as it is, both kingdoms flourish, to the great terror and mortification of their enemies.—But those who are determined to oppose, are equally determined to find fault.

*D.* And are we to go on thus to the end of the *chapter of politics*?

*F.* The *English* and *Scotch* are one people, as the *administration* and the *opposition* are the same parliament; yet you see frequently great bickerings prevail.

*D.* I have been sometimes plagued with the sound of *Scotch*, as if it were the croaking of the bird of ill omen!

*F.* You need not be alarmed, for nothing can be said to be *ominous*, which happens every day. If every one would correct himself, *there would be no time to find fault of his neighbour*, or his neighbour would have no fault in him to be found.—Mankind appear, for the most part, not to be in their *right mind*. I have often observed great contests for power, and arduous struggles for trivial matters, when others of the greatest moment hang suspended by a *thread*: the passions of mankind continually leading them, not only to neglect their *duty*, but to foment those divisions with which the world is so often *distracted*. “Whence come wars?” saith St. *James*; “Come they not from your lusts?” Nations contend with nations for *earth*, of which there is so much more than all can use. *Liberty* is an object, the enjoyment of which diminishes no man’s possession: but as immoderate indulgence at a *feast*, often creates a *surfeit*, which brings us to repentance for our folly; he who does not consider liberty as the means of *justice*, *peace*, and *comfort*, but drinks so deeply at her spring, as to *intoxicate* himself, what can follow but *political sickness*, pain of body, and quietness of mind?

*D.* I perceive your *politics* are of the *peaceful kind*. You have something of the *quaker* in your composition.

*F.* Not so: I see the necessity of using the arm of flesh: but to say the truth, I admire the habit in which the *friends*, as they call themselves, *discipline their passions* from the earliest part of life, so that they always appear to possess their souls in tranquility.

*D.* My disposition will never prompt me to act a turbulent or malicious part, either to a fellow-subject, or a stranger: and however cre-

dulous and *fond of change* some of us may be, I trust we shall not be so mad as to seek our own destruction.

*F.* All of us are valuable to each other, when we act our parts properly, and do our duty as we ought. Those who are most forward in clamour and discontent, think themselves of mighty consequence, or they would hold their peace: Instead of bringing fuel to feed the fire of contention, they would shew their courage by promoting concord, and find their reward in their own bosoms, in *that peace* which the world cannot give, and for which, the time will come, and may be near, when the wicked would give a *thousand* worlds. There can be no surer criterion to judge of the happiness of a *free people*, than their love of peace and concord, shewn by their actions.

*D.* According to your doctrine, *liberty without peace*, can be of no value.

*F.* Of what value can any thing be, but in proportion to the *real good it produces*? Will *wise men* be pleased with names? *Fools* are frequently delighted in being fools. It hath ever appeared to me, that in the same degree a people forsake the dictates of their understanding, they will forget what *liberty* means. The moderation of *statesmen* in the execution of their office, is not more necessary to prevent a habit of *tyranny*, or temptation to excess; than that the people should consider, if such moderation excites them to *throw down authority*, the ruins may fall on their own head. *Insolence* will generate *insolence*; and from the moment the spirit of charity ceases, the *chieft sweets of liberty are lost*. A mutual solicitude for each others good, without a mutual love, is an absurdity in terms. The *public tranquility* is the *first* consideration; and those who will not open their eyes to take a proper view of their own *prosperity*, must not be surprized when they see distress fall on their country. If fortune and character; if temper or disposition, experience or understanding, are of no consideration, when we speak of those who act in the various high offices of the state, where are we to seek protection? If we attend to every *idle story* that is propagated, with a view to give us a bias against one person in favour of another, we shall become the authors of our own misery, by being dupes to our own credulity and turbulent inclinations.

*D.* You consider the *most peaceful*, as the *truest*

*truest friends* to their country; but for the reason they are peaceful, are they not subject to be trampled upon?

F. No, child: those understand but little of the true nature of *peace*, who do not discover her alliance with *justice*. *Peace* is the friend of mercy, but the enemy of tyranny. The *lovers of peace* enjoy their minds in freedom; and being under no temptation to trample upon others, they are the less subject to be trampled upon. *Peace* always carries with her, authority, because she is always *cool* and *temperate*; and when she is compelled to strike the blow, it is generally heavy and effectual. Considered in private life, the more you cultivate the *love of peace*, the better humoured you will be at home; and when you go abroad, your heart will be the more inclined to good. This disposition enlarges the mind, encompassing the whole circle of your relations and friends, your neighbours, your fellow-subjects, and your country; till from a habit of generosity, you think it glorious *even to die for them*. This I take to be one of the genuine fruits of *liberty*; and whilst it promotes your temporal happiness, it will brighten your prospect of joy beyond the grave. *True freedom* comprehends every social virtue. The only rule to judge whether you really love your country or not, is by your solicitude for the happiness of your fellow-subjects: all the rest, like a pretence to *religion* without *charity*, is as *founding brass*, or a *tinkling cymbal*. So long as we cherish our good-will for our fellow-subjects, we give proof of *our love for them*; or, in other words, the love of our country, each according to his situation, and the degree of his *zeal* and *knowledge*. My master, in his poetical way, used to say, "Go to those countries where *tyranny* sits enthroned; you will see *cruelty* seated on her right-hand, and *terror* on her left; and before them stand *indignation*, *anger*, and *revenge*, ready to return the injury done the people, whenever it shall be in their power."

D. He thought then, that *virtue* is the only sure defence of liberty.

F. It must be so: only in the service of *God*, is *true liberty* to be found; and *peace* is no less essential to the preservation of it. This opinion, my dear *Mary*, is justified by the highest authority: the *truest lover of his country the world ever knew*, had this characteristic mark, he was called the *prince of peace*.

D. Very true, my father; and his coming into it, was proclaimed by the voice of angels, in these memorable words, "*Glory be to God in high: on earth peace, good-will towards man!*"

F. By the glorious example of *Jesus Christ*, we learn to reap the golden harvest of *concord*. By the good education of our children, in teaching them how to behave as true christians and subjects, we plant our forests with oaks; and by the force of *virtuous industry*, our deserts bring forth *strength* and *plenty*. It is thus, in the emphatical language of the scriptures, "*mercy and truth meet and kiss each other,*" and heaven and earth smile on the children of men.

D. I perceive how much our happiness depends on *peace*; and that liberty can flow from no other source. But if *party pride* and *contention* prevail, shall we be able to persuade the world to think seriously by what means they are to seek their own *happiness*?

F. Many are so eager in pursuit of their *pleasures*, as to neglect their happiness, knowing not what manner of spirit they are of. In our *politics*; in our private *domestic* concerns; in every path of life, where *vice* can find admittance, she will influence our manners, and render us *unhappy*, in proportion to her ascendancy. We may *flatter* ourselves into a belief, that the evil conduct of our superiors is the cause; but upon a closer examination, we shall find it to be our own. Nothing is more contrary to the spirit of humanity, or the sweets of *liberty*, than *discord* and *contention*; but by a close adherence to the doctrine of *peace*, the *poor* discover their *wickedness*, in judging *rashly*: the *rich* find, that wealth can never be so well employed as in the purchase of *concord*: the *great* become sensible, that only the fostering hand of *mutual love and good-will*, can nourish *liberty*: and the *powerful* also learn, that as the arm of *tyranny* would pluck from *their brows* those wreaths of honour which they wear, their chief safety depends on the preservation of *peace*, as the friend of *liberty*.

D. I have observed, in conversation on such matters, *for you know we are all politicians*, that those who breathe the most *moderation* and *good-will*, seem to have the greatest share of *reason* on their side. They always speak as if they were in search of *truth*.

F. There is much less danger from *peaceful people*, than from those who talk high of injuries which they *never received*, and which were *never intended*.



*intended.* Those whose passions are calm, are less subject to be seduced; and being as *upright* as *peaceful*, they cannot be *forced by necessity*; nor can they be corrupted by *flattery* or applause, to do any wrong.

D. Peace being such a friend to *liberty*, as well as to *religion*, I wonder the sermons give no particular rules to guide us in our *politics*.

F. Guide us, my child!—Is not the necessity of obedience to rulers strongly inculcated in the sacred writings, as essential to *peace*, and the *true service of God*? Are not *charity* and *mutual love* required under the penalty of everlasting punishment? And what is this but an injunction to love our country; to be good subjects; to maintain our own rights; and “*remember our end, that all enmity may cease!*” He who flatters a *tyrant*, is an *enemy to God* and his country. The value of *liberty* must be estimated by its *use*, and as the instrument of *happiness*; and when we speak of the happiness of man, we must consider him as a *being*, who never loses sight of *immortality*.—The love of *liberty* cannot be any thing foreign to, or inconsistent with the love of *God*; for if *liberty* be necessary to temporal happiness, and *God* the author of it, in order to that degree of virtue, which is required to give us the fullest enjoyment of *liberty*, we must *obey God*. And what greater happiness can the *public* enjoy, than *honourable peace*, undisturbed by false fears and hopes, or *heart-piercing* dissensions?—How many wars, foreign and domestic, do you imagine this poor nation has been involved in, during the course of the last seven hundred years? I have heard from people well read in history, that we have had fifty-nine wars (*a*), eight of them being civil broils. This amounts to a war nearly every *fourteenth year*.

D. Good God! I had no conception that *war* could happen so often, much less that we should have had such frequent quarrels among ourselves; but I suppose, in those days, we were less civilized.

F. The nature of *power*, and the legal right to the crown, were, in some of those days, not well understood; and property not guarded by law, as it is now.—Besides, we are at length happily united with *Scotland*; and if we are not capricious, beyond the measure of the folly of fools, and ignorant of our own advantages, we shall use our *liberty* like *freemen*, to the ends of our *happiness*, not quarrel about it like *slaves*, to produce misery. That national happiness depends on *peace*, is obvious in this view also, that *freedom* can give us nothing better.

D. But may not *peace* prosper under *oppression*?

F. No: It is not possible, according to my idea of it. If *peace* and *good-will* were joined together, by the voice of *angels*, it certainly means the happiness of mankind: I understand not how men can be *happy* and *oppressed*. This doctrine may be easily understood by those who have felt the pangs of *discord* and *confusion*. *Peace* is the privilege of the *poor*; and the *rich* can enjoy no greater blessing! Without *peace* there can be no solid joy. Every thing that inclines us to discord, threatens *pain*, *distress*, or *destruction*. Does not your own heart teach you, that where *peace* is banished from it, happiness is no longer to be found?

D. *Liberty* with misery, is a very comfortless thought.

F. In private as well as public life, we daily see what *miserable beings* those are to whom *peace* is a stranger: they seek shelter from the storms of dissension, but they find it not. There can be no compensation for the want of it in *private life*; and what security, or solid satisfaction can they enjoy, who through *contention* are often in want of a morsel of bread? The stores of *liberty*, secured by *peace*, are inexhaustible: she spreads smiles and plenty round her, blessing all her children so long as they love her, and shew their love to *God*, by their love to *man*.

C O N-

(a) With *Scotland* 11, exclusive of numerous occasional inroads and plunderings: *France* 21: *Spain* 6: *Holland* 2: *Denmark* 11: civil wars 8: with the *Algerines* and *Moors* several quarrels.

## CONVERSATION V.

*Liberty founded in virtue and religion. The credulity of the common people co-operating with the abuse of the press, dangerous to the common liberty. Reverence to laws essential to civil and religious liberty. The virtuous choice of representatives the only solid foundation of the freedom of the people.*

D. DO you really think so highly of it?

F. It is next to *virtue* and the *hopes of heaven!* Can any thing be so interesting to mankind as *liberty*, rightly understood? Can any thing contribute more to temporal happiness?

D. I am sensible of the value of it. But methinks it resembles *love*: we may be so *jealous* and fearful of losing the object, as to suffer more *pain*, than it can afford *pleasure*.

F. I have often thought, that an *extravagance of jealousy* may one day bring on the very mischief we dread. A jargon of words, of *no meaning*, or of an *evil tendency*; a turbulence of temper; a *fantastical attention to the sound of patriotism*, where *common honesty* is wanting; a pretence to love a *nation* without any true regard for a *single individual* of it! Are *such arts* calculated for any thing, but to delude the *vulgar* with a repentment of *imaginary wrongs*? Do you imagine they can answer any other purpose, than to introduce one man into power, to the exclusion of another; and by adopting a plan of a *perpetual opposition*, render our government a "*siege of troubles*," when it should be a strong fortress possessed in *peace*? What is liberty when we subject ourselves to perish by our own hands, or by giving an advantage to a *foreign enemy*? In many cases, it restrains the proper exercise of power, lest the remedy should become a disease; but the want of energy creates *anarchy* and *confusion*. Thus it is feared we may one day become accessaries to our own political dissolution.

D. We talk much of the glorious fruits of *liberty*; but surely it is something very different from what we see in our *news-papers*.

F. Very different indeed! *Liberty*, rightly understood, is the cement of a *happy society*: the punishment of *evil-doers*; the reward of the *virtuous*; the common love of justice and equity,

and the *glory of humanity*. Liberty is the pyramid from which *virtue* displays her standard. The genuine love of it, among *Christians*, charms the soul into *clarity*, which is the *bend of peace*. Understand it rightly, my daughter, and you will do as you would be done by; and strictly comply with the precepts of the *law* and the *prophets*. Observe what I shall tell you: mark my words, and you will find them full of *peace* and *comfort*. You will learn what belongs to your duty to your *fellow-subjects*, to your *king*, and to your *God*, the King of kings. Oit n have I seen *horror* sit plumed on the countenances of my fellow-citizens, not from the fear of a foreign enemy or rebellion only, but from mobs and commotions, and the discord threatened by incendiary *writers* and talkers.

D. That was only for the day.

F. This was too long: *Folly* brings such days too often to *visit* us. The most noisy advocates for *liberty*, are seldom *true friends to virtue*: and we must be *virtuous* ourselves, and have understanding to judge of it in others, before we are qualified to pronounce sentence. We often find a great share of *pride* at the bottom of the hearts of some, who have been at certain periods of life *virtuously inclined*; yet, when put to the test by *ill treatment*, or by not being gratified in an unreasonable request, have taken part *against* their country, of which ancient and modern history affords many instances. With us it is common, upon *any dissent*, to lit among the *opposition*. This does not prove any extraordinary malevolency of spirit, because some comparatively *honest men* fall into this snare, from a presumption that things cannot be right, which *they* have no part in the direction of. This proves how the *passions* govern; but it is not the *spirit of liberty*: it is not *That friendship for our country*, which the Saviour of the world taught mankind! When he

was reviled, he reviled not again. Though buffeted and spit upon, and nailed to the cross; yet, in his expiring moments, he cried, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!”

D. This was a glorious example of *disinterested love*; which, although a duty, men may more easily *adore* than *imitate*.

E. Yet it is the certain standard of *love for our country*: and why may we not love our country, or a number of people who compose it, when we often love a single person, though we are ill treated by him: And if *forgiveness of injuries* is the glory of human nature, may we not *forgive our country*?

D. Upon your principle, the *best Christian*, and the person most divested of *human infirmities* and *prejudices*, is the *truest patriot*.

E. This I take to be the true standard; the rest is *lukewarm*, if not *weak patriotism*, and often makes a sacrifice of the *public welfare* to *private passions* and interests.

D. Many people talk about *liberty*, without entertaining a single thought to any such purpose as your notions of it comprehend.—I have seen a *news-paper* to-day, in which there is a *letter*: were the contents of it true, it would give you great pain.

E. Have you a passion for *news-papers*, Mary?

D. You have heard me speak of my acquaintance *Philly Prattle*: she is very fond of *news-papers*: she devours every word; and thinks all is *true*, whatever it be, if it is *against* government.

F. A *brave girl*! Pray is she a *whig* or a *tory*, or has she a system of her own?—Would she be a *maid of honour* to the queen? Tell her first to be a modest *honourable maid*, and talk of what she understands.

D. She is a girl of vivacity and good-sense; but her brains are brim-full of *politics*. Who do you think the *letter* she produced, is addressed to?

F. The *King*, I suppose. We have amongst us a great number of *choice spirits*, who think themselves qualified to act as *cabinet-counsellors* to his majesty: but, contrary to the ordinary way of treating sovereigns, instead of *flattering him*, they *flatter themselves at his cost*.

D. To judge from the *letter*, one might be induced to think our government the worst administered in the world, and our nation absolutely undone.

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E. Aye, *Mary*, I have heard the story of being *undone* for many a ten years past; and it is not improbable we shall be *undone at last*, by talking so much of *being undone*; for by this we must needs offend that good Providence, which has taken such wonderful care of us. If what is said be a *lie*, those who say it are *liars*; but tell not your companion so much; it will do no good. I have seen a little of the world; and as your *father* and your *friend*, I tell you, if you pin your faith on such letters, you may soon become as *mad* as your companion. Be cautious whom you trust, not only when your *chastity* is in danger, but also your *gratitude to God*, shewn by your *fidelity* to your *king* and *country*. In my early days, the *king* was hardly ever mentioned but with *respect*: It was a maxim, that he could do *no wrong*, because his *ministers* were accountable; but these *scribblers* would have us believe he can do *nothing right*. The *bolder* they write, the more they expect their pens will be admired; and thus their *vanity is gratified*. Their letters act on the *minds* of many, as *nervous fevers* on the *body*, which occasionally affect the brain, and do *mischiefs*; but you are not to imagine they are *incurable*. As to our government being the worst administered of any in the world, there is no government that we hear of, so equitably administered. How long it will last, God only knows; for I have lived years enough to see, in the *body politic*, as in the *natural body*, many grow *sick of health*, and labouring to destroy their own constitutions. Though our political *constitution* is so admirable, we are often in a *drunken fit of politics*, and subject to die of the fumes of such *intoxication*.

D. But is government really and truly *always* well administered?

E. If it were never to err, it would follow, that it could not be administered by *men*.

D. What is the greatest defect?

F. The *corruption which reigns in the heart of man*: our frequent wars with two great nations, having created heavy expences, makes us uneasy under the burthen: add to this, a great attention to *trad.*, which though it produces so much good, is blended also with evil: it makes some *covetous*, and some *extravagant*, and inattentive to their morals. We have also played the fool, by too strong a desire of extending *colonies*, and *foreign possessions*, which are hardly within our reach to command; and shewing so much

F f the

the less care to the increase of inhabitants *at home*. This puts us in a state of *splendor*, but it partakes too much of danger, and splendid poverty. It is very hard to say what it will end in, unless we all do our *duty*, and contribute our share to the support of the common welfare. You may observe that many abuse each other with a *tyrannical inference*: so far they trample upon their own freedom. This is a truth much to be lamented; but it informs us, that our laws to *punish* are constructed upon principles of the utmost *temperance*.

D. If they connive at great *folly* and *perverse*, can they be said to be *temper*, merely because they do not press on our *freedom*?

F. If I am treated ill and abused, surely I am treated like a *slave*, and live as if I were in a state of war: *Peace* is banished from my dwelling.

D. If any one abuses you, may you not recover damages of him?

F. Yes, so far as damages shall appear to be due, according to the judgment of a *jury*; but *juries* seldom enter into the *immorality* of actions, or the tendency of them with respect to *liberty*. From this great lenity in our laws, arise such *childish tricks*, that an infant at the mother's breast cannot play a part more *puerile*. With regard to the *public*, no child ever talked greater  *nonsense* than is sometimes uttered into the world, with all the gravity of a solemn *political* dissertation. Though I have no apprehensions of any *designs* against our *freedom*, as some pretend; yet I fear the *immorality* of the times is such, that many never think of bending their minds to the *reason of things*, but accommodate their *reason* to their *passions*. Were I to say so much in public, it would offend the *Squire*, for he is as mad as *Plilly Prattle*.

D. Whether we offend *him* or not, if we grow wantonly wicked in abusing authority, we may draw down punishments and misery on our own heads.

F. You see how we *torment ourselves*. *Complaints* there ever will be; but when they are *well founded*, the manner of making them is essential to the end proposed, lest in vindicating our *own rights*, we violate the *rights of others*.

D. The preservation of liberty then requires *caution* and *judgment*.

F. Most undoubtedly. So long as we live under a *kingly* government, and allow, by agreement, certain privileges to the *king*, others to the *lords*, and others to the *commons*, the *three estates* being the representatives of us all, you may perceive that to violate the *rights* of any one of these, is to destroy *our own rights*: and whenever you hear your neighbours talk of the *people*, and not of the *representatives of the people*, you may be assured they have something in their *hearts*, which they do not comprehend; or in their *heads*, that they mean to make a bad use of. I speak *in general*: there are exceptions.—Nothing is more awful than the name of *the people*; the *crime* is in using it wantonly and improperly. You see the necessity of *caution* in our choice of persons to *represent* us. If you and I, and all our neighbours, men, women, and children, (and surely we are a part of the people) were to give our opinion, and judge for ourselves, would it not be a monstrous mishapen kind of thing, like to nothing, and productive of no good?

D. Cannot we judge sometimes if ministers are partial or prodigal, careless in their conduct, or neglectful of their duty?

F. For my own part, I often find it very difficult to judge of the conduct of my next-door neighbour, not knowing the causes or motives of his conduct. I grant that private vice, where it is really found, is no recommendation to confidence in public business. But if it were really as easy to judge as they imagine, what shall we say when we hear the word *people* bandied about, as if it could work a miracle; and often used by designing persons, not caring in the least degree whether the people perish or not? If we are undone, it must be by ourselves, by selling our birth-right for a mess of pottage, in chusing improper representatives; and above all, that we cease to fear That God, before whom we are bound to stand in awe, and carefully discharge all the duties we owe to him, to our country, and mankind.

## CONVERSATION VI.

*The dangerous effects of news-paper libertinism. A departure from the genuine use of the press dangerous to liberty. Notions which foreigners entertain of the English. Passions indulged as they tend to destroy moral freedom, necessarily bring on the destruction of civil liberty. The admirable frame of our constitution. Our natural inconstancy, and acquired depravity, militate against the purity of our political freedom.*

F. **W**HAT you mentioned to me the other day of your female acquaintance and her news-paper, made me think very seriously of *news-paper wickedness*. You are to understand, that there is, at this time, a great number of people amongst us, who live by *writing*; and many more, by daily publications of whatever they think will *sell well*, let it be ever so pernicious in its tendency to *politics, morality, or religion*: and as there are so many who can write correctly, beyond the ability of former times; others, who have studied the law, employ their skill in the examination of such intended publications, merely to see that they do not come within the limits of blasphemy, treason, and libels, as these are defined by the laws.

D. What a pretty use of law this is! I wish they would study their religion, in order that those may be punished who do as much as they can to disturb the peace of society, though at the hazard of their necks; for in truth, if they often go to the utmost the law allows, they can hardly fail of going beyond it.

F. Extremity of *right*, always borders on the extremity of *wrong*: and the tender complexion of our laws is such, offenders are screened wherever the least scruple arises concerning the construction of law. Thus many offences pass unpunished.

D. Is not this being very ungrateful, on the part of those who offend against laws which are so very tender?

F. Aye, *Mary*; but they have not virtue enough to consider this distinction: if they had, they would not offend, but make their passions obedient to the public good.

D. Our *news-writers* say, that our liberty depends upon *them*.

F. If this were true, we might well say, *the Lord have mercy upon us!* for they take an infi-

nite deal of pains to set us together by the ears. Their publications pass under the general name of the *liberty of the press*, which is held sacred amongst us.

D. May not such *liberty of the press* be made an instrument of destruction, and take away the *liberty of the people*?

F. So simple folks sometimes imagine: others say, not. Those who lament the *poor press* being so prostituted, comfort themselves, that the more it is *abused*, the sooner it will be restored to its *true and genuine use*: for the liberty of the press is sacred; that is, the liberty of the people to *use the press*, is sacred. But as the *liberty* of the subject is not *libertinism*; the liberty of the press is not the *abuse of the press*. The undistinguishing reproach of each other in *news-papers*, is very grievous. To take from me my *good name*, is worse than taking my *life*; but this *political disease* will work its own cure, by the disregard shewn to *such publications*. I have heard my master say, the *French* proverb is, "He lies like a *funeral sermon*:" we may make it proverbial, "*He lies like an English news-paper*."

D. Are *candour* and *charity* totally discarded from such writings, and we become pen-and-ink barbarians?

F. By no means: all political writings are not of the same stamp: some authors are persons of great candour and probity, and only mean to watch ministers of state, that they may not abuse their power; presuming that the nature of *our liberty*, requires the constant use of the press. Under this plea indeed, integrity and uprightness are often treated with the highest contempt, and villainy applauded. But you are to consider our customs and manners: a foreigner might be induced to think we were all ready to cut each other's throats, when no other evil than *tongue*

and *penal* use is intended. Some honest men are as blind in *politics*, as others in *religion*: therefore every prudent person should be well convinced of the truth of what is pretended, before he offers himself as an advocate in the cause.

D. Are not private personal invectives often extended to public affairs?

F. In the comprehensive view of the public, it ought not to be considered of any moment, except with regard to the evil example of indecency: but when the *great* abuse each other, the *public* is generally the football.

D. Should not all, who love the people, suppress their private dissentions, and take care the public be not injured?

F. It should be so, *Mary*; but *self* is generally at the bottom of such contentions: and most people act upon a general principle, which is to be independent of another: especially if he happens not to be of their fraternity. All men, whose passions are set afloat, are apt to forget, that the safety of their vessel depends on its being steered according to the compass of the laws: and that the best security of laws, is a right sense of mutual obligations, and mutual dependences. To-day your opponent is in *your* power; to-morrow you may be in *his*: According to the *Italian* proverb, "He who shews no regard to *his own life*, has the command of another man's;" but if we govern our passions, we shall never wish to be loosened from *social* ties. We *complain* if we do not enjoy all the advantages that mutual restraints produce to society; but you see the absurdity of *false* self-love!

D. When one man does That, which if the same were done to him he would resent in the highest degree; it is a strong evidence that he is ill qualified to take care of the *common liberty*!

F. Very justly observed. To form a right notion of the true *instrument* of liberty, or social happiness, we must keep *religion* in our eye; for all government comprehends religion of some kind or other. Liberty without *government*, is a *contradiction*: so is the government of a *civilized free people*, without religion. It is exceedingly difficult to comprehend what such government could be: if it were very *severe*, it would destroy *freedom*; and if it were *not severe*, with regard to *temporal punishments*, to supply the defect of fear of punishment after death, there could be *no peace*: *Freedom* would be utterly lost. When we examine what *our divine religion*

teaches, liberty appears in all her charms, flourishing in peace, and blessing with her smiles.— Now, *Mary*, if you desire to be informed of the little I know, it is upon this principle that I argue; for how shall we be induced to "render unto *Cæsar*, the things that are *Cæsar's*, unless we render unto *God*, the things which are *God's*?"

D. Very true, my father!

F. The same reason which holds with regard to religion, operates in the love of *liberty*, as this is founded in *virtue*; for liberty, I say, can stand on no other foundation. The *vilest libertine* grounds his pretence on this principle, or who but an *idiot* could trust him? That there is such a virtue in the human breast; and that it *must* be so, as long as men continue to be *reasonable*, and believe themselves to be *accountable* creatures, cannot be denied. Whether in their own persons they chuse to conform to laws and rules of conduct, or not, they know such conformity to be necessary for the support of peace and good order: they *esteem* it in others, and would have their neighbour *conform*.

D. This shews the folly of all irregularities.

F. Aye, and the baseness of every degree of tyranny, whether it be exercised by the *supreme magistrate*, the *presumptuous demagogue*, the *laborious mechanic*, or the *ungovernable mob*.

D. Are not many people inclined to call That *tyranny*, which is really nothing more than *wholesale restraint*?

F. This is often the case. It is but a small part of mankind, who can *reason right* on such subjects: to *act right*, requires virtue. It is the happiness of our nation, that our forefathers have considered the various infirmities of human nature, and provided against them by such mutual restraints, that in most events, there is a *rule* of judging of them; or a *power* given to the proper officer or magistrate, to determine the measure of justice; and this we call our *constitution*.

D. Some of our good neighbours here, are apt to overlook these advantages, and make their lives uncomfortable, by talking of the danger *their* liberty is in, at the moment that no person whatever offends them.

F. This is the very misfortune which so often invades us. You know I cannot venture to ride *Baldface*: he goes well enough in the *shafts*, but when *saddled*, he looks on *one* side, and then on the *other*, as if he tried to find out something to

start

*start at*; and he generally succeeds. This is our case, when we are fools enough to listen to idle rumours, and news-paper inflammatory writings. Should you not think it a miserable case, to live as if you were *undone*? The *fear* of being *undone*, is living *undone*, or something worse; for *fear* ceases, when we experience the extent of a calamity. Those who are perpetually expressing their fears of being deprived of their *liberty*, live deprived of *comfort*. However, I have often observed, that talking of *fear*, and *fearing*, are very different things. It is a part of *liberty*, as we use it, to talk and complain: and because we are accustomed to enjoy *so much good*, we are sensible of a very *small portion of evil*. This is the nature of mankind; but particularly characteristic of *us*. Hence it is that foreigners say, "You cannot compliment an *Englishman* so much, as by telling him *his country is undone*."

D. This is no sign of our being a nation of *philosophers*, as you once told me.

F. I have heard a foreign gentleman say, "You reason the best of any people in the world; but your actions do not always correspond."

D. I have often wondered what like some of our good neighbours would have: their houses, their persons and property, are in great decay: if their sons turn *highwaymen* or *housebreakers*, and are hanged, it is for want of *good example*, or *proper education at home*; not from any attempt against their *liberty*.

F. Except depriving them of the liberty of destroying their fellow-subjects. You may perceive how the *foolish* are led astray; and the  *vicious* become *dissatisfied*, in spite of all the blessings of *religion* and *plenty* which we enjoy.

D. Yes, say they: but the *times are bad*: wages must be higher, and the *necessaries of life* cheaper.

F. Both cannot happen: if wages are higher, *necessaries* would bear still a greater price. Do they suppose, that landlords will be contented to live *worse* than they do at present, in order that tenants may live *better*?

D. Should not the *landlord* agree to live in proportion as the *times* are hard?

F. You talk like an honest girl; but not as a person acquainted with the world. *All landlords* are such *fools* as to run up their rents at the hazard of destroying their *tenants*; though the

rents of *many farms* are raised to an enormous degree: and what is the consequence? the landlord is the more extravagant, both with respect to his greater income, which tempts him to spend without bounds; and the *high price* he must pay for the produce of *his own lands*. That there is, and always was, *evil* to contend with, cannot be doubted: I hope we are under an administration which will make it as light as possible, by every reasonable means. It is the glory of a government to attend to the indigent: in one sense, we are *all in want*; but as to the cry of being *undone*, alas, *poor souls*, they are not such fools as to believe what they say! Every honest man, whatever his political opinions may be, is an advocate for *liberty*; but *he* is not a good *subject*, who torments his countrymen with *false alarms*; nor a *good man*, if he propagates *falsehood*, knowing it to be such. Do you consider, child, that men are governed by *passion* more than *reason*; and consequently take the side of the *passion* that is strongest?

D. And what do you imagine That to be?

F. In a *political view*, the strongest passion seems to be the *thirst of dominion*. The fallen angels aspired at ruling *in heaven*. The mind being corrupted, it creates an impatience of control: this is increased by a false construction of laws, and a habit of *real*, or *affected jealousy*; the general bad consequences of which lie out of the sight of most people.

D. Do you think this is the case with the generality?

F. With some exceptions, it seems to be so. Among people of the *lower* degree, they are for pulling down the *higher*; presuming that they get forward by throwing others back. Hence arises great confusion in the world, and false principles of government. The *few* that get the ascendancy, are the less inclined to govern with *reason*, when the people make so unreasonable an opposition, as to require *force* or *despotism*. This has laid the foundation of the *tyranny* which reigns over a great part of the earth. And if *we*, of this nation, are not moderate and peaceful, it may reach us. Whenever you hear people clamour, and accuse their rulers *falsely*; then you may suppose they are in the most danger of bringing on the very evil they complain of; they *revive* the mischief they pretend to shun; or they are in danger of being *undone*, through the *false fear of being undone*.

D. We

D. We cannot then come to the truth of things without a sober and dispassionate enquiry; nor judge when it is fit to *oppose* or sit quiet, without calming our passions, and exercising our reason.

F. You are very right, *Mary*; if we were to do this, we should be *free indeed*; for those that rule, would never dare to do any thing *wrong*; nor would their judgments be so subject to misguide them. They would have no reason to play tricks with the passions of men; but be *contented* with the exercise of power for the good of others. Perfection we are not to expect; but he best deserves the name of a *lover of his country*, who is least influenced by any *personal* interest, regardless of the clamours of *faction*, and uncorrupted by any desire of an *ill-earned* popularity. If he zealously opposes all measures that he thinks are hurtful; supports all which he believes to be beneficial to the people, without regard to the quarter from whence they come; he acts like an *honest man*, and a good subject. *We* are supposed to make choice of men of virtue; and we should be very cautious when we condemn. That which we do not understand; yet you see this is a very common trick amongst us.

D. Is there a man who is without some degree of *partiality*?

F. It is always understood, that men are subject to err. The best are *imperfect*. It is the

end of government, and essential to the nature of it, to restrain *men's passions*; and therefore it often wears the face of *violence*. If you, knowing that *Philly Prattle* was walking to the river side, with design to drown herself, were to tie her legs, and convey her home in a cart; she would call it *violence*. The *greater* number, which is never the *wisest* and *most virtuous*, is generally *impatient of control*, be it ever so *salutary*. I have also observed, that some are so *foolish*, they would hazard their *liberty*, for the sake of *novelty*.

D. For the sake of novelty!

F. Aye: Do you not perceive how fond people are of *new persons*, and *new things*? One would imagine they thought the joys of *heaven itself* consisted merely of *variety*. We are guarded at all points, and cannot be sold, as slaves, *unless we sell ourselves*. But we must not be surprized if *liberty*, having so many *charms to the fancy*, and so many *real good qualities*, should hurry some poor mortals, like *lovers*, who know not what they would have their mistresses do for them, into some strange absurdity. The *true lover of liberty* is in his *senses*; and understands the proper manner of expressing his devotion to the object of his affections.

D. He must be *mad* indeed, who converts ease into despair; or by neglecting the good he has in hand, hunts after misfortunes.

## CONVERSATION VII.

*The effects of oppression on a generous mind. Story of an African slave who was burnt alive for a conspiracy. Story of a generous European planter, who by his singular piety and humanity, renders his slaves devoted to him on christian principles. The methods he takes in managing them. The singular expression of their love for him; an example of great importance to all planters, who wish to wipe off the stain of trafficking in their own species.*

F. **N**OTHING can be so grateful to the soul.

D. The most dreadful thing is oppression! Is not That sentence much admired which says, "Oppression will make a wise man mad?"

F. Yet a *wise man* can bear more than a *fool*: but this *proverbial sentence* supposes that a *wise man* knows best when he is *really oppressed*, and feels his condition, when a *fool* is insensible

of it. Wise men prefer *death* to base and unmanly submissions to tyranny. When *greatness of mind* and *goodness of heart*, meet with *real oppression*, it is not wonderful to see even the *wise* become desperate; and setting *liberty* before one eye, and *death* before the other, prefer an honourable grave to *insolence, disgrace* or *pain*. I would rather die than resign my *freedom*, or be instrumental in forging chains for others. As mortals,



mortals, we are ever subject to *deceit*; and there never will be wanting *knaves* to set *fools* at work to accomplish their *private* ends: under a dissimulated zeal for freedom, they may urge government to adopt measures totally *inconsistent with freedom*. It is not safe in *public*, more than in *private* life, for one man to thwart and vex another. Self-preservation teaches us to defend ourselves as necessity may dictate: but *princes* and *ministers* of state, like others, may do wrong, in consequence of wrong being done to them. There are always some, whether of the inferior classes or others, without any real suffering, capable of doing great mischief to their neighbours.

D. But where there is a *real suffering*, to a high degree, *despair* often turns into *madness*. I have read of an insane father murdering his own children, lest they should be reduced to great misery by *want*.

F. Such things happen when people lose their senses: but there is more to be feared from persons of a ferocious turn, who are made the instruments of *designing persons*. The real deprivation of liberty, as sometimes exercised, produces tragical events. I remember the story of a certain *black*, who had been bought on the coast of *Africa*, and carried as a slave to work in one of our sugar plantations. It doth not appear that he was treated with *uncommon severity*, but he had a *high spirit*, and disdained his condition. He resented his being brought *by force*, from his native country, to labour in captivity in a *strange land*.

D. I find we enslave the people of other nations, if their skins happen to be of a different colour from our own.

F. Not entirely so: they are *black*, and bought with a price; and *then* we imagine we may do—as we please.—This man thinking himself highly injured, formed a desperate plot. Being discovered, he and his associates were imprisoned. Upon his being asked the reason of his meditating so wicked an attempt, as to murder those who had never injured him? he answered, “This indeed went to my heart; but you all combine to rob me of my liberty. I thought I had a natural right to do myself justice, and to recover That of which I have been so unjustly deprived.” He and his accomplices were condemned to be burnt alive.

D. O horrible!—

F. When they were brought to the stake, and fastened with a proper length of chain, the combustibles being lighted round them, as the flames approached, the wretched partners of his crime, in the agony of their pain, cried out most bitterly! *This man*, with a resolution that astonished the spectators, took up a billet of wood, and knocked out the brains of his *suffering companions*, and then run his own head into the fiercest of the flames, and expired (a).

D. This was a daring fellow indeed! It is a pity he had not better fortune.—Have we any *right* to deprive the *blacks* of their liberty?

F. There is a traffick in human nature carried on; and *gain* makes it appear as right and fit to be done. The policy of the world sometimes wars against *humanity*. Commerce, conducted on *true principles*, promotes the liberty of mankind; but the *love of gain* grows into a passion, and frequently becomes criminal. *Cruelty* is as the sin of witchcraft; and money is so much the idol of a great part of mankind, they are apt to cheat themselves into a belief that it warrants any thing of this kind. If it were not for these *black men*, you would not have *sugar* to drink with your *tea*; or you would be obliged to pay a higher price for it.

D. Perish the *sugar* and the *tea* also, rather than wound the liberty of the meanest of mankind!—Alas! my father, do we make such a noise about *liberty*, and suffer the *love of gain* to grow stronger and brighter than the golden rule of *doing as we would be done by*?

F. Well said, my dear *Mary*! You have a truer notion of *liberty*, than many who contend for it.

D. I shall have no relish for *sugar* whilst I remember your story: but I suppose this *black* was a *barbarian*.

F. So the nations of *Europe* have agreed to call those, whom they have a mind to buy and sell like beasts; but the question is, if we ourselves do not act the part of *polite barbarians*? Other nations (b) christen *their blacks*. I have heard my master say, it is a custom in the *Brazils*, to sprinkle a hundred men or women with water, and call them so many *Jans*, and so many *Marys*, or whatever name they give them.

D. This

(a) This story I had from a gentleman who happened to be on the spot, and conversed with the *black*.

(b) Portuguese, French, and Spaniards, &c.

D. This is a slovenly way of doing a solemn office. The *brave black*, I presume, was not a *Christian*.

E. No; I am sorry to tell you, it is not *our custom*, except in a few instances (*a*), to teach these people our religion. Whether we apprehend they will be less governable, or fondly suppose it to be of no consequence; or whether the light of the gospel extends to other nations, whose climate is visited by a nearer approach to the sun, I know not; but the fact is, we do not teach these slaves our religion. The *black* in question was a *man*, and as such ought to be treated; and he might have been a *hero* in defence of *Christianity* had he been acquainted with it.

D. I believe it is more easy to instruct the children of *blacks* in the knowledge of *Christ*, than to combat the prejudices of grown *white* persons. Had this man been a *Christian* he would have reasoned differently.

E. He might have said, "If it is the pleasure of the Almighty, that I should suffer thus, *his will be done!* It is a less evil for me to die, though it be under tortures, in the hands of these *white Barbarians*, than commit *murder*. It cannot be agreeable to the *all-righteous God*, and tender father of mankind, that I should conspire against my master, who has bought me with a price, and murder him! murder his friends, his parents, and his children, merely that I may drag out a precarious life! Though removed from my native land, I am not removed from my hopes of heaven. Let me look forward towards That *immortal state*, and for the rest, it matters little."

D. This would be like a *Christian*.

E. As a *Christian*, he might have added, "Let *wicked dreams* abuse their *curtained sleep*, who gratify their unruly passions at the cost of others. No *noisome dungeon*, or strong links of steel, can hold men bound, that dare be free: The spirit is *unconquerable!* *Tyranny* may hold my person bound in chains, and render me weary of a world which treats me so very ill: But still I know that *my Redeemer liveth*. I know there is a Power above which governs all; and to the will of *That power*, I submit myself. He is *foolish*, or *insane*, who makes another's crime his own, by any act which his *true faith* forbids. Freedom of the mind from sin, is the true compass which points the *way to paradise*. Those who disdain life, from motives which

worldly men may call *glorious*, are ignorant that *the true glory of a man is to submit to the laws of his Maker.*" So it is probable this brave black might have talked, had he been taught our holy religion: and what might not such a man have done by kindness! Many of us, when we talk of *tyranny*, and by our discourse and wanton exercise of speech, prove that we are *free*, use our freedom as a cloak of *malice or excess*. Those whose conduct tends to the destruction of the good order and harmony of society, are certainly no real friends to it. A ferocious contempt of *rulers*, threatens us more with a *rod of iron*, than any evil designs, which to appearance lurk in the heart of our king, or his ministers. We may forge our own chains, by such misjudged means as some use, under the pretence of preventing oppression. Let who will govern us, the *less reasonable* we are, the more vigour in government is necessary; yet the more vigour is exercised, the more alarmed we usually become.

D. If those who think the strictest hand is necessary to govern *blacks*, would consider that gentle government depends on the virtue of individuals, they would be more attentive to the duties of humanity. When these poor creatures are made slaves by the chance of war, or by motives of *avarice*; is there no method of rendering their lives so comfortable, that they may forget their own country?

E. Totally to forget it, may require much time: they sometimes rather forget the miseries they suffered in their native land, thinking of them as light, compared to their present captivity and labour: but there are methods by which their lives may be rendered comfortable.

D. What are they? Pray tell me.

E. You seem much affected with the story of the *black*, from a partiality for bravery, though dictated by despair. I will give you a picture of *humanity*, and all its attendant charms. *Theophilus* is the son of a rich planter, who left him two estates, one in the *British dominions in America*; the other under the *Dutch*, at *Surinam*, on the river of the *Amazons*. As a man of sentiment, he applied himself to learn the art of governing his slaves by the force of *reason and religion*.

1. He observed, on their first coming, that their minds were often overcast with a sad gloom, which sometimes led them to the *desperate* expedient of *suicide*; imagining they should,

by

(a) OR Lord Renny's plantation they are taught the Christian religion.

by this means, return again to their *own country*.

*D.* Do you mean to *heaven*? Have they any notion of a state of rewards and punishments after death?—

*F.* Very strong notions, though mixed with gross ideas; such as a *personal return* to their native land on earth; and that they shall enjoy their innocent pleasures, even to their regard for a *faithful dog*. They suppose a heaven in some region that they can compass with the eyes of flesh and blood: at least one would imagine so; for they were with great difficulty undeceived when told that *death* would not convey their persons to their *native home*. To convince them of the absurdity of the notion which they had entertained, he kept one of their dead bodies, and shewed it to them in a state of putrefaction.

*D.* What impressions could be made on creatures so grossly ignorant?

*F.* Gently, my child! You shall hear how he manages them.

2. He buys his slaves chiefly in pairs, and sets them to work in each others society; consulting their affections, by inquiring of the young man if he likes such a girl; and of her, if she approves of the man.

3. The choice being made, they are married according to the form of their own country, invoking the Power which they imagine presides over the connubial state; and promising inviolable fidelity. This they observe with a more religious care and attention, than is practised among many who assume the sacred name of *Christians*.

4. As love sometimes prompts them to *jealousy*, in which they give proof of as high sentiments, as the politest people usually pretend to; so *Theophilus* hears their complaints, and does them justice; but if he discovers an accusation to be ill-founded, he punishes the accuser, as an offender against the peace of the plantation, and as doing an injustice to another; duly considering the circumstances, and in what manner the complainant might be deceived into a *false opinion*.

*D.* This is *generous* as well as *just*. But what punishments does he inflict on a *jealous husband*?

*F.* I suppose it is light, and chiefly regards reconciliation to his *wife*.

5. Upon their first coming to his plantation, he causes them to be *baptized*. *Baptism* being

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one of the two great *Christian* sacraments, as he is a Christian himself, and is happily lord and master, he naturally thinks it his duty to make his slaves acquainted with our divine religion.

*D.* It is amazing there should be any planter who does not observe the same rule.

*F.* Not if they were *Christians* only in name, and are apprehensive they shall be, in some degree, the more restrained from exercising tyranny, which I take to be the secret causes of their negligence. After baptism, this gentleman then proceeds in his noble plan of religion and humanity.

6. He causes them to be instructed in the great outlines of the laws of *Christ*, and the moral precepts which Christianity inculcates; particularly in the *charity* which man is constantly to shew to his fellow-creature, no matter what his colour or situation in life may be; every one having a due regard to the station in which Providence hath placed him. In a word, he shews by his conduct, that *he* is a believer, and requires nothing to be done by others, in respect to *his* great Lord and Master, which he does not perform himself.

7. As soon as he has possessed them with a principle of belief in a *God*, as the *supreme Author of nature*; and also a *Redeemer from sin*, in the person of the *Messiah*; the *ceremony of marriage* is again performed among those who were first joined in the manner of their own country. Thus, as *Christians*, they make this contract the more solemn by the *Christian form*, and mutual promise of *fidelity*.

8. To convince them of his impartial regard to *justice*, upon any complaint or discovery made, by which himself, or any other person, is injured by any of his slaves, he appoints a select number of them to examine into the merits of the cause, and make their *report* to him. It is remarkable, that he generally finds it to be fair and candid. This is no wonder, when it is considered, that not being corrupted by the *vicious partialities* we contract in society, they judge as the *Christian law* directs, to esteem truth as the most sacred thing among men.

*D.* I should not have expected this from these black savages.

*F.* Do you imagine that *colour* of skin, renders men less susceptible of those noble impressions, that distinguish *man* from the *brute* that perishes? It is *education*, information, and the

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customs

customs that prevail amongst men, which create the vast differences we see.

9. This gentleman entertains a pious and judicious clergyman, who is attentive to the duty of inspiring the minds of the blacks with the noble sentiments of the *immortality of the soul, and a state of rewards and punishments after death*. These poor *Africans* having their native prejudices removed, and being convinced of the great truths of Christianity, have the advantage of us, who live in society, where our spirits are tortured with such a variety of *hopes and fears* with regard to the *good and evil things of this world*. Once possessed of a right notion, they adhere to it, and act more like *philosophers and wise men*, than many of the *great ones*, to whom *this world* is an idol. The moderation of their desires, joined to their *sense of gratitude for good treatment*, preserves their minds in a state of tranquility, which may be an object of envy to many of the most prosperous among the children of this world. They no longer tremble when it thunders, but trust in the infinite mercy of the great Lord of the universe, and his incomprehensible justice; in whose sight they are assured themselves are *precious*, so long as they do *justice* to their master, and shew mercy to each other. So far they will find their Christian knowledge agree with the religion of *nature*. That the things of God should, in some instances, be above the *reason of man*, can by no means offend their reason: but when they perceive that the *moral precepts* of Christianity answer so well to the duties of humanity, and correspond so exactly with the plan revealed to us; when they behold the example of the great Founder of our religion, so productive of the safety and welfare of society; the whole history of the redemption of the world by *Jesus Christ* will captivate their minds. The *eternal happiness* which he hath promised to those who sincerely love God, and obey his commandments, will become as *pleasing* to their hopes, as the means will be *familiar* to their comprehension.

*D.* They may be happy even in their *slavery*. Would to God all the *West-Indians* who arrive in this island, were as *good men* as you represent these *captive Africans*!

*F.* Amen, with all my heart! I fear some of them forget themselves extremely; and are as careless in the preservation of their souls, as of their health and fortunes. The good master of

these slaves does not stop with the humanity which he exercises in regard to their marriages; nor in the piety shewn by their baptism and spiritual instruction: he is particularly humane in several other instances.

10. According to the laws provided for capital offences, if any one forfeits his life, he is hanged, as a terror to the rest; but he never scourges his slaves, as is practised in most other plantations with great severity: and so far from their being the less manageable, he finds them the more peaceful and industrious.

*D.* He must use some punishment for offences not capital.

*F.* Yes: he takes advantage of the common experience of mankind.

11. Confinement, bread and water, and other chastisements, which create a sense of shame, he finds to answer much better than the ordinary practice of cruelty, which generally hardens the heart, and often sets all at defiance; so that a man lost to a sense of shame, by means of the scourge, hardly ever becomes a good subject, or a good man. In a word, he treats his blacks, without regard to the colour of their skin, as fellow-creatures; considering them as reasonable and accountable beings like himself: and in this he receives a higher gratification by the exercise of his humanity, than all the boasted tyranny and severity the most imperious planter could ever devise. As a proof of this, I will give you another instance.

12. In general, the planters give their slaves *Saturday* in the afternoon, and *Sunday*, to cultivate the land, the produce of which is allotted to their own support. He gives them the whole day of *Saturday*, which they find sufficient; and the more, as they work in earnest, knowing the next day is a day of rest, and devoted to the grateful worship of their Maker. He requires them to keep it holy, as a perpetual memorial of the creation and redemption of mankind. They constantly attend divine service; and are no less observant of the proper seasons of renewing their vows at the altar, as every Christian ought to do. Religion is of all things the most pleasant to an uncorrupted mind; and these honest *Africans* delight in it.

*D.* Good heavens! how I feel shame to myself for my omissions; and shame on the part of many of our neighbours, who seem to have no delight in their duty.

*F.* What I tell you, I have from indubitable authority (*a*); and I think the reason is plain. These poor humble *Africans* are taught; and they believe. Many of us *Europeans* are not taught; and many more, on whom so much greater light has shone, by a strange *perverse*ness of will, as if this were indulged for the very reason of having the greater light, wander in *darkness*, becoming proud, and having hearts *lifted up*; but not to heaven.

*D.* I fear this is even so, though it seems to be a contradiction.

*F.* So it may seem; but the fact is, that we are very remiss in doing the will of God, though we know it so well.

*D.* Being so taught, and well treated, these *Africans* must have a most sincere affection for their Master.

*F.* They are not deficient in *gratitude*, which is a natural appendage of *religion*; for if men are conscious of the vast debt they owe to their Maker, which can be expressed in no manner so properly, as by their attention to social duties, and gratitude to superiors for kindnesses received, we must not wonder if these *Africans* are ready to die for their Master. It is not merely for the health of their bodies, and the preservation of their souls, for which he provides with so liberal a heart and bountiful a hand:

13. He also provides amusements for them, such as they are most fond of; and appoints certain hours when they are indulged. He knows that human nature is the same in master and servant; and that we are naturally fond of variety. By making breaks in time, every hour has its delight, in action or in rest.

*D.* This is a kindness which might win their hearts, if all things else failed.

*F.* As he is obliged to change his abode every six months, his slaves lament his departure with bleeding hearts, and give proof of such joy when he returns, as is hardly to be credited. These people generally swim with as much ease as they walk. When the ship that brings him comes to anchor, a number of them form a kind of stage, or boat, and swimming off to the ship, they in-treat the honour of swimming with him on their backs; and he thinks proper to trust them, in the exuberance of their joy, to convey him on

shore in their own way, as we sometimes chain a new-elected member of parliament, and carry him in triumph to proclaim his virtues, of which we know nothing; and as a token of applause for kindnesses he never did, nor perhaps ever means to do.

*D.* Our chairing of members of parliament, is a very poor representation of the joy and gratitude of these uncorrupted *Africans*; though, for my own part, I should chuse a real boat: they might tow or steer it by swimming, if they pleased. I observe in the news-papers, that the *London* mob sometimes take out the horses, and draw the carriage of some favourite, who perhaps thinks of them no better than of a mob ready for any extravagance, for him, or against him, as may suit the humour of the day.

*F.* Mobs in *England* have seldom such heartfelt, rational sense of a man's virtues, as these slaves entertain of their good master. His generosity is constantly exercised.

14. Such as have lived a certain number of years, and behaved uncommonly well, acting with great zeal and fidelity, he emancipates; by which they are left to their own choice, whom they will serve: but they generally remain in his service. Thus you see how even bond slaves, bought as sheep or oxen, may be won to a sense of virtue, and rendered happy; while men born to freedom, and boasting of it, are often reduced, by the force of vice, to a state of misery. The former may live in the delightful contemplation of the smiles of virtue, whilst the latter languish in the service of *sin*, whose wages they receive.

*D.* Yet it is but a dreadful situation these poor captives are in, with respect to a life of labour. The love of liberty seems to be one of our natural affections: and the better these are, the more we abhor those restraints which have the appearance of tyranny.

*F.* Your observation is very just: but you see the affairs of this world are so constituted, that obedience to lawful commands, is the best tribute we can offer to liberty: and custom not only renders labour sweet, when not exacted with severity, to injure health; but the bulk of mankind would be miserable, if they were not perpetually employed; except when nature claims relief

(*a*) I am well assured, from the testimony of a gentleman of great veracity, that the truth is almost literally as I have related it.

relief by rest. Thus labour and rest seem to comprehend the history of life. For when sickness or old age comes on, so that we cannot labour, what is so pleasant as sleep; or what is there resembles death so much?

*D.* You say they have their hours of diversion, which correspond with the amusements that make *breaks in time*, in the lives of those who live in the highest affluence. Upon the whole, I never could comprehend till now, how traffic in our own species could be reconciled, either to religion or humanity; and as to liberty, it is set at the farthest distance from it.

*F.* Whether it be warrantable or not, you may see how *master* and *vassal* acting in their respective stations, with consistency as *accountable beings*, may excel all the *fine-spun systems of liberty* that ever existed, but as these are supported upon principles of humanity. Let laws be what they will, you may readily comprehend, that *liberty* is never *safe*, but where *virtue* is in her alliance. *Theophilus*, with as much power as most monarchs dare exercise, acts with all the lenity and gentleness of the mildest sovereign, restrained by the most salutary laws, and a just sense of the duties of religion and humanity.

*D.* How much superior must his joys be, to the pleasures of those who give themselves up to the dictates of cruelty or pride, or any passion that is offensive to humanity!

*F.* Those who are conscious of cruelty, must be equally persuaded that they are hated: and you may be assured, that the more *Theophilus* sees himself beloved, the more inclined he is to deserve the love of his dependants; and the pleasure which dwells in his breast, must be a perpetual feast to him. I am told he lays out a considerable part of the produce of his estate, in

providing conveniences for those who work it: and the more conveniences there are, the more work they perform, and with so much the greater ease. *Virtue* thus becomes her own rewarder in this world; for he is actually so much the *richer* man. But the conscious rectitude of his will, is incomparably superior in his esteem, to the *number of thousands*, for which he could sell his estates. *He remembers his end*; reflecting that if he does not part with his plantations, they will part with him; and that his sincerity towards God, and his neighbour, will avail him on That day, when the hearts of all men will be laid open, and his *works* tried by an *unerring Judge*, whether *he has done to other men, as he would they should do unto him*. Thus far endeavouring to fulfil the law and the prophets, *Theophilus* waits for the sentence, by which he is to stand or fall for ever, in that region where the whole race of mankind are appointed to meet.

*D.* He acts, in every respect, as a righteous man; for whom we might dare to die. I am delighted with his character: it gives me the clearest notion how pleasure may be found even in bondage. I perceive how a virtuous captive, whose lot it is to labour, and a pious master under whom he lives, may mutually contribute to each other's prosperity, and the felicity which all men are born to, when they discharge their duty.

*F.* This planter gives a noble example to us farmers, and all others who earn their bread by the cultivation of the earth, and the produce of it, that every face may smile even when the sky lowers, or threatens a thunder-storm. Such is the force of humanity upon the native generosity of the soul!

## CONVERSATION VIII.

*The love of money, the root of many evils. The story of Inkle and Yarico. A reformation of the slave-trade recommended, as an object of civil liberty. The character of merchants. Trade rightly distinguished productive of the happiness of mankind. Commerce classed under the denominations of the liberal, the prodigal, and tyrannical. Gain ill applied productive of misery. The true use of time and wealth to promote the great ends of life.*

*D.* THE story of the generous, religious *Theophilus*, has made the deepest impression on my mind.

*F.* He is a glorious example to planters and owners of plantations. They may all do the same if they please. If they would renounce a small

part of their profits for a time, the loss would be abundantly recompensed. As it may be more easy to accomplish a reformation, than totally to destroy the slave trade, the conduct of *Theophilus* seems to deserve great attention, on the heavenly principles of humanity.

D. Slave-trade! A very proper term indeed, for us who deal in liberty, and esteem it the choicest of all commodities.

F. Ay, *Mary*: yet many good men hold their own species in bondage. As long as the *Africans* will sell each other, and we can gain, I fear we shall be induced to buy them for the sake of gain.

D. This slave-trade can never improve our notions of liberty. It brings to my remembrance a tale now grown old; but not the less to the purpose.

F. Do you mean *Inkle and Yarico*? I forget the particulars of That story.

D. *Inkle* was going to *West-India*, but the ship being in distress for Provisions, put into a creek, on the main land of *America*, in hopes of finding succour. The boat's crew, accompanied by *Inkle*, went on shore, and unadvisedly marched so far into the country, they were intercepted by a party of *Indians*, who attacked and slew the major part of them. *Inkle* escaped, and wandered into the woods, where a young *Indian* maid of distinction among those people, happened to find him forlorn, resting himself on a bank, after much danger and fatigue. *Inkle* was handsome, and so was the *girl*: they soon became enamoured of each other, and lived secretly together. She found the means of his support; and by a thousand acts of tenderness, and anxious sollicitude for his safety, kept him concealed in the woods. *Inkle* having instructed her to keep a look out, after some months had past, she espied a ship on the coast; to which she made a signal, and by the kindness of the night, herself and *Inkle* were conducted on board. When *Inkle* landed at *Barbadoes*, forgetting all his obligations to *Yarico*, he sold her to a planter. The poor girl endeavoured to excite his commiseration, by declaring herself with child by him; but he made no other use of this information, than to raise the price of her. Thus this *trafficking merchant* violated the most sacred obligations towards the object to whom he was indebted for his life, and whom he was bound by the strongest ties of gratitude, to have cherished in his bosom.

F. Alas, my child! be not surprized! I have

warned you against trusting to *generosity*. This young man remembered only what suited his worldly interest, and pursuit of gain. I recollect that the story says, he had promised her many fine things, in return for her kindness; and among the rest, that in his country, she should ride in a house drawn by horses, protected from all the inclemency of the skies; meaning, that she should ride in a coach. In the warmth of his blood, or the terrors of his condition, he imposed on the credulity of an unsuspecting girl, who had no idea of falsehood from one she preserved from death.

D. We must suppose that he was a mean, low fellow, or he would have expressed his high sense of obligation by marrying her; or by finding a man she approved as a good husband.

F. Or at least have returned her home with the richest presents his fortune could furnish; but he acted as one of those lovers of liberty, who do what they please for themselves, but in reality are tyrants, and monsters of ingratitude.

D. Such a hard-hearted fellow might have talked of liberty, and sold his father into bondage.

F. He estimated right and wrong by profit and loss. Trade, in generous hands, often enlarges and civilizes the mind; but in this, as in other respects, if the soil be not properly cultivated, it will bring forth the rank weeds of every vice, which can corrupt the mind. Money, my child, is the root of all evil. The love of it has strange effects, on different persons, and on the same person under different circumstances. It breaks bars and gates of iron; sets relations at variance; destroys friendships; creates treachery; occasions thefts and murders: it hugs ingratitude in its bosom; it makes the poor discontented with the necessaries of life, and the rich covetous. It is at enmity with generosity, and would unhinge the whole frame of nature to gratify itself; alienating the mind from heaven, and confounding the peace of the earth. I have lived long enough to see even the aged, on the verge of eternity, do strange things for the sake of money. And if we trace evils to their source, we shall find this love sinks much deeper in most human affairs, than you who are young, and walk in the simple path of nature can believe, even upon the strongest evidence. The cruel sale of the generous *Indian* girl; or the cruel, though deserved death of the brave *African*: whence do you conceive they derive their source?

D. From

D. From the love of money, and the desire of gain: But all merchants are not such kind of men.

F. By no means: I have met amongst them some of the most generous of mankind. They are hospitable: they commiserate the misfortunes of others with a princely liberality, beyond what is generally found amongst other men. They are emphatically styled the "honourable of the earth," in allusion to the benefit they are of in promoting industry, in exchanging the produce of different countries, and in most kinds of trade, promoting the common benefit. But gain in all ages has been apt to divert the mind from nobler objects. It is not peculiar to merchants; for though gain makes up a part of their occupation, they may be the less tempted to do wrong things for the sake of it, than most other persons. Trade is become an *idol*. What shall we say when nations avow the cause of their wars to be *trade*; and for the *sake of gain*, often contend in bloody combat?

D. May it not be for the right of communicating the bounties of Providence to the rest of the world?

F. Your construction is charitable: I wish the conduct of mankind were founded on so *generous a principle*. What has created wars between us and *Spain* and *France*, but *gain*? Clannish trade, and encroachments for the sake of *gain*, have generally laid the foundation of our wars. See us travel over the vast ocean into *East-India* for *gain*. And if *moderate gain* could have contented us, and *other nations*, so many *Indian fields* had not been laid waste; nor so many thousand *Indians* slaughtered in battle. Ask a candid *Spaniard* concerning the conduct of his nation in *South America*, if it was not the desire of *gain* which prompted it to wage an unprovoked war, and tell an honest *Mexican*, who never heard of the name of *Christ*, "if you do not worship the cross, I will kill you;" or what is worse, find a reason to kill him for not worshipping it, without his being instructed in what it means.

D. I make no doubt but that monstrous cruelties have been, in all ages, committed for the love of *gain*; but *trade* cannot be the *only* cause of war.

F. The cause is in the *corruption* of the hearts of men. Trade produces wealth, and wealth produces power. Power is often employed for

mischievous purposes. A powerful neighbouring state, hardly ever fails of alarming one part of a nation, or exciting the avarice of another. Thus mankind make or seek occasions for war. Gain has a delusive property to make men think that happiness consists in the abundance they possess. To judge from what we see, how few prefer their neighbour to themselves, agreeably to our *religion*! How few are contented with that portion of the *necessaries* and *conveniences* of life they enjoy! What *arts* and *contrivances*, *tricks*, and *violences* are employed to *get more*. Instead of bringing their desires to the standard of their *fortunes*, they languish for the means of gratifying their desires at all hazards. Now, *Mary*, combine these, and many other causes, and you will find they have their root in the *corruption of the heart*, drawing a dark veil over the fair face of *mutual love* and *humanity*! *Money*, *pride*, and *pleasure* engross the souls of numbers of poor mortals. *Pride* and *luxury*, the attendants of *great gain*, often create great *hardness of heart*. Those who are busy in the gratification of their fancy or *appetites*, can find but little time for any thing besides. *Nature* is our *truest friend*, and *safest guide*, in most cases; but she is neglected for the very reason that she ought to be esteemed, that *she disdain*s *superfluous things*: she is easily satisfied: the redundance which *great gain* furnisheth, serves chiefly to make the less equal distribution of the *bounties of heaven*. It is remarkable in all countries, that the more extravagant *one* part of the people are, the more miserable the other becomes.

D. Trade seems to be one of the greatest *enemies*, or the best *friends*, to mankind, according as the gains acquired by it are *used*.

F. True: for money is the instrument of virtue as well as vice. How often it administers to the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is no secret to the most ignorant and stupid of mankind. Yet this is more easy to imagine than describe. It is the business of every individual, to take care that his own gain shall not be devoted to worldly pleasures, to the injury of those manly virtues, which grace and adorn human nature. As we have increased in *real* and *reputed* riches, we have seen the greater cost bestowed upon *outward show*, and the greater neglect of those habits and endowments of soul, which constitute the excellences of our nature. If wealth diverts us from such pursuits as are most worthy of our nature,



had we not much better be without it? If we desire to live to a good old age, and to reflect on the events of life past, the actions of our youth must be such as will afford us pleasure to reflect on. If we employ our money to no better purpose than the *splendour of dress*; the *voluptuousness of the table*; *expensive amusements*, and the *affection of fashion and gaiety*, we may live to curse the hour that our gains furnished the means of such gratifications. The fault is not in the gain, but in us who misused it; but I see no reason to prize that so highly, which so often proves a snare. We do not usually call That a *prosperous gale*, which drives our vessel upon a rock. Which do you think the least evil, to *starve for want*, or be *surfeited with abundance*? The first may happen in the ordinary course of Providence, and we may die as the *favourites of heaven*; but the last loads the soul with so much guilt.

D. Would you infer from hence, that we have *too much trade*; and that our gain serves only to make us the more riotous and expensive?

F. That part of trade which weakens our minds, and makes us slaves to our appetites and fancies, is not good. As the world is constituted, we must have trade to furnish the means of defence, and to exchange some commodities for that purpose; but the present plan by no means produces the happiness which we ought to aspire at, as men and Christians, as well as subjects. We court trade for the *safety* which it is supposed to furnish; but when it corrupts the heart, and vitiates the manners, sows the seeds of discord, prostitutes our honour, or diverts us from generous, manly pursuits, and the true love of our country, then it becomes dangerous.

D. We can do but little evil, as we have but a small share of the gain.

F. It is *our part* more immediately to make up in *temperance and tranquility*, what we are deficient in with respect to *worldly goods*; that we may obey those righteous laws, for our obedience to which *eternal happiness* is promised. If mankind were fully possessed of a *firm belief* and confidence in the immortality of the soul, they might *live and die*, not only in freedom from the anxiety they now suffer, but enjoy the pleasure of thinking what they *may be*, when put in possession of the glories of the *life to come*.

D. I clearly comprehend, that were we to direct our wandering footsteps right, and mark the failings which mislead the *multitude who do evil*,

whatever divine Providence might appoint, in regard to *this world*, we should all be *happy*, in the glorious prospects of the life to come.— But do you consider *trade* as *good* in no other view, than as administering to the mutual *real wants of mankind*, or simply as the means of *defence*?

F. I might answer directly in the affirmative: at the same time I grant that it is difficult to draw the line between some kinds of *wants*, and several articles of convenience, which render life more pleasing; and no less to distinguish some *conveniences* from *ornaments*. The fear which nations are in of each other, prompts them to do many unwarrantable things. But of this we may be sure, that whatever serves as a pander to *inordinate affections*, and corrupts the heart, or creates misery to our *own species*, and even to *brutes*: whatever exceeds the bounds which virtue prescribes, and the true excellency of our nature will warrant, is thrown into the scale of *vice*, and in the issue will weigh down the soul with *misery*. To appearance, *trade* softens the ruder manners of mankind; but in its present state, it frequently defaces the charming features, and native complexion of *virtue*. You see in the character of *Inkle*, how his soul was devoted to *gain*, even to craze all that was good and great in human nature. He was *mercenary, ungrateful, and treacherous*. The true generosity of the soul of man, was obliterated in him.

D. He was a singular instance of *inhumanity*. He would not have understood your doctrine, if you had preached it to him. Those only who consider *their latter end*, and live in hopes of a *better life than this*, are deeply penetrated with a conviction, that to gain the world, and hazard their souls, is of all bargains the worst a man can make; but *trade* is a comprehensive word: Are there not many distinctions in it?

F. More than I am able to mark out. There are *three* in a *moral and political* view, which I call the *liberal*, the *prodigal*, and the *tyrannical*. The first I consider as highly beneficial to mankind, supposing it to consist in the encouragement of *husbandmen, manufacturers and mechanics*, who provide *food and raiment*, with the *necessaries*, and I will add, the *conveniences* of life. These being universally diffused by the force of *traffic*, would raise every human creature *above misery*, and probably render them as happy as their peculiar situations will admit. The *second* stage, or class

class of trade, I consider as furnishing the vanities and *ornamental parts of life*. This depends on *fancy*, which having no bounds, must often produce misery.

D. Surely *some ornaments* are innocent.

F. Yes: when they do not create *pride*. Some are useful to distinguish the different classes, of which a well-regulated community is composed; but you may observe, that with respect to *dress*, we are apt to confound this distinction, and make *money* the only measure; which is one reason why we are so extravagantly eager after it, as if it could put the *learned* and the *ignorant*, the *wise* and the *fool*, upon a level.

D. What is the *third stage* you mention?

F. It is of the nature of *war*, when we grasp at more than we can obtain without violence, of which the *slave-trade* is one instance, and all clandestine trades, which create quarrels between nations. In every view, gain is the primary object; but our eagerness after it, often does *mischief*.

D. The common rule of judging is, if I profit by what I sell, and another by what he buys of me, and our necessities and conveniences are provided for, in both cases, such trade must be beneficial.

F. This doth not follow; for then you would make gain the only measure; whereas the true rule is the health, the peace, the comfort, the convenience, and the promotion of the virtue of mankind. I am speaking of that height to which things are carried, so as often to *destroy health*, *injure morals*, *violate freedom*, and totally change the complexion and youthful vigour of That traffic, which promotes the happiness of mankind. You can easily conceive, that we had better be without any article of trade, which either from its nature, or too great extent, nourishes corrupt desires, and inflames the fancy with wandering inclinations.

D. Methinks you do not talk like a man of the world. Trade is in every ones mouth; and if industry promotes *virtue*, and trade promotes industry, is not trade one of the best things in the world?

F. You imagine yourself an *able casuist*. I do not talk of trade, as a man of the world, nor wish to be such a man; but if there were no world but this, I should be apprehensive my country might be distressed for want of distinguishing what is truly beneficial, from the injurious kind, and the

moderation from the excess. It is true we speak of *trade in general*, as the *Israelites* of old might do of their *golden calf*: but they mistook the true object of their worship, and were grievously punished for their *folly* and *perverse sens*. If the time and labour now employed in *trade* which answers no other end than to promote prodigality in expence, and luxurious indulgences, were devoted to the culture of the earth, now untilld; to the rebuilding hundreds of decayed temples of God, and *thousands* of wretched huts, where people live and die, distressed for want of room to breathe in: if clothing were provided for numbers who are half naked, and every face wore the smiles of comfort, would it not be much happier for us? If more time and labour were employed in the *instruction of our children*, would *vice* abound, or *immorality* erect its standard so high, as it now does? All things have their bounds. The glory and stability of nations consist not in *splendid appearances*, but in *good order*, *discipline*, *peace*, *plenty*, and *universal comfort*. Our first object is, that there should be *no misery*, which we can possibly prevent. Do we find that those who are most distinguished for their wealth, make a suitable return to their country? They *must* pay their taxes in proportion to what they spend: but this does not remedy the moral or political evils we labour under. You will see, where you are going, in the centre of trade, and the very heart of the *British* empire, so much *poverty*, *vice*, and *miser*, as will shock you extremely. I wish to see trade rendered more subservient to *population*, *piety*, *peace*, and *contentment*; or in other words, improvements in moral virtue and internal strength. Our indulgences now render us forgetful of what we owe to ourselves as moral agents and devotees to liberty. As creatures born to a state of happiness after death, we wander out of the true path of life. Should not we appear in a much higher point of view in the eyes of each other, if we made somewhat less *parade* and *flutter* in the vanities of *this poor world*, which is vanishing from us, and be more attentive to the *life to come*, making That which the great Author of nature intended for our *good*, to be *really good*, and not by our perverseness rendering it an instrument of *evil*? If the *end* of our being is to act as *stewards* to dispense the *bounties* of heaven, let not such bounties be wasted in tinsel shew, or the intemperance of modern luxury. Let us act a consistent part.

D. You

D. You convert your politics into religion.

F. True politics cannot subsist without religion. What is a man who has *no religion*? If God should be *in all our thoughts*; if this *transient scene* is a trial for future rewards, let us not lose them! let us not forget the main object for which our existence was given.

D. You believe then that we think so much of trade, as to be rendered less religious than we might be. I have hitherto understood that *commerce* civilizes mankind.

F. Poverty makes people humble, and riches renders them proud rather than civilized.

D. With respect to the iniquitous part of buying and selling, shewn by lying and deceit, I am told the *quakers*, who are chiefly employed in *trade*, do not quibble in making bargains. "The price is so much; thou mayest take it, if thou likest it."

F. Whether this be strictly true of those people in every case, is a question I cannot determine. I believe they are more cautious than most other *Christians*: and so far I think they are to be honoured. I also believe that trade civilizes, but not that it renders people moral. We learn to love those by whom we gain; though in fact

this is *loving the gain*, and not our fellow-creatures.

D. Do we not usually think of *trade* and *liberty*, as if we could enjoy neither singly without the other?

F. This is a *vulgar* opinion; and so far from being true, that every kind of trade which hurts our *morals*, wounds our *liberty*. What think you of the *slave-trade*? Does *this* promote liberty? If gain is the object of the most part of our contentions, there is no other reason for tacking *trade* and *liberty* together, than that *property* is rendered sacred by *freedom*; and that a free people are necessarily less shackled, with respect to the free objects of their pursuit. Let the world go as it may, let you and I, *Alway*, lay up our treasures in heaven, where "neither *moth* nor *rust* doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal;" and if our present gain supports our lives in comfort, let us think it "more honourable *not to have*, and yet *deserve*, than to *have*, and *not deserve*." Whilst we do our best to promote the happiness of our fellow-creatures, and our country, by *industry* in our calling, we need not fear but that in the issue we also shall be happy.

## CONVERSATION IX.

*The impolitic and injurious effects of unnecessary complaints. The dependence of liberty on virtue. Subordination essential to liberty, and the peace and security of the state. Religion requires caution in condemning men in authority. No argument in favour of despotic power admissible. Justice and liberty inseparably united.*

D. YOU have given me such impressions of the danger of an *inordinate love of gain*, I feel my condition the more comfortable from not having any strong temptation to it.

F. To be contented with moderate enjoyments, and *necessary things*, is one of the first lessons taught us by our great Lord and Master, who has promised us *eternal happiness*.

D. Whether it be for want of *money*, or distrust that *their liberty* should be lost, most people complain.—Do they find a pleasure in *complaining*?

F. One would imagine they did; for truly I think they are not *pleased* when they have nothing

to be *displeased* with. Sometimes the humour runs so high, one might imagine we were all *undone*. If we did not know it to be the custom of our country, to entertain each other in this extraordinary manner, it would give one very disadvantageous impressions of our situation. And you may be assured that it rather creates *real grievances*, in addition to *evils* which are *unavoidable*, than removes them. Nor is it less obvious, that those who try to obtain redress by means which are unreasonable or turbulent, bring on the very evils they pretend to avoid. I have been witness to many complaints made without

reason, and *remonstrances* calculated to *disquiet* or *overturn the state*. We can hardly disturb the peace, without wounding the laws, nor wound the laws, without aiming a blow at the *life of liberty*. Laws are to liberty, what blood is to the natural body. We may as well stop the course of blood in our veins, as wrest the laws to a wrong meaning, and set liberty at variance with herself. Liberty must not be used *roughly*. Those who under a pretence of love for her, treat her as if she were a *common prostitute*, making her subservient to their *private gratifications*, may expect to feel the weight of her resentments. I have lived to see the *boldest pretences* to law, set up in opposition to the *plainest dictates of justice*: and *common-sense* overturned by *clamour*, while the *security of life*, was exposed to a lawless mob: *but it did not last long!*

D. Those must have been *bad times!*

F. So I thought, though many called them *glorious days of liberty*. You must be sensible that there are many amongst us, who are *foolish*, and others *wicked*. The laws, as I have told you, are made conformable to right reason, and the experience of *men and things*, for our mutual safety; and *reason and experience* must be our guides in the *construction* of them; and not the spirit of *turbulent times*.

D. The more peaceable we are, the nearer we shall be to our happiness.

F. It is fit we should watch the *rights* of each other, to prevent mischief; and observe the laws, that we may reap the happy fruits of peace and safety. This is all that *liberty* can do. *It cannot work miracles.*

D. But when false and hurtful steps are taken by ourselves, if we do not complain, how are they to be *redressed?*

F. In what manner are false steps in *private life* redressed? *Experience* teaches us how to behave. Good men are fair and candid—they treat others with candour; knowing that at best we are imperfect beings—they appeal to reason as a guide—they use legal measures; knowing that *party rage* plunges all sides into difficulties—they see things *as they are*, and endeavour to accommodate them to the several interests concerned—they consider that the inclination of mankind to wickedness is such, that many delight in the disgrace of others, though themselves suffer by it.—Thus they curb the *pride* of those who would triumph in a capacity of ag-

gravating the calamities of their neighbours. At the same time, they find it necessary to be *watchful*, to prevent the abuse of *power*, and to shield themselves from *oppression*, whether it shall happen to come from the *commoner* or the *lord*, the *peasant* or the *prince*. No man was ever a *tyrant*, but through the means of the flattery of *sycophants*; and the prostitution of common honesty and courage, to the vilest purposes. Yet *discontent* which is *not just*, but contrary to *truth and candour*, strikes at the vitals of government, and undermines the foundation on which *liberty* is built.

D. How are *common mortals* to distinguish in *critical cases?*

F. It generally costs more pains to mistake, than to discover the *true line of duty*. Good and bad things are so blended in the world it sometimes requires *age and experience* to discover the truth, and form right notions: *Power*, in this trading country, is the companion of *riches*. Many are rich; and consequently *power* is divided, and become in a great measure a security to liberty. If this division occasionally creates some *confusion*, from a presumption in the wealthy, that they have a title to take the reins of government into their own hands; it serves at least for *one* to check the *other*. From the nature of our government, we are subject to be misled by *fearing* without reason, as well as by trusting wantonly. If our manners do not keep pace with the true spirit of our government, the generous uprightness of liberty may sink into *baseness*; and both *governors and governed* be reduced to the same bad situation. There must be *candour and uprightness* on both sides. Would you treat a *minister of state* with scurrilous language, for not doing that which you do not chuse to trust him with the power of doing? Yet from the nature of our government, this case often happens. Give him the power that is occasionally necessary, then you will cry out, *that he will make a bad use of it.*

D. We must then occasionally suffer some inconveniences.

F. Let a minister have ever so much wisdom, you will hear many cry out against the very idea of a minister, or *leading man*, though it seems to be morally impossible to do without such an officer: but he must take care not to trespass.

D. If fears and jealousies deprive us of some advantages which we might enjoy, and without

such fears and jealousies, liberty may be the more easily invaded; then we shall always suffer in *reality* or *imagination*—

*F.* Till in general we become more virtuous. In the mean while, *government* must be carried on. We may talk and refine; but it is not in the nature of men to enjoy all the benefits of *liberty*, which good or bad minds may represent; for *men* are not good enough for *complete happiness*. Every one expects *virtue* from *another*, though he does not practise it *himself*; and therefore challenges more than *reason* can justify. Few things are so *foul* or *fair* as they are represented. The greater part of us contract some bias; and either *diminish* or *magnify* evils: and *prejudices in politics* are amazing things. As you grow in years and experience, you will find it so; therefore *take up no opinion rashly*: Knowing that to condemn is our national infirmity, and to abuse each other, a common practice; but it stains our *national character*. As a *Christian*, as well as a subject, you cannot be too cautious how you express yourself. If we are answerable for every *idle word*, surely *idle words against the state, or against men in authority*, are to be answered for at the tribunal of the great Judge of the world. To distinguish *libertinism* from *liberty*, is no vulgar talk; but it is the duty of every subject to learn the distinction: *Religion* and *liberty* require this at our hands. You will hear much *nonsense* talked in the world; and therefore you must learn to *smile* at what is *good*; and shake your head at what is reported as *evil*; still asking this comprehensive question, “*Are you sure you understand your subject?*” Rather doubt, than wade out of your depth; and leave your companions in the enjoyment of their imaginary triumphs, rather than aggravate your sins by any unjust accusations. This will give your mind a charitable frame, and strengthen your judgment. You have lived long enough to know, that let who will govern us, they are generally said to be *the men*, who are *the least fit to be trusted*; consequently we should trust *nobody*, and have *no government*.

*D.* This is a natural conclusion: but I presume there are times when people’s minds are quiet, and that there is *no danger*. I am sure the *moral* part of your advice is good; and that our *religion* teaches us many things with regard to government which we do not observe.

*F.* We are apt to talk more according to the

*humour* of the day, than the *real evils of it*. If we are not successful in war; or if any great political question be agitated, it is our custom to abuse *ministers* of state, in the same manner as it is the custom of the *Turks* to strangle *theirs*. Every nation has its *humour*: to complain *capriciously*, is *ours*. This is the consequence of *abusing* the liberty we enjoy. We talk of what we *do*, and rather than give up our pretensions to politics, we also talk of what we *do not* understand.

*D.* *Government comes from God*; and therefore we should be more cautious.

*F.* He is the great *Governor*, as well as the *Creator* of the world; and therefore some think, that the *power of earthly sovereigns* should be like his, *unlimited*: but this is a *vain* and *wicked* conceit; because the goodness and justice of men cannot possibly be like That of the *Almighty*. To reason from *facts*: if we consider the servile state into which mankind are sunk over a great part of the earth, particularly in *Asia* and *Africa*, the arguments for despotic power wear a hideous countenance, and are totally inadmissible. *Fear* is one of the strongest passions in the human breast: extinguish this in any man, and what must follow:—that he may do what he pleases without punishment? This is the case when people resign themselves up to the rule and guidance of *one man*, though he be a *monster* in human shape.

*D.* I see the danger of resigning ourselves *implicitly*, as I do of *complaining wantonly*, lest we be punished, as the nations of old have been.

*F.* The history of mankind, particularly of the *Jews*, furnishes abundant proof how the Almighty repents a *perverse* conduct. Where power is lodged, respect is due to the person in whom it is vested: and not to do *justice* to our rulers, is in effect doing *injustice* to ourselves. *Our liberty* is so well secured, it may stand the shocks and changes of *time*; but if the whole nation were depraved, it could not be ruled without a rod of iron. The virtuous and the quiet now save the vicious and unjust. In general we complain of the want of national virtue; but there are many among us, who, if it were necessary to call them forth in defence of *liberty*, would devote to it every drop of blood in their veins.

*D.* Some of us seem to mistake their own humour for *liberty*.

*F.* To entertain a *true sense of liberty*, we should

should consider what we owe to justice, as comprehending the duties of humanity. *Justice* and *liberty* are such *united friends*, all the powers on earth cannot separate them: they combine in defence of the *rights* of mankind: Heaven has ordained this union, and they will live and die together. Ask your own heart if you act *justly*, in all your several relations, in order to know if you behave respectfully to *liberty*.

*D.* But *perfect justice*, you say, is not the attribute of man.

*F.* No: nor *perfect liberty* his condition! There is *perfect liberty* in the service of God, but in this, we are always *defective*; and though *perfect justice* is not *our attribute*, to be just to the utmost of our abilities, is *our glory*! You may conceive what a state the world would be in, if there were no *judges* appointed by laws, to execute justice and judgment in the earth. *Liberty* and *government* should be understood with us to mean the same thing. We boast that we live under a *free government*, or a system of laws

calculated to preserve freedom: this is our proper inheritance: it is the *honour* of our condition as *subjects*; and it should be the *joy* of our hearts! But all these are but mere *words*, till we apply them to real life; for when we do not act *justly*, and upon principle, we must be restrained by *force*, till we have suffered the penalty of the law: and if that penalty happens to extend to *death*, then liberty and life have but one period.

*D.* I perceive the necessity of *justice* in all the concerns of life as essential to liberty.

*F.* Nothing can be more obvious, than that *liberty* depends on virtue and the fear of God: and how can this be expressed so well, as by being fair in our dealing; tender towards each other; ready to serve them at the hazard of our blood; and constant in our obedience to laws, and those who have authority over us? If any act a different part, the rod of the magistrate will reach them; or how are we to be guarded against *rapine* and *violence*?

## CONVERSATION X.

*The dangerous effects of a corrupt heart, and a turbulent disposition towards government. Taxation essential to government, and the preservation of liberty. Fable of the belly, and the members of the body. The folly of rich men hunting after great offices. The untoward situation of ministers of state. No indulgence a compensation for freedom. Fable of the wolf and the mastiff.*

*D.* IT is truly unreasonable; and shews the weakness, as well as wickedness of mankind! To desire to be free, yet use my freedom to the injury of another, can be reconciled upon no principle of *common honesty*.

*F.* Just as well may one pretend to serve God with an upright heart, yet fear nothing but the *gallows*, as to make pretensions to *freedom*, and violate *justice*. The first lesson we learn in the school of true liberty, is to defend the freedom of our fellow-subjects, as well as our own; not only with regard to their *persons*, but also with respect to their *opinion*, though it should happen to differ from our own; but for a man to rob or oppress his neighbour, or practise private frauds, and at the same time tell us he is ready to die for public

liberty, I conclude that he is a mad man, or a gross impostor. As to opinion, if it disturbs the *peace*, the laws will interpose; but you may be assured, that as *temperance* is the great preservative of *health*, *justice* is the chief supporter of *liberty*. We are happy beyond all other nations; not only with regard to the excellency of our laws, but that in the decisions of our contests for *property*, our *judges* are so distinguished for their purity and incorruptibility.

*D.* Yet many of us, I fear, have so little virtue, as to seek occasion for *tormenting* our neighbour, rather than exercise our humanity to avoid vexing or displeasing him.

*F.* You know, *Mary*, that our *holy religion* obliges us to act upon such principles of mutual affection

affection as necessarily promote the peace and happiness of life. And in the same degree that we depart from them, so as to create pain, trouble, or loss to our neighbour, we expose ourselves, in some cases, to the rigour of human laws: but we always offend against the divine law, and subject ourselves to the resentments of heaven.

D. I see how wonderfully our *religion* is calculated for the happiness of mankind in *this* world, as well as that which is to come:—and that generally punishments by our laws, are suited to crimes.

F. Generally it is so. You see, in some cases I think we are too severe; in others ours laws are defective. Some subject themselves to imprisonment; others to corporal punishment: some forfeiting their lives, are cut off from the face of the earth, not only as *offenders*, who are justly condemned by sentence of the laws, but because the safety of good subjects depends on the removal of such dangerous persons. As to those who clamour, and *breed riots*, though they should be *sometimes in the right in substance*; yet, in the manner of shewing it, they often render the *remedy* worse than the *disease*. Do you remember how the royal Psalmist prays to be delivered from “the raging of the sea; the noise of the *waves* :” and to this he adds, “*the madness of the people* ?”

D. There are several passages, in which he mentions the *waters* that overwhelmed him; what did he mean?

F. He compares the rashness of the multitude to an *inundation*.—There were many and great *rebellions* against his government: and he often alludes to the madness of popular tumults, in which men distinguish as little as the *waves of the sea*. We have lately seen an instance of this, in those frantic wretches, who demolished *Thomas Bolt's* mill, and the flour in it, at the very moment the price of bread was very high.

D. This was a proof of madness, as there was so much less flour in consequence of their extravagance.

F. *Injustice*, whether it be committed by *pretenders to liberty*, or by a *despotic power*, on the part of the rulers of the land, is *injustice*: and from whatever quarter it comes, it is *arbitrary government*, and tends to establish it on the ruins of liberty. I have told you very often, that let people pretend what they please, they can be

ruled only by the *reason of laws*, or by *force*. When once arbitrary power is established, let it come from ever so base a principle, or mean a quarter, history furnishes abundant evidence, that subjects generally submit to it.

D. Were it not more eligible to die, contenting for liberty?

F. To reason from fact: the perverseness of some in rendering them vicious and lawless, has destroyed the common liberty of a nation. It is difficult sometimes to determine from what causes the greatest mischiefs proceed; though in general we cannot too often reflect, that no *wise man* ever expected perfection in any thing:—no just judge ever determined without deliberate council:—no able politician ever despised the advantages of good laws:—no wise man ever affected to be inattentive to the beauties of such laws:—and surely no *honest man* ever employed himself in *finding faults*, or exercising his wits to *evade laws* made for the *common good*, for the sake of his *private emolument*. You will hear many talk high of what they would do for liberty; yet they oppose *good laws*, or see them violated; or do nothing towards rendering them effectual to the ends for which they were framed: Do such people deserve to be free? Of all the interesting concerns of government, nothing is more important than *taxation*. We could be of no consequence to the world without it. Indeed we could have *no liberty*; for if we did not defend ourselves, by means of taxation, a foreign enemy would take our country: and would such enemy leave us free to pay, or not to pay taxes? There is a celebrated story in relation to the foolishness of subjects, in not understanding their own interest. A dangerous tumult once arose among the citizens of *Rome* on account of certain taxes, which the senate thought absolutely necessary for the preservation of the *Roman state*. Upon which, the first officer, being the *consul* for the year (*a*), was deputed to appease them. He accordingly addressed them in these words: “My friends and countrymen, attend to my words. It once happened, that the members of the human body, taking some exceptions at the conduct of the belly, resolved no longer to grant him the usual supplies. The tongue first, in a seditious speech, aggravated their grievances: and after highly extolling the activity and diligence of the hands and feet, set forth how hard and unreasonable it was, that the fruits of their labour should be

(a) Menenius Agrippa.

squandered away upon the insatiable cravings of a fat and indolent paunch, which was entirely useless, and unable to do any thing towards helping himself. This speech was received with unanimous applause by all the members. Immediately the *hands* declared, they would work no more; the feet determined to carry no further the load of guts with which they had hitherto been oppressed; nay, the very *teeth* refused to prepare a single morsel more for his use. In this distress, the *belly* besought them to consider maturely, and not foment to senseless a *rebellion*. "There is none of you," says he, "can be ignorant, that whatsoever you bestow upon me, is immediately converted to your use, and dispersed by me for the *good of you all*, into every limb." But he remonstrated in vain; for during the clamours of *passion*, the voice of *reason* is always disregarded. It being therefore impossible for him to quiet the tumult, he starved for want of their assistance, and the body wasted away to a skeleton. The limbs grown weak and languid, were sensible at last of their error, and would fain have returned to their respective duties; but it was now too late! death had taken possession of the whole, and they all perished together!"

*D.* A most natural and happy conceit to convince people of the *necessity of government*, and of submission to *taxes*! It could not fail of opening the eyes of the multitude.

*F.* You see, *Mary*, how necessary it is to support the *state*, in order to preserve every individual that composes it. And is it not probable, that the more decent regard we shew to *statesmen*, the more able and willing they will be to regard us, by shewing the stricter attention to *their duty*? If I love a virtuous man, I shall certainly do more for him, than for a worthless, quarrelsome fellow, who takes pains to disoblige me. You may imagine, that every able statesman makes large allowances for *political blindness*: and if he cannot restore the multitude to their *perfect sight*, by the kindness of Providence, and the intervention of *accidents*, he may at least lead the people *out of danger*. If we judge from events, we should be as candid on one side of the question, as the other; and give *praise* where there is *merit*.—When I think seriously on this subject, the pre-eminence of those who rule over us, appears only as a superior solicitude for the common good, subject to numberless *cares* and *inquietudes*.

In other respects, they are but as people who live in affluence. The power of directing a nation's revenues, especially when they grow short, and of disposing of *offices*, which give bread to thousands who work hard for it, as well as for some who do no labour, change not the nature and dependencies of man. We should preserve some corners in our hearts for compassion for those above us, as well as them who move in a lower sphere. Do you imagine that great officers do not feel grief from disobedient children, and shed as copious tears as other people? Sorrow and pain, and all the gloomy pomp of sickness, wait on *them*, as well as on *us*. They make *wills*, and appoint executors, and go through all the solemn parade of common mortals. As to their *peculiar* circumstances in disposing of offices; among those they really *serve*, how few think they have *enough*, or shew due gratitude! And many whom they *cannot serve*, load them with reproaches!—How often do they disguise their thoughts for fear they should *offend*; and decline the duty they *dare* not perform! Is this a state to be envied?

*D.* According to your description, it is rather to be avoided.

*F.* Mankind are apt to mistake, in thinking the high reverence shewn to office, is respect to the officer: and if it were, what would it be really worth to him? We must bring things to the heart: if I were a *statesman*, instead of a *farmer*, what would it avail me to be told, "Sir, you are great, noble, and happy," when the man who tells me so, might wish me hanged? but supposing he were sincere, I might, notwithstanding his fine words, feel myself encircled close with all that constitutes the *disquiet*, the *anxiety*, and *wretchedness* of a *common mortal*. The goodness or true greatness of a man, consists not in his external circumstances, nor in the number of heads which are uncovered at his approach:—nor is it the common appendages of attendants and dependants, which can afford any solid satisfaction. Judgment, knowledge, dispatch in business, virtue, and right principles of action, can alone make up a man's character, deserving the name of *good* or *great*.

*D.* How comes it that so many, who are said to have large independent fortunes, push forward for great offices?

*F.* Some, because they are not so rich, as they are thought to be: others, because they are

covetous.



covetous. Some love business; but in general, those who might act as petty sovereigns on their own domain, and dispense their bounty like the ministers of heaven, have acquired such a vitiated taste, they are not satisfied, but leave us to take care of ourselves: and although they have not been trained to public business, yet they must needs be *ministers of state*.

D. What can their motives be?

F. Ambition! Some may gratify this passion very properly: I speak only of those who ought to consult the public good, by correcting the *morals of the people*, on which such good depends. And he who exercises himself in promoting the virtue and integrity of a village, a town, or district, may bid much fairer to promote public felicity, than he who is contending for an office, which perhaps may be much better filled by another, who has it not in his power to act the same part with regard to such dependence; but with respect to the inconsistent conduct of men, there is nothing so wonderful, as that we should wonder at any thing that is passing in the world; but least of all should we be surprized, that in this commercial country, grown luxurious by success, we should become as mercenary as the most slavish part of mankind are generally found to be. In *Spain*, the grandees serve the king for an antient stipulated appointment, not higher than the wages of some domestics in *England*. I should rather say, *with* such appointment, and *for* the honour of being near the person of the sovereign, and taking their share in the weight of his government. As to our indigent nobility or commoners, who have talents, or the art of making others believe so, they are often as *hungry* as the *wolf in the fable*: but they have not the same notions of freedom.

D. What is That?

F. By the great caution of the shepherd, the wolf, becoming half-starved, strolled in the way of a well-fed mastiff. The wolf being too weak to act upon the offensive, thought it most prudent to accost honest *Towser* in a friendly manner; and among other civilities, congratulated him on his goodly appearance. "Why, yes," returned the mastiff, "I am indeed in tolerable case; and if you will follow me, you may soon be altogether in as good a plight." The *wolf* pricked up his ears at the proposal, and requested to be informed what he must do, to earn such plentiful meals. "Very little," replied the *ma-*

*stiff*; "only drive away beggars; care for my master; and be civil to his family." To these conditions, the hungry wolf had no objection, and very readily consented to follow his new acquaintance, wherever he would conduct him. As they were trotting along, the *wolf* observed, that the hair was worn in a circle round his friend's neck, which raised his curiosity to enquire what was the occasion of it. "*Nothing*," answered the mastiff, "or a *mere trifle*: perhaps the collar to which my chain is sometimes fastened." "*Chain!*" replied the wolf with much surprize; "it should seem then, that you are not permitted to rove about where and when you please." "*Not always*," returned *Towser*, hanging down his head; "but what does that signify?" "It signifies so much," rejoined the *wolf*, "that I am resolved to have no share in your dinners: *half* a meal with *liberty*, is in my estimation preferable to a *full* one *without* it."

D. This fable seems to carry with it its own moral: but still it is the condition of the greatest part of mankind to be in a state of servitude to each other.

F. True: and the great secret is to make it easy.—There is a pleasure in a *willing service*, when it is *well accepted*; but is not a competency without restraint, better than great affluence without it? We all naturally love to do that which is most agreeable to our several tempers and dispositions.

D. Of all slaveries, subjection to indolence, or an incapacity of knowing how to employ our time, is the worst in my opinion.

F. So it should be. For the same reason, dependence made useful to mankind, though it be attended with *drudgery* and some *mark of office*, is infinitely preferable to a slothful, worthless independence. Human nature is the same in prince or beggar. To the *virtuous* of all conditions, labour generally becomes a pleasure: and it is the happiness of a great part of mankind, though they do not acknowledge it, to be *constrained to labour*. Many who think themselves wretched, because they are obliged to work so much, let the quality of the labour be what it may, might find themselves more wretched, if they had no business to attend to. Active persons in private or public life, whether they work for *something*, or for *nothing*, work they will: but this is rarely the case of men in the highest offices. The offices are generally coveted for the *emoluments*; and

and the *emoluments* for the *pleasures* and *amusements* they furnish. Let the *public* business be executed as it may, it is our lot to labour: and the better we perform our task, the more gracefully shall we throw our mite into the treasury

of public safety and happiness, whilst we promote our own; still attentive to those duties which afford us the joyful prospects of glory in That kingdom which fadeth not away.

## CONVERSATION XI.

*Every nation jealous of its liberty. The existence of a people depends on their moral conduct. The declarations made in Scripture concerning the Providence of God, in respect to his protection of nations. The destructive effects of bribery in the election of representatives. Moral honesty the guardian spirit of liberty.*

D. THE notions which you entertain of *liberty*, differ much from the *common opinion*. Those who talk most about it, and express their *fears* so strongly, seem to enjoy little more than the *pleasure of talking*, whilst they suffer the *pain of fearing*.

F. Aye, *Mary*: but the strangest part of the story is, they fear That least, which is the most dangerous, the *corruption of their own manners*. *Faithfulness* in the service of God and our country, banishes *fear*, cherishes *prudence*, warms the *heart*, enlivens the *fancy*, and diffuses comfort through the whole community. True liberty is in its nature courageous, not timid. It is the abuse of it in our own persons, which makes us so jealous and fearful. Do you not observe, that whenever you do a *wrong thing*, you grow fearful? The terror of human laws, and of that invisible power which presides over the world, startles us. It is true, scarce any other nation in *Europe*, has preserved its freedom in so eminent a degree, as this has done; and therefore watchfulness becomes so much the less necessary to the people of other countries. But you are not to imagine, but that upon every new mode of oppression, they are alarmed: and a spirit of resentment among those we call *slaves*, often extends to murder. So jealous are mankind of what goes by the *common name of liberty*! I have heard it said by a *foreigner*, that we make ourselves dupes to our own *fears*; intimating, that if we had less liberty, we should have more happiness; but we do not chuse to truit to any such event. But still we talk of more freedom than really does,

or can exist, unless we were all much less vicious than we appear to be. This may be exemplified in many instances, with regard to the execution of laws, and the correction of abuses.

D. We esteem our own form of government the most happy of any in the world: and for the rest we shall be more or less happy, as we are all more or less virtuous. Pray, are we never apprehensive of danger from a foreign enemy?

F. Danger there always is in time of war. But the earth, or at least *Europe* and *America*, is now so divided, that mankind have not the same temptations to enslave each other, as they had in ancient times: not but vast tracts of land on the continent of *Europe*, change their masters very often. Happily for us, being islanders, though we are exposed to all who have ships, yet we are guarded by that large and deep moat, *the sea*.

D. But we occasionally acquire new dominions from other states.

F. Such as we have had just claims to. — Some nations depend on their *swords*, to make others tributary to them; we trust to *commerce*, and the *arts of peace*, by which every nation may be benefited; and so long as we endeavour to live in peace with mankind, as the subjects of God, the common ruler of all, we may hope he will preserve our country: nor can we, without the clearest violation of trust in his providence, act upon any other principle. The defence of *just rights*, is the plea of every nation, when they go to war. But still there is a moral principle which reigns in a greater or less degree: and there seems to be a guardian spirit, the minister of Heaven, which

which acts as the defender of a people, so long as they maintain a degree of virtue; or a destroying agent, which chastises nations when they give themselves up to work wickedness.

D. When we pray that the councils of the nation may be for the advancement of the glory of God, the protection of his church, and the safety, honour, and welfare, of our sovereign, and his kingdoms; we implore his mercy, that truth and justice, religion and piety, and as a consequence, peace and happiness may be established among us, for all generations.

F. True: and we beg this in no less a name than that of *Jesus Christ*, the mighty Prince of Peace, and our defender against all the powers of darkness. I hope we mean what we say, when we pray.

D. This is of the nature of a solemn engagement on our part to promote these ends; to respect, honour, and obey the laws of our country, as the only means of supporting the glory of it, and the worship of the true God. But I fear we often forget our engagement.

F. Few of us consider what hath already happened, and God only knows what may happen again, if we do not walk in his fear. There never was a people more credulous or inconstant than we have been, at some periods of our history; nor any that hath been tried in a more signal manner, as you will judge from our numerous wars, our tempers and inclinations; yet by the kindness of Heaven, we remain a people, and a powerful nation.

D. We are more knowing now, and I hope more virtuous, than in the times you allude to.

F. At no time should we open our ears to every one who comes with liberty in his mouth, unless we have good reason to think he hath virtue in his heart. We have every good thing to hope for, so long as we are just and honest; and every thing that is bad to fear, when we depart from this principle. Nations subject to arbitrary power, so long as they are governed by good and wise men, may be happy; though they act upon a more servile principle. Our political as well as moral security, depends, in a more distinguished manner, on the virtue of individuals. We often see, that the great events and dispensations of Providence, in the œconomy and government of mankind, depend upon their own conduct; for God will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children of them that hate him, and shew mercy

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unto thousands of them who give proof of their love, by keeping his commandments. The child often suffers for the crime of his parent, especially in a national capacity. After long provocation, the past as well as present offence, draws down almighty vengeance: and if a people persist in their iniquity, it must at length end in a final period of their national existence. What hath the Almighty declared on this head from the mouth of his prophet? “*At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, to pull down and to destroy it; if That nation turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*” So on the other hand, when the Almighty intended good, he says, “*At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, — to build and to plant it, — if it do evil in my sight, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.*” — These are expressions accommodated to our weak apprehensions, signifying the difference of events, with regard to us. “*Good parents and good princes, without any change of opinion, with regard to virtue or vice, encourage or discourage their respective children, or subjects, according as they change their behaviour for the better, or the worse.* Laws made by the greatest human wisdom, cannot take notice of the repentance of great malefactors, in the case of capital crimes; because it is impossible for such wisdom to discern when the repentance is sincere; and consequently it is altogether unsafe, to trust to any pretences of That kind; but God, who sees the inward dispositions of men’s hearts, judges always according to the reality of those dispositions, and dispenses his rewards and punishments accordingly.” With respect to our liberty, or our existence as a nation, it as surely depends on virtue, as your health depends on your temperance. As a nation, we may not be ruined in a year, nor your health totally decay in a day; but in the end, vice will certainly destroy one, as intemperance the other. In this view, what shall we say of that tragedy which, for a long time past, has been acted every seventh year, when so many of us were used to sell our country to the best bidder, laying waste that common truth and honesty, without which no nation can have the least title to liberty?

D. I hope those days are past. I have heard it said, that our forefathers paid those who represented them in parliament.

F. And with good reason; for the charge was  
I i attended

attended with *expence*, as well as *labour*. Notwithstanding the great reason we have to boast of the superior excellency of our constitution; like the several parts of nature, it hath in its bowels, the seeds of its own dissolution. The people naturally wish to be their own *guardians*; but you see how prettily they *guarded themselves*. Many appeared to make no other distinction, than who would bid highest for their vote. Was this acting like a *free people*? Could it possibly be attended with any happy consequences to liberty?

*D.* It was rather receiving the *wages of sin* in the service of the *devil*, with a view to introduce *slavery*.

*F.* Even so, my daughter!

*D.* Yet I do not suppose that till our *representatives* are restrained from giving, in general, our consciences will revolt against *taking*.

*F.* *Common-sense* would guide all mortals, when *custom* does not tyrannize over them. So long as a people depend on virtue for their freedom, *corruption* must verge on *slavery*. What a shame it was to take a bribe for doing a common duty, or to take one for *not doing it*; behaving like slaves, by acting against the sense of our own minds! If the member is chosen without a bribe, he will be the more free to give his voice for that which he believes to be *our real interest*, and we shall receive the reward of national felicity, or punish him if he is capricious. *Good* and *honest measures* being pursued, *party* prejudices will cease to interrupt the *public welfare*; and our *politics* and *religion* become one and the same object, in *practice*, as they really are in their own nature.

*D.* Yours is very sound doctrine; but the *guineas* glittered more in their eyes, than the distant rewards of virtue, on which you build your argument. The pleasure, purchased with this money, made them drunk with joy, for the *present hour*, and they did not think of the *next*.

*F.* For the *present hour* indeed!—That they were pleased, I make no doubt, or they would have declined the gift; though I believe many having a degree of remorse, sought their mind's relief in *custom*, and others in *drunkenness*. Being *intoxicated* and *infatuated*, they did not perceive that they were teaching their children to sell their birthright for a *mess of pottage*. They did not discern that they instructed their *wives*, their

*sons*, their *servants*, and their *daughters* also, to love ill-gotten gains, and to expect *bribes* in some form or other, for doing the common duties of life, or to do any *other evil for the sake of money*.

—The arch corrupter of mankind, full commissioned from the regions of darkness, could not have found out a more certain way of spoiling a nation of its choicest enjoyments in *peace*, *plenty*, and *freedom*, than by bribery and corruption. In short it accustomed them to do any thing for money. Do you not imagine that the *butcher*, *brewer*, or *baker*, who might have no vote in themselves, yet they think they have a share in the wages of such prostitution? How many enormous charges have been made beyond all bounds of decency, as well as common honesty, as if the occasion warranted the grossest injustice. This practice played havoc with the morals of the people at large.

*D.* And did not the representatives themselves lavish hundreds of thousands on the occasion of their elections, distressing their families from generation to generation?

*F.* I have known in my time more than a score of opulent families reduced to beggary by this pernicious practice. They thought they should be benefited by getting into a share of the government of their country, whether by fair means or foul. I remember a young nobleman, with whose parents my master was well acquainted, enjoying a good character, and a princely fortune, plunge himself into inextricable poverty. By contesting an election with another nobleman with a larger income, he deprived himself of the means of a subsistence.

*D.* Was it a matter of great moment to them, or to the public?

*F.* It signified nothing, either to them or the public, whether A or B was the representative. But according to our constitution, these peers ought not to have interfered. However they punished themselves severely. Never did greater *folly* reign in any *civilized* or *uncivilized* nation, than this of contending to such great loss and damage.

*D.* Some, I presume, were enriched by *bribery*.

*F.* *Enriched, my child!* It seems to have occasioned more bankruptcies than can be imagined. By distracting the people with *rioting* and *drunkenness*, whilst it destroyed the fortunes of the *great*, as it were in a *storm of corruption*, instead

instead of promoting *industry*, and making *peace* and *plenty* smile, it discouraged *sobriety* and the *fear of God*; the profusion of expence producing no other harvest than *blasted morals*, and *sickly discontent*.

D. Has the custom prevailed for any great number of years?

F. It seems to have reigned triumphant under five or six parliaments, even to be adopted as a principle, that there could be *no government without it*. This supposition was built on so rotten a foundation, that we now behold the contrary, and that there can be *no government with it*. We beheld the whole fabric giving way, and it might be feared would tumble to the ground. To give you a clear notion of the pernicious effects of this custom, I remember to have heard *Charlotte Carcas* speaking of her husband say, "My *Stephen*, though no *saint*, has been often in danger of having his brains beaten out by his great zeal in *parliament elections*. He used formerly to get *five* or *ten* guineas for his vote; but he neglected his customers, so much for the good of his country, as he called it, that his country has been often in danger of having his family to support by the parish rates. He was so often intoxicated in drinking healths to his candidates, that he almost ruined his own constitution. In a word, he contracted such *bi-deous habits*, that we were great losers by his *bribes* at the year's end. I am therefore very glad to find that gentlemen are come to *their senses*, and will no longer *give* us money in that vile way: but I hope as they grow more virtuous, they will shew it by relieving our real distresses, when *increase of family*, or *want of work*, *sickness*, or *old age*, shall bring us hard on death's door. When they know that we are become *virtuous*; or we know that they are so, and leave off this cursed trick, we shall mutually have a much better opinion of each other."

D. *Charlotte* seems to have a right notion of the thing.

F. My master used to say, that the good people of *England* are very apt to go astray after *strange inventions*; but again recover the *true path*. We are all sensible that there is nothing of so much consequence to our happiness, as *our government*, and the admirable plan for the preservation of liberty, with which our religion

is intimately connected: yet are we become so *heedless*, that in our reasoning on *liberty*, we are apt to leave *religion* out of the question. It is a bad qualification for sitting in judgment on the rulers of the land, when we are conscious of *our own transgression*; and to rail at a venture at the government under which we live, at the moment we are endeavouring to corrupt the morals of our *representatives*. This is as wicked as it is childish. And how few there are who do not pin their faith on their *leader*, without any judgment of their own.

D. *Ignorance* being so much our lot, and *accusation* so much our practice, it seems more safe to *praise* others, on a *slender testimony*, than condemn them *unheard*.

F. This is talking very candidly, *Mary*: we should be careful of taking up an opinion of public measures, for this plain reason, that the good effects of them are not always so immediately ready at hand, as to qualify us to judge of them. It is easy to make a rod to scourge ourselves with; and no uncommon thing for corruption to create an imaginary evil, and indulge a repentment, as if it were real.

D. Do you think that *bribery*, with regard to our representatives, is the cause of such false judgments or evil inclinations?

F. Whatever we do *wrong*, certainly tends to destroy the virtue of the mind: and we may complain that we cannot confide in the very person whose morals we have debauched. If we think the person chosen *the proper man*, we should not put him to the necessity of paying for his voice; and if we do *not* think him proper, we should not give him our vote.

D. Would you not have us accept a drop of water to moisten the glands of our throats, lest it should prove a temptation to utter an assent which the heart condemns?

F. Every one is to use his own discretion. Though we are not to expect *perfection* in any thing, we are not to use the means of rendering our own condition the more wicked, which we certainly do when we take bribes.

D. You say ours is the best government in the world; and yet we find it subject to such great abuses.

F. This is not the fault of the *form of government*; but when the people want common-sense and virtue, such may be the consequences.

The *worst* government is That which is without power to restrain, or affords a temptation for *tyranny*: The *best* is That, in which laws are founded in *reason* and *religion*, and exercised with *humanity*. But we must not judge, as if the *perfection* were all on our own side; since it is evident, *as in this case*, that the merit comes from the *government restraining the people*, and

not the *people restraining the government*. Nothing has happened for a long time, which has given me so sincere and heart-felt a satisfaction, as the measures we are now pursuing, to destroy, root and branch, That poisonous growth of *bribery*; than which *liberty* cannot have a greater *enemy*.

## CONVERSATION XII.

*Cause of the fall of the Roman state. The word of God declared to mankind, with respect to the support, and the downfall of nations. The destruction of the Jewish state evidently occasioned by their wickedness. Particular detail of the punishment the Jews incurred in England in ancient times.*

D. I Cannot be more perfectly convinced of the necessity of strict honesty, and the love of each other. The lasting welfare of my country, and the maintenance of liberty, must depend on them.

F. I wish to God we were all convinced of the same thing, not in opinion only, but in practice. Every good subject ought to reflect seriously, that the temporal glory of all nations has its bounds, as the nations themselves have their periods of existence: and we may even judge of their *stability* or *decay*, by their morals; as we do of the natural body by the health or countenance. A *state* may last for many years; and the *natural body* only for a few days: but *time* itself doth not subdue with more certainty, than *vice* and *immorality*. There is scarce an instance in history, of any great and mighty nation being ruined, whilst the people maintained their virtue: when they became *discontented*, *profligate*, and *rebellious*, they have been often destroyed root and branch!

D. We see that *vice* continually brings *private* persons into misfortunes; and occasions an early death. In the end it may produce the same effect to a great number of people.

F. Very true: such events seldom pass unnoticed; and on enquiry we generally find that, to all human appearance, the evil might have been *prevented*. In the same manner, the most powerful nations, composed of a number of vi-

*cious persons*, may bring on the speedy destruction of their country.

D. The unrighteous, I believe, are often preserved for the sake of the true servants of God; but no one can say when a generation of men hath filled up the measure of their iniquity, as did the *Jews* of old times.

F. No other nation has been ever cut off for their sins in the same manner. Though the causes of events are oftentimes hidden from the eyes of mortals, history proves to us, that many nations who have become very dissolute, have been no less severely punished; and some of them rendered remarkable examples to the whole earth. The *Romans* were the most famous people we read of: they made a very considerable figure, at the time the great Lord of nature appeared on the earth. The *Jews*, who rebelled against the *Messiah*, were punished by the swords of the *Romans*: but these, in their turn, forsaking their ancient virtue, and rigid temperance, which had given them victory over so many nations, were themselves conquered, and their empire dissolved. The *Romans* had been always distinguished for their disinterestedness, even to a contempt of death, when the good of their country was in question. This made up a most remarkable part of their character: but with the change of their *manners*, they changed their *sentiments*; and the happiness which arose from a conscious integrity, gave place to very different objects. They were

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once famous for an awful reverence of *religion*; acting upon the persuasion that *virtue* would be rewarded, and *vice* punished after death. In such circumstances, they feared to offend their gods; but as soon as these considerations ceased to be the rule and guide of their lives, the splendor of *dress*; the pomp and extravagance of *sumptuous feasts*; the grandeur of *public shews*; and the gratification of their *passions* and *appetites* in private, were substituted in the room of them;— and then they fell from the pinnacle of their glory!

D. A child may conceive, that from the moment they became so *extravagant*, they would be perpetually quarrelling for the means of gratifying their *intemperance*.

F. So it was, *Mary*: one man contended with another, till numbers contended with numbers. They had frequent bloody frays in their streets: according as their passions and prejudices led them, some supported one favourite, and some another; till at length the most dreadful civil wars broke out; and foreign enemies taking the advantage, this once mighty empire was divided and subdivided, and they ceased to be a people. So it hath happened with many others, and will probably happen to the end.

D. Are there no traces of this nation, except in *history*?

F. The ruins of their ancient buildings, of which we have so many pictures in *England*, are yet to be seen, and appear very grand: but the descendants of the *Romans*, who call themselves by the same name, are become a baneful of people, subjects to the *pope*, chiefly consisting of *priests*, *painters*, and *musicians*.

D. The fall of so mighty a nation, was a fall indeed! But the *Jews* being the chosen people of God, were yet more renowned than the *Romans*.

F. Much more renowned, considered in a religious view by us *Christians*! Their history, as recorded in the sacred writings, is a series of most wonderful events! They were led and conducted by the hand of God, or felt the bitterness of his displeasure, according as they behaved. At every period, from the beginning of time, we see the great Author of Nature dispensing  *blessings* or  *punishments*.—We know but little of the world, before the deluge, except that it became so abominably wicked, it pleased the Almighty to destroy the inhabitants of the whole earth, (one family excepted) after it had lasted 1656 years.

From the deluge to the birth of *Christ*, is a period of 2348 years. How the earth was then over-run with *ignorance* and *idolatry*, is an amazing consideration!

D. From the birth of *Christ*, to this time, being 1776 years, how old does it make the world?

F. These three periods added, are five thousand seven hundred and eighty years. A thousand years in the sight of God, being but as one day, the vastness of the object to our comprehension, only shews our *littleness*.

D. Yes: but what astonishing events have happened in the course of this time!

F. You have read the sacred writings: there behold the *predictions* of prophets, and the *completion of prophecies*, with relation to the iniquities of nations.

D. We are not acquainted with any prophecy, which particularly relates to *ourselves*.

F. No: we only understand that the *wicked* shall not go unpunished. What I told you in regard to our shameless conduct in *taking bribes for our votes for representatives*, would have come upon us in every view, were we to continue so infamous a practice. Do you remember how the prophet *Isaiah* expostulates on the subject of the folly and vanity of those who do not fear God, and whose *politics* are not built on the foundation of *religion*? He says, “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance!—All nations before Him are as nothing!—It is He that sitteth on the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers: that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: that bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.”

D. This being the condition of all human power, how ought we to look up to Heaven, whence our salvation comes!

F. Even so, *Mary*. The strength of this world, is weakness in the sight of God! It should humble the *proudest man*, and make him think, whether his conduct be acceptable in the sight of God, or not. When the Almighty is pleased to support a nation, and give it strength, the same prophet says,—“Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth:—Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small; and shalt make the hills as chaff.”

*chaff*:—Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and glory in the Holy One of *Israel*!”

D. Very grand!—Doth the prophet speak of those who are enemies to God, though they should be as strong as mountains?

F. So I understand: but this seems also to allude to the coming of the great Lord and Ruler of the earth, *Jesus Christ*, who brought down laws from heaven, which observed, quench all the fires of wrath and contention among men. The prophet says, “He shall bring forth judgment unto truth:—he shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he shall have set judgment in the earth: and the *isles* shall wait for his laws!”

D. What is the meaning of this passage, with respect to the government of mankind, and the establishment of kingdoms?

F. *Our island* has long since owned his sovereignty: how she hath rebelled against him, is terrible to think of! The prophet meant, that *Christ* will make the truth and justice of his cause appear against all adversaries; and at length obtain a complete victory over them; and that his followers would propagate his gospel, and not be discouraged by any difficulties. Accordingly we find this is the only way of establishing solid justice and judgment in the earth, upon the principles of the religion of *Christ*. Every passage almost through the sacred writings proves, that in length of time, God will *destroy* those who are disobedient, and set up those who observe his laws: and accordingly we find, that although many *bad* people have been saved, for the sake of a few *good* ones; yet, when the *bad* prevailed to a certain high degree, they have *all* perished, and the name of a nation hath been blotted out. The *Jews* are at this day a standing monument of his vengeance!

D. Their wickedness could never be equalled by That of any other nation upon the earth!

F. Their punishment, when *Jerusalem* was taken by the *Romans*, by famine, and civil broils; the slaughter of each other, as well as by the enemy; and the anguish with which they were seized, during the siege, make a detail as melancholy as was ever related by historians:—Their dispersion over the earth; and likewise their separation from the people under whose government they live, are full of wonder! There is something highly deserving of our notice, in the

circumstances of the *Jews*, as a nation, which corresponds with ancient prophecies. I desire you will take notice: They have been now dispersed over the earth, among *Christians*, *Mahometans*, and *Pagans*, for more than *seventeen hundred* years: during this time, the Almighty hath not permitted them to collect themselves into a body, or form any government, notwithstanding so great a part of the earth is uninhabited. Their descendants who live among us, said to be chiefly of the tribe of *Judah*, and others of *Manassah*, maintain their particular customs and manners: they neither keep *the same sabbath-day*, nor eat the flesh of animals killed after the same manner as we do. They do not mix with the world as *soldiers*, *seamen*, or *husbandmen*; and they intermarry only among *themselves*.—In a word, they stand as *monuments* to remind us of this great event, though themselves are *unbelievers*, and *still* look for That very *Messiah* whom their forefathers crucified. This dispersion hath not been their only punishment in their *national* capacity: but still they are reserved for *mercy*, when they shall be made sensible of their error; for the prophet says, “Fear thou not, O *Jacob* my servant, saith the Lord, neither be dismayed, O *Israel*; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and *Jacob* shall return, and shall be in rest and quiet, and none shall make him afraid, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations, whither I have scattered thee, *yet will I not make a full end of thee*; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”

D. There are many other passages in the same prophet, to the same effect.

F. I make no doubt, the Almighty intends to give proof to the children of men, that he is the *King*, the *Lord*, and *Governor* of the world: and if he preserves the scattered remnant of the *Israelites*, their not being *totally* wiped off the earth, must be intended for some great purpose, with regard to the promises made to their *righteous forefathers*, or for some other display of his power. The very nations among whom they lived in their captivity, and several others who received them since their dispersion, by wickedness, or the various accidents to which mankind are exposed, have changed their *manners*, their *laws* and *customs*, and even their name, as others *may do* before the completion of this prophecy,

even



even to their total extinction: yet the *Jews* remain a distinct people, though scattered as a *nation*.

*D.* One would hardly think there should be a *Jew* living.

*F.* In times of superstition and arbitrary power, or in resentment of their clandestine practices, they have been often driven from this island: in milder days they found their way back again. Our history mentions, that in the reign of *Richard I.* the *Jews* of *Norwich*, *Bury St. Edmund's*, *Lincoln*, *Stamford*, and *Lynn*, were spoiled of their wealth. At *York*, five hundred of them, besides women and children, took refuge in the castle, where they offered money to the *Christians* to save their lives: but being refused, they cut the throats of their wives and children, and cast them over the walls on the *Christians* heads; then burnt the castle, and themselves in it.

In the following reign, *King John* commanded all the *Jews*, men and women, to be imprisoned, because he would have *all their money*. Some of them delivered up all they had, and yet promised more to escape many kinds of torment. By a grant made by *Henry III.* to the inhabitants of *Newcastle*, it appears, that no *Jew* was permitted to inhabit in that town. The prejudice against them run so high, that in the time of *William the Conqueror*, the *English* complained of their hard treatment, by his bringing *Jews* into the land, from *Roan*, appointing them a place to inhabit and occupy.

In the 37th year of *Henry III.* among other severe injunctions, every *Jew* was obliged to wear a badge upon his breast; and none suffered to abide in any town, without the king's licence; except in towns where *Jews* were formerly wont to reside. In the year 1250, this prince accused the *Jews* of clipping money, and found no less than *three hundred* guilty, *forty* of whom were hanged, and the rest bought themselves off. The extortions on these unhappy people, ran so high, that this prince, and his successor *Edward I.* in the space of seven years, are said to have extorted from them *four hundred and twenty thousand pounds*. This is incredible, unless we suppose they were the chief traders in the kingdom.

In the year 1291, *Edward I.* banished no less than fifteen thousand of them at one time, confiscating all their estates. *Pope Innocent III.* at this time gave them toleration, but soon after banished them with very odious epithets. They had resided here for 230 years, and did not return for 364 years.

*D.* They seem, in all ages, to have been much the same kind of people; and generally to have deserved the punishments they met with.

*F.* They now live in peace and quiet under our government. There are many professing themselves *Christians*, very bad men; but when *Jews* become such misereants, we must not be surprized that they should exceed in wickedness: for though the law of *Moses* requires obedience to moral precepts, the *Jews* still preserve as many of their *forms* and *ceremonies* as their condition will admit of; but the *spirit of religion* is often lost in them. As they do not intermix with *Christians*, by living in the same manner, and are employed in little or nothing more than *traffic*, you may be the less surprized, that some of them should turn their thoughts to very iniquitous practices. Of late years a few of them became housebreakers, and upon one occasion committed a murder. These wretches formed an association, and invited over some of the same stamp from *Poland*; but after several robberies, a *Jew* had the merit of detecting the villainy, and bringing the offenders to justice: and the *Polanders* they had invited over, were sent back again. The thefts committed in diminishing our coin, by whomsoever it might be done, have been lately discovered to be amazingly great.

*D.* What other *Christian* nations suffer the *Jews* to live amongst them?

*F.* Under certain regulations they live in *France*, *Italy*, *Holland*, and several other *Christian* countries. Their *dispersion* into so many nations, and the *general contempt* into which they are fallen, are not so extraordinary as their *preservation*, for so many ages, under such circumstances, as a distinct people.

## CONVERSATION XIII.

*A remarkable anecdote of the Jews in Cromwell's time. The naturalization of the Jews attempted in England in 1753. The Jews preserved as a distinct people. Their present dispersion a standing proof of Christianity. The apparent design of the Almighty to restore them in his good time. The visionary doctrine of the reign of the saints for a thousand years.*

D. **T**HE Jews must have been in a miserable state after they were driven out of *Judæa*.

F. *Titus Vespasian* dispossessed them of that country; but they were persecuted by several of the *Roman* emperors. *Adrian*, to shew his high contempt of them, sold the Jews as we sell cattle. Through many centuries they had no better fortune. In the year of *Christ* 615, they were driven out of *Alexandria*; and in the two following years, from *Spain* and *Portugal*. Towards the close of the same century, they were also expelled from *France*. But it was not till the *twelfth* century, that *Edward*, Bishop of *Mentz*, drove them from thence. Having again obtained a protection in *France*, *Philip Augustus* banished them a *second* time. The crime against the state, of which they were generally accused, was their old trick of *clipping* and *coining*, which has been constantly deemed a capital offence in all countries. In the issue, it proves a robbery of every one who receives the money so diminished or falsified.—It is a remarkable event in the history of the Jews in *England*, that in 1655 they sent two of their noted rabbies from *Asia*, to *Cromwell* the Protector, in the presumption, that a man, whose attempts had been attended with such wonderful success, in subverting the church and state of a powerful nation, might perchance be the *promised Messiah*. Such was the monstrous credulity of these deluded people! They had several conferences with this chief of the rebellion: but discovering their folly, he had too much sense to give them any countenance beyond a bare connivance at their admission. From 1655, they have been protected, and lived with uninterrupted freedom. We treat them with tenderness: and they are considered in some other christian countries, particularly in

*Holland*, as worthy of notice, being protected in their liberty and property. In *Amsterdam* they are restrained as to the particular quarter of the town where they are to dwell. The *Mahometans* in *Asia* are less favourable to Jews, than they are to *Christians*; for they allow that *Jesus Christ* was a great prophet sent from God, though in their opinion inferior to *Mahomet*.

D. Such is their ignorance and unbelief.

F. In *Turkey*, the Jews have large commercial connections, but they are often fined with great severity. In *Russia*, only a few have settled; and they have been sometimes obliged to leave that country. About the year 1740 they were banished from *Bohemia*. They took refuge in *Holland*, but their brethren begged they might be sent away; alledging, that they were not in a capacity to support so numerous a *poor*.

D. I perceive, in every case, that the predictions of *Christ* concerning them, are verified. They are the outcast of nations. If I am rightly informed, they have been unprosperous of late years in this country.

F. My master was particularly acquainted with many of them, and esteemed several as very charitable worthy men. I have heard him say, that some by their extravagance, and some by overtrading themselves, from being wealthy have sunk into poverty. In 1753, a few of them, who knew least of their religion, and abounded most in worldly vanity, aspired at being naturalized in *England*. My master was of opinion, that they mistook their real interest; and that we should not understand ours, if we consented to it. He knew that the reasons urged in behalf of the act of parliament intended to qualify the Jews for naturalization, were not founded in knowledge of real facts. Having lived abroad among Jews in foreign lands, and knowing the senti-

sentiments of some other nations about these *Israelites*, he saw very sufficient reasons to think those nations would be very much offended at our conduct. He had assurance that naturalization would appear to them as *incorporating Jews with us*, at the time that some, particularly the *Portuguese*, do not admit a *Jew*, professing himself to be a *Jew*, to set his feet on land but on *certain conditions*. He is to be distinguished by particular clothing, and to be attended by an officer of the inquisition. My master was also of opinion, that we should attempt to counteract the design of Providence, the *Jews* having been kept through so many centuries, separated from all the nations of the earth: and amidst a variety of revolutions which the nations have suffered, the *Jews* are still monuments of Providence. They teach us that they are still to be preserved as a *distinct people*; and that we should not attempt to incorporate them with us, or do any thing that may induce them, or other nations, to believe we consider them as part of the community; alledging, that whilst they remained in their present situation, as *merchants*, in this country, they might be quiet and unmolested; but as soon as they should assume the privileges of natives, and become *landholders*, in consequence of *naturalization*, they might be easily betrayed to do acts which would expose them to some resentments, if not to such persecutions, as they suffered in former ages. It likewise appeared to him, that our religion, as we are *Christians*, is so united with our laws, none but *Christians* can be endowed with the *privileges of natives*; so that we might as well naturalize a *Mahometan* or a *Pagan*, as a *Jew*. As to bribing them to become *Christians*, the absurdity is no less glaring. If any person renounces *Judaism*, and declares himself a *Christian*, though a *foreigner*, he may easily obtain his naturalization.

D. What was the event of this attempt?

F. Some ascribed it to political frenzy, and opposition to the designs of ministers, at a time of election of our representatives in parliament:—but I believe it was the *common sense of the nation*, that there should not be any general bill to qualify those for naturalization: and though many, in opposing the general principle, might be actuated by party prejudices, others thought the proposed naturalization repugnant to the designs of Providence. The fact is, that the act of parliament which actually passed both

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houses, and was confirmed by the king, qualifying the *Jews* for naturalization, was repealed the very next session.

D. All the *Jews*, you say, did not concur in asking for their naturalization.

F. The attempt was contrary to the sentiments of the graver and more pious part of them. These applauded my master's conduct upon their own great principle; that it is totally inconsistent with the *faith* and *hopes* of a *Jew*, to be *naturalized*, or in any respect incorporated with *Christians*. While they believe the *Messiah* is not come, they must remain as a *distinct people*.

D. If he meant to screen the *Jews* from misfortunes; preserve our own reputation abroad, or guard the purity of our religion; he acted upon laudable principles.

F. Do you not perceive it to be a most singular providence, in proof of *Christianity*, that a people so divided, are so wonderfully preserved?

D. Their original language, customs, and manners, being so unmixed with the other nations, is truly wonderful.

F. These people are like so many grains of dust among the nations, yet have they not been lost, when the nations themselves have become extinct, of which, proof is given in many instances, both in the eastern and western parts of the world; witness the *Egyptians*, *Babylonians*, *Greeks*, *Romans*, *Gauls*, *Goths*, and other nations, which are either entirely lost, or so totally changed, as no longer to be nations.

D. I suppose that every father among the *Jews*, takes care to tell his child that he is descended from the *Patriarchs*, and that in his disconsolate state, he is still to hope for a *Messiah*.

F. They have seen the promises of their own doctors, for the speedy manifestation of an *expected Messiah*, prove false; but still they are *obstinate*. All that can be said is, that *when* they shall believe in *Christ*, then will the *Messiah* come to them. What event will happen to bring about their *conversion*, is beyond us to determine.

D. They believe in the *Old Testament*.

F. Whilst we trace out the completion of the sacred oracles upon the comparison of both *Old* and *New*, we see under what circumstances he *was* to come; and likewise this plan of divine Providence accomplished. We behold the great *Lord* of nature establishing laws for the *government* of those who believe in him, till his *second coming* to judge the world.

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D. I perceive, that no less than the power of God can preserve the *dispersed Jews*. The crime which they committed as a people, in crucifying the *Saviour* of the world, filled up the measure of their former iniquities.

F. This brought on the load of calamities, which they now suffer: but I believe it will not move the Almighty to retract his promise, and to reject entirely, and without resource, the posterity of *Jacob*. We learn from this great event, that their blindness will probably be one day removed, and they will adore Him, whom *Abraham* (a) had desired to see, and whom he had in spirit adored with the holy transport of joy and gratitude.

D. The *Jews* thus punished and dispersed, and bearing witness to *Jesus Christ*, one would imagine that those Christians in whose cities they reside, should be more struck at the sight of a *Jew*, than we who seldom see one.

F. That is a mere fancy.—You sometimes behold a miserable *Jew* travelling about the country with *trinkets*: others live in comfort, and some in affluence: but in the religious view, we now consider them, this makes no difference. “*Their dispersion* proves that *Christ* is come: their preservation, that he hath not rejected them for ever: their *miserics* proceed from not having known him; and the *only hope* they have, is that they shall one day come to the knowledge of him.”

D. This I think is agreed on all sides.

F. “Had they been only punished, it would only have proved his *justice*; had they been only preserved, they could only have proved his *power*; but being reserved to worship him, they will prove his *mercy*,” and make reparation for their outrageous crime, as a nation, and shew all the people of the earth that God is their Almighty sovereign, their *parent*, *protector*, and *friend*.

D. The recal and conversion of the *Jews*, will be a *very awful event* to all the *Christian* world.

F. And as far as we know, as it will baffle all the *infidelity* of the wicked, it may bring on the conversion of all the rest of mankind: but this seems to be self-evident, that except we live in constant attention to Him, as our *great Lawgiver*, the object of our worship, and the mediator between God and us: except we honour all worldly *ordinances* to which he com-

mands us to be *obedient*, we rebel against his authority, in spite of the evidence we have received of his being the *Christ*, the Son of the living God, and may bring ourselves into the same condemnation as the *Jews* now are! As a nation we have the strongest evidence drawn from the experience of every day, that obedience to the precepts of our religion, draws down blessings from heaven, secures our liberty in the most perfect manner the nature of things will admit; and gives us a prospect both of temporal and eternal happiness.

D. Christianity being so well calculated to establish universal righteousness, and make all mankind happy, would to God it were more generally attended to, and more seriously embraced!

F. Alas, my child! you who are so young may perceive, that the *corruption* of mankind prevents *its effects* on our minds, who are so well acquainted with it; as it obstructs others who are ignorant, from receiving it. We know that above seventeen hundred years have passed since the preaching of the gospel; yet there are millions, and tens of millions of people that either never heard of Christianity, or know nothing of the wonders of the *life of Christ*, the tremendous events of his *death*, or the glories of his resurrection. The time will come when his religion will reign over the whole earth: nor are you to imagine, though many generations of men walk over each others graves, in such a succession of ages, it is the less evident that a *thousand years* in the fight of God, are but as *one day*!

D. Are there not some nations of the earth who have been informed that there is such a religion, and yet are of a different persuasion?

F. Yes: such is the force of prejudice in the human mind: even among the *Christians*, what a variety of creeds and modes of worship do we find! I remember to have heard my master say, when he was among the eastern nations, that some of the missionaries complained, although the *Mahometans* allowed the nature of God to be *incomprehensible*, yet they would not allow the doctrine of the *Trinity*.

D. If they allow that God is incomprehensible, it seems to be one step towards acknowledging that the *Christian faith might be true*: and if they found the *Christians* acted agreeably to

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so great and generous a faith they might give credit to the rest.

*F.* Yes : but he said, that although good *Mahometans* were not so repugnant to the purity of our divine religion, as some Christians imagine, yet in many countries bordering on *persish* dominions, christianity appeared to them as gross idolatry ; and no wonder, if one considers how the papists worship images of the *Virgin Mary*, and of real or fictitious saints, falling down before them, and praying to them as intercessors with the Almighty. He said, that in the north coast of *Persia*, near the *Caspian Sea*, as he had seen the remains of a number of temples dedicated to fire, the object of the worship of the ancient *Persians* ; on the western side, in the mountains of *Dagistan*, are found many traces of christianity. In the countries now subject to the *Turks*, where Christianity first shone forth, remain the ruins of many Christian churches, built in different centuries, being so many monuments of the truth of what we read : and vast numbers of Christians are still scattered over the *Turkish* dominions.

*D.* These are monuments of our religion ; but how came the followers of *Mahomet* to prevail so far over the Christians ?

*F.* My dear *Mary*, you may as well ask me, how came the *Jesus* to crucify our *Saviour* ? So heaven permitted : but still a true Christian is unconquerable, whatever dominion he may live under : his faith is superior to the power of the sword. The political liberties of mankind can be proposed only to their reason, though sometimes prejudice may interpose ; but their religion must be built on their faith and moral sense of good and evil. By this, eternal distinctions of good and evil are presented to them. The miracles which our *Saviour* and his followers wrought, were to convince the *understanding*, not compel the *will*. We know not when it shall be agreeable to the wisdom of the Almighty, that all mankind shall acknowledge *Christ* ; but this we are persuaded of, that in proportion as Christianity prevails, true government and the liberty which rational creatures ought to covet, will be established. It is foretold, that

the *sun of righteousness* with healing in his wings, will cover the whole earth ; but when, is a secret to us mortals.

*D.* What a glorious thing it would be, if all the kings of the earth were so righteous, and established Christianity, by inspiring their subjects with just sentiments of it !

*F.* Glorious indeed, *Mary* ! this would be the reign of the saints on earth, agreeable to a fond opinion which prevailed for two or three centuries, in the first ages of the Christian church, that *Christ*, at a certain time, would return to the earth, and reign for a thousand years ; the expiration of which, would be the consummation of all things. One of our own writers, a learned, but perhaps a whimsical man (*a*), is said to have pretended, that these thousand years were to commence in 1720, which happened to be the period of a *national frenzy*, with respect to the *South-Sea* bubble. Without amusing ourselves with notions, for which there is no clear authority in *Scripture*, nor perhaps in *reason*, let us try, to the last hour of life, to keep to That which we believe to be right, and come as near it as possible !—There are but two ways to govern mankind, *reason* and *force* : in reason is comprehended *faith*. The manner of applying to the mind, and the various modes of exercising authority in government, constitute an essential difference. Some degree of *force*, where *reason* does not prevail, is inseparable from the nature of all government otherwise it would be in vain to appeal to the laws for *justice*. On the contrary, a portion of justice must be found in the most *despotic* rule, or men would not bear it. Nothing is *perfect* ; if we walk as near to this straight line of duty as we can, it is all that is expected : the rest we must leave to heaven ! I charge you, my daughter, as you love, not your *liberty* and your *country* only, but your *God*, and your own soul, count nothing as worthy your solicitude compared to your knowledge of *Christ*, whose *kingdom is everlasting* ; and in which you may share in the glory, even to the full completion of your happiness, in the regions of eternal bliss !

(a) Whiston.

## CONVERSATION XIV.

*The perverseness of the ancient Jews with regard to their government. Character of a good king, and the advantages of government.*

F. FOUL means must produce foul ends : and it is more than probable, that those who mean to cheat the devil will be over-matched.

D. May not an administration, meaning honestly, sometimes do *evil* that *good* may come of it ?

F. In a national view, *good* often comes out of *evil* ; but he who premeditatedly commits evil, though it be in hopes that good will come of it, makes the *evil* certain ; and therefore he is *punishable*, at least by the divine law ; for at best he invades the province of the Almighty, with regard to what *shall* come to pass. In a national view, it is tempting of Providence to deprive us of the advantages we enjoy, by seeking other benefits in an unrighteous way. It is forsaking the true path of religion, and substituting another in its place : and whenever we presume to indulge ourselves in making such constructions, the true light which guides us to the paths of eternal rest, is taken from us. It is setting up an image to worship ; and whether it be called *opinion*, or any thing else, it is an idol. The *Israelites*, in the stupidity of their perverseness, upon one occasion made a *golden calf* for the object of their worship ; and instead of adoring the great *Jehovah*, the *God* who had delivered and preserved them so often, and in so astonishing a manner, this strange infatuation seized *their* minds. *We*, by the singular interposition of Providence, and the *blood* which our ancestors have spilt, in defence of our pure religion and liberty, as wantonly pay honour to *gold in coin*, when we sell our *voices* and *consciences* ; consequently the heart, which should be offered up as incense to the true *God*, is devoted to the *instrument of all evil* ; namely, *money*. That we were sincere in what we did, is evident ; for he who bade highest, generally secured us. Regardless

of the event, we were led like the ox crowned with garlands, to be sacrificed at the altars of corruption. Indeed, *Mary*, I think no good could come of it : the evils which might come, wore a formidable aspect ; for let the *morals* of the people be thus laid waste, what will become of their religion ? Where will be those generous-sentiments, which maintained *freedom* with our blood ; or where the regular obedience to government, which constitutes so great a part of domestic peace and harmony ?

D. It was a dangerous practice, and put us to *open shame*. I am glad we bethought ourselves in time, and did not lose our reputation entirely.

F. There is no possibility of telling how far mankind may carry their *base inclinations*.—You know that the *Jews* were for some ages under the more immediate government of *God* himself, by the instrumentality of *judges*, and *leaders* of their armies ; but at length being *discontented*, they desired to change their *form of government*. And what were we about when we corrupted our representatives, and ourselves, when we required money to do That which ought to be the *freest act* in the world ? If we had meant to change the stern virtue of our forefathers, and to persuade our representatives that we are sheep or asses, to be bought with a price, regardless of the best laws, and the mildest government, we could not have acted more consistently than we did. The *Israelites* desired a king, as the heathen nations around them had kingly government. This was mere wantonness : they would needs be better than well ; or it was gross ignorance of what such government was subject to. You may suppose that kingly government was not *limited* in those ages, as ours is. However, they offered the kingdom to *Gideon*, their *deliverer*, to him and his posterity after him : he generously refused

refused their offer; reminding them, that *Jehovah* was their king. Upon the death of *Gideon*, *Abimelech*, his son by a concubine, slew all his brothers to the number of *seventy*, *Jotham* alone escaping; and by the assistance of the *Sechemites*, made himself king: but *Jotham*, in opposition to his wicked brother, upon this occasion represented to the people their *extreme folly*. He shewed them, that the most deserving are generally the least ambitious; whilst the *worthless* grasp at power with eagerness, and exercise it with *insolence* and *tyranny*. He conveyed his sentiments to them in the following manner:—“Hearken unto *me*, ye sons of *Sechem*, so may God hearken unto *you*!—The trees, grown weary of the state of *freedom* and *equality*, in which God had placed them, met together to chuse, and to anoint a king over them: and they said to the olive-tree, “Reign thou over us.” But the olive-tree said unto them, “Shall I quit my fatness, wherewith God and man is honoured, to disquiet myself with the cares of government, and to rule over the trees?” And they said unto the fig-tree, “Come *thou* and reign over us.” But the fig-tree said unto them, “Shall I bid adieu to my sweetness and pleasant fruit, to take upon me the painful charge of royalty, and be set over the trees?” “Then,” said the trees unto the *vine*, “Come *thou* and reign over us.” But the vine said also unto them, “Shall I leave my wine, which honoureth God, and cheereth man, to bring upon myself nothing but trouble and anxiety, and to become king of the trees? We are happy in our present lot; seek some other to reign over you.” Then said all the trees unto the *bramble*, “Come *thou* and reign over us.” And the bramble said unto them, “I *will* be your king: come ye all under my shadow, and be safe; obey me, and I will grant you my protection: but if you obey me not, out of the bramble shall come forth a fire, which shall devour even the cedars of *Lebanon*.”

*D.* This is a glorious lesson for subjects to know *when they are well*; and not do any thing contrary to those rules by which they have been rendered *happy*.

*F.* This teaches us also to respect our laws, and *proper sovereigns*; and when we see ourselves cherished and defended, to be *contented*. It likewise instructs *kings* to consider the arduous task of royalty.

*D.* How is a king to give proof of *his* virtue?

*F.* By *doing well*. The prophet *Daniel* (*a*) represents a king as a very large and strong tree, the top of which reacheth unto the Heavens, and its branches spread to the extremities of the earth, bowing down with *fruit*; and by the beauty and abundance of its leaves, constituting the happiness of the plains around it. Whilst it supplies a *grateful shade*, it secures a retreat to beasts of every kind: the *wild* and the *tame* are lodged safely under its branches; and it supplies food to *all living creatures*.

*D.* But what prince upon earth ever answered to this character?

*F.* None perhaps ever answered *entirely*; princes are *men*, and as such betray *human infirmities*: and they govern men who are no less inclined to *evil*. But still it is a fine allusion to the real services, and solid advantages procured to nations by kingly authority well exercised; for *good government*, as I have said, is the foundation of all earthly blessings; especially with regard to the poor and weak, who under the shade and protection of the majesty of a king, find peace and tranquility, whilst the monarch himself is exposed to the storms and tempests from which he shelters others. A *good king* is also compared to a *shepherd* guarding a numerous flock of sheep, dispersed over a down, grazing in quiet on its *softest grass* and *fragrant herbs*: he is careful that none shall stray; he guides and follows them, and changes their pasture; and if the *wolf* approaches, he is ready with his *dog* to protect them.

*D.* In this sense, the *shepherd* was certainly made for the *sheep*, and not the *sheep* for the *shepherd*.

*F.* You would think a *faithful shepherd* highly deserving of respect and applause.

*D.* I believe there are few instances of a people shewing respect to a *king*, merely for his *merit*.

*F.* Where did you take up that conceit? If it be true, it is not for the credit of a people. Perhaps this may be a reason, why kings are not very solicitous of praise or popularity. Many subjects would trample upon *royalty*, if it were not attended with pomp and splendour; such as fine coaches and horses; sumptuous dresses; a crowd of guards and attendants: we see in

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common life, that a fine person, and a commanding air, strike the imagination. Whilst people gratify their curiosity, they are awed into respect, and eager to feast their eyes on *outward* appearances, which flatter the vanity of the heart: and it is not wonderful, that both prince and people should in many instances be caught by the *eye*. Such appearances are necessary to distinguish conditions; but they hinder neither one nor the other from being wise and virtuous.

*D.* Is it not also a great happiness in prince or beggar to enjoy a temper, even, constant, and free from any violence of passion?

*E.* Prudence and good-humour in all conditions, prevent offence being taken.

*D.* How can a king or minister of state keep his secrets close, yet act with sincerity and openness?

*E.* Just as you may by having no ears nor tongue, where there is any temptation to discover what should not be known in public: and of late years, not all the machinations of opposition, from whatever quarter these may come, have been able to extort secrets of this kind.

*D.* Did you ever hear the *great* talk of these things?

*E.* Yes: I once waited at table, when some persons of distinction were upon the subject of a good and able king: one maintained, "That he should be grave and serious in public; his sentiments exalted, and his words few, conferring his favours with a grace that doubled the benefit: that he should be quick and decisive in his judgment, and fruitful in expedients; having such a comprehensive memory, as presents to him the names and faces, the wants and desires of his subjects, without partiality: That he should also treat ambassadors, and other strangers, with whose sovereigns he is connected, in the most courteous manner. He should be a master of all concerns relating to his kingdom; and abolish all such *customs*, and *abuses* of laws, as tend to immorality, that his authority and example may advance the honour of God."

*D.* I am glad to hear, that *great men* talk of the *honour of God!* But hath the king power to abolish all those bad customs and abuses, which the great man mentioned?

*E.* *Great men* sometimes mistake. To enable a king to accomplish, either by authority or example, what the noble lord mentioned, he

should not only be arbitrary, but have the power of working miracles. A prince who governs with judgment, justice, and mercy, may be said to be the immediate messenger of Heaven: But the Almighty himself doth not control the wills of men.—Another of the company added, "That a prince should see as much as possible with his own eyes; and consider all his people as one family; and consult the happiness of his subjects, as a father doth his children."

*D.* Is this possible?

*E.* If a private man finds it extremely difficult to manage his own family, where his power is never verbally disputed, what allowance must be made for a king in *this* country, who has a million of families to manage, and which must be done according to the rules prescribed to him? Your own candour and good sense will suggest to you the necessity of tenderness in judging of others, not less in the highest than in the lowest.

*D.* I understand how iniquitous it is to use disrespectful words, tending to insult a supreme magistrate.

*E.* You see how difficult his task is; and that were he an angel, if his subjects were not angels too, they would not be all obedient, nor contented with their condition. I have not told you half the accomplishments which they said were necessary in a *king*: but I did not hear them mention what was necessary in those, who stood next in rank to a king to dispense happiness to the people. In this country, a man of *ten* or *twenty thousand* a year, may see more good done, than a king can venture to do in person.

*D.* How glorious a thing then it is to be rich! But still I apprehend that our kings have much liberty, and may do much good or evil.

*E.* Liberty! He converses with able persons, foreigners and subjects; he enquires into the characters of men: he delights in ingenious arts and improvements, which beautify a country; he is not less attentive in reviewing his armies and fleets. He attends his *cabinet* and *councils* upon public business; anxious to see both *church* and *state* conducted in such a manner, as may best answer the great ends of government; knowing that his own happiness, and the welfare of the nation, is the same object; both equally depending on good order, valour, discipline, and the fear of God. His religious deportment is solemn and unaffected, proving that his hopes are



are founded on the promises of the gospel. In his private character, he is an affectionate husband, and a tender father; shewing the utmost regard to his people, by a singular sollicitude, that his children shall be well instructed, in all that is proper to their high station; and the character which they are to fill. In this instance, he gives proof of a sincere regard to posterity: no man in his dominions can possibly demonstrate a greater; with this distinction, that others may educate their children so as to be good subjects, but he breeds up a *race of kings*, fit to govern the land from generation to generation. You are also to observe, that he was born in *England*, which has not been the case of many of our sovereigns, for near a century past.

*D.* And has any foreign birth, or foreign education, occasioned difficulties?

*F.* Many dangerous prejudices have arisen from this cause; but our present sovereign draws experience from observation, from the conduct of his ancestors, who have sat on the *British* throne: these furnish such instruction, as enables him to judge what part to act upon all emergencies; whilst the native goodness of his heart, restrains him from every kind of intemperance.

*D.* This is more than can be said of many of his subjects.

*E.* But it is not the less true: if our own im-

moralties do not render us unworthy the protection of that Being, who is the King of kings, and without whose aid, all human power is vain; we have the utmost reason to hope he will govern us with such judgment and justice, as will establish the throne of his fathers, and deliver it down to his children, bright and unfulfilled.

*D.* One would imagine, that the writers of our *news-papers* entertained no such thoughts; or had no talent for any thing but defamation. Has the king great privileges annexed to his high office?

*F.* Greater than is prudent for him to exert to the utmost, upon all occasions: but it is happy, that he hath so much power; otherwise I should fear the time would come, when we might stray into a wilderness, as sheep without a shepherd; or what is much the same, be under so many *shepherds*, that they would devour us. The better we behave, the more we encourage him to do good; and the more good he does, the fairer opportunities we shall enjoy of expressing our gratitude to him, who is the instrument of heavenly mercy in so many instances to us.

*D.* It being natural to love them who love us, it is no less good policy to be respectful to those who are in authority; and most of all to the king, who is the highest officer in the state.

## CONVERSATION XV.

*The British Americans their notions in regard to the British constitution: their ability to maintain a war against their mother country. The happiness they may enjoy as colonists, not inferior to that of any subjects at home. Prayer against rebellion. Prayer of a good king in respect to rebellious subjects.*

*D.* **W**HAT is this bustle in relation to *America*? Is there any good foundation for a civil war?

*F.* Our fellow-subjects of that country, by the protection received from the strength of the *British arms*; the force of the *British* treasures; the vast bounties given them to encourage their trade; the loan of *British* property to promote trade; and the protection derived from the happiest government in the world, are become

formidable enough to say, "We can do without you; and as for the gratitude you expect from us, we are like other common corrupt mortals; we can stand upon our own legs, and we do not want to have any connections with you. We allow no longer of the name of a *mother country*: and if you pretend to tax us, you must do it by force of arms."

*D.* Do they say so much?

*F.* Not in so many words, but in effect they

say as much, and do as much. Very learned distinctions have been made by the *opposition* at home, of *external* and *internal taxation*, *revenue taxes*, and *regulation taxes*. The understanding has been confounded with nice distinctions. *Much learning has made us mad*; and poor common-sense has been involved in the most apparent contradictions and absurdities. All attempts to reason our rulers out of their senses, have proved vain: and the great *rational majority of the people of England*, concurs in this plain, simple proposition, that the *American colonists*, commonly called *British Americans*, are *subjects*, as you or I may be; and that our government is vested in king, lords, and commons, as the guardians of our liberties, in all and every place over the earth, where *British subjects* dwell: and they are all eligible as members of that parliament which so constitutionally represents them *all*. To suppose the contrary, is not only devoid of truth, but treason against the state; or in other words, against themselves. Were the parliament to give up its authority, the Colonists might have a plea to break off from us, because we should then break up our constitution, and dissolve its frame; but to rebel because they maintain, is the raving of madness. The parliament being composed of men, they are subject to err. They seem, in some points, to have erred; but the errors are by no means of such a nature as to warrant rebellion. On the contrary, that according to the proposals made to them before any blood was spilt, the duty, tax, or assessment intended to be levied on them, is only such as is expedient for the support of the *civil government*, the administration of justice, the regulation of commerce in that country, and other purposes necessary to maintain the supreme legislative authority, as shall be approved by his majesty and the two houses of parliament, considered as essential to our constitution and the establishment of that government, which really and truly constitutes them *fellow-subjects*. We have as little inclination to oppress or enslave, or make war with the *Americans*, as we have to quarrel with the emperor of the moon: on the contrary, we hold out conciliation to those who are inclined to *obedience* and *fidelity*.

D. Then their refusal of the terms proposed, puts the dispute upon the clearest ground.

F. So clear, that it seems apparent some of them have long intended to rebel; and they have

awed some by threats, and deceived others by false representations. If they deny the authority of the *British* legislature, they defy all *British* laws and government.

D. Surely this will be attended with some dreadful consequences, unless they repent.

F. The king has sent over a great army, and a strong fleet, most heartily wishing at the same time, there may be no effusion of blood. Were we tamely to suffer government to be suspended, and leave our parliament with nothing but the shadow of authority, or suppose it to be a mere *phantom* which hath no power, then you and I may live to see *Great-Britain* become as insignificant among the nations, as our island is small compared to the extensive countries which the map of the earth furnishes. Then we might consider the blood of our forefathers, shed in defence of these very *American subjects* against the *French*, most foolishly and wantonly spilt; and the vast treasures expended in the same cause, *childishly* dissipated; and in the issue confess that we are sunk so low, as hardly to deserve the name of a *people*.

D. Good God! You rouse my indignation. Is this the state of the question? I thought it a glory to be born an *Englishwoman*; but if we submit, I shall be ashamed of my country.

F. Bravely said! If we do not rouse at this alarm, and exert our public spirit in so great a cause, and employ it in the true defence of liberty, to prevent one subject's insulting another in his *civil* or *religious* liberties, what is our government good for? If a chimerical claim is submitted to: if we do not exert our fortitude to vindicate our rights, farewell to all the blessings of government and empire!

D. Does the evil lie so deep as this comes to?

F. I am an *Englishman*, and feel for my country.

D. What good do our *American subjects* propose to themselves by quarrelling?

F. Contrary to the subjects of all the other *European* nations in *America*, a great part of them would trade with whom they please, and do every thing else as they please: in a word, they would be a *separate people*: but this cannot be. If they are *fellow-subjects*, they must shew a rational subjection to our government, which I think is the gentlest in the world. Taking the measures proposed as they now stand, in *my own judgment*, and not as *their jealousies* or *pride* have repre-

represented them, they are very much in the wrong.

*D.* But *some* make a great parade upon the article of a man's drawing his sword in an *unjust cause*.

*F.* He who thinks it an *unjust cause*, may talk this language: but *That is the question*. I say it is a very just cause, the cause of *liberty* and my country: the cause of those who would submit to a part of the people to grow so formidable, as to separate and become our rivals. The greater they are the better, provided they are subjects; otherwise, the greater they are, the more dangerous to us. *Britain* may fall by *British* arms. The change they make such a parade about, appears to be no more than they have always submitted to: it is not only an equitable requisition, but a necessity of state. If more is now demanded than formerly, they are become greater; even so mighty and so great, they will dispute length of swords. But does this requisition make them less the care of government, or give them the less title to protection? Just the contrary. They have so much the better title as they contribute to the support of the *whole*, of which they are a part.

*D.* This is plain common-sense. It seems as if they had been rash. What say military men who are to hazard their lives in this cause?

*F.* The soldier draws his sword, supposing his prince is accountable to God for the cause of the quarrel: it is his duty to act like a *soldier*, for the sake of his *personal honour*, and the glory of his country. But in *civil war*, he will feel sorrow and remorse, if his *conscience revolts against the occasion*; or being convinced that the cause is good, he will feel the inward comfort of his private judgment, and have the testimony of his own mind, that he is contending for the *justice* due to his country, and his *fellow-subjects*, that *one of them shall not injure another*; and though

he will use all the gentle arts of persuasion which religion or humanity can inspire, to prevent the effusion of blood; though his tears may flow in streams, yet he will feel that the cause is fit for him to fight for; and that if he falls, he falls with glory.

*D.* Common soldiers are not supposed to think much.—But the *son* will defend his *mother* even against his *father*, should he attempt to plunge a dagger in her bosom. And yet methinks it is dreadful that our *American* colonists, after spilling so much *British* blood, and exhausting such vast treasures in their defence, should act such a part.

*F.* Let them who profane the  *sacred name of liberty*, think how they steered their hearts to the feelings of humanity, when they occasioned the carnage at *Banker's-Hill*, against troops come to keep the peace, and maintain liberty. What would they have? Few people know that we have given them at different times above thirty-four millions (*a*), and spent perhaps three times as much in the wars we have engaged in for the sake of that country, which the *Americans* now pretend is *not ours*. *Gratitude* may be unknown in *political* connexions; but in the issue it will be found, that nations, or the parts of nations, declining acknowledgements of this kind, are often punished by Providence.—Dropping this consideration, let us at least be assured, that *true bravery* and *compassion* are constant companions; and let us pray that these motives may so prevail in the hearts of both contending parties, that neither may prove treacherous in the sight of God, to seek for reasons to war against each other; and that the *Americans* in the sleep of common sense, may not murder duty, gratitude, and every obligation to peace and justice, instead of cultivating the most obvious motives for sheathing their swords in peace (*b*) and amity. It is they who seek the war, not we. It appears, in

(*a*) See *Rights of Great-Britain asserted, against the Claims of America*, page 72. — 24.697, 142 l. 10s. 10½ d. and 10 millions estimated.

(*b*) *Against intestine war*.—O Father eternal! under whose Almighty Providence the inhabitants of the earth are governed, and on whom the rule of kingdoms depends, inspire our hearts, we beseech thee, with so just a sense of duty as subjects, that we may not be tempted by *pride* or *avarice* to rebel against thy righteous laws. Let not *avvath*, *jealousy*, or *disscontent* seize our hearts, to plunge them into rebellion. Regulate our affections and desires, and confine them to such objects as are pleasing in *thy sight*, that innocent blood may not rise in judgment against us; nor the sin of witchcraft make us the servants of the *prince of darkness*. Teach us to consider for what cause the angels fell from their obedience to thee, and the bitter pangs to which

in the strongest point of view, that our *American* fellow-subjects have acted upon a presumption, however strange in itself, that the people of *England* were inclined to support them in their pretensions; for this purpose they have sent over letters addressed to the people of *England*, the purport of which has been, that we should take arms in defence of what they are pleased to call *their rights*. They distribute their intelligence with the most artful assiduity, as if they were really so infatuated, as to imagine the majority of us had not sense enough to discern the clearest and most obvious duties of subjects.

*D.* Is it possible they can insult our understandings so much? What is it they demand?

*F.* They ask to be put on the same footing as they were in 1764, which, in effect, was no footing for their present increase of power, or right understanding of obedience as subjects, on which dependance can be made. It has long been in the mouth of every child, “*The Americans will soon be in a condition to shake off our government.*” In some parts of that vast country, particularly *New-England*, many of the people are unhappily disinclined to *kingly* government, notwithstanding ours is so controlled. They would establish a *republican government* of their own. Some unhappily may have minds tainted with *jealousy*, and would therefore shake off their subjection: others, from a pride natural to the heart, may amuse themselves with conceits of an independent government, though they will make a much better figure by reconciliation. Being roused from a lethargy of tenderness, we exert the authority which God and the laws have

given to us. What degree of force, or what kind of reasoning will prevail, *time* will shew. I believe they will soon submit. Be assured, that we mean to dispense *justice* and *judgment*: and “*earthly power doth then seem likeliest God’s, when mercy seasons justice.*” So far I hope we shall never depart from *equity* and *compassion*.—I hope we shall find the means of accommodation to our *mutual safety and happiness*. Had we gone on much longer, in granting them the indulgence of so profitable a *commerce*, by which they are so much enriched, and in return receive no reasonable eye, or mark of obedience to legislative authority, sufficient to constitute them *subjects*, we *Old-Englanders* should be considered by all the world as the greatest dupes upon earth. We should no longer deserve the name of a *brave*, much less an *intelligent* nation.

*D.* Yet many talk as if the *Americans* were hardly dealt with. Whether they understand the business, is another question. The advocates for them say, they are not represented; and argue from thence, that they ought to be exempt from *taxes*; and that no *body* of men can, in any empire, exercise an *unbounded authority* over others.

*F.* This is a specious kind of argument to us who are a free people. It is the plea of the *Americans*, and has found many friends and abettors; especially among those who are glad of an occasion of complaint of administration at home; but it proves a great deal too much. I never heard that they desired to be represented: if they had peacefully made such a requisition, and it had been constitutionally consistent, it is more than

which they are assigned, that we may subdue the pride of our hearts to that easy yoke, which the almighty Lawgiver and Prince of Peace hath required us to submit to. Open our minds to a discernment of what is the reasonable tribute due for the support of That government under which we have prospered; that by such reasonable service we may acquit ourselves acceptably in thy sight. O God, inspire our hearts with a just sense of our condition, as the true subjects of that mighty Sovereign and Lawgiver, whose spirit was *meek* and *humble*, and in whom there was no shadow of turning from the everlasting paths of *truth* and *moral rectitude*. We beseech thee to look down in *mercy*, and turn the hearts of the unrighteous to the wisdom of the just, that no spirit of enthusiasm may prevail to lead us into the snares of sin and death. Let not the weak be deceived by the artful; nor the cunning of designing men mislead the *simple* into ruin, to build their own nest on high, with the spoils of the miserable and distressed. Guide us, O Lord, by thy counsels, that we may hear with patience, and understand with an upright heart, the things which belong to our peace, lest they be hid from our eyes for ever. This we beg in his name, who left it as his last request, that we should love one another. Let us ever remember the commands of our blessed Lord, the mighty Sovereign of the Christian world, who fell by the hands of sinful and deluded men. O *Christ*, thou Son of the living God, hear our supplications, and let not the revilers of dominion and authority, so pervert our hearts, as to give us our portion among the *disobedient*! Grant this, O Almighty and Omniscient God! for his sake, whose obedience hath obtained the glory of eternal ages, even *Christ* the Saviour of the world.

than probable that debate and verbal contest would not have ended in *civil war*. The feat of government must be in *Old-England*; or I am afraid we shall have no government at all. The measure and rule of right, can consist only in the just distribution of political privileges, and the general principles of justice and moderation: and things must be considered as they are, not as refinements which destroy the essence of government, may represent them. Those who are for surrendering the attributes of sovereignty, because they are liable to abuse or misapplication, should consider that this argument is levelled against *all government*, and overturns the principles on which it is maintained. The *Americans* must depend on us at home, unless we give *them* the power *over us*. There must be a head somewhere; and if the *colonists* should succeed against us, they, namely, the people in general, might forly repent their efforts to change their masters. They will at length learn, that it is an invariable rule in the constitution of all forms of government, that a supreme power must exist, and that a part of the people must necessarily be subject to the state or power which constitutes the *government* or distinction of nations. This necessary and discretionary power with us, is not lodged in *one man*, but in a number of men; *king, lords, and commons*: and our form of government, as I have explained to you, considering the imperfections of human nature, is the most safe and consistent in the world. At the present time, the people in office, I believe, mean as *honestly* as any governors can mean; and do you not think it is time enough to rebel, when there is good grounds to cry out against *real oppression*, and not to rebel *for fear of being oppressed*? The *life of a man* is trusted to a *jury*, composed of twelve men; shall you or I rebel, because we will not place a *discretionary authority* in the hands of the legislative power, *king, lords, and commons*, to exert them for the necessary support of the *state*, or guardians of the people, of whom we are a part? Or shall we insist on being left to our own discretion, whether we will be subjects or not?

*D.* Do you take this to be the case with regard to the *Americans*? I am sure if it is, their attempt is as weak as it is frantic.

*F.* Exactly so: they would be subjects to the *king*, as they *pretend*, but not to the *state*. This is a mere *delusion*; for they know that the *king* is

only a part of the *state*: it is upon the whole legislative authority that we depend; and by the union of the whole we exist, and maintain regular order and liberty. But the *state* cannot subsist without *money*: it hath a discretionary power of taxing *all the people*, for the preservation of *all the people*. Whatever the *Americans* may pretend, they are a part of the *people*; and therefore they are subject to be taxed. Learned men, as I have told you, may reason till they run mad; but nothing more nor less can possibly be made of the argument. When subjects appeal to the *sword*, there is an end of all *reasoning*. But it does not appear to me that the colonists appeal to it from apprehensions of *slavery*, as is pretended; or that it is meant to *oppress* them; but that they fondly imagine they have the *longest sword*, and that upon the whole it will be *better for them* to be *independent* of us. Their leaders will gratify their pride and avarice more by establishing an independent government. They have the presumption to think they may become a greater state than *their mother country*, because they have a larger extent of ground: and they will not believe it is their interest to submit, till, like the prodigal son, their conduct reduces them to great straits. We apprehend that our military strength is much superior to theirs; that we have more resources for war, and their distance not such, but that we shall soon shew them our wooden castles, by the assistance of canvas wings, will skim over the surface of the mighty deep, and convince them very soon, that they are utterly mistaken in their politics, and were ignorant of the things which belonged to the peaceful enjoyment of the lands which they have cultivated, under the protection of their common parent. That as *merchants, farmers, mechanics, and labourers*, they may enjoy happiness from generation to generation: but that they cannot set up for a separate people, an independent monarchy, or a republic, without involving themselves in the guilt of rebellion, and its dreadful consequences.

*D.* Under the circumstances which you represent this case, they will soon sue for peace and pardon.

*F.* Indeed I apprehend they will; and that they will be wise in so doing, without hazarding their lives, exhausting their treasure, and losing their trade. By commerce they became so affluent and proud, as to think of rebellion; and

now they are giving their people idle and dangerous habits, by parading in arms.

D. There are some reasons, I suppose, why we should commiserate their condition?

F. I think there are: for a course of years, our ministers were so inattentive to the political state of that country, that it pampered many of their leaders, and flattered them into an opinion that we were *afraid* to contend with them.

D. They still talk very highly.

F. They must do so or *yield*. If the most wealthy were left to their own freedom, unawed by the rabble, or desperate part of them, they would be very glad to make their peace (a). I believe they will soon yield to the dictates of *prudence* and *safety*, in the persuasion that the contest will be attended with some happy consequences.

The mother country and her colonies understanding each others pretension, a higher degree of amity will subsist, than has been at any time known before. Thus we may come to a right understanding, without the effusion of more blood. The command which we have at sea, and the high importance of commerce in these days, may turn the scale, and the *Americans* may see their *folly*. The good disposition which reigns in the breast of our *sovereign*, as it will give the highest glories to his exalted station, it will preserve him from the danger of being tainted by any contempt of rebellious subjects: and I dare say he prays with the same ardour as any great prince may do, who believes in a *power supreme over all*, on such an interesting occasion (b).

## CONVERSATION XVI.

*Nature of the public debt: The duty which subjects owe their country in respect to it: The obligations of individuals to assist in reducing it. The benefits and disadvantages of reducing our taxes. The reduction of the debt the most effectual means of preventing war, and of providing for it when it comes.*

D. **H**OW strange it is that mankind should make such scourges for themselves!

F. So it happens. Each knowing his own perverseness, suspects his neighbour. A nation suspects a nation; and suspicion, "proceeding from a heat-oppressed brain, sees things that *may be*, as if they really were." *Jealousy*, being made a fool of, befools the understanding; and this

dwarfish evil becomes a monster of a huge tremendous aspect. Men forsake their *reason*, and with it their *humanity*.

D. If men lose their reason, and run mad, it is no wonder they should act against each other so much like *savage beasts*, and spread horror and devastation over the earth's fair face.—

F. Alas, my child, I have long since thought that

(a) This alludes to the state of things in *February 1775*.

(b) O Almighty Lord of Hosts, who viewest the hearts of princes, and weighest the deepest designs of their enemies as in a balance: Thou, in whose hands are the issues of life, even thou, O Lord, knowest that I intend to promote the glory and safety of the people thou hast put under me; and that I have no ambition in my soul, but to advance the honour of thy *holy name*, and the good of the state I belong to. O Almighty Father, favour the justice of my arms, and convert the hearts of all who oppose the government of their mother country, to a regular and faithful submission to That which belongs to their temporal and eternal happiness. Enlighten their hearts, and open their understandings, that they may behold the rectitude of my intentions towards them. Teach them to consider, that the frame of the government under which thy Providence hath appointed me as the chief magistrate, can be preserved from violence, only by obedience. Let the love of my subjects be so exercised towards each other, as to remove all shadow of just complaint; and shewing obedience to thy righteous laws, learn to love and bless each other, that the sword may be sheathed; and peace flourish in the land. This I beg for the sake of the mighty Lord and Sovereign of the world, whose blood was shed upon the cross by infatuated men, that the earth might be redeemed from all her sins.

that all men are *mad*, whether they kill others or themselves, in war or in peace, except that war, by consent of all parties, is warranted by custom. Heaven knows how my heart bleeds when I think of That which I have *read* of, much more of That which I have *seen*; but I learn from hence how the great and benignant Author of nature punishes those who are *disobedient* to his laws; whilst he tries the constancy of his *obedient children*. For though the ox should cease to low; and the field to laugh and sing in plenty: though meagre famine, with her ghastly countenance, should lay waste and spread destruction round; yet will they flee unto the Lord, and rejoice in the God of their salvation. Even in death, my child, will they *rejoice*!

*D.* Such, I am sensible, are the advantages of *virtue*. In the great view of our politics, is the *public debt* the cause of any evil that we now complain of?

*F.* It occasions many heavy taxes; but it does good in many instances. The amount of the *interest* is considerably more than a third part of the whole national revenue. You are not to imagine, but that a great part of such *interest money* returns again to the *husbandman*, the *labourer*, *artificer*, and *mechanic*, by whose work the state is enabled to pay such interest. If no such interest were paid, much less money would be circulated, and brought to market.

*D.* And what should we be the worse for That?

*F.* I think we should be the *better* for it. You now get *three shillings*, and sometimes *three-and-sixpence* for one of my fat turkeys; if there were no public debt, I imagine it would not fetch above *half-a-crown* at most.

*D.* Then the *public debt* is *good* for us.

*F.* Aye; but on the other hand we pay so much the more for every thing we consume; even for the *light* we let in at our windows.

*D.* Is the nation the better upon the whole on account of the debt?

*F.* I am convinced it is the better, with respect to what we owe to each other; though I do not so well comprehend that the debt to strangers is advantageous to us. If, upon the whole, we are *richer*, we are not therefore the more *secure*. If we could be certain that no foreign war would be waged, the good might overbalance the evil. Our industry, I apprehend, is increased by the money, or property circulating;

and which we are morally sure of finding at market: but as we are always subject to war, and to have great demands made on the state for its support, I apprehend we should keep our *credit* good, that in *case of need*, we may so much the more easily borrow. To reduce the debt in some mode or other, by the creditors giving up a part of what is due to them, would be wise and politic. It may happen, that they must give up a *part of the rate of interest* which is now paid them; and this comes to the same issue as if it were the *principal*.

*D.* But many of these creditors may be as little able to give up a portion of the small income they receive from the funds, as you or I to give up part of the produce of our labours.

*F.* Yet it may be the safest thing for them. Those who are in possession of the greatest property, whatever it may consist in, should be ready to relieve the state, in proportion to their possessions. A *sincere love* for the *public*, must ever make up the greatest part of the glory of our national character: if we are not so generally influenced by such a sense of glory, as to act voluntarily, and we do not consider the state as a good child should consider a good parent; it is our fault, if not our crime. It is mentioned to the honour of the women of ancient *Rome*, that upon some great occasion of public danger, they brought in all their jewels to the public treasury; yet *they* could not talk higher of *liberty* than *we* do!

*D.* And should not we bring in ours with the same zeal and alacrity, supposing the same necessity?

*F.* This is more than I can answer for. A deep sense of great danger, like surprize, they say, will turn the hair grey, in a night, or make it *drop off*.

*D.* But only such as have great property, can relieve the state upon any emergency. And many of these seem to take pleasure in the expression of *dissatisfaction*.

*F.* That is common with us *English*, the *poor* as well as the *rich*. In the wantonness of the heart, or perhaps from depression of spirits under real distress, we *murmur*: and yet few of us know any thing of the calamities mankind are subject to. Do we feel any of the *devastations* created by a cruel and triumphant *enemy*, *famine*, or *earthquakes*? As to war, all mankind feel the most pernicious effects from it; and our debt is

one of the effects. But war thins their numbers; and they go on the same way, from generation to generation. You see how eager many are to murmur and condemn ministers of state in regard to this untoward *American* business. There are many *political incendiaries*, who, prophaneing the sacred name of *liberty*, light up the fire of war, and blow the flames of civil discord and confusion. We are all given to be dangerously abusive towards each other; yet in general we know when to stop.

*D.* Are you sure of That? I have been often afraid we did not know when to stop, and should one day plunge ourselves into ruin. But as to those who have *great riches*, I presume when they are called upon, they will cheerfully give up a considerable portion of what they cannot use?

*F.* *Cheerfully give up what they cannot use!* I have generally observed that mankind are more tenacious of things which please the *fancy*, than such as are essential to their happiness; and, like the rich young man in the gospel, the more they have, the more sorrowful they are when called upon by the necessities of the state. The more a man possesses, the more he generally desires. In this view, the *public debt* is hurtful to our *morals*: if it promotes industry, it creates a canine appetite for wealth, and often occasions extravagance. It is true, as you observe, those only can afford any essential aid of money, beyond the taxes we now pay in common, who are possessed of large property: and this only can set us on such safe ground, with respect to foreign connexions, as the necessities of war may require.

*D.* If the *taxes* were lightened, do you think the state would be in a more *flourishing* condition?

*F.* I am so well satisfied it would, I should be glad, for my own part, to give up a tenth of my little property for this purpose, upon an *interested* principle; for I think the *ninty* remaining of every *hundred*, would be more valuable than I now esteem the whole hundred.

*D.* Is it not then the part of our rulers, who are watchful of the public weal, to set heartily about this business?

*F.* Ah, my dear child! Things are more easily *said* than *done*. It hath been evident for some years past, that *ministers* do not chuse to attempt so difficult an enterprize, as to pay off

more of the debt, than the surplus of our ordinary revenue enables them to pay. The time may come, as I have said, when we *must* submit to some new kind of *national economy*. *Every one* now pays according to his *consumption*; and consequently the rich man, who spends *ten thousand pounds* a year, you and I living on *fifty pounds*, pays two hundred times as much as you and I do: so far at least as he consumes the *necessaries* which are taxed. This is *equal* and *impartial*. Till danger comes like an armed man, and threatens our downfall, the great holders of property will hardly submit to any tax which appears *partial*, on the principle of their being rich, and able to relieve the state. Their *virtue* is not always equal to their *wealth*. It is very certain that many are possessed of very large property; that the state is burthened with a vast debt; that it is for the interest of the richest people to preserve the state; and that the best means is to ease the debt. These are truths self-evident; yet, I say, till the danger is very great, you will not find that such truths *will operate to any great effect*. Ministers of state know, that very few *rich men* will allow that the debt of the nation is *their debt*, in proportion to the value of their possessions, compared to the value of the *whole*. The rich say, *let all the people pay as well as they can; those who cannot pay by their wealth, may pay by their labour, which is to them as wealth*. This reasoning is plausible; but if we wait till the *poor man* by his labour lightens the load, if it is *really burthensome*, the nation may sink under it.

*D.* If the rich man might have lost his *whole fortune*, lands and tenements, had it not been for the security purchased by the *public debt*, does not his *whole fortune* stand bound for such debt?

*F.* You propose a very fair question. Every member of the community has his share of protection, by the liberty and religion he enjoys: but the wealthy, for their own interest, should consider, that let who will be master of the gold and silver, land or merchandize, those who live from hand to mouth may hazard their lives, but they cannot be the persons who are to prop the state by *money*. The wealthy, for their own sakes, should subscribe to salutary measures to be *taken in time*; and be anxious for such measures, not putting off the *evil day*. If they have their wits about them, they may be sure the evil will fall

on



no *themselves*, in the same degree of weight, as they are wealthy and distinguished in the community.

D. *If they have their wits about them*: but do you find that they have their wits about them in such a degree as to weigh the events of things.

F. Well questioned, my daughter: you are sensible that it is the wisdom of all nations to use the means of *preventing* evils; and avoid such a necessity as the state was in at *Rome*, when their *women* brought into the treasury the ornaments of their head-dresses. We are *spirited* and *courageous*, and for that reason *presumptuous*: it is not our *method* to provide much *before-hand*. You see some of the people, who think themselves *secure* by their *distance* from the seat of empire, refuse to pay any taxes.

D. You mean the *Americans*. They must repent, or bring on themselves the sword of *vengeance*.

F. So I conclude. You remember the fable of the *belly* and the *members of the body*.

D. Perfectly; and an admirable fable it is. The *Americans* may find it suited to them, and, if they are wise, submit for their own sakes.

F. As the rich at home should do, lest *fear* or *insanity* should in the last extremity deprive them of the succours, which common sense and reason may now afford them. What may be done at the charge of ten to-day, may require ten hundred to-morrow; and the next day become impracticable. Delay is the effect of a *false* spirit of *prudence*.

D. But my dear father, if there is *at this time* no danger, why should you wish for any thing but what you see, or fear any thing you do not see?

F. Our pleasures and our pains, *Mary*, depend on our *hopes* or *fears*, with respect to both worlds. I love my country, and would gladly do justice to it, and see justice done. We talk of liberty as our *guardian spirit*; but we must guard her, and watchfully too, or she will not defend us. Those who depend on the *public funds*, would think it a bad specimen of *liberty* to be plunged into *poverty*. I think half the debt, or half the amount of the interest of the debt which we now pay, may be rather a benefit than an injury to the *whole*, as contributing to the support of so many *individuals*, who are of some use; but the whole debt, as it now stands (a), even were it all at

3 per cent. is so great, it circumscribes or lowers the power of the nation, and checks its energy.

D. We hope Providence will take care of such persons, provided they use the means to take care of themselves.

F. *Necessity* hath no law: and if timely measures are not taken agreeable to the laws of our country, we may leave things to so precarious an issue, that the *remedy* may be as bad as the disease. If there is a *time for all things*, there is a time for an *honest nation*, as well as an *honest man*, to pay debts, in the *manner* and *degree* that *necessity*, *prudence*, or *justice* may dictate. To give force and energy to government, and prepare for such events as nations are ever subject to, is national wisdom. And let us carry in mind, that our accumulation of *wealth*, and our *national strength* and *power*, upon the comparison with other states, have their bounds. If we proceed upon a fond presumption that our *public resources* are unlimited, there needs no extraordinary wisdom to discern, that we shall, in the issue, find ourselves most bitterly mistaken. The *rich man*, who wishes to see justice done to every creditor of the nation, should submit to an equitable decision of this question; and every *poor man* will certainly subscribe to it. He who by partial reasoning in defence of his own riches, would hazard the fortunes of other men, who are *creditors to the nation*, has but a slender title to the praises due to a *patriot*: he forsakes the true dignity of a man, and the glorious hopes of a *christian*. Whilst we are in *this world*, let us think seriously and constantly how *all our steps* may be directed to the honour of God; and consequently to the *welfare of our fellow-creatures*.

D. Do you think that religion is concerned in every instance of *public virtue*?

F. *Public virtue* is but a part of *private virtue*, or a combination of *private virtues*. To wish, for instance, that the national debt were lighter, is to wish to lighten taxes and the price of provisions; and if the wages of the labouring part of mankind were cheaper, they might notwithstanding live in more plenty. We have reached the *meridian height* we ought to venture at. The *national debt*, as I understand it, is the debt of the people, who compose the nation. Every advocate for *liberty*, and friend to his country, should concur in the best means to *lighten* it, as being *necessary to the general good*!

D. You

(a) Near 130 millions.

D. You think we discover the *nakedness* of our politics by not doing it.

F. I have told you how a nation may be undone, by the very means the people court; namely, a lavish enjoyment of *good things*, as they appear in the eyes of the beholder, but which are no longer *good* to them, than as they can obtain them *honestly*, use them *soberly*, and do justice to themselves, their neighbours, and their country. If they go beyond the measure which divine Providence hath fixed to the gratification of their desires, and disqualify themselves for the discharge of their several relative duties; what can be the consequence with respect to society? Either they will involve themselves in penury and distress, or become instrumental to the poverty and wretchedness of other people. In both cases, they will act a part equally offensive to the common Friend and Parent of mankind.

D. If private virtue is the foundation of the genuine love of our country, all *good* people must love their country.

F. Private virtue is the ingredient so much wanted in our composition, to render us a real free

and happy people. I have often heard my master talk of the condition of various nations, among whom he had lived, differing much in their forms of government; but none enjoying the plenty, ease, and security of life and property, that we can boast of. He used to say, that we owe our advantages to our *industry*, as well as *our laws*; adding, that every nation hath its ebbs and flows, depending on virtue and *due precaution*. Many must eat their bread in the sweat of their brows. Whether a nation be in a *prosperous* or *unprosperous* state, in debt or out of it, this is the condition of life: but the meanest person, who is really virtuous and knowing, rejoices or mourns, as his country flourishes or falls into distress. To hear the *peasant* express his satisfaction, is as pleasing to the ears of humanity, as the exultations of a *peer of the realm*. For my own part, I indulge the hope, that ere long we shall see our country delivered from her present untoward situation of *public debt*, and the vexatious expences and danger created by her children on the other side the *Atlantic*, who I trust will recover their sight; and discerning the error of their past ways, return to their duty.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N XVII.

*The importance of preserving the honest and laborious part of our fellow-subjects. Husbandmen the source of the greatness of a nation. Immorality, in every part of life, the bane of true politics. The national misfortune of not encouraging matrimony. The folly of running up the prices of the necessaries of life beyond the increase of property; and the extravagance which attends it. The bad effects of dividing the lands into great farms; and the evils arising from a passion for money. The danger of an increase of the wealth of the several nations who misapply it in the destruction of each other. The labours of the field, the most valuable revenue. Fatal consequence of extravagance.*

F. USE the honest means put in your power to provide for your own support: I will do the same. My *landlord* will hardly think of raising my rent, or of taking *his small farm* from me, when my lease expires: if he does, the little *freehold* which my good master gave me, will maintain me: but I shall have less in my power in regard to *you*, and my other dependents. Such considerations are of moment to men of reflexion. And I thank God I have found *some* who weigh

the consequence of their actions, as they may affect the community to which they belong.

D. *Some*, my dear father! Should there be *one*, who pretends to the name of a *Christian*, who can forget that he was born for the service of others; and is to be happy in a life to come, as he discharges the duties of charity in the present life?

F. True: those whose bread depends on the mercy of another, have a right to That mercy; and

and he who does not shew it, how is his own life, *his life eternal*, properly regarded? For my own part, I would gladly promote my *landlord's* advantage, as well as *my own*: and I hope he is not a stranger to PUBLIC LOVE. So long as I pay my rent punctually, and put him to no greater charge to support my *house* and *barns*, than the proportion he would be subject to, were his estate rented by one *leviathan farmer*, it would be a wanton exercise of his power, after so many years labour on the *father's* land, if the *son* should distress my *grey locks*, merely to receive his *thousands in a lump*. If I were discharged from my farm, I should be obliged to set *John* and his wife adrift, now that they are so *comfortably settled* with me. This would grieve me much.

D. Are you sure your landlord will concern himself about *such* matters?

F. I hope he will: riches do not always diminish the sensibility of men with regard to the sufferings of others. The duties of humanity should flourish with the power of complying with them. If I, who am a *poor man*, extend my mercy so far, how much more is it incumbent on my *landlord* to think of the happiness of others! He should likewise reflect, that of all the produce of his lands, there is not one equal to that of MEN BRED TO LABOUR.

D. If he forgets this, may not his children one day see his estate *laid waste*, for want of people to *cultivate* it?

F. Or for want of *good soldiers* to defend it from an enemy? If he loses sight of this regard, he will administer to the general diminution of the number of subjects; the consequence of which will at length lower the value of the produce of his land, by there being so many the fewer people to consume it. But be comforted; this young man is reputed a man of sense and virtue; and I hope he will consider his duty in the manner he ought to consider it. He cannot but know that Providence never intended he should revel in the laborious *miseries* of any *low-creature*; or deprive others of those *comforts*, which are obtainable at so easy an expence to himself. It is true, that I have seen of late, many instances of *covetousness*. The age we live in, is falsely refined. Those who have abundance, are eager after more, as if the *appetite of wealth* increased with the *enjoyment*. A thousand fantastic desires, which you and I are strangers to, distress *them* beyond measure. Many, who

if they were accused of *cruelty*, would be much offended, *prattise* it. One raises the rents of lands, because another does it, making the produce dear, and plunging himself into *difficulties*. There seems to be more distress now, than when we were not so rich. Some, with twice the rent-roll, are not so hospitable, nor so much *beloved*, as their fathers were.—The higher the price of the *necessaries* or *ornaments* of life are, the more do landlords think of adding to their rent-rolls. Where do they intend to stop?

D. Some will stop at the point of ruin. But surely, it is only the *vicious*, whose extravagance tempts them to grind the faces of the poor.

F. There is a combination of causes. In *Scotland* and *Ireland* the evil has been carried further than in *England*. In proportion to the number of people, many more *Scotch* and *Irish* have left their native countries, to seek precarious bread in *America*. What miseries do not these *wanderers* go through, before they can settle there, so as to enjoy any degree of comfort and security! And some wish to come home again. Sure I am, that *luxury* at home has a natural tendency, *first* to raise the produce of the land beyond due measure, and then *drive* off all the tenants who are not in circumstances sufficient to pay such an increased price.

D. This is the readiest way to make some *insolent* with *wealth*; and others slaves through poverty.

F. I think it is not right policy; for all the *good* proposed may be done without the *evil*. But you need not be much alarmed; they will soon be glad to take their former reasonable prices. In many places where they have *raised* their rents, most good tenants, able to pay the former price, are already scarce, particularly in *Scotland*. If mankind would consider, that the more ingenious they are in the *arts of harassing each other*, the further they travel out of the true road of happiness in *this* world; and from the duty they owe to their Maker, on which the felicity of the *next* depends. If they would consider this, they could not be guilty of so many trespasses against *decency* and *justice*. In countries of slavish governments, we find this doctrine proved true in the strongest manner. We must allow for *change of times*, and the love which every individual may justly entertain for himself, according to such change; but the running up the prices of the *necessaries* of life, has an evil in it which few

them to be aware of: it has a tendency to *oppression*. The *earth* alone can supply us: and if the proprietors of it may do what they please, he whose life depends on the produce, may be obliged to commit violence, or lose his life.

*D.* He may be in a very doleful situation, but not so bad as this comes to.

*F.* Granted: but you may perceive how it becomes the duty of government to interpose, that one part of the people shall not overwhelm the other. Running up the prices of things beyond a certain measure, cannot promote our *foreign* trade. If we over-rate the produce of our land, a stranger will go to another market. If the commodity is at a very high price, who is to buy it of us? If other nations live more parsimoniously, and sell the same kind of commodities cheaper than we do, shall we not lose the buyer's custom? Ingenuity without frugality, will not avail? Providence hath been very indulgent to us; but if our desires increase with the gratification of them, what will be the end? If we are not *contented* with our acquisitions made by *war*, nor by the gain of *commerce*, but strive, beyond measure, to gain on each other, we must, in the issue, leave them who come *last*, in *distress*; and at length, he that was *foremost* may happen to be *lost*.

*D.* I believe a great part of our complaints are the effects of our *folly*, in not knowing when we are well: but let *landlords* or *tenants* pretend what they please, in the sight of God and man, That must be the best trade which tends most to make the people happy.

*F.* Very justly observed. I wish this were our rule of conduct: for it is very obvious, that if great numbers of people are employed in promoting *pomp* and *shew*, the less provision will be made of *food* and *raiment* for *domestic comfort* and *security*; and the more *misery* there will be.

*D.* The more such pomp is the object of the desires of the *great*, the less attention will be shewn to the *poor*. But methinks you talk as if we were all of *one family*!

*F.* My dear child! we ought to consider ourselves in That light: the *healthy* to take care of the sick; the *rich* to assist the *poor*; the *strong* to defend the *weak*; the *wise* to direct the *foolish*; and those who *see* the true path of life, to lead the *blind*. Thus would every one become a *philosopher* and *guide* to his neighbour, and a *friend* to God and men!

*D.* This would be glorious indeed! But you would have every one work with his hands, I presume.

*F.* By the order of nature every one is obliged to work in some way or other. Those who will be *perverse*, and swerve from their duty to their Maker, must be miserable. He who will not perform his part in promoting the *public happiness*, whether the neglect arise from the *madness* of his *heart*, or his *head*, should be confined and fed on *bread* and *water*. The *good* behold with pleasure the honours which accompany *industry*, and disdain the *pains* and *disgrace* which are occasioned by *idleness*.

*D.* I fear there are great numbers of such *idle mad people*, or *mad idle people*, of all ranks and conditions.

*F.* What the number is, I cannot tell; but in proportion to it will misery be found in society. What is the cause of the most part of the calamities we behold? Can we learn the *christian* or the *social* duties, but as we exert the powers which the Almighty hath given us, by labouring with our hands? He who labours is an instrument in the hands of God, to give life: he who labours not, being able, is an instrument of *Satan* to destroy mankind.

*D.* But do as we may, *misery* will come.

*F.* Aye; but it would be also driven away as fast as it approached; and could not take up its abode amongst us in the manner it now does. I grant, that let us act as we may, the affairs of men are untoward; but it is vice and folly which makes them so. If the *rulers* of a people are inclined to *peace*, they are often obliged to provide the means of war, lest *security* should become their most dangerous enemy.

*D.* If every nation does the same, they all become the more capable of destroying each other.

*F.* True: and you see what *destruction* is wrought upon the earth. One nation may compassionate another, as if *war* were a necessary evil, and leave the aggressor in the hands of God: but it is from the *capacity* of doing mischief, that the mischief chiefly arises. All princes seek for *revenues*, as a means of *defence in war*, as well as to cultivate the arts of peace.—Some revenues are hurtful to the morals of a people, and wound their health, bringing on the very misery which a wise government is always careful to guard against.

*D.* How

D. How can the *health* of people be hurt by a *revenue*?

F. What do you think of the duties on *tea*, of which we consume so vast a quantity? Is *tea* in general, profitable to *health* or *industry*? Do *spirits*, or liquid fire, promote *sobriety*? Is the prodigious number of *public-houses*, where *malt liquor* is consumed in a very wanton manner, a *public good*, in any view but that of *revenue*? The consumers, for the most part, injure themselves and their families. Do you not perceive that mankind are ingenious in the arts of rendering each other so much less *happy* than they might be?

D. I understand, that what is called *policy*, often creates more wretchedness, than the unavoidable evils we are subject to. If the 'quire thought so much about the happiness of other people, as you do, we should see a greater number of inhabitants, and in a more prosperous condition, than is now to be found on his estate.

F. He has land sufficient to maintain, in the most proper manner, *five hundred* people on the spot, each using his own proper calling; and he may put a good *five thousand pounds a year* into his pocket by their means. But he chuses that only *four hundred* shall live.

D. What is the reason of this?

F. He can add another thousand to his rental.

D. But how long is this to last; and what is he to do with the additional thousand? Had he not *enough* in the *five thousand*.

F. *Do*, my child!—I could tell you of a *thousand things*, which may be done with a *thousand pounds*, which would make your young blood run cold. I could tell you of girls, who were innocent, seduced by *gold*: of men, cut off by *excess in wine*: of *gamesters*, who pluming themselves on their thousands, were plunged into *poverty*. I have seen so much mischief done by money, it may well be called the *root of all evil*.

D. They know this; but you will not therefore persuade any young man to forego opportunities of advantage.

F. I have frequently observed more generosity prevail in the breasts of *young men*, than in *old* ones. Let the youth look to himself with regard to his *passions*, his *prejudices*, and his folly in squandering money: but folly wears a less hor-

rible visage in youth, than avarice in grey hairs.

D. Are *great farms* so much more beneficial to landlords than *small* ones, as to tempt them to drive the people off the land?

F. *Improvements* in land, like other things, are sometimes ascribed to *wrong causes*. Great improvements have been made, and in many places a number of *small farms* have been thrown into *large* ones; but it by no means follows, that the same, or even greater improvements might not have been made, if the *small farms* had been put into *proper hands*, to make the most of the land, and not wear it out. And surely, so far the *public security* and *happiness* are connected, with regard to the *number of inhabitants*, the more *farmers* there are, who can pay their rents, the *more people* there will be, for all the purposes of a great and powerful state. *Power* and *greatness* are the objects sought; but they are *mere names*, unless there are *numbers* to support them.

D. *Landlords*, I imagine, consider their *own* interests, and not the strength and power of the *nation*.

F. So it is natural to suppose: but these generally go together; and in this case, you may perceive, that a vicious selfishness among individuals, may ruin the freedom and grandeur of a people. *Vanity*, *profligacy*, or *covetousness*, are very indirect means of adding strength to a state, or cherishing the industry of the honest and laborious. The *profligate* often feed the *profligate*; but the example tends to the decay, not the prosperity of him that *gives*, or of him who receives.

D. In order to promote virtuous industry, and render a farmer prosperous, how many rents should he make of his farm?

F. The vulgar notion is, that *three* rents are necessary: but some fields render six; and others do not pay the culture. My gain, I find, depends on the kindness of Providence, and the use of my *understanding* and *experience*, particularly with regard to *frugality*. This holds equally the same, in proportion, of *small farms*, and *great* ones.

D. But it seems as if it were imagined, that a *farmer*, who rents but *fifty* or an *hundred pounds* a year, cannot *know* so much, or be so *willing*, or so *able* to improve the lands, as one who rents *five hundred* or a *thousand pounds* a year.

F. You will often find, that a *poor* man is  
M m 2 treated,

reated, as if it were impossible he could be so wise as a *rich* one: yet, if *wisdom* dares do what she can, *fortune* durst not show her face. It is most true that some farmers, depressed by poverty, sink into *ignorance*, or think only of the *bread of the day*: but let the generality of those who have credit to hire land, be duly *taught* and *encouraged* by landlords, and considered as persons honourably employed, and as furnishing the means, not only of obtaining the *necessaries*, but also the *ornaments* and *superfluities* of life, by their labour: the worthy farmer who holds but *fifty* pounds a year, may be in higher estimation, than many a *worthless varlet*, who is a pander to *vicious* pleasures, or the gratifications of *vanity*. It is a *landlord's* fault when he has not *able farmers* on his estate; for if certain rules be laid down, the tenant holding upon such terms, will observe them.

*D.* This would secure the good part proposed, by treating the less affluent farmer with a proper respect; and not as if it were necessary to the common good that all farmers should be men of *large property*.

*F.* Some farmers of late years are become very opulent: but the passion for *gain*, like the dog-star, creates madness. The great object of a wise state, is not to make attempts at levelling conditions, but to render every subject happy. The condition of a farmer presupposes a man who labours with his hands, as well as directs others who labour under him; and not such persons as wallow in luxurious indulgences, which can serve no other end, than to teach the *peasant* to ape the *lord*, and imitate him in his vices. The present method seems calculated to tempt one to tyrannize over another; or to lead people into an opinion, that upon every change of *fortune*, or *unfavourable season*, they are suffering extreme distress. Riches throw many out of the rank of life which they have an education proper to fill, and create confusion. If *farmers* turn *gentlemen*, or *gentlemen*, *farmers*, let both look well to the event. It is but too common with us all to be *extravagant*, and consume every article of life in a greater quantity than can, with any propriety, be called *necessary* or *useful*.

*D.* If in general we can afford to *live well*, or better than other nations, have we not a *right* of doing so?

*F.* What is vulgarly called *living well*, is sometimes *great extravagance*. Affording to *buy*, does not increase the quantity which the earth

can furnish: strictly speaking, the most wealthy have no title to waste any thing. Wealth promotes industry: yet you find many deserving people, having numerous families, complain of want.

*D.* Do not riches increase the quantity of land for *tillage*?

*F.* Aye; but we *consume* in a greater proportion than we *improve*; otherwise, how comes it that we have any occasion to buy *corn* of foreigners?—The people now eat *wheaten bread*, and a great part of it very fine, beyond what the lands which may be laid down in *wheat* can produce.

*D.* Is this a *real fact*?

*F.* So one might judge from the import; but I hope it will not continue long. Formerly we were contented with *barley* and *rye bread*: we now scarce hear of the name of *rye*; and as to *barley*, we drink it up. In my early days, the buying grain of *foreigners*, was thought as strange and absurd a thing, as *sending coals to Newcastle*. By fifteen years practice, it is now become familiar. *Wheat* still keeps near the ancient price; but *barley* and *oats* are near double their former prices. This makes some tenants very rich, and landlords naturally increase their rentals.

*D.* Upon the whole, if we had *less property*, should we be *more contented*?

*F.* If we had *more virtue*, we certainly should. The diminution of *nominal property*, would lower the price of the *necessaries of life*. Were I now possessed of an *hundred pounds* a year, I might be really richer with *ninety*.

*D.* How is That possible?

*F.* If I am now obliged to pay *four-pence-halfpenny* for a pound of mutton, and in proportion for every other article of life, and it could then be afforded for *four-pence*, my income of *ninety* would put me in a capacity of living as well as I do now for an *hundred*.

*D.* What then doth such a profusion of nominal property signify?

*F.* If my observation be well founded, the redundancy of credit is good, but like every other object, it has its bounds. Upon this depends a great part of our property; *real riches*, and *reputed wealth*, are very different things. The *property* now exceeds the measure of *riches*: and what is of more consequence, many expend beyond the measure of their property. The annual income of several of the *nobility* and *gentry* of

of these kingdoms, is actually short of their annual charge.—Thus many are sent to *wander abroad*.

D. What do you mean?

F. *Humanity* hardly permits me to tell you what I mean. Much do I lament the fate of some men of my master's acquaintance, born to *ample* fortunes; yet, by the *gaming table*, the *alley*, or by the election of members to sit in the House of Commons, they have been plunged into *poverty*, hardly leaving themselves a *cent* to cover their *nakedness*.

D. Deplorable indeed! But what do you mean by the *alley*?

F. A certain little place near the *Royal-Exchange*, in *London*, where great numbers of people meet to transact business in relation to the public funds. Some of them having no money to pay for what they buy; and others not possessed of what they *sell*.

D. They must be *fools* or *knaves*.

F. Take care, child! Some of the first people in rank occasionally play such tricks; and from having pampered themselves like high-fed horses, at length like asses are condemned to eat thistles.

D. Such practices must be attended with very melancholy consequences.

F. Melancholy truly! Some pillage their fellow-subjects, and are hanged: others hang themselves; while the greater number, by various arts and contrivances, negligent of the sacred obligations of religion, involve themselves and others in every kind of calamity. Let you

and I seek to discover our own defects; for the rest, whether great farms or little ones be in fashion, the general interest is in the *hands of God*, whose good Providence hath so often guided and protected us, and our fellow-subjects. Whenever you hear talk of *ruin*, whether they mean from *large* farms or *smaller* ones, a *heavy* public debt, or a *light* one; do not suppose that they mean what they say; or that they use an improper word. It is much more probable that *farms* and debt will fall or decrease, under the nation, than the nation fall under them to a degree of *ruin*. These evils are great, and such as may bring on bad consequences in the issue; but they are not of so deadly a nature as *private vices*, which by their complicated force, and the union of numbers in the same dangerous track, at length lead the nation into ruin. When our Saviour wept over *Jerusalem*, he did not talk of the blunders the *Jews* had committed in their politics, but of their *perverse senses*, with regard to *moral obligations*, and their repugnance to listen to the calls of heaven. “O *Jerusalem, Jerusalem!* thou that killest the *prophets*, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” And what followed, but *That destruction*, which from the nature of moral evil, and the disobedience of men to the voice of God, has ever followed, and must follow, in the way that the wisdom and mercy of the Almighty shall appoint, till this fabric of the earth itself is dissolved, and *time* shall be no more!

## CONVERSATION XVIII.

*The inclosing of lands beyond a certain portion, decreases the number of the people. Comparison of the merit of the labouring man and the domestic servant. The false judgment created by plenty. The advantage of reducing nominal property. The necessity of furnishing employment to great numbers of people. The landlord's error of knowing how to cultivate land. Reflexions on paupers. The importance of numbers of labouring people to support the state.*

F. EVERY circumstance which tends to make us *wiser* and *better*, is gain to the public as well as the *individual*. The cultivation of humanity is the first object. If for the

fake of *gain* the laborious cottager and his family are driven off the field, where is he to seek his bread? So much as the land produces, at any time, more than it did before, may be reckoned

reckoned as gain to the *individual*, but the *public* may feel the loss in some other respect. *Loss* and *gain* must be estimated on the *whole of the account*. If the *cottage* and the *garden*, and the right of *commonage*, where the *cow* and the *geese* were supported, or the *hog* found sustenance, are all *levelled*, and thrown into the main body of a *large estate*, though the same spot be covered with *grain*, it may be no equivalent to the cottager, who must live by some means or other; and is valuable in proportion to his *usefulness*. Let as many improvements be made as the *zeal*, or the interest of individuals may suggest, or the wisdom of the legislature may contrive; provided we take care of the *indivisible hind*, and his *progeny*; for in them is our *last resource*; and on their *hands*, next to the kindness of our mother the *earth*, depends our *glory*! The protection of That *God*, who governs heaven and earth, is as much extended to them, as to the greatest of mankind. A nation which seeks its own prosperity, should consider how the meanest subject is to pass his life in a manner most beneficial to himself and the community. We complain of the *poors-rates*, and at the same time too often act as if we meant to distress a vast number of people. If the indigent were properly considered by *parents*, or *children*, or *friends*, and especially by the *affluent*, there would be no occasion for any *poors-rates*. Whenever a cottager who maintained himself and his family by his labour, is compelled to leave his native spot, his cottage being pulled down, and this practice prevails, whither is he to go? he is every where subject to the same calamity. The right which *nature* seems to have given him, being invaded for the sake of *gain*, for another's use, whither is he to travel? He has no *house*, not an *inch of earth to plant or sow*: he must sit down *somewhere*, or leave the world. He who labours with his hands on the lands of another, should be considered as the true riches of the landlord. Let him go wherever *Providence* directs, his industry is his wealth; and he should be *cherished*; especially if he has *children*. Let him be encouraged to provide for himself and them on the spot where he lives, and not *run up the price of the necessaries of life*, by seeking bread in a great town, to which his food must be *carried* to him. Is it not far better that the face of a country should be spread over with inhabitants living an honest and laborious life, than that *great towns* should be built, and vast

numbers of people congregated? We constantly find, the greater the number of people assembled on one spot, the more debauched they become. It is not the parade of *vast cities*, but stern *virtue*, *skill* and *resources for war* in men and money, with plenty of provisions and stores, which constitute the real *greatness* and the *happiness* of a people. We sometimes desire to do much work with very few hands: but this kind of policy has its bounds. If the earth were to bring forth her increase without the interposition of the *husbandman*, should we not sink into fordid *ignorance* and *idleness*? Our *manners* would be as little cultivated as our *fields*.

D. This was once the state of mankind, when perhaps they were more innocent, than they are now. The more the earth is cultivated, the greater number of people will be employed: and if the lands of this country are at present in their highest state of improvement, it follows that as many people are actually employed, as it is possible to find work for.

F. I deny that it is so improved. Look which way you please, you will find ground that might be improved; some space where a tree may be *planted*, an *house* or *cottage* built or repaired; some little garden or inclosure made for a poor man. But there must be numbers of people, many more than are necessary for the cultivation of the earth:—*one* man can provide bread for *eighteen*. Raiment, with arts of every kind, require hands; and people born to fortunes will *eat*, though they do not *work*. But it is not only the *parish poor*, the *indigent honest labourer* should be the constant object of the care of his superiors: and it is far better policy, as well as a stronger proof of humanity, to cherish him a little more than what is barely necessary, than fall short of the true mark.

D. What would you do for his *relief*?

F. Always prevent his wanting work; and take care that he should, as near as possible, be supplied with the means of living, within the compass of his abilities to pay for it. No place, if possible, should be left without milk and fuel, within the reach of the labouring man. And if no farm exceeded an *hundred pounds a year*, and no farmer were allowed to rent so much, unless he were taught how to manage a farm, do you imagine there would be a want of *good and able farmers*? I am but a *little farmer*; but I defy the greatest of them to cultivate the earth in a better manner than



than I do, either as to the proper manure, the best kind of plowing, the true season of sowing; the distinctions of *grasses*, *roots*, and *grain*, and the choice of the land peculiar to each of them.

D. But who would you make the judge of the farmer's abilities? If the *landlord is ignorant*, he cannot examine his tenants in such points.

F. Boys at school born to fortunes, should be taught *agriculture*, as well as the languages. This would do the generality of them more good, than any other knowledge they acquire; and they would have more pleasure in applying it to real life. To know what to do with the land they inherit, would prove a better *philosopher's stone* than they usually discover. I have always considered an active and skillful culture of the earth, as the foundation of the prosperity of my country, even prior to good laws, and the just execution of them; granting that without the latter it is impossible a country should flourish. All men eat; and the *days were* when our *corn-trade*, malt included, brought in at least *seven hundred thousand pounds* a year.

D. And so it might be yet, if we ceased to *devour* so much. If so many *farmers* themselves live in a *lordly* manner, and shew a *bad example*, what is to be expected of other people, who have greater temptations to folly and wickedness?

F. For a farmer to live like a *lord*, is as absurd, as for a *lord* to live like a *farmer*. But the most distressful circumstance is, when men who used to work, or might be employed in the *fields*, equally profitably for themselves and the public, are constrained to take refuge in great towns; their morals being often as much debauched, as their health is injured.

D. The fashions of great cities seem to turn the brains of mankind. I am told the people grow profligate, and neglect *marriage*.

F. Where *liberty* abounds, we cannot restrain expences. This depends on the prudence of individuals. The vexation, I say, is when half a dozen promising young men, who might each hold a *little farm*, and cherish a wife and children, are constrained to serve some overgrown farmer. Is it not a sad case, when the house is *levelled*, and the *honest husbandman*, with his whole family, is turned into the world, to wander, as if he had murdered his *brother*, or done

some horrid crime for which he ought to be punished?

D. I hope this rarely happens; but you seem to think that *inclosing* of lands, however beneficial in one view, if it makes no provision for laborious husbandmen, it will prevent their *marriage*, and bring on the mischiefs arising from a decrease of our numbers. Were we to hear the *farmers* talk of the burthen of the *poors-rates*, one would imagine we were already overpowered with numbers of people.

F. There is something very singularly inconsistent in our conduct in this respect. We grow rich with the labours of the *poor*; and when they are past labour, we think it hard to give two or three in a hundred (*a*) of our income for their support, that we may not do as the barbarous nations, who kill those who can no longer provide for themselves: and as to *infants* of the rising generation of *labouring* people, if we suffer them to perish, who is to get in our *harvest*, or fight our *battles*? Happy would it be, if the *reign of the saints* were come, in which *peace* should spread her balmy wings over the whole earth! but as things are, we must be in a capacity for *war*, in order to prevent it. If every parish brandishes a sword against a subject not legally intitled to the parochial tax in the identical parish where he lives, he feels himself so far excluded from the common rights of a subject, as he is restrained from *marriage*.

D. If every one were compelled to labour who is *able*, nothing but some public calamity, with which it might please the Almighty to punish us, could much affect us as to our *poor*.

F. Afflictions may come by means far beyond our reach to discover; but you say well that the ordinary cause of them is our *iniquity*. We complain sometimes of having too many people on a spot; when the *evil* lies not in the number, but in our *ignorance* or *indolence*, in not employing them properly, and not maintaining *good order* and *discipline*. We should not deem it good policy to destroy *infants*, male or female, as it is said the *Chinese* are permitted to do the *females*; were our religion to countenance such barbarity: but when we hunt away the poor who have no parish settlement on the spot where they would gladly live, the parish officers, pretending that they

(a) Supposing the annual expence of the people of *England* to be 60 millions; 3 per cent amounts to 1,800,000 l.

they *may* become burthenfome, the hazard is increased tenfold, and they often really become a public burthen by the very act of an oppreffive removal of them. The very mention of fuch conduct makes one afhamed of our pretences to *humanity*, much more to *liberty*. If our *poors-laws* were executed properly, and the parochial poor compelled to work, we fhould foon fee true difcipline revived. The laws are by no means intended to promote *illnefs*, much lefs the indolence, which in later ages we have frequently feen exercifed by the poor themfelves, in triumph over *juftice* and *common-fenfe*. Thofe laws are the moft humane that ever were devifed for the relief of the diftreft; but they have been often fcandaloufly abufed.—

D. How can it be prevented?

F. By a new fyftem: I would propofe, that no claim to a fettlement in a parifh fhall be valid, unlefs the parties (being turned of a certain age) fhall produce good and fufficient evidence, that they can knit, fo as to gain at leaft a fhilling or eighteen-pence a week.—

D. But fupposing a real miserable being not able to knit.

F. He would ftill be confidered as a *cafual pauper*, and treated as fuch, but not as a *claimant to a fettlement*. It cannot be too often recommended; and the means contrived as one of the moft important objects of the ftate, that the poor of all denominations ought to be furnifhed with employment *on the fpot where they are*; and in lieu of pulling down cottages, on occafion of the inclofing of lands, build *additional* ones, and prepare for *more mouths*. Thus, inftead of diminishing the number of the people, we might increafe it. The 'quire may not acknowledge this to be good policy, for it would condemn his own practice: but the mind is free; every one may judge; and this propofition feems to be felf-evident.

D. The increafe of the people may be provided for, as well as the improvement of the land.

F. With much eafe: they fhould go together: if the landlord's thoughts are fixed on the *land* only; if landlords bring themfelves to think their riches confifts in the *number of cultivated acres*, without regard to the *number of people* in a capacity to fupply themfelves, as well as others, with the neceffaries of life, from thofe *acres*, the *true line* is not drawn. If the value

of land arifes from the ability of defending it, or from the numbers who are to confume the produce, population muft be confidered as the *firft* object, as induftry and good order conftitute the *fecond*. If this plan doth not increafe the rents fo much at once, as the *prefent method*, and confequently not answer the purpofe *for the day*, the greateft part of mankind in general, being fo much for the *prefent hour*; yet, in the iffue, it will be found the moft happy, becaufe the moft fevere, and productive of the mutual affections of individuals. The confiderations of *money* and *credit* have been carried to fuch lengths as weaken the motives to the exercife of *humanity*, and the advantages which might arife from That fuperior policy, which confifts in moral perfection. The higher claffes of the people do not fufficiently confider the condition of the *laborious* and *obfcure* part of mankind. The voice of the poor is not fo eafily heard, nor have they the fame motives as the *wealthy*, to be fo follicitous about their numbers, as thofe whose property depends, in time of *war*, on *foldiers* and *failors*. They do not confider, that in *twenty years* our *Asiatic* dominions drain our country of the largeft number of *British* forces that was perhaps ever affembled to form an army, compofed of fuch fubjects. The *representatives* of the *opulent* are no lefs the *representatives* of the *indigent*. Though the peafant doth not complain, it is natural for him to wifh to live *comfortably* in a *married ftate*; and if pofterity depends on it, his filence is not a fufficient motive for others to neglect this part of the *national intereft*. The provident, who look forward to futurity, may, with great propriety, complain *for him*. If I am not deceived, this is our fituation at prefent.

D. I fear things will go on in the fame way. Till a large number of a hardy race of men is wanted for *defence*, we fhall fcarce make any alteration.

F. Then we may be obliged to take men even from the plow and the loom.

D. This may be more eafily accomplifhed, than to engage them after they are accuftomed to the lazy fplendor of figuring behind a gilded chariot.

F. True, my child. Many a young fellow is now wallowing in plenty, and fpending his time in a drowzy or fantaftic idlenefs, who might be of great ufe to his country.

## CONVERSATION XIX.

*The delusions of self-interest, and vicious self-love. The union of Great-Britain and Ireland productive of the security and happiness of both. The encouragement of protestantism in Ireland by new modes, practicable. Improvements in commerce in Ireland. Some of the clergy in England not sufficiently careful of their cures. True policy founded in religion. The love of our country, what it consists in. Every means that can be used for the promotion of it on virtuous principles, a duty incumbent on subjects.*

D. **T**HE care of the indigent and laborious is certainly the first object; but do you imagine that those who hold the *land* do not think of such things, their *interest* being so deeply concerned with them?

F. I fear many landlords presume on the protection of Providence, and the care of government, and *think* but little. That disposition which is vulgarly called SELF-INTEREST, is the most successful cheat that reigns in the human soul: it seduces people of all ages and conditions; insomuch that they often *think* they are studying *truth*, when they are studying *falsehood*. That, by which they are to receive an *immediate benefit*, blinds them; and the heart being bribed, gives an easy assent to whatever the *will* proposes. The *good* part being present, and the *evil* remote, we are apt to soothe ourselves into an opinion, that we are consulting our real happiness, when nothing is more foreign to it.

D. There can be no happiness without virtue.—But it is no wonder men should be partial to themselves, when we see friends and acquaintance so partial to each other.

F. True: when you get into the world, you will see *such partialities prevail*, that the *crimes* of one shall appear or be represented as *petty offences*; while the *small offences* of another, shall wear the aspect of *crimes*. You will hardly ever discover *truth* from the *party concerned*; nor even from the report made by indifferent persons, till you compare evidence, and discarding all considerations of *interest*, judge dispassionately for *yourself*. Is it not a blind and partial self-interestedness, which tempts so many to neglect the universal benefit of their country, for the love of a *paltry*

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*gain*, by which they are prompted to do a thousand hurtful or ruinous things?

D. In some cases prejudices triumph over interest, and the love of gain.

F. Of this we have a very notable instance in our *sister island*. I apprehend she prefers to be curbed and restrained with respect to many advantages she might enjoy, rather than unite herself by a stricter bond of *common interest*. The *Irish*, as well as the numbers of *English* who possess estates in *Ireland*, would find that island would derive greater safety from her *foreign* enemies, and enjoy more internal peace and comfort at home, if the true light of the gospel shone where clouds of ignorance and thick darkness now overwhelm the wretched inhabitants, plunged as they are into the lowest degree of *poverty*, and the most abject *slavery*!

D. You mean among the *papists* of *Ireland*, by their low condition in a state of bigotry to their wretched leaders the *Romish priests*. I have heard from some of our *hay-makers*, and *harvest* people; in what a miserable manner they live in that country, and how they are deluded by false notions in respect to *religion*. Why do we not make both into one nation! Is *Ireland* at so great a distance?

F. No, my child: it is our being in debt that frightens them; not so much the *Irish*, vulgarly called *wild*, as the *civilized* part of the people; whilst a jealousy of *their* natural advantages frightens *us* in our turn: thus *mutually frightened*, we seem to run *from* each other, instead of *meeting*; and though good friends at the bottom, often act, as if we both meant to invite an *enemy*. If the *poor papists* were considered with a due

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attention

attention to the duties of *religion*, and the soothing arts of *humanity* employed; I am persuaded their prejudices might be subdued: they would discover those *religious tenets to be best*, which tend most to promote *peace*, and render life *comfortable*. The encouragement of *industry*, and the security of *property*, would open new scenes of advantage. The *priest* being repeatedly shewn by formal *lectures*, to which he might be invited, or rewarded for attendance, wherein his doctrine is *absurd*; if provision were made for him, in case of his *conversion*, we might see *Anti-christ* tremble from her foundation. The example of a few would soon operate on the whole.

D. This would be a glorious work indeed! When will they begin it?

F. If our *news-papers* do not mislead us, and sometimes they speak *truth*, we are *now* actually encouraging *Ireland* by new designs of *manufacture* and *fishery*. I am confident that the safety of the *landlord* and his *protestant* tenants in worshipping God, at proper times, supported by their liberality for the *poor*, instead of squandering wealth in *vicious living*, would make their *light* shine, and bring the people over to a true sense of religion. But there must be *good example* to support *good precept*.

D. If we shew such tokens of *belief* and *trust* in the blood of *one common Redeemer*, as would convince them of our *sincerity*; we might in a short time drive *images* and *beads*, *transubstantiation* and *priestcraft*, together with *flattery*, into the sea, and clear the land of *idolatry*. When will pious nonsense cease among christians!

F. Bravely said! If we look at home to our own faults, we shall find much to condemn in *practice*, if not in *belief*; not so much by false devotion, as a neglect of what is true. But still we keep free of such gross and absurd constructions of the sacred writings, as the papists impose on the world. I hope ere long we shall see some of the churches in our neighbourhood *better served*. I intend to represent the neglect to the bishop of the diocese. I am a *poor man*; but poor men often speak truths, which *rich* ones, blinded by imaginary interest, conceal. I hope my reputation will hold me up; I have no design to *injure* or *betray*, or speak with any intention to deceive. "There never was a *hypocrite* so *disguised*, but he had some mark or other to be known by." I hope my sincerity will appear. The first lesson taught me was, "That not to

intend what I speak, is to give my *heart* the lie with my *tongue*; and not to *perform* what I promise, is to give my *tongue* the lie with my *actions*."

D. *Truth* and *falsehood*, like the iron and clay in *Nebuchadne-zar's* image, may cleave, but they will not incorporate. But how far the bishop will give such a poor man, as you are, any *credit* for the evil effects of the absence of clergymen, I cannot judge.

F. Perhaps he is not informed of the fact; or does not believe that such bad consequences attend it. The *prelate*, as a true disciple of our Lord, will trace out where the evil lies. It is *his province* to furnish us with warriors against the powers of *darkness*. Without this, the arm of flesh will not avail: a nation cannot derive stability from any principle of earthly power. Without *religion* to judge from what we see of the effects of *vice*, our numbers will decrease, and our improvements again decay. Without this ruling principle, the landlord may contend for an increase of his rents, till he sees his country in decay, and become the spoil of an *enemy*. *Impiety* breeds private *discontent*; discontent sows the seeds of public and domestic injury; and the harvest may be invasion by a foreign enemy; or intestine feuds; which are often more deadly.

D. I know not how far you or I may be mistaken in our politics with regard to *this world*; but I am sure we then understand *our own interest* best, when we serve God with the *purest heart*, and the *greatest humility*.

F. Aye, *my dear Mary*, this is the thing in which we are so much wanting to ourselves; and without which, politicians may think what they please, we can never become, in all respects, so happy a people as we might be.

D. You think we want *precept* as well as *example*. If our *poor curate* is to supply *two* or *three livings* lying at the distance of *six* or *seven* miles from his home, whilst the *vicar* diverts himself at the *fine places* in and about *London*, with the produce of our tythes; and the 'squires give themselves no trouble about it, we must not wonder that some among us are so *ignorant*, and others so *profligate*, as we find them to be.

F. Take care, *my child*, not to trespass against charity, by any remarks which look severe; or condemn at a hazard: but let us, for charity's sake, be *attentive* to the means of preserving the souls

souls of our fellow-creatures. Not to be so, is acting like an infidel; for what can an infidel do more? All the world is conscious of the bad effects of a careless insensibility. If every one ought to have religious admonition suited to his wants; and the soul of a *peasant* is as valuable as that of a *prince*; *justice* ought to be distributed with an *impartial* hand. The blind must have a guide. In a religious sense, all men would be blind, if they never had been enlightened by the gospel.

D. If *Christ* had not come into the world, where would the best of us have been in point of knowledge? Being as it is, if two or three hundred villagers pay as many pounds a year by labour to their respective vicars, for the care of their souls, and the work is performed, perhaps very slovenly, for a *sixth* part of the money; it is as if their defence against sin were worth no more.

F. Your conclusion is just, though rather *severe*. If in a spirit of meekness we represent how much we pay for *spiritual aid*, and how little of it is given us, perhaps *justice* will be done.—We can boast of *liberty*, only as justice is distributed with an equal hand to the *poor* as well as the *rich*; and that we have what we pay for.

D. With regard to *Ireland*, of which you was speaking, were we to practise the arts of gentleness and Christian meekness, with the zeal that is suited to *Christianity*, we might hope to drive *idolatry* out of that country.

F. The *principles* adopted by the *papists*, and the strength of their prejudices, are mutually supported by their *ignorance*. There are other reasons also, to which you will hardly give credit. Some *protestants*, possessor of lands in *Ireland*, countenance the ignorance of the *papists*, upon this principle, that the less they know, the more *abject* will their condition be; and the more base and sordid it is, the less will be the price of their labour.

D. This is infamous in practice, though it may be true in fact.

F. No *end* can be obtained without using the *means*: and every day's experience proves that the thing which is deemed not only extremely *difficult*, but *impracticable*, is found the contrary upon the trial. Our *zeal* for *religion* is at too low an ebb: and so, in many instances, are our *politics*: let the *tide* rise, and you will see how the *vessel* may be steered into her harbour. If

I were a man of large estate in *Ireland*, methinks I would chuse some pleasant spot, well wooded and watered, on which I would build a dozen or more neat commodious cottages, with half an acre of land to each. I would provide both the houses and the grounds with necessary furniture, to render the inhabitants happy. I would then let them for a *pepper-corn* acknowledgment, for a certain number of years, to such *papists*, as were converted to the *true faith* in *Jesus Christ*, according to the *New Testament*; for so I would propose the question, proving that *Christ* was a *man* as to his outward form, and not a *vine*, nor a *door*, nor did he literally keep sheep, nor was his body broken at his last supper. Do you not think it would excite the *curiosity*, or interest the hearts of some, to be *car-didates* for such houses?

D. If you provided employment also for the inhabitants, by which they might obtain a more comfortable support, than they ever had before, it would appear to be a work of such piety, that the church of *England* would begin to wear as pleasing a garment as the church of *Rome*.

F. So indeed I think.—And why should it be thought a thing impracticable? The same has been done many times in similar circumstances. You may be assured, that those who try such experiments, (and there are a few who have actually tried them) are not disappointed of their hopes.

D. You are sanguine in *yours*: I am not a judge what might be done: I dare say you would attempt it if you were able: and a work once begun, is said to be *half ended*, be it what it may. Perseverance does wonders: but the greatest work is to bring others into your way of thinking.

F. We are apt to jumble *religion* and *politics* together; or make too little account of both as they stand related. I apprehend many *reciprocal benefits* would arise from a closer union, in respect to mutual *ability for defence*; and the promotion of *true religion*, *industry*, and the *general felicity of individuals*. Were *Ireland* rendered more *civilized* and *politic*, with regard to the manners of the inferior part of the people; her *natural produce* and situation for trade would make her a more considerable addition to the *British empire*. She might not only be so much the more able to defend herself, but supply a larger number of recruits to the *British* armies and navies, of a stout

and brave people. The advantages on both sides, would outweigh any inconveniences that could arise to either. *Both islands* would be rendered the richer, more powerful, more happy, and more truly affectionate, as sisters who have one common interest.

*D.* You are for removing all difficulties; reconciling all parties; disposing of all property, and all persons, for the public good: but I question if the 'squire is so well inclined: you would leave him nothing to complain of.

*F.* He need not be afraid: passions, prejudices, and false self-love, will always take the side of murmur and complaint. We may hope, and wish, suppose, and even build castles in the air; these can do no harm, as we do not mean to garnish them with any mischievous artillery. There is generally some evil spirit lurking in bodies politic, as distempers lurk in the natural body; inso-much that the remedy which is good for one of our diseases, is hurtful to another. This is proved in the case of reducing the number of farms, which I understand has been done in *Ireland*, as well as in *England*, and to a higher and more dangerous degree. If the increased income of the landed property is become greater than it was when farms were more divided, the proprietor will call himself the richer, in proportion as he receives more rent, and for the same reason say, the nation is so much the more opulent; but unless it extends also to the best part of the riches, namely, the increase of people who are skilful and laborious; and the comfort of their lives, who work upon the land; he who, in the estimate of the wealth of a nation, does not include the indigent part, is a bad politician.

*D.* Can poverty be called riches?

*F.* Poverty is the cause of riches. The indigence of some, is the means of preserving and increasing the riches of others. Would there be a soldier or sailor, a manufacturer or husbandman, if it were not for poverty.

*D.* If it were not for fear that Providence might afflict them with this evil, some of the rich would grind the face of the poor more than they now dare do.

*F.* Mankind are too apt to forget what changes life produces. The thought of poverty to the rich, is ten times more bitter than to us in an humble condition. The great articles of life, to render it comfortable, are wool, cotton, and flax, wrought into raiment; and corn, vege-

tables, and flesh, prepared for food. On the present plan of the government of civilized nations, money is also become necessary; but neither money nor property alone, constitute a powerful state. It still reverts to this, the numbers of strong and skilful people; their industry, contentment, and happiness, are the first objects. It is thus the able politician makes up the account, otherwise all is but a mere external, or the shadow of a substance. These, with the cultivation of the arts of peace, are the glorious objects which constitute the exalted virtue of love to our country; or, as it is commonly called, the love of our country,—We stand bound by our religion, not only to meditate, but to do all the good we can. Charity, peace, liberty, and the love of our country are united: he who loves a few as he ought, will interest himself for the many: and he who truly loves his neighbour, will hardly ever forget his obligations to society.

*D.* I have heard people talk of a bad private conduct, yet a good public character.

*F.* You may easily hear people talk of what they do not understand. A man may comprehend what is the interest of his country, and talk of it properly; yet, if he is not to be trusted in regard to moral honesty, what is he good for? Politics is a profound matter. Do you not find, that the deeper we enquire into the affairs of state, and the difficulties of GOOD GOVERNMENT, the more we find ourselves bewildered?

*D.* The greater is the wonder that so many pretend to decide so definitively.

*F.* When you hear women and beardless boys, unlettered men, or presumptuous persons declaim, you will generally find that they either talk like parrots, or as some leader dictates; or judge without knowing half the connections which relate to their subject. They should consider this as an age of pleasure and luxury, not of stern virtue and rigid temperance: every one is ready to acknowledge it, and those who have a common share of sense, while they perceive luxury to be the ruling principle, will not expect every thing which relates to good policy. There are two kinds of people who go into the extreme: one is very sanguine, the other timid. The first has the pleasure of seeing every thing in the brightest light, and believes no harm will happen; the last suffers the pain of supposing that every small evil will produce a greater, and that danger is always at his doors. One is in danger from his security; the other always wretched.

*D.* Ex-

D. Extremes are dangerous : but pray what do you understand by *luxury*, from which you apprehend *evil*?

F. When I use the word *luxury*, I mean criminal excess; *that is*, when people spend more than they can afford, and endanger their own safety, together with that of others : or by being devoted to  *vicious gratifications*, and the indulgence of their vanity, neglect the considerations of temperance and moral rectitude. I have told you so much of *liberty*, and the love of our country, it may serve you for many a long day.

D. You have fired my heart with the *love of liberty*, as it is founded in reason and religion, depending on the *love of peace*.

F. It is the *integrity of heart* which makes *true lovers of their country*, more than strength of head, or the fine-spun notions of modern casuists. If we reasoned less, and were more observant of our *duty*, we should more easily arrive at the happy ends of our labour. You and I have had much serious discourse as friends to our country. You perceive that I build my politics on the foundation of my *religion*. If I err in my opinion, my sincerity is not less apparent in the sight of Him who knows the hearts of men.

D. *Truth* and *integrity* will always be valuable in the sight of that Being, who is the disposer of the fate of nations.

F. Such offerings must be grateful to the righteous Ruler of the earth, and will hardly ever fail of temporal blessings. But we must leave such mighty matters of state to those who are better acquainted with them, and whose duty it is to conduct them.

D. There can be no harm in expressing our good wishes for the common welfare.

F. On the contrary; it is our duty to *wish* and *pray* for the happiness of our country. And let us trust in the God of our fathers, that he will not withdraw his protection from the present generation.

D. Would to God *such considerations* were taken proper notice of in our politics!

F. We maintain a numerous body of men devoted to the purpose of informing and instructing us, and keeping up in our minds a just sense of religion : the rest must depend on the hearts

of individuals. In a worldly view, we should consider every means by which national strength may be increased; but it must be done consistently with moral obligations, as in a moral view we are bound to use every means to preserve a fellow-creature; a fellow-subject comes near; a parent and a child, or friend, is nearer still to our affections. Without dominions abroad, our lands at home would not be of near the value they now are: if such dominions lie remote, the greater vigilance and number of men is necessary to guard them. Our coasts are extensive. A strong army and *militia*, well appointed for defence, are necessary. Our ships are justly called our *bulwarks*, our *walls* or *ramparts*; but we must not depend on them *only*. Abstracted from every such consideration, let us be active and vigilant, and every day contribute to the common stock, and the support, the ease, and comfort of each other.

Thus shall we remember the God that made us, the *earth*, the *sea*, the *heavens*, and the *heaven of heavens*, and all that them inhabit; even Him that rules the hearts of princes, and the governors of the earth. Let us not cease to implore his *protection*. And whatever his will shall be, as we discover it from *Revelation*, supported by *reason* and the voice of *nature* crying aloud; whether it regards *civil liberty*, or national power for strength and defence, let us rejoice in the assurance of his favour, so long as we seek it by *obedience* and a *contrite heart*!

D. Your conclusion is truly the glory of our nature; but the love of money, and the splendor of life, become the idols of mankind: and, as if these were the true foundation of their happiness in both worlds, they *worship* them.

F. Alas! my child, this is often the case; but the practice is not vindicated on principle, by any but *infidels*; and even they see their vanity in the issue. It is the *folly* and *iniquity* of mankind, not their *skill* nor *industry*, nor their *liberty*, nor the maintenance of the *rights* of human nature, which draw down evils on their heads. It is by *virtus* alone that we can learn, what belongs to our condition as *accountable creatures*; or carry up our minds from *earthly* to *heavenly* government, and obedience to the great Ruler of the universe, in whose service alone is perfect liberty.

## P A R T V.

*Happiness in its various Views.*

## CONVERSATION I.

*The happy effects of the friendship and advice of pious and judicious persons in reforming the careless and profligate. A plain Christian exhortation and invitation to the supper of our Lord: attention to this duty, the best criterion to judge by, whether a man be a Christian or not. Obedience to divine laws, and the moderation of our desires, with regard to this world, the essence of religion. Expostulation with a young gentleman of education on his irreligious deportment. His confession. Religion the only true basis of happiness.*

D. GREAT news, my father! *James* is returned, and is actually married to *Louisa*. She says she now makes no doubt of his constancy.

F. She has given proof of her own. You remember my admonition in regard to the evil report of him. I told you that if he returned, *Louisa* would forget all that had passed. Love soon returns to the breast; and friends forgive. Hath any thing extraordinary brought him home?

D. Divine Providence has interposed in his favour, beyond the common events of life. It happened that he was employed in his trade by the same reverend gentleman who is to marry my cousin *Elizabeth*. Being informed of *James*'s story, he gave him such good advice, and such assurances of his friendship, if he acted a consistent part, that *James* took the virtuous resolution of returning home and marrying *Louisa*; and he promises fair to be steady. They say he is become quite a different kind of creature.

F. Many a man might be saved body and soul, if the same Christian spirit prevailed, as influenced this good divine.

D. Happy *Elizabeth*, to have a husband who distinguishes himself in so humane, charitable, and useful a manner!

F. He has done a good work indeed: but I advise you by all means to keep out of the way of both husband and wife, lest after what has passed, you should be the cause of jealousy or discontent. Is *James* become a convert, so far as to receive the sacrament? You and I have often had much serious discourse on that subject.

D. I am told he is at length brought to a sense of this duty; but it was not by the exhortation contained in the Liturgy, which you so much object to.

F. You remember the reasons I gave, founded on facts, against the exhortations in the communion-service, as answering no end but frightening many from coming to the supper of our Lord, instead of inviting them to it. Whatever might be originally intended by the pious composers of the first exhortation, which we heard read last Sunday, were it not far better to reduce it to a few plain significant words?

D. What would you say?

F. Dearly beloved, I purpose next Sunday to administer the sacrament, in remembrance of the death



death of our blessed Lord, by which alone we obtain remission of our sins. In this sacrament we partake of that spiritual food and sustenance, which will nourish and preserve our souls. You must consider the dignity and importance of it, that you may come with an humble and contrite heart, bewailing your sinfulness, and confessing yourself to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life. For Heaven's sake reconcile yourselves to your neighbours. Make restitution and satisfaction, to the utmost of your power, for all the injuries and wrongs you may have done to others. Forgive, as you ask forgiveness of your own offences at the hands of God; that quieting your consciences, you may trust in his mercy. If you have any scruples or doubtfulness, come to me; I shall be glad to receive you; or go to any pious friend, doubting not but that through the mercy of God I shall relieve your mind. Consider, my brethren, if by any false conceit of the nature of this duty, you rebel against the clearest commands of our dying Lord, to remember him by this token; you administer to your own condemnation; and by neglecting the remedy appointed to save your souls from death, plunge yourselves the deeper in sin. If you have any secret intentions to continue in your sins, as if you desired the vengeance of Heaven, what can avail your coming here to the temple of God to hear me this day? Discharge your foolish wicked fears in relation to the sacrament, and dare to be faithful soldiers and servants of the great Leader, Redeemer, and Saviour of mankind!

D. Is there any clergyman who dares make such an exhortation?

F. All sensible clergymen, who know the world, talk this very language: and this I apprehend is what their master Jesus Christ requires them to speak. Our reformers were fearful our Lord's supper might be profaned. They did not mean to make a miracle of it, as the papists do; yet feared to speak of it in terms which might possibly be thought unlawful; till at length it is become an object of mystery, as it is sometimes erroneously called. Nothing is more easy to understand: from the moment it is deprived of its genuine simplicity, the ignorant, though honest-minded, are driven from it. I dare say James was won to a sense of his transgressions by means of the most familiar discourse. He seemed more inclined to wickedness than the generality of mankind; yet you see the effect of a little common sense.

D. Such is not the case of poor Simon. He still plumes himself in the confidence, that there are great crowds as negligent as himself.

F. Or, if you please, as stupidly wicked, without any apprehension of the consequences of the neglect. Was there ever any religion in the world, or any bond of society, which did not require certain obedience, and the performance of duties, as essential to the rights and privileges of the professors of it? Are the times we live in distinguished from all others for ignorance and barbarity of manners? The contrary is true in every respect, except in this: In this we act like barbarians.

D. Simon pleads the common excuse, that he is afraid his offences, after his receiving, will be so much the greater, than if he had not received.

F. There might be a shadow of sense in this, if it were left as a matter of choice, whether he would receive or not: but as it is an absolute command to receive, and a means of spiritual grace, it is because he is a graceless fool he does not receive. He not only disobeys, in a direct view, but he cuts himself off from the means of returning to his duty. Whilst he reasons and acts so absurdly, no change can be expected.

D. It is absurd indeed to decline doing a thing; for fear of an evil consequence; when a certain and very evil consequence follows the not doing it.

F. But if his doing it upon the highest authority, and his general obligation, with regard to the immortality of his soul, and a state of rewards and punishments after death is concerned, is it not madness to talk as poor Simon does? If he is a Christian, he will repent; if he truly repents, he will amend his life; and one of the first proofs of amendment, as a Christian, is to use this means of correcting his evil ways.

D. He understands this, or he is too much a fool to be capable of any attention.

F. And do you think that if he lives in charity with all men, and intends to lead a new life, he will not receive the sacrament? If he is not in charity with mankind, and does not intend to lead a new life, or, in other words, to amend; there is an end of all argument: he makes a league with the prince of darkness, and gives up his hopes. The sacrament requires no new duty. It is as old as Christianity; from the time of the death of Christ. The paschal lamb, you know, was eaten at a certain time by the

*Isaiah's,*

*Israelites*, in commemoration of *their* wonderful deliverance from the *Egyptians*; and this celebration had prevailed for many generations, before the coming of our *Saviour*. It was typical of this part of the *Christian* spiritual sacrifice and worship. The *Christians* commemorate the death of *Christ*, and their wonderful deliverance from sin by means of his blood and resurrection; not by the festival of *Easter* only, but as often as his followers meet at his table. Our *Saviour*, who knew the heart of man, could not but know what admonition and calls to duty were *necessary*. He was the person that *required* this memorial: He required it in *mercy* to our transgressions; and they despise, or what is the same in effect, neglect the injunction.

D. But these foolish people apprehend they can do better for themselves than follow his injunction.

F. I have not heard any man say, in so many words, "I can do better without this part of the *Christian* worship, than with it; and therefore I will not follow the injunction made by *Christ*:" but in effect the excuse usually urged, amounts to this. It favours of an impious declaration that the great Author of Nature is not so well acquainted with the means of preserving his rational creatures, as they are themselves.

D. Indeed it appears so. The natural conclusion should be, I am a *sinner* by not receiving. —I will receive, and endeavour to leave the evil of my ways.

F. Can any one be so foolish to imagine, that the infinitely wise and *perfect* God requires *perfection* from such short-sighted creatures as we are? —But because we are so *imperfect*, he requires of us a certain duty, as a proof of our obedience to him, and as a means to render us acceptable, by such *obedience*. And as one virtue naturally operates to produce another; from *obedience* in one instance, we shall be led to obedience in another.

D. This is very plain common sense: none of these people pretend to say, that one act of *obedience* has no tendency to produce *another* act of *obedience*: or that *disobedience* does not create or generate *disobedience*.

F. Most assuredly will it be found, that with all their sins and imperfections, those who obey, in this instance, from a persuasion that they ought to obey, from their hearts, are more obedient in other instances, than those who argue against their

receiving the sacrament, out of false fear, or give themselves no trouble about it. Let us take any dozen persons of our acquaintance, who frequent the table of our Lord, and as many of the *best* of those who do not receive the sacrament; I believe we shall find the *communicants* the best livers.

D. The *best* my father! I know not of one, who not receiving, can with truth be called a good liver.

F. After all the fine things that have been said of *happiness*, and the difference of pursuits of men in search of it, I see not *where*, or in *what*, it can be found without *obedience*; Obedience even unto death, in the view of the glories of *immortality*! What says the inspired penman? "Them that are *meek*, shall he guide in judgment; and such as are *gentle*, them shall he teach his way." And if God is gracious, and will teach sinners his way, it can possibly be done only by *their* learning it; and they cannot learn it without *obedience*. If they do not call to remembrance his tender mercies and loving kindness to mankind, which have been in all ages displayed to the world, but more particularly by the *death of Christ*; what hope can they have, or how avoid being *ashamed*? If he who transgresses without a cause shall be put to *confusion*, can he plead *his opinion* as a sufficient motive for his neglect? Will his soul dwell at ease, or his feet be plucked out of the net, in which they are entangled? Will his sorrows cease to be enlarged, or will he be brought out of *trouble* and *anguish* of mind, but as he puts his trust in his Maker? If he would practise *righteous dealings* towards God and man, he must examine and prove his heart; then will he wash his hands in innocency, and go to the altar, shewing the voice of *thanksgiving* for all the mercies he has received, and his *joyfulness* in those he has in view.

D. So indeed it must be: it cannot be otherwise: he that loveth not the temples of God, and the place where the honour due to the Almighty dwells, but flies from the altar where he ought to present his heart as a living sacrifice, will surely stumble and fall.

F. These are strong and apt expressions. If in *Christ* only is salvation: if we are to seek those things that are *above*, and not set our affections on this world, as if it were our resting-place, the scene of our supreme happiness: if we indulge our evil propensities, of which

which *this negligence is one striking proof*, what can we say? When *Christ who is our life* shall appear, shall we, thus neglecting him, appear with him in glory? As well may we suppose no difference between *obedience and disobedience, good and evil!* It is not with such as *Simon* only: how often have I heard my master talk, as a *Christian*; “How,” said he, “can any man, believing in *Christ*, be *happy*, if he does not obey the commands of *Christ*?” I remember the occasion when he argued thus with a *young gentleman* of his acquaintance. “It is more easy to prevent, than to cure the maladies of the soul. If by the force of *precept and example*, you had been habituated, from the age of *fourteen*, to shew your *superiority* over the *unlettered*, by comprehending the plain obligation of attending the supper of our Lord, and had actually frequented it; there is a moral certainty that your *passions and appetites* would have been restrained, and you would not have become a *slave* to them, as you now seem to be. You exercise your reason least in That which is the most interesting to you, I mean *religious faith*. Do you believe there is a God? Does he not require your adoration? How do you express it? You acknowledge your soul to be *immortal*: how do you know it, but as you believe the *New Testament*? And if you credit that book, can you vindicate your *profligacy*? Did not your master at *Westminster* give you some impressions of religion? Will you be so good as to let me know what those impressions were? —You are *silent*. Have you forgotten what he told you? Are the impressions *totally effaced*? You boast of superiority over the *unlettered* part of mankind: is there any distinction between *man and beast*, or the *wise and foolish*, so great and noble as that which religion points out? For shame, *my friend*, lay yourself under some restraints. Be no longer a slave to your *vices*, your *indolence*, your *incredulity!* Is it not amazing, that the joy which ought to spring up in your heart, in worshipping God in *spirit* and in *truth*, and acquiring a *habit of adoration*, should be neglected by a man of your understanding, as if it were an object of no moment? Is it not the supreme felicity of a man to carry the habitual thought of God, as his *father* and his *friend*, with him to the grave? Much grieved am I to observe you have so little relish for devotion, that you amuse yourself in the most *puerile, in-*

*desult* manner, even in the morning of the *fab-bath*, rather than set your feet within the doors of a church.”

D. A *fine schooling* truly! How did the young gentleman digest it?

E. He shrugged his shoulders, and with a dejected countenance said, “Upon my word I have not had such a lesson during the whole course of my life. I know not what I did at *Westminster* in regard to religion, nor how to answer your questions. They condemn me without any pleading. I am connected with people I *secretly despise*; yet my associating with them is one of the chief causes of my sins and follies. I will try to break loose from these bonds of iniquity. Whatever opinion you may entertain of me, from what you see me *do*, or from what I *do not*, believe me, Sir, I am as sensible of my own *misery*, as you can be of it: but *habit* and *evil company* enthrall me. Though young, I have lived long enough to *feel* my own faults, as well as *see* those of other people. You are not to imagine that I think myself a *happy* man. I am sensible, that the true joys of *sense* and *reason*, are comprehended in *health* and *virtue*, supported by a *competency*, suited, in some degree, to the manner in which a man has been bred. But *virtue* and *religion*, I consider as the same object. I profess *Christianity*; and I believe it: some young fellows of my acquaintance would fain persuade me it is a well-invented political fable, to keep the vulgar in awe; but I think them the most stupidly vulgar and hardened against *conviction*.”

D. Was not all this a good sign of *reformation*?

E. This young gentleman’s understanding was right in the *logical* part of it, for he *reasoned* well; but in the application of the rule he *acted like a mad man*. Alas! my child, there is an evil principle predominating in the heart of the best of us; but in these days, even in some of our schools, religion is strangely neglected; this plant of happiness is blasted even before it has taken root. As boys grow up, the salutary restrictions essential to a moral life, amidst the *unbounded* notions many of us entertain of civil liberty, become *burthenfome*. Our natural tempers and habits are cherished by a government, which both in *form* and *execution*, is the most indulgent the world ever knew. Hence we acquire a bold and daring disposition; and though

*ingenuous, humane, and generous*, even to prodigality; liberal in bestowing alms; and active in every kind of improvement; yet, as I have told you, by our success in *commerce* and *war*, we are so much intoxicated, as often to forget the hand that made us. I say this with many exceptions, as to particulars. But true simplicity, and the greatness of mind which attends it, and for which some periods of time have been distinguished, are rarely to be found.

D. But you do not think we are *more immoral*, and therefore *less happy*, than other nations.

F. I believe we are not so bad as some others; but we certainly stand so much in need of *reformation*, that to talk of *national* or *private* happiness, yet giving no greater countenance to *religion*, seems to be a gross inconsistency in our conduct. The *simplicity* of our ancestors gives place to *new conceits* and *strange devices*, in which real happiness has no share.

D. I apprehend there is but a small part of

mankind that searches after the simplicity you talk of.

F. Not a large part, I believe, indeed? To be *wise*, to the degree of contentment with being thought *foolish* with respect to *self-love*; and to be *rich*, with respect to hopes in a *life to come*, a man must be satisfied with a slender portion of the things of this world. But let such of the *great* and *learned* as live immorally, think as they please, religion is the soul of science; the animating principle from which all knowledge derives its dignity. Of this we have unnumbered proofs in the persons of some of the greatest characters that ever appeared on the theatre of the world.

D. You once mentioned to me several laymen, as much distinguished for their piety as their learning: while many celebrated divines have been as distinguished for the morality of *their lives*, as the fame of their *writings*.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N II.

*Freedom from sin, in the comparative view, the supreme happiness of man. Happiness, like liberty, not to be found, in any degree of perfection, but in virtue. How far joy, benevolence, and hope constitute happiness. Variety administers to our felicity. Humility essential to happiness. The reward of it in the person of the woman of Canaan. Pride an enemy to happiness. Temporal happiness promoted by obedience, yet subject to great interruptions from the necessary duties of life. The power of being happy in this world, depends on the strength and exercise of reason. Whether it depends most on humility, ease, or contentment. No enjoyments perfect. Fable of fortune and vice.*

D. O B E D I E N C E, happiness?

F. Aye, my child; the joy which sincere obedience produces, exceeds all praise: it is That which we all pursue! If we seek for happiness in *liberty*, *study*, or *amusement*; if we mean to enjoy the nobler faculties of the mind, we must be obedient to *reason*. If we give up our right of government to our *senses*, and serve them, we may be obedient too in one sense; but they will prove very tyrannical masters. The more innocent we are, the more happy.

D. Happiness then depends on *moral liberty*.

F. Both *moral* and *civil* liberty have but two roots; they both grow out of *reason* and *religion*,

and the branches are *pleasure* and *happiness*. The liberty which is not supported by *virtue*, is a *licence to do mischief*. Whatever some *politicians* may pretend, there is no such thing as gratifying the mind of man with *freedom*, but as it is founded in *reason*, and supported by *religious faith* and *obedience*. We are perpetually talking of *liberty*, but we understand it only as we observe the duties of *moral obligations*. It may put on a solemn countenance, and harangue with a philosophic solemnity; but *liberty* and *vice*, no more than *virtue* and *vice*, can live under the same roof. All that can be said for *liberty*, or any other blessing, is, that it is good, so far as

it is productive of happiness, and no further. When it ceases to make us happy, what is it good for? The *pride* and *reputation* of it is but an *imaginary advantage*.

D. People talk of *happiness*, as something *good* which they desire; but not as if they knew what it is.—They depend on the enjoyment of what pleases them; but this often changes with the hour.

F. You see that it must be sought in reason. *Happiness*, like *liberty*, is in every one's *mouth*, but *complete* in the heart of no man.

D. I never met with any one who could tell me clearly what he would have, only that he would be rich, or possess some particular object which I thought could not long answer the hope he expressed; so that he seemed still to have his happiness to seek.

F. The love of *riches* creeps into the hearts of men: instead of studying how to mend their condition by *knowledge* and *virtue*, they *wish* and *seek* a *something*, which they call *happiness*; but not knowing how to direct their pursuit, they do not find it. For my own part, I am also *weak* enough to *wish*; but it is for *good spirits*, *health*, *judgment*, and a retentive *memory*. Joyful benevolence, and the steady hope which is founded in the exercise of reason, and the true worship of God, appear to me as essential to *happiness*. Possessed of such qualities, whether the world *smiled* or *frowned*, methinks I should be happy: still I suppose the portion or degree would be very short of my *longings*.

D. If you were virtuous and joyful, you would necessarily be *happy*.

F. If joy is happiness, the measure or degree of the joy, must constitute the degree of the happiness: and if virtue only produces true joy, he who is *most virtuous*, is *most happy*.

D. But *virtue* often feels *pain* and *sorrow*, whether from the body or the soul, from the offences of others, or from human infirmities.

F. True: yet in the issue it *triumphs* over all. The great Teacher of the *Christian* world, bade not his followers to avoid *sorrow*; but not to be *sorrowful as men without hope*; assuring them that their *temporal* sufferings should be but for a moment, compared to *eternity*; as their *sorrows* should be a means of purchasing an *eternal weight of glory*. On this object he commands us to keep our eye. “*Time* and *chance* happen to all;” and it is not possible for man to fathom

the whole conduct of the great Author of our nature, in his government of the world: but if *man who is born to die*, goes no further in his researches than the *present life*, it is impossible he can form a true idea of it. *Present happiness*, without respect to the *future*, is a paradox. In respect to this world, think you of every thing as *little* and *insignificant*, except a *comfortable support*: and if this comes from *daily labour*, you have, *under God*, the *better title to it*. *Nature* is contented with little, and *virtue* having the power of making mortals as happy as they can *reasonably* expect, they must look forward to a *life to come*, or they will certainly fall far short of the mark.

D. This I readily conceive; for I find the *hope* of some *distant good*, makes up the greatest part of my *present happiness*. When I talk of *happiness*, I mean little more than *contentment*, and some variety.

F. The change of *day* and *night*, *summer* and *winter*, *labour* and *rest*, *youth* and *age*, and the hopes of worldly pleasure and profit, make up a great part of the happiness of mortals. These constitute the *variety* we are so naturally fond of: and which some call *happiness*.

D. Yet these alone do not render them happy: they wish for *riches* also.

F. I have known many, who were in want of nothing, except *contentment*, amidst *plenty miserably poor*; and with all their *knowledge*, ignorant beyond description, in what objects they should seek for the *happiness* they so much longed for. *All* the advantages common to mortals, considered as possessing each his portion, can hardly be supposed ever to meet and unite in the same person. I believe there is no such thing in the nature of man, as a capacity in one to enjoy *all* such things, as in different persons are found to make up the happiness they respectively enjoy. Yet, he who made us, is no respecter of persons: and therefore, *happiness* is no where to be found, or it belongs to *us all*. If the good qualities of the mind may be enjoyed by *all*, it follows, that *all* have happiness so far within their reach: and so much of it as they can grasp, so much will they enjoy.—Let every one cultivate this opinion, and make it his pursuit: let him exert all his powers to make *others* as *happy* as he is able, and men will become the instruments of the divine love to all their race. The earth will smile around; and God, beholding his image in

the human breast, will reward his children with so much happiness as is *good for them*, comprehending always in the idea of *good*, the welfare of the *life to come*.

*D.* My dear father, you open my mind to a much clearer and higher sense of happiness, than I ever entertained before; but I see it is more easy to talk on this subject, than to acquire any large portion of it. I sometimes think if I were *rich*, I should not hunt in vain after happiness.

*F.* If thou wert *rich*, my child! Would you not then be like other *rich people*? Are you so weak as to imagine the rich are *all* happy? If you were wise, and had more experience, you would not talk thus, nor even *think* much about riches. You acknowledge that God is no respecter of persons. You confess that the Author of our *nature*, must be the fountain of our *happiness*; or in other words, *happiness* must flow from *virtue*, as *virtue* from *freedom of will*, and the *aid of Heaven*. Where then is your opinion of what you might be were you *rich*? Be rich in good thoughts and good deeds.

*D.* I might still find my searches vain. Yet I cannot help thinking that *wealth* is very *useful* to *happiness*.

*F.* It is *useful to life*. But cheerfulness, christian charity, benevolence, and hope, are all objects very distinct from riches; and these, we are sure, from their nature and properties, are more balmy comforts to the soul, than all the gold of *Brazil*, or the silver of *Mexico*. It is only in the *soul* where *happiness* dwells: the rest depends most on the delusions of the fancy. Whatever our *outward* circumstances may be, these administer the best remedies to heal the wounds the mind is subject to receive. Were men to wear them *upon their foreheads*, as well as *in their hearts*, the light would reflect *happiness*, as a mirror doth the human face. We should be *comforters*, as well as *monitors*, to each other: we should *rejoice*, not only in the *good possessed*, but in so much the brighter prospect of *good in the life to come*!

*D.* You think then, that *humility* and *benevolence*, and the cheerfulness which constitutes the temper of the mind, are, above all other considerations, in the composition of human *happiness*.

*F.* So I apprehend. These qualities depend much on each other: and it seems more eligible

to *die* in a *good* humour, than *live* in a *bad* one. Humility, in every part of life, is the *most graceful virtue in our nature*: it is the most becoming the dignity of it, as we are creatures dependent on God: and we find its excellency by observing how repugnant it is to the corruption of our hearts: it is the habit of the soul most to be depended on for *happiness*. How gloriously does the humility of the woman of *Canaan* shine forth! How excellent is her *hope*, as founded in her *humility*! And the *comfort* she received, how distinguished it is, beyond all that *pride* or *riches* can bestow on the children of men!

*D.* The *Jews* were not generally distinguished for *humility*.

*F.* On the contrary, their presumption, in regard to the *pre-eminence* they supposed themselves to enjoy above the rest of mankind, in the favour of the Almighty, became their curse. They were apt to consider all the other nations, upon the comparison with themselves, as *dogs*. According to their usual mode of expression, our Saviour asked her, "Is it fit I should give the meat intended for the *children* of the family, to *dogs*?" She, conscious of her own unworthiness, and the dignity of the person to whom she was speaking, with the utmost patience and submission, answers to this effect:—"True, Lord! I put myself in no competition with others; but I appeal to your boundless mercy and compassion! And if *dogs* receive crumbs from their master's table, I may hope to enjoy a part of the blessing, of which the children of the family have so vast an abundance. Upon this principle I implore *your mercy*. I know that you, *Lord*, have the power to command all nature, and can deliver my daughter from the evil spirit which afflicts her." Upon this, you remember, our Saviour, as it were in a burst of joy and satisfaction, replied, "O woman! great is thy faith!—Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt!"

*D.* What pleasure it affords to think of such examples! This was a most admirable lesson, in every respect, to the *proud unbelieving Jews*; and may be no less useful to us, at this distance of time and place.

*F.* You see the world is become so corrupt, that infidelity and inattention often swallow up *humility*. In the pride or foolishness of the heart, men too often try to find reasons for *disbelieving*.

*D.* Humility seems to be as necessary to *happiness*, as any other virtue.

*F.* No-

*F.* Nothing can be a greater enemy to *happiness* than *pride*, except *cruelty*.

*D.* Our cousin *William Bury* is a happy young man. His countenance and manners, and inclination to virtue, bespeak him such: whether sick or well, tired or refreshed, you always find him in a good humour.

*F.* *William* is a lad of a happy disposition, always smiling, as if his looks proceeded from the contentment of his heart. He is *happy*; for it seems to cost him no labour or self-denial to keep his passions under control. I hope he will always preserve that equal mind for which he is distinguished. There is scarce any one in whose *happiness* I interest myself more. Man is naturally a *beneficent* creature; and the most generous minded, are in themselves the most happy; for they are rich in proportion as others possess riches, and employ them well. They *communicate comfort*, while they *receive* it. The happiness of a *good man* is founded on a rock. Neither the soft breezes which *vice* often brings with her; nor the storms of *adversity*, can allure or frighten him out of the strait path of virtue and happiness.

*D.* How to arrive at so happy a disposition as *William's*, is the difficulty.

*F.* Cultivate your benevolence; cherish your humility; guard your purity of heart; so shall you learn what it is to be *happy*! Man, who lives in society, cannot be happy in solitude. He stands in need of the kindness of others. Let them be *unkind*, and what are riches or honours? Let him endeavour to make *others* happy, and he will be happy *himself*. He that both *receives* and *gives* with a good grace, is so far happy in a double capacity. The best instruction which I can give you, is to apply your whole strength, upon every occasion which requires it, to keep your thoughts *calm* and *unruffled*.

*D.* But this can happen only as I am *happy*.

*F.* I speak of the necessary preparatives for *happiness*. For let *fortune* claim what relation she will to *happiness*, *virtue* is the parent of it, as *peace* is the companion of *virtue*. If you resolve to be *happy*, you must resolve to be *virtuous*.

*D.* If we could be *happy* by *resolving to be so*, we should have no complaints on this head.

*F.* Do not be hasty in your conclusions. The surest path to *happiness* is by *resolution* to avoid *misery*; and consequently the causes of misery.

To shun *misery*, is to court *virtue*. *Resolving* to be any thing, is not therefore being That thing: but *happiness* is not attainable without *resolution*. *Resolving* to be *virtuous*, goes a great way in opposing human frailty: therefore I give it as my strict injunction to you, to be virtuous: for this in effect is *resolving* to shun *misery*. It would be prophane and absurd to say, I *will be happy* in spite of *virtue*. As well might you say, I *will be happy*, whether my conduct is pleasing to the Almighty or not.

*D.* I believe it is impossible to be *vicious* and *happy*!

*F.* Nothing can be more contrary to the nature of things, or, in other words, to the decrees of Heaven, than *happiness without virtue*. The vicious may *seem* to be *happy*, but they certainly are not so.

*D.* If the *cheerfulness* and *pleasant temper* you build so much upon, be so essential to *happiness*, what a pity it is so little care and study are employed to acquire those amiable qualities, when *nature* has not given them.

*F.* More men are favoured in this respect, than know how to manage their youth, so as to make it administer to their happiness in both worlds. *Cheerfulness* is absolutely necessary. You may more easily form an idea of what happiness is, by what it is not, than by any other means. What is a sour or unpleasent temper, but another name for a *disturbed* mind, or misery? As rarely shall we find a *pleasant temper*, with an *unquiet conscience*, as *happiness*, without a *pleasant temper*? Virtue is the fountain of *happiness*; and *hope* the stream, at which we must drink to satisfy our thirst: this is our *comfort*. Religion teaches us the various duties of *this life*; and the performance of them naturally inspires the heart with *hope* and comfort, and expectation of *happiness* in the *life to come*, without which the mind cannot enjoy the *peace*, which the *world*, as distinguished from the interest of the *soul*, never yet gave.

*D.* The most glorious object of *hope*, must be the *happiness* of the *future state*. I endeavour to indulge this *hope*, and *rejoice in it always*.

*F.* You do well, my dear daughter, not to expect *too much* from the present life. Disappointments render us miserable. In the ordinary course of Providence, we are ever subject to *suffer*, and be rendered, what we vulgarly call *unhappy*: the follies and iniquities of others, if

not our own, will make us so: but by the same laws of Heaven, we find, that *virtue* has the power of covering her friends, as it were, with an impenetrable shield; and she guards them from the arrows of *misfortune*. Thus, if not in *present enjoyment*; in *prospect*, she uniformly presents happiness to our view. Try the experiment, my daughter: the nearer you approach her, the faster she will meet you: she will give you such a foretaste of *future joys*, as constitutes the most essential part of *present happiness*. This seems to be the most that mortals usually arrive at: this every one may compass; therefore I presume, this is the *happiness* which we so often talk of, and so seldom understand.

D. Has not *health*, as well as good fortune, a great share in our *happiness*?

F. *Health*, as I have told you, is the *salt of life*, which gives it a relish; it is to the body, what *virtue* is to the mind; and the soul that is deprived of it, may be very properly called *unfortunate*: but health is not at our disposal. Though our *reason* teaches us how to preserve it, in a great measure, we should consider it as the choicest gift of God. You are sensible, that both *health* and *wealth* may be abused. *Wealth* cannot be enjoyed by all; but *happiness* is common to all: therefore *wealth* is not essential to *happiness*.

D. Not so essential as *food* and *raiment*, and *shelter from the sky*; which are necessary to life.

F. Without a regular supply of these, we must certainly pass our days in a state of misery. But even in this case, we find that nature demands but little; nay, we often see people with a slender share of health, by the force of virtue, enjoy a considerable portion of happiness, whilst others, the more health they enjoy, the more wickedness they commit.

D. This is a sad truth.

F. If you acknowledge this to be true of health, it holds much stronger of riches. I am sure there are many, who the more riches they have, the worse lives they lead.

D. What have you learnt from books on this subject?

F. I believe we had better consult our own hearts, than the heads or hearts of other men, who may have written books, without knowing experimentally more than we do. Would you ask any body whether you are happy or not? they can only tell you, why you ought to think yourself

so. Philosophers have agreed to give this short verdict, that *happiness must be sought in a sound mind, in a sound body*. A sound mind implies *virtue*. But in proportion as the body is *unsound*, so as to *distemper* the mind, in the degree of the distemper, will the man be incapable of *happiness*.

D. Nobody can dispute this. But many, who are not confined for *lunacy*, act as if they had lost their wits.

F. They lose them, when they do not use them, or when they employ them improperly. The power of enjoyment seems to be according to the strength of our reason, this being directed right. If an *unsound mind* cannot produce *happiness*; an *unsound mind*, in an *unsound body*, certainly cannot produce it: but thank Heaven, a *sound mind* is often found where the body is much *decayed*. We also find *Nature* so kind to us, that in the body, the change from *pain*, to *ease* and *relief*, gives so quick a sensibility of *pleasure*, that in some *unhappy* circumstances, it constitutes, for the time it lasts, such quiet and satisfaction, as we call by the name of *happiness*. Thus you see how *happiness* must fluctuate. *Today*, we are *miserable*; *to-morrow*, we may be *happy*. This is a consideration of the highest importance to mankind; but the more level it is to their apprehensions, the more they seem to slight it. When the mind is tinged with *melancholy*, the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*, are all clothed in a pallid garb, and we cease to behold life in its true colours. Guard against it as against *misery* and *death*. An uninterrupted tranquility is something so good, we are happy whilst we think of the possibility of it; but on the trial we find it imply a perfection which the state of man does not permit of. Without the sweet company of *virtue*, and the contemplation of her smiles, the measure of the desires of the soul cannot be filled up; and with them, we still find ourselves too *imperfect*, to be always and entirely happy.

D. You lay it down then as a principle, that complete happiness is not to be found on earth.

F. Without this principle I should equally offend against my *reason* and *experience*. Let the curious and inquisitive puzzle themselves as they may, I advise you to seek for *ease*. This cannot be acquired without a good conscience. If your mind is *easy*, it will lead you into the knowledge how to make the best of the enjoyments life is capable



capable of: and that is the *most* we can make of *happiness*, were we to reason upon it till doom-day. Change the name, and *ease* is *happiness*!

D. *Happiness* then, is to be found in the degree which you call *ease*; and beyond this, it is hard to discover where it dwells; yet, if we seek for it in the habitations of wisdom and virtue, the very search becomes a *happiness*; as a consciousness of *good actions*, accompanied with *good intentions*, quiets our minds, and making us satisfied with ourselves, produces *ease*.

F. You seem to understand this matter as well as the *learned*, whose books I have read. Every one can tell you, at least for the present moment, whether he enjoys *ease* or not: and if he is at *ease*, it is presumed that he is *contented*; and consequently what we vulgarly call *happy*. *Contentment* is so far the *representative* of *happiness*, that without it, *happiness* is but a name! Observe, that *moderation* in *prosperity*, as well as strength to support ourselves manfully under affliction, are properties essential to *happiness*. Without these, you may plainly perceive, *misery* will ensue. This is agreeable to our common notions of *virtue*.

D. Do you think there is any man living so *happy*, as not to have tasted the *cup of sorrow*?

F. I believe none.

D. But the less numerous our sorrows are, and the purer our hearts, the *happier* we shall be; or the less *miserable*, upon the *comparison* with those who are guided by their passions and appetites.

F. Most assuredly: it is by *comparison* we judge. In our state of *probation*, it is not possible but that our *temporal happiness* should be in a fluctuating state. The *relative duties* of life necessarily depend on the sense and virtue of others, who perhaps have not had such favourable opportunities of knowing their duty as ourselves, or enjoying greater and better occasions, have notwithstanding neglected to improve them.

D. Even benevolence to our fellow-creatures, naturally calls forth so much the *greater sensibility*: it excites tender passions, and awakens our *sympathies*.

F. Very justly observed: and these occasionally disquiet the mind, and create sorrow: religious hopes or fears act in concert with *charity* and *benevolence*: but let these chuse their objects with ever so great care, wherever there is *much sensibility* there must be *suffering*.

D. Then *happiness* is a *mixed* state of *pleasure* and *pain*.

F. We cannot say, with the least propriety, that the painful part is *happiness*; but we may safely pronounce, that it is the condition of human life to suffer *pain*; and so far as *experience* warrants this opinion, *reason* gives us authority to pronounce that the *happiness* we are capable of is of a *mixed kind*: the very notion of a *state of trial*, seems to imply so much. Reason requires the regulation of our passions, but never yet recommended the *extinction* of them. Those who do not consider *contentment* as the chief ingredient in the composition of *their cup*, I am afraid will never relish life as they ought to do. There are *degrees in contentment*: perhaps the highest of these, is what we call *happiness*.

D. We know, at least, what we mean by *contentment*.

F. Yes: but the *word* does not please us so well, as *happiness*. We say, that *happiness* is the contrary to *misery*, so is *contentment*. We say, that *happiness* depends on *opinion*; there is something in the notion of *contentment*, more fixed and lasting than *opinion*. We imagine we shall find *happiness* in this object, or in that: and the *hope that we shall find it*, makes us so much the more contented, and constitutes a part of the very advantage we seek; or, in other words, makes up the sum and substance of our *happiness*.

D. Then you make *happiness* to be something *present*, only in part, and the rest supplied by *hope*.

F. Even so: was there ever any *happiness* in which *hope* had not the largest share? Whatever our enjoyments may be, we *hope* to keep them, we *fear* to lose them: we are daily alarmed: and as to our opinions of the *happiness* of others, arising from their different situations, they are very fallacious; we generally *reckon without our host*; and are apt to forget, that the greatest difference in the *conditions* of men, is the greater or less portion of the *sense* and *virtue* which they possess: and to judge of this, is a difficult task. It requires much candour and strength of understanding to judge of *ourselves*; and still more to criticise other people.

D. Then we must *come back to virtue*. By the *conditions* of men, you mean the different degrees of *wealth* and *grandeur*, which we see in the world.

F. Wealth

F. Wealth and grandeur are *pretty play things* to pass away thirty or forty years. But men's notions of *happiness*, as I have told you, derived from such things, are as *variable* and *inconstant* as the things themselves. They glitter so much in the eyes of some poor mortals, as to make them believe the possessor *happy*: but just as well may we suppose, that all who *are not* in these circumstances, are *miserable*, which is so contrary to common-sense and experience, every child finds out the fallacy of such a judgment. I grant, that the opinion in favour of riches, takes such fast hold of the greater part of us, we cannot dispossess ourselves of the thought, that because wealth can purchase so many *good things*, it can purchase *happiness*. But did you ever hear that *health* or *virtue* could be *bought*? Here the *delusion* is flagrant; and we discover, that those who see things in this light, are *bad judges of happiness*?

D. I am answered: I perceive that it is not in the power of *fortune* alone to make me *happy*.

F. But it is in the power of *vice* to make you *miserable*. Do you remember the fable!—According to this, *Fortune* and *Vice* had once a violent contest. *Fortune* boasted that she could take from men every external good, and bring upon

them every external evil. “Be it so,” replied *Vice*: “but this is by no means sufficient to make them miserable, without *my* assistance: whereas, without *yours*, I am able to render them completely so: nay, in spite of all *your* endeavours to make them happy.”——

D. *Vice* may surely do mischief without end, but, in general, she can do no *real good* to mankind.

F. This hath been the voice of all ages, in which we hear of any moral philosophy.—In regard to *happiness*, the lives of mankind consisting of a mixture of *pleasure* and *pain*, *joy* and *grief*, the advice of the apostle is, “If you are *sorrowful*, pray;” appeal to heaven for relief: “if you are *glad*, sing psalms.” In *all fortunes*, forget not the hand that made you: forget not, as I have told you, that he who mourns to-day, may rejoice to-morrow. So quick are the changes and events of life! They who are *wise*, whether poor or rich, are so fully sensible of this truth, that these learn to shun *pride* and *insolence*; and the other, to avoid *melancholy* and *despair*: and whilst habit and custom make the plenty of these *indifferent* to them, the *poverty* of the other becomes familiar.

### CONVERSATION III.

*The inefficacy of riches to purchase happiness, or produce it. The comparison of the different conditions of mankind, with respect to poverty and riches. The notions of ancient philosophers. The advantages of the Christian religion. Happiness the jure reward of it.*

F. GREAT families! Do you imagine they are so much happier than *little ones*? They have as much happiness, as *modes*, and *forms*, and *ceremonies*, *dress*, *equipage*, *great quantities of superfluous food*, and a *great number of superfluous servants*, can furnish. As they live at a great expence, they look forward to the *fortunes* of their children, as supposing these will constitute the greatest part of their happiness. *Bliss to come*, *Mary*, is ever taken into the *present* account of our enjoyments, proving how natu-

rally the soul longs for something this world cannot give! And because the *great* depend so much on *fortune*, and, if I may presume to say it, so little on *reason* and *nature*, their *cup* is more subject to be imbittered than ours, which does not require a *tenth* part so many ingredients.

D. Can this be true, my father?

F. Do you consider, that although we live from hand to mouth, we find ourselves at ease when we have the *few* enjoyments which Nature points

points out: whereas, they are accustomed to think, as I have just told you, that a *large supply* of the goods of fortune, is absolutely necessary to their well-being.

*D.* They depend more on their *fancy* than we do; and are not so much the children of *Providence*.

*F.* They certainly do not put themselves so much under the *care* of Providence; for sick or well, their *rents* are paid. *We* seek for happiness in *contentment* and *industry*; and therefore may find it more easily, than those who seek it in *grandeur*: the fewer enjoyments people are accustomed to, the less will be the number of their *wants*, and the more contracted their *desires*.

*D.* Supposing *contentment* to be equal among the *rich* and *poor*, should you not esteem the *rich* man as the most happy?

*F.* *Hope* being a pleasant passion, and *fear* a painful one; the poor man having the *most hopes*, and the rich the *most fears*, I doubt whether the greater anxiety, joined to the greater number of temptations to excess, may not be a heavier drawback on him, than his riches may prove an advantage.—This seems to depend much on the turn of the mind. Be this as it may, let the *rich* remember, that every thing relating to *wealth*, is unstable; *riches* oftentimes making *themselves* wings, where folly does not make wings for them.—How many BANKRUPTCIES have been made in *England* in my time! Some were the effect of misfortune: many more by too expensive living. Some over-traded themselves, in hopes of the means of gratifying themselves in *expense*, which they fondly imagined to be happiness. The desire of gain beyond measure, is ever attended with bad consequences to the happiness of the individual. “He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent.”

*D.* The loss of innocence is the greatest unhappiness.

*F.* You see the world is so constituted, that many worthy persons, wealthy enough to be happy, could they secure their riches, are frequently involved in heavy losses and calamities, and thrown from *affluence* into *poverty*; but not therefore abandoned by *Providence*.

*D.* Is there not reason to apprehend that effects are sometimes concealed, and under the sanction of *bankruptcy* by *misfortune*, the law which is intended to screen the debtor from op-

pression, becomes oppressive to the creditor, and countenances the vilest thefts?

*F.* I believe this is true in many instances. These are *heavy* drawbacks on happiness; but light on the comparison with many others. If the person failing delivers up his *all*, mercy is shewn him. So far we consult the happiness of each other. The humanity of our fellow-subjects frequently goes much further than a bare *release*. Many a worthy person has become a *bankrupt*, and so assisted, that with great honesty he has returned to trade again, and become *rich*; or lived in *comfort*: and those who are really entitled to the name of *honest*, *worthy* men, have paid their former *creditors* to the *last farthing*, though the letter of the law has not required it. But ill-gotten wealth must be a curse in the issue. I have seen it in a thousand instances. That which the laws of the land cannot reach to, nor discover, is left to the justice of Heaven: and let the *unjust* tremble at the thought!

*D.* Is it not *strange* that men should commit *unjust actions* for the sake of wealth!

*F.* In a moral view it is strange. It is strange in every view of true self-love; but if you, *Mary*, with all your virtue, lean so much to the opinion of its being necessary to *happiness*, they seek the same thing as you do, though they mistake the means of acquiring it.

*D.* *Some degree of wealth is necessary* to a degree of happiness, or among us who labour, if you call the necessaries of life *happiness*, I shall not dispute the point. I am sensible that fine houses, splendid furniture, rich clothes, and brilliant equipages, are mere *play things*, in the great view of human happiness, and the quiet of the soul of man.

*F.* Now I understand you; and I beg you will remember *your own declaration*, and that such play things sometimes prove very dangerous. They are frequently *disagreeable incumbrances*: they carry with them such a train of *wants*, and such a number of mouths which must be fed, and such a number of *steps* which should be watched, many a man has had reason to rejoice when he has got quit of them; though others, unacquainted with the trouble of some part of grandeur, have sought it with eagerness. Let such advantages be enjoyed in the most proper manner, and they are *good*; but they exhibit no shew, comparable to the glory of the heavens

and earth! *Diamonds, paintings, statues*, the most expensive magnificence, can only be *seen* by the possessor; other people may *see* them also occasionally; but they are not half so *beautiful as the face of nature*, particularly when our *fields* are improved, and our *woods* are planted by the virtuous hands of skilful *industry*. And for the very reason that such works of art are not so common, nor so easily come at, they are not so *valuable*. If the happiness of the poor man may be promoted by an object in itself so intrinsically more great and noble, he is a *fool* if he overlooks his advantage. He ought to have a greater relish for the feast which *nature* hath appointed, because his mind is not bewildered by a multiplicity of objects, nor warped from its true bent by any fondness for the productions of art.

D. Happiness will still depend on *opinion*.

F. Aye; but opinion ought to be regulated by nature, the love of God, and of his works.

D. What have the *wisest men* thought concerning the condition of man, and what situation is the most fit for *happiness*?

F. Read your *New Testament*, *Mary*, and see! He should be a *Christian*: but I have read of an ancient wise man and lawgiver, a *beaten*, by name *Solon*, who was in high esteem among the *Athenians*. Being asked by *Cræsus*, King of *Lydia*, and one of the richest princes of ancient times, "who among mankind, in all the countries into which he had travelled, he apprehended to be the most truly happy?" *Solon's* answer was, "I esteem *Tellus*, a private person, and a citizen of *Athens*. He lived all his days without *want*; saw his country flourish; had *virtuous children* in universal esteem; and after seeing his children's children, died gloriously in battle, fighting for his country."

D. This was a *philosopher's* happy man.

F. It would be yours too, if you knew as much of the world as I do. *Tellus* wanted *nothing*; and he was fortunate in all things, *even in his death*.

D. He died contending for what he thought right, I presume. I do not say, my father, that I differ with you; I only wish to form my mind to just notions of happiness. But what shall we say, when those whom we know to be *vicious*, appear to be *happy*?

F. You say well, *appear to be happy!* They may appear to be *what they are not*; or it is not their *vice* which makes them happy, if they are

so. That portion of virtue which they possess, for no man is without *some share*, may give them *some joyful days*: and the virtue of *other people*, may contribute yet more; but it is a *steady hope* in the happiness of the life to come, which gives so sweet a relish to our *present enjoyments*, and alleviates our *sufferings*. What think you of the good old *Ann Sarazen*, who at her advanced years of *seventy-two*, is in such health and spirits? Her life cost very little to maintain; yet is it very *valuable*. Her maxim is, "*let us always be doing; there will be time enough for rest in the grave.*"

D. *Rest!*—to those who *do well* in this life!

F. Go among the *gay* and *thoughtless*; they are eager in their search after happiness; but in what do they seek it? in *dress*, and *company*, and *amusement*. *Ann* has but one point in view. Her days are drawing to a period: she is in *earnest* in her search after happiness: it is by doing all the *good* she can, and losing no time in doing *evil*, or being *idle*, that she is *happy*. She thinks she is possessed of the greatest of all treasures, an *immortal soul!* Nor is she attentive only to the *poor*: an honest freedom dwells in her breast; and she tells her *rich friends*, that if they have a mind to be distinguished, they must read the *holy gospel*, and act up to the precepts it contains.

D. She gives excellent advice. Life being at best so very short and uncertain, and the belief of an after-account so strong and unconquerable, your argument carries its own proof in favour of *virtue*, as necessary to happiness.

F. In regard to the ordinary consequences of vice, particularly when supported by a large fortune, we are sure that gluttony, drunkenness, and incontinency, naturally create pain of body, if not sorrow of mind, and shorten life: *covetousness*, instead of rendering men the darlings of human kind, makes them hated as *enemies*: *prodigality* renders them contemptible: pride, swollen with presumption, is detestable: *anger*, in a storm of rage, is terrible: *fear*, trembling at every joint, painful and unmanly: *vanity*, with her silly train, is ever treated with disdain: *ambition*, burning in the heart, is no less at enmity with the repose of mortals: *revenge*, holding up her dagger, yet reeking with blood, how can she be welcome to the heart of man? Can these, or any vicious properties, in rich or poor, promote *happiness*?—Will the wise, the beneficent,

the

the merciful Lord of all suffer, that qualities so repugnant to the interest of mankind, shall render the possessors happy?—On the other side, behold *charity* and *humility*, *meekness* and *kindness*!—Survey them well!—Observe how all this smiling train, dispense comfort and peace among the suffering children of the human race!—Now judge you, *my daughter*, where you would seek for happiness, and where it may probably be found.

*D.* It is very obvious, that whatever portion of happiness is permitted to man in his state of *trial*, it cannot possibly exist without *obedience* to the decrees of Heaven.

*F.* Does not this shew you most clearly, that our *happiness* rises from the same source as our *being*. We are made to be happy in both worlds; but we cannot be happy in either, if we rebel against the hand that made us, and defeat the gracious purposes of Heaven. Nor need we go into a *deep search what kind of being man is*; neither what we are, nor what we are not capable of, when daily experience teaches us, that however *dark* some of the ways of Providence may be, certain *actions*, *thoughts*, and *words*, will produce *pain* or *misery*, as others infallibly administer to *pleasure* or *happiness*.

*D.* I see daily, that every kind of excess, and every ungovernable passion, sows *discord* or *confusion* in the world.

*F.* And what can the harvest be but *misery*? We must seek for happiness in *generosity*, *humility*, and *meekness*; in *manly* strength, and *trust* in *God*, and in *compassion* to our *fellow-creatures*; or give up the pursuit. In *appearance*, many an offender enjoys every gratification, without controul; he flourishes like the *willow* on the waters banks: but the tree will wither soon; it will decay, or be torn up by the hand of violence. You see violence generate violence: and every gratification forbidden by the laws of God, is attended by injury to men. The *just* and the *unjust* are subject to fall, from various causes: it is the forbearance of a merciful God, which sustains us all, and points out the way to rest. Both worlds are linked: the chain continues on. In our present state, how often hath the smiles of affluence injured the child of wealth!—and whilst they flattered him, stung him to the heart! Perhaps, insensible of the snares around him, he has gone through a whole *scene of iniquity*, one evil action leading to another; and the last still cal-

ling for relief from some unwarrantable or *expensive* gratification; till at length, it hath amounted to such a sum of debt, such a load of guilt and folly, as bowed him with anguish to the grave!

*D.* Yet it seems that many live in *sin*, for a number of years, and are as eager after *happiness* as the most virtuous person can be.

*F.* They are deluded with hopes of some *distant good*, called *happiness*; but they know by sad experience they cannot find it in *vice*.

*D.* Yet have they not resolution enough to try what *virtue* can do for them, as necessary to the end they have in view.

*F.* No: hurried on by their passions and appetites, they are thrown out of the path of life; they become anxious and wretched, or *thoughtless* and *foolish*, and so deluded as not to perceive clearly why it is so.

*D.* This seems to be a misfortune common to the *rich* and *poor*; but taking the world as we find it, I believe the *poor* are less exposed to become *unhappy in the extreme*, than the *rich*.

*F.* It may be so: the poor have less temptation to excess; but when vice seizes them, and grows importunate to have her wants supplied, the indigent profligate sometimes closes the wretched scene at the gallows. Let the *poor* behave as poor, and learn that *That* is best for us all, which is most agreeable to infinite wisdom. If we look through the shades of *virtuous poverty*, gloomy as they sometimes are, still we behold, with the eye of faith, the tender Father of mankind discharging the promises made to his children: and what are these? They eclipse all the dazzling brightness of *their* condition, who have only wealth to recommend them. You may easily comprehend how it comes to pass, that we so often judge ill; and why we are tempted to murmur against Providence. But our murmurs proclaim our folly, and our *vices* take off the veil, and discover our *misery*. The Almighty hath declared himself to be in a more peculiar manner the *God*, the *sovereign*, the *father*, and the *friend* of the *poor*; provided they are dutiful on their part. And all the promises of happiness made to the *rich*, in common with mankind, are upon *this condition*, that they too shall be his instruments, as the friends, the advocates, and protectors of the poor: *and they only are truly happy who remember this condition!* From hence must spring their *present* joy, as built on the *hope* of bliss eternal.

D. Still it comes to the same point, that *virtue*, in all conditions, tends to happiness, and *vice* to misery; though it appears, that we often judge rashly, and without knowing what is passing in the heart of man.

F. You easily comprehend, that God who made the heart, framed it so, that the portion of *happiness* we may enjoy, shall depend upon the discharge of our *duty*: and though all the ways of Heaven are not the objects of *our* comprehension, yet we may trace, in this instance, that happiness keeps pace with *well-founded hope*; and is a *sure* and *certain reference* to *That* state, which adjusts all the inequalities we now see. We could have no satisfaction in standing upon this charming spot of earth, if the prospects before our eyes were sad and dreary; and if in our way home, we were obliged to pass over burning brick-kilns, through darksome paths untrod by mortal foot, o'er sands or rocks, by precipices deep and horrible! We know that all is smooth.

and pleasant; and are *happy* in our present situation. And if *all may be happy*, the *comparison* of the various stations appointed by Providence, is out of the question.

D. You believe that there can be no such creature upon earth, as a *real happy vicious man*: but may there not be a completely *miserable virtuous one*?

F. No: I have told you that *virtue* will not, in my opinion, admit of *complete misery*: if our calamities are *not* great, virtue will enable us to sustain them manfully; if they *are* great, they will make an end of us by *death*: and in either case, *virtue* will triumph, and our end be *glorious*! Remember this, *my daughter*, so shall your prospect of happiness in this world brighten; you will be proof against the *evil of your own heart*; or that of other people: and may your confidence in God be your shield and buckler in the day of trial!

## CONVERSATION IV.

*Strength of mind and confidence in God, with just hopes and fears, the true foundation of the temporal happiness of man. The uncertainty of the enjoyments of this world. The happiness of life ever precarious from the accidents it is subject to. Story of John Hewit and Sarah Drew. Particular Providence not discoverable by men. The practice of suicide cowardly. The moderation of our desires towards earthly objects. Humility and resignation to the will of the Almighty, the great props of comfort and ease, and the nearest approaches to happiness. The absurdities of the doctrine of predestination exemplified.*

F. AFTER all my enquiries and my endeavours, I find nothing contributes so much to my present happiness, as *hope in future good*. What can any mortal enjoy in this world, but he will soon desire something *greater and more excellent*; and if he hopes to obtain it, his mind will naturally be taken up with the enjoyment of *That hope*. If it is no less than *heaven*, the vastness of the object will swell his mind with a joy surpassing any pleasure this world can furnish. But you must really hope, and not merely talk of hoping. Encourage it; think often of it with complacency, till it becomes the nearer, not only as life wastes away, but

from the fervour and assurance it affords.— Where hope prevails most, there is the most pleasure; where fear gets the ascendancy, those who in all other respects may be pronounced the most happy among men, are *wretched*. *Fear of evils to come*, must destroy the relish of all *present good*. Neither rank nor fortune alone can make any one happy or miserable. Both *happiness and misery* are seated in the mind. *Fancy and opinion* often take the lead, as if *reason* were but the mere passive instrument of their pleasure. We must therefore curb their insolence. In the meanwhile, “Hopes and disappointments are the lot and entertainment of human life; the one serves

to keep us from *presumption*, the other from *despair*." Men of *good* and *strong* minds are constant; they do not make the apprehensions of evils worse than the evils themselves. "A firm trust in the assistance of an Almighty Being naturally produces *patience*, *cheerfulness*, and all other dispositions of mind, that alleviate those calamities which we are not able to remove."

D. I perceive how much *happiness* and *misery* depend on *opinion*; and consequently they that seek *happiness*, should exercise their reason under all fortunes, that they may form a just opinion of themselves.

F. Most certainly: and suffer no passion to enslave the mind. Do not you make yourself miserable through *fear*; for this in effect is being wretched *to-day*, because you may chance to be so *to-morrow*, and spoiling the mind for vigorous action, when you most need it.

D. Is not *sorrow* as dangerous an enemy as *fear*?

F. When sorrow is excessive, it takes away "ferour from *piety*; vigour from *action*; health from the *body*; light from *reason*; and repose from the *conscience*. Some are refined like gold in the furnace, by affliction; others are consumed like chaff." Gain wisdom, my child, by every loss you suffer. What I have told you of *hope*, I tell you also of *happiness*; the *expectation of future happiness* is the spring that gives motion to life, and makes every day pleasant. It prevents our desiring *death*; and yet, as death approaches, he will seem to smile. "This expectation is the best relief of *anxious thoughts*; the most perfect cure of *melancholy*; the truest guide of life; and the most cordial comfort when we part with it."

D. Then you make this *hope* or *expectation*, the strongest proof of *wisdom*, as well as of *happiness*. What have the wisest men hoped for most anxiously?

F. That which all men seek most assiduously; *happiness*: but we sometimes see men, who are reputed *wise*, act *foolishly*.

D. This was the case even of *Solomon*.

F. He lived to feel the decay of all his powers. Under such circumstances, who can answer for the event? Some weaknesses we call *insanity*. When *Solomon's* understanding was in its full strength, he asked for *wisdom* as his *supreme good*, and highest *happiness*: and if you or I were brought to the test, what should we chuse as the chief instrument of happiness?

Should we prefer *worldly riches*? the *applause of men*, *rank*, *title*, or any *earthly grandeur*? Or should we ask for the *wisdom* which cometh from *above*, and leads the soul to *everlasting bliss*?

D. However the *corruption* of the heart may bend it to *earthly things*, he must be the most happy who lives most in favour with God.

F. Gloriously said, *Mary!*—We find in the earliest ages of the world, mankind entertained an opinion that happiness was to be sought in some distant region, and not where they saw such scenes of *misery* abound, as in this world. Unenlightened by any *Christian revelation*, they imagined, that the greatest favourites of Heaven, were the most happy of the children of men; and that those were the *greatest favourites*, who were slain by *lightning*, presuming that it was an *express commission* from the great Father of mankind, to remove them from hence, without the pain and sorrow they might otherwise suffer in such a world as this.

D. There was some reason and piety in their notion: it is evident they were strongly possessed with an opinion that *the soul is immortal*.

F. So they must have thought, or what *favour* could they have esteemed it, to be *destroyed*, as we vulgarly call such an event as being struck dead by *lightning*? The truth is, they saw very clearly, that the *complete happiness*, after which the soul so naturally longs, is not to be found on this side the grave. We *Christians* do not presume to determine, that people to whom such accidents happen, had therefore the more virtue: we call them *unhappy*, on a supposition, that of all blessings, *life* is the greatest: but this is rather a mode of expressing compassion, than a steady principle; for at the same moment we acknowledge, that the greatest kindness of Providence, is to grant us a *happy death*, let it come in what shape it may. What is the language of reason and experience? What doth the Christian say, whose heart is devoted to his Saviour? "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" This is the prayer of every good man: he lives prepared! Death can be *judged*, in the evil sense, only to those who are *unprepared* for it.

D. Your reflections bring to my mind the providence of God, in the story of a *virtuous pair*, who were killed by lightning, as they were at *harvest-work*. Do you remember the story?

F. I have almost forgotten the particulars of it.

D. Their

D. Their names were *John Hewet*, and *Sarah Drew*; and they lived at *Stanton-Harcourt*. They were distinguished in the country, for their good tempers, and virtuous inclinations, which created a mutual affection. All the neighbours spoke of their loves, with kindness and respect: he had already bought a ribband for her hat, and chosen the poesy for her ring: the consent of their parents was obtained, and the day of their nuptials appointed. They were in the field at harvest-work, on the last day of *July (a)*, when the clouds grew black, and a storm ensued, which drove the harvest-people to the best shelter they could find. The thunder roared with a frightful noise, and shook the very arch of heaven, and the lightning darted forth its flames. *Sarah* fell down in a swoon, on a heap of barley. *John* immediately raked together two or three heaps, endeavouring to secure her from the storm; and laying one arm about her neck, the other was held out, as if he meant to screen her from the lightning. In this posture they were both struck dead. When the storm abated, the harvest-people called to each other, but no voice came from these faithful lovers: they went to the spot, and found them *dead!*—One of *Sarah's* eyebrows was singed, and there appeared a black spot on her breast: *John's* body was all over black. You may easily imagine the grief that seized their companions at this doleful sight! They carried the bodies home, and the next day buried them in one grave, a stone being laid over them, mentioning their characters, and the cause of their death. Thus ended the lives of an honest, industrious young man and maid!—Was this sad event any proof that they were the *favourites* of Heaven?

F. It is a melancholy story: but, as far as we can judge, it might be a favour that they were delivered from the possibility of any *falling off*, or of being exposed to any contest with *sickness*, *poverty*, or *pain*? Heaven, in approbation of persons, whose hearts were so sincere, might, as far as we know, thus determine to *secure* to them an *endless* state of immortal happiness, instead of *That* which they fondly imagined they should enjoy in the possession of each other. What could they have had, but a short period of a precarious life, and a shorter and more precarious state of *happiness*?

D. Heaven is gracious in all its purposes!

(a) 1718.

(b) Temple of *Argos*, supposed to be dedicated to the heathen goddess *Juno*.

Yet, my father, it was a sad misfortune, thus to be cut off in the blossom of their *youth* and *hopes of happiness*!

F. In the common notions of mankind, you say right; it must needs be considered as a mournful event: but if we mean to talk *common sense*, and not contradict ourselves, we shall draw one of these conclusions; either they were not the *virtuous pair represented*; or not secure against *vice*, and would have become *vicious*; or lastly, they were *really and truly as good* as they were esteemed to be.

D. And might they not have become *more virtuous*?

F. *Why more virtuous*? If they were *then* good to the degree of being a fit offering to Heaven, and might have turned out ill, was it not a great mercy that they died? Such events are called *misfortunes*; by which we mean, that we who *live*, are sorry when deprived of *good people*: but what is this to them who die in the arms of virtue? We know not what was intended by That God, without whose permission not a sparrow falls! The happiness of persons who thus, as *we* term it, fall *untimely*, may fall in *happy time* for them. *Solon* the wise heathen lawgiver, whom I lately mentioned, being asked, who was next happy, in his opinion, to *Tellus* the father who died fighting, and whose children were so good; he answered, “*two brothers* whose duty for their mother was so distinguished, that the oxen which were to draw her to the temple, not being ready upon a great occasion, they put themselves in the yoke, and drew the chariot five miles. The mother, as this ancient story is related, in a transport of pleasure, prayed they might be honoured with the greatest favour that Heaven bestows on mortals: and accordingly her sons falling asleep in the temple, there died in a soft and pleasing slumber.

D. These stories are striking proofs of the sense of mankind, with regard to *happiness in a life to come*!

F. And how common a share of piety and virtue may sometimes immortalize a *name*: for the story says, the people consecrated statues to them, and set them up in their temple (b).

D. You almost make me think an *early death* the readiest way to happiness.

F. It may be so: but here the short-sighted mortal appears: how can we tell? The love of life



life is ingrafted into our frame; and it is the highest affront to the Giver, to wish for the means of getting quit of it; much more to destroy it by our own hands!

D. Which I hear is often done in *London*.

F. It sometimes happens: would to God it were less frequent. In these days of *splendid impiety*, accompanied by *cowardly and childish fears* of the frowns of a *filly world*, we see this *horrible deed* perpetrated, in a manner disgraceful to our *national character*, and in the most daring violation of our holy religion. It were better if, in some cases, a public mark of *insanity* were shewn to the *dead body*. For your part, *Mary*, you need not be apprehensive, while you continue *virtuous*, that you will *long* for the *end of life*. On the contrary, you will *rejoice*: and if you are *not virtuous*, you will *wish for time to repent!* You will *fear* to go to your *last account*, with your sins in blossom! You will rather strive to lengthen life, in hopes to cut up your sins by the root.—By such means, you might still *hope for happiness* in this world; and leave the event of death in the hands of the great Arbitrer of life and death, to whom only it belongs. Death will come, when it doth not please Heaven to prevent it: and of all sins, the greatest is to bring it sooner. As we believe in the general providence of God, we must conclude, that the happiness of mortals is in HIS hands; and that *we* cannot measure it, but as we take in the *time past*, and the *time to come*, as well as the *present period* of our existence.

D. Do you think there are PARTICULAR PROVIDENCES, with regard to the *happiness* or *misery* of particular men in this world?

F. If the laws of Providence *in general*, and the operations of Almighty Power, whether in the *natural*, or *moral world*, are past finding out, in their full extent, it seems to be equally foolish and presumptuous to pry into the *secrets* of Heaven; how far it pleaseth God to shew *distinguished* mercy and favour, to *particular persons*, at particular times, for any wise design, the end of which is known only to *Him*. As surely as there is a God, he delights in the virtue of mankind: such virtue is *their choice*; but the reward is in *his hand*: He, who is the God of all nature, sheweth mercy in all the various ways which seem good to his infinite wisdom and compassion. What have we *poor mortals* to do, but fall down in humble adoration! Self-preservation is the first law: for this we are com-

manded to pray, whether in *happiness*, or in *misery*. “*Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*” In what particular manner we shall *find*; or *how* it is *opened*, still rests upon the wisdom of the great Ruler of the world.

D. Do only *Christians* pray as if they believed in a *particular providence*?

F. I understood from my master, that the *Mahometans* are yet more inclined to devotion: and whatever their notions may be concerning the events of this life, they acknowledge their dependance on God, and the necessity of *moral duties*; and they believe in a state of rewards and punishments after death, according to their conduct in this life.

D. But they favour the doctrine of *predestination*.

F. So I understand. The absurdities of this opinion being duly considered, they support the doctrine of a *particular providence*; which seems to be the great foundation of religion. I have heard a story which ridicules predestination: I do not remember that I ever mentioned it to you. The *grand vizir*, or prime minister of the *Turks*, on occasion of the plague being at *Constantinople*, determined to leave the city. The *musli*, or high-priest, represented to him, “that he could not fly from the decrees of Heaven: that if he left the city, the people would be exposed as sheep without a shepherd: that if *he was to die, he would die*, in town or country.” The *vizir* heard him very calmly, acknowledged the force of what he had advanced; but added, “I believe I am predestined to leave *Constantinople*; and therefore I will leave it.”

D. This might as well be urged, as that he *would die*, or *not die*, let him use what precautions he might.

F. Some professing *Christianity* have held this doctrine of *predestination*; but *common-sense* has always opposed them. Men pray for deliverance from *death* in certain instances, because they believe there is an Almighty Power which *can* deliver them from it. Were they predestined to suffer, what do their prayers signify with respect to the present object of fear? To think of it would be *absurd*, and to pray *fantastical*.

D. True, my father: why do men seek after *happiness*, but that they believe they shall find it, if they use the proper means? If we are *good*, I believe we shall be *happy, here or hereafter*: and *hope or fear* of good or evil to come, seems to

constitute the greatest part of our *present* happiness or misery.

F. Real good or evil in *ourselves*, is the whole of life. Angels are confessedly happier than men, because they are so much better : as *reasoning* creatures, our *happiness depends on our thoughts* : we all agree that *opinion* makes the greatest part of our *happiness or misery*.

D. I see every day, that those who *think themselves miserable*, are so.

F. As our opinion or judgment of our own state and condition is true or false, so will our happiness or misery *generally* be. Observe your duty to God, and your neighbour, otherwise you will never feel within your own bosom, that sweet *complacency*, to which we so deservedly give the *name of happiness*.

D. I have remarked, that some people are so weak-minded, they *make themselves miserable* ; as if they had not *sense* enough to be otherwise.

F. Your observation is true : in the mean time, *Eternal Justice*, with an equal hand, weighs the actions of men. He that sheweth mercy, and promoteth the happiness of his fellow-creatures ; to him will mercy be shewn, and his happiness promoted. He who, through want of mercy, embitters another's cup ; sooner or later will the same ingredients be thrown into his. This seems to be the ordinary dispensation of Providence, though the contrary *sometimes appears*.

D. You think those the most happy, who contribute the largest share to the happiness of others : and yet, that the more we are engaged in doing good, the more misery we usually see : and that this destroys a great part of the pleasure. There can be, then, no such thing as *complete happiness*, even to those who are the greatest friends to mankind !

F. Although the evil you mention chequers life with a portion of misery ; yet still the quickest joys arise from *doing good* to those who most need our services. I believe indeed there is no such thing as *complete happiness*. We would fondly imagine that happiness *complete*, which is full, ample, and entire *to-day*, though it may be, and indeed in the nature of things can hardly fail of being, in some degree, broken and uninterrupted *to-morrow*. When the great Benefactor of mankind arrived on earth, angels sang *Hallelujahs* ; and what was the subject of them ? “ Glory be to God on high ! In earth peace, good-will to man ! ”—Yet, the *sufferings* of the Son of

God were such as no language can describe ! He pointed out the way to *heavenly happiness*, by bidding us to be as merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful : whence it is evident how much mankind stand in need of compassion. The same divine person did not talk of *complete earthly happiness* here below ; on the contrary, he commanded us, *not* to set our *affections* on things on the *earth*, but on *heavenly things* : and the reason given is obvious. The things of the earth pass away and are gone, and the place of human *happiness or misery* is known no more. Not so the things of *heaven* ; these are as permanent as *eternity* ! He could not say, for in *his* breast eternal wisdom sat enthroned ! We must bear the evils, my child, and *cherish the good part of life* : this will bid fairest to make us as happy as the Almighty means that we should be in this life. If we keep our desires in a state of *moderation* towards *worldly objects*, *humility* and *resignation* towards the *great Author of our nature* ; we shall not be subject to much pain from sorrow or disappointment.

D. And I believe the better humour we are in, the quicker sense we shall have of those *events*, which make up the sum of *their* happiness, who would be affronted, were we to attempt to prove, that they seek their own *misery* by being, what is commonly called, *out of humour*. Your doctrine seems to prove, that the love of *God*, and the love of *man*, meet in one and the same point : and you open my mind to such a sense of the great law of *Christ*, as enraptures my heart. I perceive what love, and peace, and harmony lodge in the bosom of our religion !

F. If men were truly sensible what charms there are in such divine philosophy, they would be more like angels : and though it is easily discoverable, that *complete happiness* is not attainable on this side the grave, yet we may find the peace which the world, *without religion*, can never give : and that we might be incomparably *more happy* than we generally are, were we to pursue the most obvious means, which is to guard our hearts watchfully, and strive to keep them *unspotted from the world*. And whenever, through the infirmity of our nature, we cease to *stand upright*, if we pray for aid from *Heaven* with sincerity of heart, and purpose of amendment, we are *assured* it will be given us. Remember this, my child, and let it be the corner-stone on which you build your happiness.

## CONVERSATION V.

*A firm belief in a future state of happiness the only sure foundation of worldly felicity. Life exposed to many miseries. Reputation a great incentive to virtuous deeds. Strength of mind and resolution as absolutely necessary to happiness as virtue, and constituting the most essential part of virtue and religious conduct.*

F. IT must be so! It cannot exist on any other terms. Let a man's condition in life be what it may, his mind must be at rest, or how is any degree of happiness to be acquired?

D. But what condition do you consider as the best suited to promote happiness?

F. That in which a man enjoys most health of body, and vigour of mind: that in which a man can pray, labour, and suffer, or enjoy, with most good-humour, dignity, and grace: that in which he is as far removed from severity, as to esteem mercy the darling inclination of man, as it is the attribute of God, in which man is most interested. Extreme poverty is apt to pervert the heart: great riches inflame it with false desires. To have necessaries convenient for life, and to make the best of life, whatever our condition may be, is as great happiness as falls to the lot of mortals. To look above us, and below us; and to thank Heaven that we live, and that we are to die!

D. This seems to require much virtue.

F. Aye, Mary! happiness requires much virtue. Consider what life is; or what is our frame and make! From infancy to hoary age, we are exposed to numberless accidents: we are made social: we depend on society for all necessities and comforts; the first company we come into, is the nurse's: in some countries the women are so ignorant, that, under a notion of helping nature, they smother infants; and stopping the circulation of their blood, prevent their growth; or they pull children by the arms, without considering how easily the body may be twisted; or they dandle them till the poor infant frequently falls out of their hands. Thus many a human body has been distorted; and many a lingering sickness created: if the body is injured, the mind will sympathize. The animal

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part of a man, is such an exquisite piece of machinery, that even an accident, to appearance of no consequence, may ruin a man's prospect of temporal happiness. What is life? How often does the company we keep ruin the health of soul and body!

D. Whether we find happiness or not, we must avoid the miseries of life. I perceive that temporal happiness depends on many circumstances; and a large share of it can fall to the lot of but a few. For my own part, I shall expect to find ease and peace, in the degree that I lead a virtuous life; rather comforting myself now with the hopes of future joys, than presuming upon so much satisfaction in this world, as to call it happiness.

F. Here you may safely rest: and according to your own decision, give your soul repose. You, Mary, to whom I am so old an acquaintance, will not be surprized, that my discourse is tinged so deeply with religion. I find no other anchoring ground, on which I can venture to ride out the storm of life, short and uncertain as it is, before the vessel must suffer the common wreck, and its parts be divided. When I look back, as a spectator of the great world, and consider so many eminent men, whose persons I have seen, and who made a considerable figure on the stage of life, now generally forgotten; were I not a believer in Christ, there would seem to be nothing substantial in life. It would appear as a mere shadow, an actor that struts and hectors, or mourns and bathes his cheeks in tears, for a poor hour or two—not only to be heard no more, but no more to exist! Yet, when I turn my mind's eye, and view my immortal state, the scene is changed: the sun shines forth in glory: I feel his kindly warmth and influence: hope drives away all that is sad and gloomy in me, restoring

Q q

peace

peace with all her charms! The nearer this poor play of life draws to an end, the brighter the prospect: my soul, so long confined from her proper home, gladdens at the thought of the approaching scene of new delight!

D. Do you feel it so, my father? I believe the bulk of mankind find their thoughts *tied* to this world, even when the flame of life is just expiring!

F. So it is: where reason or religion fails, it will so happen: but if men were consistent with themselves, and did not *falter in their faith*, allowing for the natural abhorrence of death, and the *custom of being afraid of it*, we should see more *heroism* in the world, and more consistency of conduct. We *believe*, or *not believe*: the way to convince ourselves that we believe, is to *act* as if we did, still praying to Heaven to help out the deficiency. Your observation with regard to mankind being tied so much to the world, is very just. Some even worship the *vanities and follies* of it: others sacrifice their souls to *sin*. I would gladly think well of mankind, and rather flatter the *native greatness* of the mind, than the *acquired baseness* of it. To tell a man, that he can do a great action, is to *make* him do it. To attempt to convince him, that he is a *dastardly, insignificant wretch*, not worth hanging, may make him an arrant knave.—Reputation is one great prop of virtue, in our social state! Such is the mind, and so much depends on society, and the encouragement of each other in acts of generosity.

D. I have seen this reduced to practice in some instances: not in the great concern of *happy dying*, but in kind actions, and *happy living*, among my equals.

F. Such of the clergy as tell us we are nothing, *nothing but villainess*, do wrong; for if we were really nothing else, what signifies their preaching? For my own part, I have long found my poor bark tossed about in a tempestuous ocean; but I never lost my compass, as I have told you, but always found safe anchoring-ground in religion. Where *are* the thoughts of man to rest? What can be the result of the most *active life*, or the most *benevolent disposition*? The great Author of our being hath revealed his will through *Christ*: his *decree* is, that if we obey his laws, though we must all *lie down* at the appointed time, we shall break the shackles of mortality, and rise again to immortal happi-

ness! This is the Christian's faith, not to be shaken. The rocks, whose foundations are laid in the depths of this firm-set earth, shall melt away in fervent heat, and this substantial mass be all dissolved: but the *soul* can never *perish*!—Let this consideration be the chief object of your *present happiness*, and you will, with the greater alacrity, perform every moral and social duty.

D. You still lay your foundation of *temporal happiness* in your belief of the *immortality of the soul*.

F. Most certainly: I see not how *man that is born to die*, and believes himself to be accountable after death, can be happy in this present life, but as he rejoices in the God of his salvation!—

D. I hear you with joy, and feel the doctrine beyond the power of my expression! The ordinary discourse of mankind concerning happiness, does not go near so far. They think this world only can afford them this world's happiness.

F. Aye, but so it cannot be: the most thoughtless must find out at last, that man must always consider himself as immortal. He must apply his heart to the contemplation of religion, as the basis of his happiness; or so far from finding it, he will *perish*! Mark what I am going to say: Every discharge of duty renders the approach of death a more confirmed expectancy of *happiness*.—This *expectation will increase*, as death advances nearer, and the prospect, or deluding expectancy of happiness in this world, retires before us. The world itself, with respect to individuals, is *ending*. We know that social and religious duties require a certain regard to posterity: and so far as we shew this attention, we consult our own happiness. A wise man will always submit gracefully to the thought of his dissolution: it is this which makes us *easy* for the short time we live. He who is torn from the world, instead of *resigning* it, and will not give himself up into the hands of his Maker, cannot be happy.

D. Happy he cannot be: I do not conceive how he can avoid being *miserable*.

F. Do you then think how to receive the message with joy, and not reject the *mercy*; for surely, *God* is as merciful in our *death*, as in our *life*! How often is it *apparently* a *mercy* to die!

D. Seeing that death must come, it is always a *mercy* to think of it with *complacency*!

F. So

F. So it must be, otherwise we must be *miserable*: for “in the midst of life we are in death:” and to whom can we fly from the arrows of *mortality*?

D. You lay a great stress on benevolence, and the pity and compassion we ought to exercise towards our fellow-creatures. Do not even these good qualities often produce a bad effect, and *soften* the mind so much with sorrow or other tender passion, as to afford very little *happiness*?

F. Every virtue borders on vice, and when carried to an extreme, we are apt to pass the boundary, and become vicious. The qualities you have mentioned, are the best preparatives for *Christian duties*; but if they grow into passions, they *weaken* the mind; and as surely disqualify it for the discharge of those obligations which our religion requires. *Love* and *friendship* are the noblest passions in the human breast; yet, if they are not regulated by *reason*, and directed by *religion*, they involve us in perplexities without end. To feel so much as to induce us to *do good*, is following the example of our blessed Lord, who even wept with tenderness: but to feel so much as to *neglect doing good*, or be induced to *do evil*, is as contrary to our *present*, as it is to our *future happiness*. As nothing can be so *weak*, as to build our happiness on the *unstable* foundation of the applause or affection of other people, so nothing is more *uncertain* than the event. Let others judge *ill*, and the majority of mankind always judges *ill*, and there is an end of *his happiness*, whose dependence for it is on the caprice of another person.

D. I am well convinced we must not trust wantonly: but the applause and affection of others may contribute to *increase* our happiness.

F. You are in the right: it always is so; it cannot be otherwise in the nature of things: but we must learn where to stop, and keep the mind in such *vigour* and *strength*, as to live as independent of the world for our happiness, as the nature of society will admit of.

D. Is it possible to live in any great degree independent of it?

F. Be assured it is much more than possible; or how should it be so essential a duty to set our *affections on things in heaven, not on things on the earth*?

D. I comprehend that we may cherish every social affection: we may rejoice in the love of our *relations, our friends, or acquaintance*, as I do

in a more particular manner in yours: and yet if we cherish a *truly Christian disposition*, we shall not leave our happiness, in this world, entirely dependent on them.

F. There is a very striking difference between the *real Christian*, who takes pleasure in *charity*, and the efforts of a good and generous mind for the welfare of others; and the very zealous friendly person, or the warm lover, who is influenced by his passions. He who exalts his soul above the world, may, in a religious sense, love his neighbour as *himself*, and enjoy the sublimest happiness any mortal is capable of; supposing other circumstances relating to the comforts of life, not entirely equal. In proportion as every individual contributes to the common happiness, as he deserves the esteem and affection of others, he will find a complacency in his own breast, and generally meet the regard of others. The great *end* is happiness; how many mistake the *means* for the end; or use *means* not productive of the end. If, for instance, you have a desire for any thing as an instrument of happiness, and become unhappy because you cannot obtain it; or obtaining it, do not use it *properly*; you will soon perceive that you have mistaken the *means* for the end, and chained your mind to one object, when you should be providing it with resources in any other that Providence may throw in your way. Keep your soul *constant, steady, and enlarged*: you will the more easily comprehend in what your happiness consists; and *how to come at it*. A *merry, or rather cheerful and innocent* heart, with a clear understanding, will lead you to discern the things which belong to your happiness.

D. But some *thoughtless* persons are distinguished for a *merry* disposition: and youth is the season for mirth.

F. But nobody has a right to be a *fool*. Let the mirth be confined by rules of prudence and religion, and mirth becomes happiness. I am glad when I see you rejoice: on the contrary, if, under a notion of virtue, you indulged a sensibility to a degree of *mournfulness*, and grieved sadly for the faults of others, without doing them the least *good*, you would do *evil* to your own soul; and I should condemn you highly.

D. I understand your doctrine. “To persevere in obstinate condolence,” whatever be the account, of any evil that may befall one, is a proof of *stubbornness* or *foolishness*: it denotes

“ a heart unfortified, a mind impatient, and a will unschooled.” To learn in early days a deep submission to the Almighty’s will, and not take much to heart the evils that befall us, is a habit grateful to Heaven’s high pleasure, whence happiness proceeds.

*F.* Well observed, *Mary*: if, in doleful plight, you were to make a *peevish* opposition, as if you thought yourself ill-treated at the hands of God; I know you would condemn such conduct as impious and unworthy of your character as a Christian. You talk so much after my heart, I know not if my love for you could make me forget this lesson. But while I act consistently, I shall not cease to applaud your seeming resolution. You will mourn, *Mary*, when I *die*; but if I thought you would abandon yourself to grief, and act as if you despaired of all earthly comforts, I should entertain a mean opinion of your virtues. Mark how the world goes, and you will observe that those who make professions of love, as if they must needs die with their friends, are not of the class most to be depended on. If

they know not what duty they owe to *God* and *themselves*, how should they practise the true measure of their regards and affection for others? And those who are but little acquainted with their own hearts, may talk in a *romantic* strain; but when they are brought to the trial, and *exercise their powers*, they find that *nature* or *grace* will do that for them which they were not aware of, as a duty they owed to themselves.

*D.* Many are insincere in what they say.

*F.* A greater number talk without much thinking. Be assured, that to be happy, is not to indulge tender sensations, and the softer passions, more than the austere ones, further than is necessary to assist *reason*, and give it energy. Those who wantonly throw up the reins of that power, which the Almighty hath appointed to rule and govern them, out of their hands, do in vain seek for happiness in either world. They live under the sting of conscience. Though this may not constantly pain them much, yet it is not possible to rise to any fulness of the measure of temporal happiness.

## CONVERSATION VI.

*Trueman’s description of the impediments to his own happiness, which the untoward events of his life had created. The struggles of a mind inclined to virtue, yet not sufficiently guarded to prevent the inroads of sin and folly.*

*D.* **NONE** perfectly happy! You are, and I believe always have been *happy*. You seem indifferent about *living*: yet, by applying yourself so diligently to do all the *good* you can, you delight in *life*. I am happy in the share which I enjoy in your goodness; I am sure it makes my life pleasant.

*F.* Happy, my dear child!—and *all* my life. I will tell you how grossly you are mistaken; and I will leave you to judge what false estimates are frequently made of the happiness of others. You are sanguine in your applause of me. It is not always wise to discover our own *follies*: but it may afford you instruction, if I inform you how weakly you judge!—and you may learn

from me to curb your presumption; to humble your heart; to regulate your judgment, and animate your courage!—In the same manner as you pass a wrong sentence in my favour, are numbers deceived in *favour* of their neighbours; frequently flattering themselves in a manner their better judgment cannot approve. That I have no motive to be anxious about life, is true—That *death* hath no terrors, when I bring him close to my mind’s eye, is not so easy to determine—I cannot judge of myself in this article, now that I am in *health*, and *at my ease*.—In the general view, *nature* is indulgent to us, by keeping the king of terrors, as it were, at arm’s-length. He never seems to be near. The more

we are reconciled to *death*, whether by *sickness*, *pain*, or *old age*, the riper we grow for the harvest of *immortality*. *Nature*, *reason*, and *religion* keep pace, till age and decay, or some accidental evil throws us into the arms of death! That I have joy when I can be of any service to mankind, within the narrow circle of my poor power, you need not doubt:—but our search for opportunities of *doing good*, furnishes as many opportunities of *doing evil*: and the wretchedness which we cannot relieve, is apt to create more pain, than That which we remove, gives *pleasure*. Still we must devote our lives to the *good* of others: but how to be *happy*, whilst I behold the miseries of other men, is a secret I have not yet learnt.—Nor are you aware, that my judgment, in many events, hath been too weak, or my passions too strong, to admit of any degree of that repose, which we call *happiness*. In some of the chief events of my life, benevolence hath rendered me a *dupe*; so the world calls it: and can he who hath been often a prey to the folly and iniquity of others, be *happy*? He that *intends* no evil, is so far *happy*: but for the reason that he is less suspicious of others, he is the more subject to see his *happiness* swallowed up by *their* iniquity! Thus it happens, that many a wiser and better man than myself, is tried in the furnace of affliction. If his dross is purged away, he may esteem himself happy: mine is not yet purged away: I cannot therefore rank myself in this happy class. I have indeed *begun* to enjoy the sweets of an innocent life: I hope it will *last*.—With regard to the *world*, in our condition, it cannot be expected we should always equal the serpent in wisdom; neither have we so much occasion for it, as in some other states. Let this also be your comfort, under every disappointment, that there are many events in life, for which mankind are apt to reproach themselves, as if they had acted *foolishly* and *absurdly*; and yet, in the issue, such events prove happy. If *ignorance* makes up any part of *happiness*, as we are less acute than the *learned*, this also is in our favour; nor ought we to be insensible of our advantages in other respects. Like other men, I have been accustomed to consult my *pleasure*: most pleased when I could serve my neighbour. Yet objects of *fancy*, with gilded wings, have still fluttered before me, *promising* happiness, but not *performing*; offering with *one* liberal hand some apparent good; and

with the *other* presenting an unlittered cup.— Sometimes I thought myself *too busy*, and then *too indolent*, to be happy. —I saw how many fantastic tricks *imagination* played; and how the evil humour *possessed* my heart! What could this do, but create a sickness in my soul, and in its effects remove me so much the farther from *happiness*!—I sought for *peace*, but peace was not where I looked for her.—Sometimes I promised myself good, in saving my *money*, and making a purse: not for the sake of money, for I never had it in any estimation, but for its excellent use in life. Here my *indifference* on one side, and my *eagerness* on the other, defeated my end. Like a rash young man, I embarked in enterprizes of great hazard: I relieved a friend, who proved a villain: “I lost my money, and my friend!” This did not plunge me into intolerable distress: yet, where there is not *success*, there *happiness* is seldom found!—Still I had reason to esteem myself a favourite of Providence; for I always found resources to accomplish most of my pursuits. If one object failed, my fertile mind produced another! Shame to me, that I have not expressed my *gratitude* in higher terms! —I once thought I should be exceeding happy in so kind and good a master as mine proved to be! He was, indeed, a man after my heart! —But still I found that *something* more was wanting. I married the woman I loved beyond all others in the world. For a while, nothing seemed wanting to complete my *happiness*: and when you, my child, came into the world, my fancy represented to me, that *you would prove* *good*, I should have no reason to envy the *great* of mankind!—Your mother became unhealthy; I sympathized in her pains and sorrows: and all the beautiful structure of my happiness was thrown down and blown away, like the dust of which I am made. Soon after her death, I lost my two little boys, your brothers. In my fancy, they still hang round my neck, and their charming images live in my heart!—Heaven delivered *them* from ever suffering such sorrows!—Then fell my good old master!—His last kind words still sound in my ears:—he made provision for me: but I loved and honoured him so much, I suffered more anguish at his *death*, than joy in his *liberality*! Indeed, his kindness added to my grief!—Was this being happy? I have experienced a large portion of affection and regard from some of my relations, acquaintance;

and

and friends: others have given me such heart-piercing sorrows, as have long preyed upon my vitals!—I know not whether it be a peculiar perverseness in *my* nature, or common to other men; but I ever found that *sorrow* made a deeper impression on my mind, than *joy*: yet it is not the less true, that Nature in her general course, delights in *pleasure*, not in *pain*.—I bore my misfortunes with some degree of *fortitude*; but, I *felt* them:—perhaps, *too long*, and too much in the extreme!—My soul panted for virtue, “as the thirsty hart longs for the water-brooks:” but I so often trespassed against my better judgment, that I discovered, I had not sufficient virtue to make me happy.—In this fluctuating state of mind, more easy to be imagined, by a man frail as myself, than for me to describe to *you*, I thought that to exercise my *reason*, and keep my *passions* calm, was to be happy: but life was ebbing out faster than I subdued my evil propensities: I asked myself, Where is this to end? Will it avail to *resolve*, and *re-resolve*, if at length I die the same poor, wretched *image of a man*, and hazard eternity, oppressed with conscious guilt?—Thus I reproached myself:—and thus I carried on the war against my youth, with various fortune and success: *feeling* the scriptural doctrine, that *life is a warfare*. Some people conquer themselves more easily: but can there be *happiness* in such *conflicts*?—The education that is *truly good*, early discovers the *folly* of sin, and alarms the heart with apprehensions of its consequences. Conscious that I was a *coward* in not shaking off the chain, and boldly devoting my heart to God, by *stronger* thoughts, and *better* deeds of piety and love, you will easily imagine, that my spirit was often vexed.—I *intended* no evil to my *neighbour*; yet was I not sufficiently guarded against the evil propensities of my nature, to do no violence to my own soul. Had I been less volatile, and less inclined to *pleasure* and *amusement*; more *righteous*, *constant*, and *resolved*, I should have shewn so much greater favour to those *more wretched than myself*! I should have felt *their* sufferings *more*, and extended my arm *farther*, for *their* relief!—Here again some *foolish imagination*, or *vain wish* still rankled in my heart, and made it cry out in anguish, “Do not deceive thyself: thou art not so true a friend to *virtue*, as to entitle thee to her smiles!—Mend thy life; then wilt thou be *happy*!”—

Like a common mortal, fluctuating between good and evil, hope and fear, I am arrived at the confines of my journey's end, having been *happy* through my life, as *you fondly imagined, Mary*; but not really so: I cannot make myself this compliment, nor give my condition so *soft* a name: the uprightness of my heart revolts against deceit!—Nor would I have *you* imagine, that all things *are* as they *appear*.—By the mercy of God, I have been preserved in many dangers, in variety of forms; *saved even from myself*! can I cease to *adore* his providence? To love *virtue*, is, in some measure, to be *virtuous*; as being *sorry* that we are *no better*, prepares the way for *amendment*. Learn whilst you are *young*. I was early taught by the *example* of a pious mother, as *you* now learn from *my precepts*: and I hope my *example* will not hurt you! I will strive to serve you, my child, not only for the sake of the parental love I bear you; but from a sense of gratitude to our *common Father*, of whose mercies I have enjoyed so large a share, *during so long a life*. Every motive of obedience to Him; every tender concern for your welfare, inspires my heart with a desire to shew you the path to that unknown land, where immortal happiness resides! You will conclude, from what I have told you, how erroneously one part of mankind judges of the happiness of the other! It were but an unkind office, to attempt making another believe himself *unhappy*: yet, neither ought we to flatter the *vicious*. Vice cannot be represented in colours too horrible. We commend the *fortunate* and *successful*: our *courtship* of them constitutes no small part of their *happiness*. We ought to delight in *giving* joy, as well as in *receiving* it. *Happiness* itself may be defined, *rational and godly joyfulness*!

D. My dear father, I have listened with great attention, and not without sorrow.

F. I know it well! I saw the big tear stand in your eyes, as if my *confession* mortified your *pride*, while it melted your *compassion* for me. When I explained to you, that I had not been the *happy* man you fondly imagined, you looked as if you had met some cruel disappointment.

D. Could I hear you talk of yourself so candidly, and not *believe* you, or believing, not feel as a *daughter* and a *friend*? I was sensible of still more, my father: I felt as a believer in *Christ*, and as one conscious of *her own offences*! But is there any child of man, who makes claim



to virtue, who doth not *reproach* himself? You made me think of the mournful tale related by a greater sinner, and a greater saint (a). Is not a sensibility of our sins, one great step towards the conquest of them? And have not you discovered to me That sensibility?

F. To be persuaded of our weakness, keeps us the more on our guard. I would deal honestly with myself, knowing that *security* is man's greatest enemy!

D. You must therefore give me leave to say, I think you are *comparatively* happy. You have told me, that I am a *woman*, not an *angel*: you, my father, are a *man*, and not an *angel*!—If there is happiness in humility; if there is joy in heaven at the conversion of a *sinner*; there is happiness in *repentance*.

F. I will not dispute that point. You are not to imagine, from any thing I have said, that my fortune has been much severer than other men's. Many have suffered much more than I have done. If even our wishes are lost in the possession of them; and having nothing to *wish* for, nor desire, we become glutted with *enjoyment*; it proves that very few persons are of so choice a spirit, but that their *pleasure chiefly consists in freedom from pain*. The exercise of reason is the glory of a man. He who can govern himself, is greater than the most powerful monarch, who is a stranger to any law but *his own will*. Of all other superiors, this will be most disposed to lead him in chains.

D. But even he who best governs his life by *reason*, must daily feel a thousand pains and sorrows, in seeing the *fellies* and *vices* of other men.

F. Granted: but I say there can be no happiness where there is a dread of punishment. Life is beset with *evils*: the wiser the man, the more he shuns the evils he *can*, and the lighter he makes those which he *cannot avoid*. He considers how much depends on himself; and supported by the smiles of Heaven, he makes a *virtue of necessity*: his soul enjoys the exalted pleasure, and full contentment, which flow from resignation to the will of Heaven. From hope in *happiness to come*, the mind will reap an ample harvest of *rational* and *religious* delight, such as will make even the dreary desert of *misfortune* smile, and rob the scorpion *adversity* of its stings.

D. Considering what evils mankind are ex-

posed to, being surrounded by such natural delights as fall to our lot in this *rural scene*, we may *contemplate life*; and by the comparison of our condition to that of many millions born to a higher fortune, rejoice in *the God of our salvation*. He who has done such great and mighty things; He who so loved the world, that he gave his only Son to die for us, can we cease to *rejoice* in his love?

F. You talk like a *Christian* of a lively faith. I would rejoice from this cause also. Many who, like me, are ardent in temper, and active in disposition, I have observed have involved themselves in so many more and *deeper* distresses than any which have befallen me. Upon the *comparison*, therefore, as you observe, I now call myself *happy*. Is the question, What did God intend with regard to me? I am a being of wonder, the work of an almighty hand. It was certainly intended that I should be *happy*. Why am I not so? God is good and merciful: it cannot be *his* fault, if I am unhappy. Have I done what he requires at my hands, which I am capable of doing towards my own happiness? No: then let me *mend*. Let me confess my sinfulness, and seek my happiness in *obedience* to the great Author of my nature. What shall I now do to render my life not only *supportable*, but *pleasant*? Certain duties are required at my hands, under certain circumstances.—As these arise, let me consult the oracles of God, as contained in my New Testament. All circumstances require *patience* and *submission* to the dispensations of Providence: Let me try, if by the force of *reason* and *faith* in the promises of God, I can make any change in my disposition, which seems now to be a bar to my happiness. I can find happiness only in my *mind*; it is not to be found in *fortune*. If I am driven to seek refuge in *poverty*; it is but *poverty* I have to contend with. This is much more easy to subdue than a *troubled mind*, or a murmuring disposition against Providence. God is the *father* of the poor? will he not be mine, if I am obedient? Still I will *rejoice* and cry, “O my Father, and my God, to thy *protection* I commit myself in life and death!” If “man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards;” if that is the law of the *moral*, as this of the *natural* world, happiness is a compound of *bitter* and *sweet*. It is my duty to make the best of life I can, and seek my happiness as my *reason* guides.

No.

No man in his senses can seek distress; but neither can he shrink from his duty for fear of it. The *Saviour of the world*, the *giver of life*, and the *fountain of happiness*, being himself a man, was acquainted with grief. Considered as a *man*, he also saw with the eye of *exultation*, the glory which was to be revealed to mortals; and he triumphed over the *world* and *sin*, *death* and the *grave*!

*D.* To us mortals, *temporal happiness* seems to be a term relative to the various conditions of men, all being equally empowered to triumph over *death*, which is the sum of earthly glory.

*F.* It is so: and the more this is done, the more do men resemble *angels*: they become the greater favourites of Heaven; and the more *consistently* they behave, the more they will be the darlings of the human race.

*D.* Do you really entertain so good an opinion of mankind? I was afraid that let one's conduct be ever so consistent, we ought not to expect to find a proportionate regard from our fellow-creatures.

*F.* I do not mean to build my happiness on any such expectation: but where *piety* and *benevolence* are supported by *good sense* and *good humour*, the comforts of *reputation* and *esteem* hardly ever fail. But we must neither *court* nor *despise* them. Charity is a combination of all virtues in life: it covers the multitude of sins to which we are by nature prone: and in *death* it triumphs. If you should suffer in the cause of virtue, reflect that the only perfect man the earth ever beheld, died for the *sins* of others: and he commands us to rejoice with exceeding great joy, in the prospect of That complete happiness which he has provided, where only *complete happiness* can be found.

*D.* It is natural for every one to rejoice in the prospect of a *future good*; but where faith fails, the hope is sickly.

*F.* It depends on faith: and the greater the *good*, the greater should be the *joy*: and if joy is *present happiness* to us mortals; it follows, that we are happy in proportion as we trust in the word of God, and obey his commandments.

*D.* In this I perceive the goodness of the Almighty, and that religious hope is the most substantial pleasure, and *unfailing feast of life*.

*F.* This is the truest happiness mankind in their present state can enjoy. The highest capa-

city we are endowed with, is to *serve our Maker*: the right employment of that capacity must be our *greatest good*. If knowing the will of God we conform to it, as rational beings, whose proper happiness must be of the rational kind, we are surely in the fairest way to find what we seek. Whether we consider happiness to consist in our *benevolence as social creatures*; in *love or friendship*, as reasoning beings; in *faith, hope, or charity*, as *accountable creatures*; we shall still find, that whatever leads most surely to the happiness of an *eternal state*, is our *greatest good*.

*D.* We may have so far a foretaste of heaven, as we live the life of angels, *who always rejoice*.

*F.* He who is best able to carry his heaven in his own breast, seems to be *so far* the happiest man.

*D.* So far, my father! Let a man's outward condition be ever so good, unless his hopes of heaven are *lively*, I see not how he can be *happy*.

*F.* The heaven of a *wise man* is not the *paradise of a fool*. *True hope of true happiness* can be founded in nothing but *religion*. It is not in the nature of things, but that some must suffer more, or enjoy less of the good things of this world, than others. My sufferings, of which I have ventured to give you a detail, may prove to you that I am far from having been the happy man you imagined; yet was I not the most miserable. I am the more *humble* from having *suffered* under, what is vulgarly called *fortune's* blows. We judge from the events of things. The Searcher of spirits alone can fathom the heart of man! Learn from my story, how easily you may be mistaken in your estimate of the happiness of others.

*D.* I believe that many are *so ignorant of themselves*, as to speak peace where there is *no peace*. Others think of riches only as essential to happiness.

*F.* The *high* are as subject to be tempted, as the *low*; and, as their education is so much superior, they feel a *sharper and more lasting* anguish of soul. No mortal can see the human heart: *so noble* a creature is man, we cannot reach the *firmness of his strength*; and yet *so frail*, the eye is too much overwhelmed in tears, when it attempts to behold his *weakness*! We talk of happiness, as of *something* belonging to our present

state:

state; but, as you observed, it is only relative to the different conditions of men, and the state of their minds, where the happiness is seated.

*D.* If we would be happy, we must endeavour to improve ourselves in all *Christian graces*. Past events sometimes make a deep impression: indeed, how could we repent of sins, if it were not for looking back?

*F.* Some know more of their *frailties*, than of

the native greatness that resides in their hearts, which would appear were it called forth! There is more *good* in them than the world is aware of. Whereas many are so ignorant of their *own infirmities*, as to become objects of *compassion* on this account. Think as highly of human nature as you can, you will often find it abused; but do it *justice*: never lose sight of its perfection: thinking well of others, contributes to our happiness.

## CONVERSATION VII.

*Submission to divine Providence under all circumstances essential to happiness. The pleasure of thinking of submission, a part of happiness. The foolish complaints of mankind with respect to their occupations, a cause of their unhappiness. An immoderate love of ease, or freedom from labour, an enemy to happiness. Idleness the cause of misery. Definition of happiness, a compound of comfort, peace, and joy, resulting from hope in a life to come. The sad condition of virtuous tender parents, when their children become vicious.*

*D.* THE pleasure of *thinking of submission!* Can That be happiness?

*F.* Whatever we apprehend to be acceptable to the great Father of mankind, who alone is the dispenser of all the *good* our nature is capable of, must afford such a *present* satisfaction to the mind, as deserves as much the name of *happiness*, as any thing we can enjoy most agreeable to our nature.

*D.* The consciousness of offending God, I am sure is *misery*; and as *happiness* is the contrary of *misery*, my apprehensions of what is pleasing to God, I find, make up a large portion of my happiness.

*F.* Can you look back with pleasure on what is past? Do you approve the present temper of your mind? Can you look forward with a firm and vigorous hope, yet say you are not happy? If to be happy, is to be *something* for which we stand indebted to Heaven; if it be a thing in which our reasonable *hopes* overcome our *fears*; our *present* pleasures subdue our *pains*; in a word, if we have a complacency in our existence, we ought, in the comparative view of life, to *think ourselves happy*.

*D.* But to *think ourselves happy*, as reasonable

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creatures, or acting agreeable to our nature as such, is this alone *sufficient*?

*F.* It is to be in a very eligible state.

*D.* But it requires *good sense, resolution*, and a *good heart*, to think ourselves happy.

*F.* Whatever be the degree of the understanding, we must entertain *an opinion* what happiness means, or it is the *happiness of an ideal*. With respect to the *heart*, sorrow and humiliation for what is past, and *resolution* with regard to the *future*, is actual amendment at the *present hour*; or it bears only the name of *resolution*, and is the mere delusion of a distempered mind.

*D.* Such *amendment* must create *self-satisfaction*, and by degrees become *happiness*. If I may judge from your cheerfulness, and appearance of piety and resignation, and I *can judge* only from what I *see*, you are *now a happy man*. Yet if you think you are not; *you are not*.

*F.* Most certainly: happiness is in the *mind*; and what is there really in the world, "*but God, and a man's own soul?*" But we are apt to descend into the little concerns we call *opinion*, which gives a pleasing or displeasing colour to every thing. If we persuade ourselves that *our*

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*actions* are such as are grateful to God, we bid fair to find all the other ingredients which enter into the composition of happiness. "Attend to God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." But your partiality for *me*, warps your judgment to the flattering side; and flattery is deceitful. If you seek freedom from *pain*, seek freedom from *sin*: and forget not that one of the greatest misfortunes among men, is not being able to bear misfortunes: and we may add, that one of the greatest *goods* he is capable of here, is to know how to make the *evil* accidents of life administer to *good*. In some shape or other, *evil* will happen; *trouble* is the lot of every one who comes into the world, and every one must learn.

D. I am sensible that if all things succeeded to my wishes, I could no more exercise the grace of resignation, than forgive my enemies if I had none: nor is it less obvious, that let man be ever so foolish, God is wise and merciful, and will make good his promise. This seems to make up the sum of the *happiness* you teach me to expect.

F. Upon this you may build as upon a rock, which I hope the gates of hell will not be able to overturn. Be *contented*; so far you will be *happy*. *Frugality* secures to you the bread you eat. *Health* invigorates your body; the love of *industry* inclines you to *virtue*; and these should render your *humble dwelling*, *joyful*! I am past the days of much joy: I feel some decays of nature brought on by *time*, not without a consciousness of excess, though I have been reputed temperate: I have no disease created by *steth*. I yet *relax* labour; and, in humble gratitude to my Maker, hope for *happiness* in the life to come! Should I not consider this as an ample share of good, especially when I reflect on all the evil I have done, and the misery which many better than myself suffer. If we bring things home to our bosoms, and examine what is passing there, we shall not complain of Providence, in regard to *wealth*. How small a portion of mankind can be rich! — And how few employ their plenty for the *honour* or *profit* of human nature, as they should do! When I examine my own heart, and discover in it so many dark shades and spots, I conclude there would be many more, if I had possessed great abundance. Convinced as I am, that *virtue* is the *sovereign good*, without which there can be no *happiness*, let us

keep her constantly before our eyes, and trust for the rest.

D. Your discourse pleases me much: but the world will say, you do not talk like a *man of the world*, but a *philosopher*.

F. *Man of the world*! I would gladly *think*, and *talk*, and *act* like a *Christian*. We must all talk like lovers of *wisdom*, or lovers of *folly*; in other words, like *philosophers*, or *fools*. Do you believe that a *quiet and contented mind* is the *chief good of mortals*?

D. You have reasoned me into a persuasion, that there can be no greater good on earth than a *quiet mind*; except *health* with a *quiet mind*.

F. If this be as great a good as man is capable of in this world; if to maintain an uninterrupted tranquility of spirit be the crown and glory of wisdom, what higher notion can you form of *happiness*?

D. I believe that those who have large portions of worldly goods, are apt to hanker after them even when they die!

F. Whereas you and I, instead of being torn unwillingly from this earth, may throw it off, as we part with our garments when we retire to rest. Is not this to enjoy a superiority in the last scene of life, and go off with more applause, than if we had acted a *higher part*? Worldly goods are *flattering*; they often deceive mankind.

D. Notwithstanding all the evils which have attended your life, you are a favourite of Heaven! You have learnt to value *your own advantages*! I hope I shall learn to value mine!

F. So far I am bound, in justice to Providence, to acknowledge my *present good fortune*. When I look back, I am *afflicted*! when I look forward, I hope for *good*; and in That *hope* I am comforted! When I hear numbers of people complain, that their respective *occupations*, *labours*, or *employments*, are the worst, or the *least happy* to them they can imagine, I should be led to think, that *all* occupations are productive of *misery* to mankind, if I did not know, in general, the direct contrary to be true: *idleness* is one of the *greatest miseries*! Some indeed have their parts but ill cast; but habit and application make up the defect. The misfortune is, that many seek for happiness in things *out* of their power; apprehending, that those which are *in* their power, are insufficient. This is carried so far, they treat every thing with disdain, which

is *easy* to be come at, proving the sickness of the soul; for one of the best properties of any thing, is that we can come at it *easily*.

D. It seems to be impossible for any person of such a turn, to be *happy*.

F. And yet, strange as it may seem to you, this crime of overlooking advantages, enters into the composition of almost every child of *Adam*! This is the *cruel something unpossessed*, which is so apt to leaven and sour all our enjoyments! The thinking part of mankind discern this truth, and lament their *folly* when they fall into it.

D. As well they may! If so much misery arises from a *false* opinion, a *true* one only can restore us to health of mind. We may wonder that the *good* which is in the world, is so much overlooked, when so much *evil*, which is oftentimes unavoidable, prevails in it.

F. However wonderful this may be; it is *true*: and this seems to be the grand fault of mankind in their pursuit of *happiness*. The poorest have *many advantages*, which the kindness of Providence presents them; but if they do not consider them as *advantages*, in the estimate of their lives, they cease to be such: they are *lost* and with them they lose their *gratitude* to Heaven, the exercise of which alone, is *happiness*. Thus *ingratitude* uniting with *ignorance*, instead of finding *happiness*, they stumble upon misery.

D. To *bear* so many complaints, at the same time that I *see* how unwearied Heaven is in acts of *mercy*, convinces me of the truth of what you say. But mankind still go on, seemingly perplexed in their notions of *happiness*. Ask them what it is, and they give very different accounts, though they mean the same thing.

F. When they know their meaning: but every one must answer for himself. In the general view, they mean, a "*combination of circumstances suited to their inclinations*:" now you may easily comprehend, how seldom *every thing* will *combine* and *join* with the inclinations of an individual: considering the capriciousness of the heart of man, how difficult it must be to establish *happiness* on this foundation!

D. A meeting together of circumstances suited to our inclinations: this is a flattering account of *happiness*, as it supposes a great number of enjoyments: but the greater the number, and the greater the variety in different persons, the greater must the difficulty be.

F. Well observed; reason only can establish a

standard. If *inclination* comprehends every thing the imagination may suggest, happiness must require many enjoyments! But to reason from experience, *many enjoyments* cannot be had, without *many disappointments*: I am, therefore, not satisfied with this account. If I first suppose all my inclinations so exceedingly pure, as to constitute virtue: then it is *virtue* chiefly which makes me happy: and I believe, *Mary*, we must return to *our dear virtue*, and court her smiles, to give us *right inclinations*, whether all of them, being right, be gratified or not. In order to acquire a relish of that *portion of satisfaction*, to which the name of *happiness*, in some measure belongs, we must discharge our *anxiety* about *worldly matters*—The world is in perpetual motion: we cannot fix it. *Anxiety* is but another name for *pain*; and *common sense* forbids us to think, that while we are *in pain*, we can, at the same time, be *happy*; so that we shall still return to the point where we set off. That *health* and *contentment* are the chief ingredients in the sweet cup we long for, will ever be found true, and a contented mind must be a virtuous one.

D. The *tempers, habits, and affections* of mankind being as changeable as any thing in the world, we cannot depend on them for our *happiness*; granting, that the more circumstances combine to render us *happy*, the better satisfied we ought to be.

F. The *tempers, habits, and affections* of others, make up what we call the *world*. If our *passions* are harsh and austere, they will interrupt our *happiness*: they will hardly give our humanity *fair play*. You may be *just* to a degree which will entitle you to *reverence*; but not *good*, as the scriptures mention, so that men would even *dare to die* for you! On the other side, if the affections are *tender* beyond due measure, they will cut out so much work to regulate them, as will leave you but little time to be *happy* in. If you take impressions too quick and strong, or depend much on other people, your heart will be often wounded. *Virtue* in distress afflicts us: *folly, ignorance, caprice, and vicious self-love* in others, perpetually thwart our best designs. We cannot regulate these things: they will be the subject of our thoughts; and so far become a part of our misery.

D. But still we must owe a great part of our *happiness* to the virtues of others.

F. True: and for the same reason we must

be subject to be rendered *miserable* through their *errors* and *crimes*.

D. This seems to be the unavoidable state of human life.

F. Then we must seek for *happiness* in our strength and resolution. To humble *your* heart, and shew you the faint colour of *my own*, I will propose a question. Suppose, in addition to the past sufferings of my life, you, my much-loved daughter, now that your days of mourning for me are coming on, that *you*, I say, should turn out a *bad girl!*——Do you think I could be *happy* in spite of *such* an event?——Do not look sorrowful: I only propose a *manly* question.

D. Alas, my father! I believe your love for me is such, that were I wicked, you would be wretched beyond description, for a while; but you would find reasons for submitting to the se-

verity of your condition. You would even in this case, submit to Heaven, and not become wicked, because of my guilt, and shew an *obstinate resistance* to what is entirely out of your power.

F. As a faithful servant to God, I should weep over the grave of your virtues; but when I had done it, I ought, with the *Royal Psalmist*, upon the death of his son, to wash my hands and face, and sit down to meat, thankful to God for giving me *resignation*.

D. You ought to do so; but I am afraid this would not be so easily accomplished. You would still be thinking of my *future state!*

F. O my child, torture not my soul with such a reflection! Rather suppose that your sins would plunge a dagger into *my* heart. May you live no longer than you devote your life to God!

## CONVERSATION VIII.

*Happiness, as dependent on the conduct of those we are nearly related to. Social intercourse essential to happiness. Happiness most easily found in the married state. General rules for happiness. Dutifulness in children, the great instrument of happiness to parents and children. The natural desire of happiness. Happiness more dependent on common sense, than on a superiority of understanding.*

F. **FUTURE** state!—Eternity!—These are tremendous objects, my child! How *happiness*, with respect to this world, dwindles at the thought of them! The mind finds a resting-place, only in *hope*; the hope of That bliss, of which the earth can furnish no copy.—In regard to the present life, should we act consistently with our own principles, were we to depend on *man* for our *happiness*? We are not to put our *trust* in any child of man; nor are we accountable beyond a just measure of sorrow for the transgressions of others. Let us not make an offering to *self-love*, falsely understood, and neglect our *true interest*, in discharging our duty to the great Author of our nature!

D. I perceive that *happiness*, I mean so much of it as we can acquire, should depend less on

the conduct of other people, than I had imagined, agreeable to what you have often told me: but still there are many circumstances in life, in which it is hardly possible to enjoy any considerable degree of satisfaction, but as others, to whom we stand in a near relation, behave themselves with propriety.

F. There is much truth in your remark: we see many of the best minds wounded deeply by *unkindness* or *ingratitude* with regard to the appointments of nature: We may further observe how the *happiness* of the rational creation depends on acting reasonably, where the *appetites* or the *affections* are most deeply concerned, as well as in all other instances.

D. The temporal happiness of a *social* creature must depend on society.

F. So it seems, indeed: still reserving to ourselves

felves a generous independency. The Almighty created *male* and *female*: no society is so *pleasing*, or so *lasting*, as That in which both sexes are concerned.

D. In general, you think *marriage* essential to *happiness*.

F. I do not say, that no other state is capable of producing any considerable degree of *happiness*; this depends on circumstances: but when I observe what is passing in the world, and the influence of the sexes on each other, I incline to the opinion, that in general, *marriage is necessary to happiness*; I mean the marriage which is founded in reason and mutual affection, supported by a common love of virtue, and a likeness of tempers. As a *rational* creature with strong affections; as an animal having *appetites*, man must have the proper object of such affection: and where is this to be found but in *marriage*? The *appetites* and *affections* must be under control: yet I see not, in the *general view* of life, how the mind of man can find rest, unless he has the object suited to such *affections* and *appetites*. He who submits to no restraint, becomes a *brute*: he plunges himself and others into miseries without name, and without end: he acts destructively of civil life, and lays waste all that is beautiful in the moral world! How is it possible he should at the same time be *happy*?

D. But some are *elegant* in their *vices*.

F. Elegant! curse on their elegance. They may affect to be elegant in their religion too; but they cannot possibly accommodate a *religion* to irregular *passions* and *desires*, and at the same time satisfy their own souls *that all is at peace*. It is impossible for man to be *happy* without the concurrence of his *reason* and *conscience*.

D. Being made *social*, you think he must have a mate, rational like himself.

F. Whence is it that a great part of mankind become wretched from a certain *dissatisfaction*, for which they cannot account? The wise man says, "he that hath no *wife* goeth about *mourning*." You smile, as if you meant to say some married men have cause to mourn. Both sexes must exercise their reason, or find themselves sorely distressed. If the *man* or *woman* is stupid and ignorant of what the great Creator intends, with respect to themselves, or knowing his will revolts against it; can the event be happy?

D. Some are so paired in *ignorance*, as to go on very well.

F. Still they are *paired*: but *ignorance*, which degenerates into *vice*, or *vice* which puts out the light of *conscience*, can never produce *happiness* in the *married*, or in any other state. Of this I will tell you more of my mind when the proper time comes. In all states, observe *these rules*.

1. Trust in others, so far as prudence and religion permit.

2. Be moderate in the exercise of your passions; humble in your enjoyments; and resigned to the events of life.—

3. Observe that these virtues are as necessary to your *happiness*, as to your *religion*, and have a wonderful relation to each other.

4. As you are a *Christian*, glory in that name. Think of it often: consider what it is, and whose *disciple* you are. Thus will your obedience point out the true path to *happiness*.

5. Whatever evils befall you, strive to preserve an *equal mind*.

6. Remember that *religion* is as *manly* and *resolute* as she is *gentle* and *tender*.

7. Strive to keep your heart free from all engagements hurtful to your *love of God*.

8. Study the prayer of our Lord, and lead not yourself into *danger*.

9. Cherish no tenderness your reason condemns.

10. Indulge no *peevish* or *petulant* humour which perchance you may find in your disposition.

11. Endeavour to find a gratification in all things *innocent*.

12. Consider every *offence* as an enemy to the *happiness* you seek.

13. *Last*, but not *least*, *think*, if according to your own acknowledgment, you might try *me* solely, think of the unhappiness of *parents*, through the succession of generations, when their *children* rebel against the laws of the Most High, and, as it were, tear out the entrails of the mother at whose breast they hang!—Do you *understand me, Mary*?

D. Indeed, my father, I feel the force of all these good rules; and not less the afflictions of *virtuous* parents. I see the strength of the commandment to *honour father and mother*, that *my days may be long and happy*; and how necessary this is to the happiness of life, to *parents*, as well as *children*.

F. What pangs must those suffer to whom it happens to have worthless or undutiful children! But so it ever was, and ever will be! Think

of what is most worthy of you as a *subject*, and a *daughter*, and, in good time, as a *wife* or *mother*. All these relations are distinguished in the *Christian*. Worldly applause, honours, riches, and a long list of such articles, which chiefly relate to the opinion of other people, however pleasing they may be, according to the *pride* and *fancy* of the possessor, they never did, nor ever can constitute more than a small part of human happiness; nor doth it seem that ever any mortal was *completely happy*. We often *talk*, as if we imagined life to be capable of *complete happiness*; but we feel the contrary!—yet, such is the *desire of happiness*, there is *comfort*, if not joy in *talking* of it. Make *comfort* the prop and stay of your *virtue*; cherish *sweet comfort* even in adversity; and whilst these virtues mutually act on each other, they will make you so far happy. This will answer the glorious end in view! By this means, you will keep pace with the gracious designs of the God of nature, who would not that any mortal should be *unhappy*, much less that he should *perish*. You may clearly discern, that from the moment you expect *more happiness* than is attainable, or pursue any joy upon other principle than that of virtue, you lay the foundation of your misery: for you must be disappointed; and *disappointment* is *misery*.

*D.* *Common-sense*, good inclinations, and *good judgment*, in discerning what we *should* be pleased with; the distinctions of *good* and *evil*, and the measure and degree of our *affections* towards the things of this world, I find must be taken into the account of our happiness.

*F.* Most certainly: to *chuse* what is good, and *reject* what is evil, is as necessary to *happiness* as air to *life*. This is not to be done without the exercise of reason, and the assistance of common-sense, and a good heart:—but do this, and nature will furnish a vast field for delight.

*D.* I believe it is more easily done by *common-sense*, than by any other sense.

*F.* *Great strength of understanding* is not common; and therefore not necessary to *happiness*: but *weakness of head* is oftentimes but another name for *foolishness of heart*, and operates hurt-

fully to happiness. How often have I seen people *laugh*, when I thought they should have *wept*; and others make themselves wretched, suffering *torture* for That which, to me, was a *subject of laughter*: yet, in regard to the state of the offender's mind, in both cases, it was a *mournful object*! How many things are we bound to submit to with *patience*! How many are there, which we can neither prevent, nor remedy by any care or solicitude! And yet, our *happiness*, as vulgarly understood, depends on such events.

*D.* Would you have me suppose that few are *wife enough* to be happy?

*F.* *Wife enough*! I have told you that *common-sense* and *virtue* are the best means to procure *happiness*. I am sure that the bulk of mankind are *foolish enough* to be miserable. You may have heard it said of some people, “They are *too wise* to be happy.” It is meant *not wise enough*; being too wise and inquisitive. *Knowledge*, not rightly applied, may perplex the mind, and drive it into madness; but *wisdom* never deprived any one of his senses. You may easily observe, that to *mourn* and *perplex* ourselves for mourning and torment's-sake, is being miserable *by choice*. Reason will support and direct you, if you *use* it: it is given by the hand of God for that purpose? What is the happiness of this life, but *rational joy*?—To *rejoice even in affliction*, when it leads to a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; is it not *temporal happiness*? It is religion only which can secure to us That *eternal weight of glory*. Consider *wisdom*, *virtue*, and *happiness* as sisters, whose love for each other is so sincere, they cannot bear a separation. In the same degree that you receive *wisdom* and *virtue* as your guests, and love and honour them as your *friends*, they will divide your heart with *happiness*. They will be *true* to you, though all the world besides should fail you. With them you may march in triumph through the mazes of this transient world, and partake of that happiness which the Author of our being hath prepared for us, each in its proper kind, *here and hereafter*!



## CONVERSATION IX.

*Reflections on the happiness arising from contentment and rural simplicity. Discourse under an ancient oak on the vanity of such pursuits as torment mankind. Folly of pride. Danger of riches, as apt to produce infidelity.*

D. MY dear father, you have been so intent on your discourse, you have forgotten how far you have walked.

F. I am tired! Let us sit down under this ancient oak.—These venerable branches afford us a happy shelter from the sun!—This is our present happiness! More than once have I been relieved under this tree! Here have I given rest to my limbs; here bound up my scattered thoughts! Sleep is the death of each day's life; and waking, an image of resurrection. The nourishment we receive in sleep, prepares us to renew the feast of life; and that, which is a mimic of death, for ought we know at the hour of rest, may calmly lead from earth to heaven! O happiness, the life of life! the spirit of our being! our glory as intelligent beings! the end of our toils, and the summit of our wishes! How often have I seen thee pursued with all the eagerness of youth, and fly off as a vapour, or the breath of man expiring in extreme old age!—Oft have I longed to tell my mind to many a young man; and check the career of women also, when I have seen them mistake their road, and in search of happiness, plunge into misery!—We have had much serious talk on a subject, which so deeply engages the thoughts of high and low, rich and poor: but methinks we shall find where our happiness dwells, more easily by what we now feel, than by any thing that can be said upon it. Whether we laugh at our own follies, or other people's, let us still judge with candour! And while we ponder in our hearts, the evils with which life is beset, remember the compassion which is due to the heart of man, in our own persons, as well as in those of others.

D. Is there any reason to fear any one will ever stand in need of admonition with respect to the love of themselves?

F. Few make a true judgment of themselves. People of good hearts, have not always strong sense, but grow unhappy from not considering what human nature is. The ways of God to men, are full of pity and long-suffering: we are commanded to imitate Him: and assured that our imitation shall be our happiness. Let us cultivate a self-complacency.

D. This seems to be the substance of the enquiry after happiness.

F. In whatever form we represent it, the best reasoning the wise and learned ever taught, must be drawn from an improvement of the best qualities in our nature, and an imitation of the perfections of the Almighty.—But what is happiness to us in this present hour? We are free from the care of riches; the delays and cheats of law; the pangs of ill-timed or despised love; the tortures of ambition; the storms that tear up the sands of the deep sea! These can hardly hurt us on this spot!—The stream that rolls o'er the small pebbles of this transparent brook, will give us comfort, when the swelling tide, that brings the produce of the eastern and western Indies, concerns us only as we wish well to trade, or partake of the advantages furnished to our country. The birds which whistle through these shady sprays, may lull our senses to repose, and give our slumbers peace; such peace, my child, as few enjoy, of those who live in highest affluence! If I am not deceived, even the great, to whom is assigned the task of government, learn best what life doth signify, when they sit down and meditate on their good designs, not forgetting their own being, and their end. If, by some accident, Heaven, in mercy to their sufferings, allows them an opportunity of entering into the recesses of their own bosoms, then are they put in the fairest path to happiness.

D. Are

D. Are the highest offices generally filled by the most virtuous men?

F. The *most* virtuous men! — This I will venture to say, they who are appointed for the *grand drudgery* of dispensing government, having by far the most *difficult task* to perform, are the most to be *pitied*; and the more *virtuous*, the more *respectable*. They are more tried, as in the fire, than men who act a lower part, and seldom are so *happy*: Yet are they often envied and distressed by the *ambitious*. Often have I wondered how it happens that those, whom God hath blessed with profusion of good things, who may dispense his bounties like emissaries from the throne of mercy, are yet *desirous of this drudgery*; and fond of involving themselves in the most busy scenes, and dangerous cares!

D. Is the weakness of mankind in their pursuits of *happiness* so great?

F. Even so. If to be truly good and wise, is to be *happy*, it seems more easy for those to acquire true wisdom and goodness, who are provided with only the *necessaries and comforts of life*, their passions being tamed by *fortune*, than for such as are *inflamed by wealth and power*!

D. If one might, without danger, enjoy some of the good things, which the squire's daughter calls the *elegancies* of life; methinks they would contribute their share towards obtaining *happiness*.

F. *Elegancies of life, Mary!* Still harping on some distant worldly good! What have we to do with *elegance*? This is a child of fancy! the mere *trifling* trappings of a garment! I apprehend you rather mean, *things useful*, which are most easily preserved in a *cleanly state*.

D. I do not mean fine or expensive things.

F. Cleanliness depends on industry. Let nothing of *fancy* enchant you, or corrupt the purity of your mind, lest you neglect the more substantial merit of things *useful*. *Artificial* wants keep pace with the inventions of every *ingenious* artist. There is no end to our longings nor expences; and therefore but little *happiness* to be found in such gratifications. Under a notion of pleasing the *fancy* with elegance, however innocent in the degree, where the fortune allows of the expence, this passion has been the cause of much *vice* and *folly*; and instead of *happiness* often occasioned *misery*. There is no end, I say, to the indulgence of *imaginary* wants; but to one it makes *happy*, it *distresses* many. No, *Mary*: let you

and I rather wish to remain ignorant of *useless arts* and *refinements*: being free from the desires which sprout up in the hearts of the opulent, our *vanity* will not *intoxicate* us: we shall not be *flattered* by it, nor learn to *deceive* others. Having no power to *give* or *take away*, we are the less subject to *reproach*, and the *unhappiness* which attends it. If we are invaded by *poverty* or *pain*, no *false shame* or *capricious fancy* will add sharpness to the sting, or drive us to *despair*! Happy when we follow the plain track of *nature*, and are satisfied with her simple fare, waiting with patience the appointed hour, when all distinctions cease! What is the *pride of man*? — Let it but see itself in its own mirror, and it will stand aghast, or fall with suppliant knee! — He that in stubbornness of heart, is exalted in his self-sufficiency, is the farther removed from *real happiness*. And as to religion, think, O my daughter, what may one day be the anguish of 'That soul, which hath *no trust in God*! — No confidence in the blood of *Christ*! — No consciousness of having made *his law* a rule of life! — No *firm persuasion* that he ever made a law: perchance, *no belief* that he was commissioned by the sovereign Lord of all, to visit and redeem mankind!

D. What hopes of *happiness*, indeed, can such a person entertain? If we appeal to the words of eternal life, " *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*" But do you think there is really any such character among men, so far estranged from the expectancy of *happiness after death*, as you describe?

F. Have you forgotten the story I once told you of an *infidel*? And how many depend on the *absence* of thought for the quiet they enjoy! You judge, as knowing not what is passing in the world: and you are *happy* in your *ignorance*! We *rustics* sometimes think ourselves *unhappy* that we partake not of the splendid glory of this world; not considering how many thousands, naturally of *good minds*, by the means of worldly pomp, are plunged into an abyss of misery! — Happy might *they* have been, in the retreat of some lonely village, supplied with the bare comforts of life! There might they have passed their days, like us, in harmless ease and peace! — As to myself, *Mary*, my prospect is now bounded to a *short view*; not that I feel my blood is congealed, or wants a kindly warmth; or that my heart is stoney; yet, by *Nature's* course, my

*day* is nearly spent ; my *sun* is setting ; my holy must, ere it be long, descend to meet its kindred dust : “ An angel’s arm cannot save it from the grave ! neither can it be confined there, were legions of angels to attempt the task !” In the mean time, my hopes in *heaven’s joys* flourish, as if age brought on a *second spring*, and smiling youth, towering above this earthly tenement, gave notice of the *approaching state of immortality* ! You probably will yet have many more days : — but what is the *difference* between *twenty* and *three-score* years ? It is but as *yesterday* I was a boy at school ! *What is man, that thou, great Author of life, hast such respect unto him ! O Father supreme, in whom all happiness is centered ! whether my daughter shall live few years or many, grant them to be happy ! Let her live in thy peace here, and reign in thy glory hereafter !*

D. I thank you, *my dear father*, and say *amen*, with all my spirit ! —

F. When I am gone, *Mary*, you will think of the lessons I have given you ! Be your fortune calm and easy, or perplexed and difficult, make sure of *something* ! Though your vessel were

driven on a rock, *from all you can, never despair* ! Be not miserable in both worlds !

D. I will renounce this world, rather than forfeit the hope of *happiness* in the next.

F. Rather groan under the rigours of *austerity*, than load your *heart with guilt*. It, instead of *this venerable oak*, you could sit under a *royal canopy*, with a grain of innocence the less, would not the oak be the more eligible *furniture* ? — Look up to him who sits enthroned above ! Him, in whose sight all *earthly glory* is as *that billbeck* of the ant ! — Nor should you suppose that Providence is niggardly in dispensing *happiness*, because you are short-sighted, and know not what to-morrow will bring forth ! — In all fortunes think on the admonition delivered by the Son of God, and promote the *happiness* of others. “ Be merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful !” *Sweet mercy*, is the noblest *badge* that *rich or poor* can wear ! — That you will stand in need of all the mercy you can shew, must be as true, as that we *all are sinners* ! Let your *happiness* be built on *this rock*, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it !

## CONVERSATION IX.

*The contempt of wealth exemplified in the character of the Roman general Fabricius. The impressions he received of true glory in contentment and moderation of desires, when the splendour of life was set before him. Different opinions and impressions of greatness from those we see in modern times. Duty of attention to our temporal good. Our first concern our eternal welfare. The duties of the Christian religion, the only solid rock on which we can build our happiness.*

D. YES : I think you have *fixed* my opinion with regard to *happiness*. I am *satisfied* that a change of condition to great affluence, might have the effect to turn the current of my thoughts, and instead of *loving God*, I might grow enamoured of the *world*.

F. You are satisfied, that it is not *wealth* for which the soul so naturally longs ; it is *happiness*. So far as wealth is a *means* of *happiness*, it is a duty to seek after it, with as much attention as is consistent with other duties, and *no more*. In seeking for *happiness*, we must avoid *misery*.

VOL. II.

*Wealth* is now become almost another name for *the world*. *The world* ! — alas, this is often treacherous, and at *enmity with God*. To covet wealth, or be anxious about it, works on the soul like *witchcraft*. Bring your desires down to your *fortune*. This is an *easier*, and a much safer task, than to raise our fortunes to our *desires*.

D. The desires of mankind increase with their acquisitions : and I suppose it is for this reason so few are satisfied.

F. A *wise man*, who is not in want of the necessities of life, and who restrains his desires

S s

within

within the bounds of reason, is a *rich man*. Whatever reason some may justly have to seek for riches as the means of living happily, I am sure none are so *poor* as the *covetous* and *ambitious*.

D. The greatest pleasure wealth can afford, is That of *doing good*.

F. But *doing good* with respect to ourselves, does not consist merely in distributing to the necessities of others. You have been often told, that you may give your body to be burnt, and not be *charitable*. When we are wealthy, we are bound to distribute, as the stewards of Providence. In the distribution of the bounties of Heaven, we often see one has the *riches*, another the *contentment*; which, think you, is the most happy? When I see private persons very wealthy, I *rejoice*; especially if they use their riches as *Christians* ought to use them. In different ages, the world has entertained different notions of *life* and *manners*. *Fabritius*, an honest, brave man among the *ancient Romans*, was a great general; and though very fortunate in war, he remained very poor: he conquered for *the state*, not for *himself*. *Pyrrhus* the king of *Epirus* offered him a large sum, requesting nothing in return, but what appeared to be honourable to *Fabritius*. *Pyrrhus* observed, "that no expence could be more honourable to a prince, than that of relieving great men, who through poverty cannot lead a life worthy of their virtues."

D. What did *Fabritius* say to so fair a proposition?

F. He said, "We are all in a state of affluence in *Rome*, as long as the *republic* is so; for we consider her treasures as *our own*."

D. This was bravely said, as a good subject; but I never heard that they who profess the highest taste of liberty, are in this way of thinking.

F. We are not inclined to grasp at *public good*, where *private interest* can be promoted; but rather enrich ourselves at the expence of the state. I do not pretend to say there is no such man amongst us as *Fabritius*, who fought for happiness in *freedom*, *labour*, and even in *poverty*: allowing for difference in education, we may suppose there are many as brave as him; for we see men devote their lives to the service of their country and mankind. The *Romans*, in those virtuous days, had the strongest impressions of love for their country, and a contempt of every thing that interfered with it. *Fabritius*,

on this occasion, told King *Pyrrhus*, "The *Romans* are all equally admitted to the employments of the state, as she judges us worthy of trust. She knows no distinction between her citizens, but those of virtue and merit. I am so far from repining at my fortune, that I think myself the happiest of men. When I compare myself with the rich, I find a certain satisfaction, and even pride, in that fortune. My little field, when I cultivate it as I ought, supplies me with whatever I want, and even enables me to *lay up* the fruits it produces. Every kind of food is agreeable to my palate, when seasoned by *hunger*. I drink with delight when I *thirst*; and enjoy all the sweetness of *sleep*, when fatigued with toil. I content myself with a *habit*, that covers me from the rigour of winter; and of all the various kind of furniture *necessary*, the meanest, in my opinion, is the most commodious. I should be unreasonably unjust to complain of *fortune*, while she supplies me with every thing that nature requires. If I am incapable of relieving the necessitous, the only advantage the rich can enjoy over me, I can discharge all the duties incumbent on me, to the best of my *ability*: and in what then can my *conscience* condemn me?"

D. This was talking like a man of sense. Had he been a *Christian*, he could have said no more on this head. Was he not considered as a very extraordinary person? To hold great riches so cheap; and live, by choice, like a *poor man*!

F. Such were his notions: nor were they very uncommon, at that period of time, among the *Romans*. He pursued *happiness*: and you see the method he took to obtain it. He gratified himself in the highest of all pleasures, *that of thinking he was acting right*. He sought his own good in the good of his country; and by shewing a noble example of the contempt of riches, devoted himself entirely to her welfare. His manner of living, and his austerity, probably kept his body under, and being free from temptation, he enjoyed a happiness which only the virtuous can form any idea of. Thus, *brave* in the *field of battle*; *brave* in maintaining his *integrity*; *brave* in the *austerity* of his life, and his intrepid virtue; he enjoyed the *hopes of fame*, and most probably the *assurance of immortal happiness after death*. He had not only been at the head of the *Roman armies*, but also an ambassador to foreign princes: nor does it appear that he ever forgot his own importance

importance to the state, whilst he devoted his life to the service of it, particularly by his example of *temperance in peace*; which if imitated properly, would have prevented in future time the downfall of the greatest empire the world then knew.

D. Such rigid virtue could not be exercised in these days, without the imputation of *frenzy*.

F. Upon our plan of social intercourse, it would be hardly practicable. But, as I have said, men may devote their lives to their country's good, yet neglect *no regard due to relations and friends*: and we look up to such as persons of admirable virtue.—*Hilary*, a celebrated philosopher, after the city of *Mezara* was taken, being asked by King *Demetrius*, if he had lost any thing, he answered, “*Nothing; for I carry all my efforts about me*,” meaning his *justice, probity, innocence, and wisdom*.

D. I am convinced that it is more than possible, not to *desire or dread* any thing beyond what *nature* demands; and by trusting in God to esteem death itself as a happiness.

F. Aye, my dear daughter! and taking mankind in their most civilized state, is not such conduct as that of *Fabricius* most glorious? Submission to Providence, in all ages, has been the supreme good of mortals! If *riches* are the root of evil, even to a proverb, and moral evil ought more to be dreaded than *death*, is it not charming, to see the mind of man triumph over the world? Is it not glorious to exercise *temperance* and the moderation of *desire*, and such a love for our country and mankind, as subdues all *evil inclinations*, and reduces them to this standard, to do no harm to any one: to show no evil example; and do good to every one to the utmost of our power? It is in such breasts that Heaven dwells.

D. Every one should think his own happiness united with the *common welfare* of his country, and promote it to the utmost of his power.

F. You may perceive, that in doing this, he would serve his own children, and his friends: he would enjoy the happiness of being *kind and charitable*, and render himself so much the more the darling of the virtuous. Every one wishes to be distinguished: every one wishes to be *happy*. We daily see the vanity of human life, in the persons of those who endeavour to procure a memorial after death: they seek for *riches and titles*, even when they stand on the brink of the grave. But the greater proof they give of such vanity,

the sooner they are forgotten, as insignificant beings.

D. You are a poor man, in the comparison; yet you live at least as well as the *Roman* general seems to have done. But I observe, you share in the misfortunes of your country, as if they were personal and domestic. You look sad or joyful, as the news is good or evil. Most people talk as if they were *indifferent* to such events.

F. Those who offer incense to *ambition or avarice*, think only of their own dear selves. I am not exposed to temptation; therefore the safer. The *Roman* virtue, of which so much is left on record, was frequently carried to a height, which we call *enthusiasm*: yet, with respect to the good of mankind in general, it was as far short of the glories of *Christianity*, as the regard which the *Romans* showed to their imaginary deities, was short of the excellency of our obedience to the laws of the *Messiah*, in whose person shone the fulness of the majesty of the one supreme sovereign and Lord of all!

D. The *heathens*, I presume, could never come up to us when we do our duty. But each pursues his happiness in his own way.

F. Happy it is for those whose way is *right*. You perceive, however, there is in the soul of man, a principle of action which leads him to triumph over his own corruption, and to despise *death itself*, when conscience is on his side.

D. Does not this prove, that he is immortal, and that he must seek his happiness in a state of *immortality*?

F. Yet, notwithstanding what is revealed by the Son of God, in a system so full of peace and love, temporal happiness, and the prospect of immortal glory in the next, which eclipses the most glazing splendor this world can furnish; *wealth* flatters the *concupiscence* of the heart; and men, as I have said, offer incense to it. As the world is constituted, we are constrained to seek such a measure of property, or at least the daily supply of life, as will furnish the conveniencies suited to our respective conditions, and render the character we sustain, be it high or low, as respectable and useful to society as we can. *Indulgence* with regard to the *necessaries of life*, is criminal, as well as *absurd*. But let not your *fancy* roam to torment your heart: let not your senses wander, or seek gratifications at the expence of your conscience.—It is the genuine use of the bounties of Heaven, which makes up a great part of the character of the

the *faithful subject*, the *true friend*, and the *sincere Christian*. Those who do their duty to themselves, are generally befriended by *Providence*; the order of which is extended to all ranks and conditions, and furnishes an *equality* far beyond what is vulgarly attended to or understood. What is lost with respect to the want of *wealth*, is made up by *freedom from temptation*: and as *virtue* is so confessedly our supreme happiness, it is demonstrable from what we daily behold in the conduct and characters of men, that happiness is not confined to any rank or condition. We see that distress is occasionally the common lot of mortals, whether it be the effects of *immoral* conduct, or the inscrutable wisdom of the great Governor of this world, in which virtue is often tried as gold in the furnace, man being *immortal*, and his present life but a small portion of his existence. Consider then, my dear child, in all your searches and longings after *happiness*, that there is *no path to it*, in which *virtue* is not the guide: whether it be over rugged rocks, or delicious lawns, in

respect to the great object in view, *experience* proves, that “her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

D. My good father, I will think on these things, for my own sake, as well as in respect to you; indeed, your words found in my ears, as a voice from heaven!—What a new turn of thought great prosperity might give me, I know not: prone as I am to evil, in my *humble station*, I tremble to think how the glories of this world might ensnare me. But I am under no apprehensions of any change of fortune: and will not renounce my present happiness, by dreaming of That which I may never see. The things which I once fondly thought so *highly* of, since you have given me such lessons, appear comparatively *low*. Methinks I am so much the *nobler* and *richer*, as I am *better informed* of the *nature of virtue and happiness*; and the more *happy*, as I feel myself inspired with *stronger* and *brighter* hopes in the *immortality* of my soul!

## P A R T VI.

*Reflections on the common Mortality of Mankind, with Anecdotes of the Deaths of variety of Persons and Characters.*

## CONVERSATION I.

*Death, in its apparent approaches, nearly the same to youth and age. Its properties. Variety of cause, which damp the desire of life. Innocence the great rampart against the fear of death. Properties in the soul which render death an object of hope. Prayer for a happy death. Different tempers and habits of men, render death more or less formidable to apprehension.*

*D.* ARE the aged so much more apprehensive of death than the young, as to create more painful thoughts?

*F.* Life and death have long been equally poised in my thoughts: they seem as inseparably united; for our decay is surely as much the work of nature, as our progress to maturity. I have considered that, at my time of day, I ought to be *indifferent*, and alienate my affections from the world so far, as to be ready to part with it at the shortest notice. The *youthful* not having had their feast of life, may be supposed to desire it with the most anxiety: but they have generally the most courage; and are therefore best qualified to meet death with *indifference*. In the mean while, time runs his course, and the grave levels all distinctions. The difference therefore does not appear to me so great as you may imagine.

*D.* Without regard to age, what do you think in general?

*F.* My thoughts take in a considerable compass; and I doubt if some of them will please you.

*D.* Why should they not? I am as much interested in the subject, as any of the children

of Eve; and I shall hardly meet with so good a friend as yourself, whose care for me extends even beyond the grave.

*F.* Well, my dear child, hear me patiently, and I will tell you. Death appears to me, as a remedy for many miseries, not curable by other means: it is as *food* to the *hungry*, and *clothes* to the *naked*: whatever our sorrows or afflictions may be; whatever our pains of body, or anguish of mind; death wipes away our *tears*, and puts an end to our *labours*; while the contemplation of it is balm to the soul of him who has a prospect of happiness in a life to come. We are *ever dying*, whilst we *live*: every time we draw our breath, it subtracts from our duration, as much as it *adds* to it.

*D.* I do not comprehend your meaning.

*F.* Why, the longer we live, the more days are added; but doth not every such day bring us the nearer to *death*?

*D.* True: and we ought to grow the *letter and wiser every day*, to answer the true end of living.

*F.* We pray to God to enable us to number, or reckon our days, with this view, that we may

may apply our hearts unto *ourselves*. It is foolish to make a bustle about *life*, without considering the *design* of it; and that we should be temperate in the love of it, is as obvious, as that we should be "*temperate in all things*." We pursue a *variety* of objects, and obtain but *few*; and sometimes receive but little satisfaction when we obtain them; but the wants and necessities of many are so great, such persons may be said rather to *suffer life*, than to *enjoy* it!

D. The miserable, who are languishing in *pain*, oppressed with *misfortunes*, or gleaning with anguish of mind, can surely have but little relish for life!

E. And what do you think of those who enjoy every blessing, *except a thoughtful concern for the preservation of their souls*?

D. They seem to be wretched.

E. It is this alone which can give a true relish to life.—What is the state of those who droop with *melancholy*, by thinking *too ill* of their own condition; or of such as are elevated with presumptuous conceits, and do not see that they walk on the verge of a precipice! Do you, my dear *Mary*, bear life with an *equal mind*; and not vex yourself about that which, at best, can last but a little while. In the great view of our existence through *starry*, *life* is as a sun-beam playing in the air, disappearing as the light withdraws. It is surely a *small object* to those who have *great hopes* beyond the grave; though it is of great moment to them who have no other happiness in prospect than what they find here!

D. Persons in the situation you describe, seem to be more pitiable than those who are afflicted with *pain*, or distressed by *poverty*. Do you apprehend it will administer much to our happiness to be able to view death with indifference?

E. Of all advantages it is the greatest: if we neither desire *life*, nor *fear death*, but as Heaven is pleased to direct, then we may be said to enjoy

that *peace* which the Almighty bestows on us, as the greatest mark of his favour to mortals: this however cannot be the lot of those who are captivated with the dazzling charms of wealth, the fascinating esteem of honours, or any worldly object. Nothing but a *sound judgment*, and an *innocent life*, can secure it to us!

D. But where are we to find those, whose lives are so innocent that they can really smile at death?

E. Recall thyself, *Mary*: you have known some instances: I mean such innocence as consists in a hearty desire of virtue, and a resolute pursuit of such objects as are acceptable in the sight of God. Innocence, without any mixture of guilt, was never found in any of the children of men; except in Him who was *God* as well as *man*!

D. But is there not something exceedingly dreadful to most people in the thought of death?

E. The thought of death is horrible to *evils*. If you have resolution enough to oppose *vices*, you may acquire such a firmness of mind as enabled the brave, in all ages, to meet *death* as a friend; or at worst, as a necessary evil which they must suffer; therefore send up your prayers to heaven for a *happy death* (a).

D. To die the death of the righteous, is the thing most devoutly to be wished for, as the highest blessing. But granting death to be what is vulgarly called an *evil*, we bear many evils with the profoundest resignation; why should we not bear this also with the best grace? It is the last we can suffer on earth.

E. Why not, indeed? It comes from the same hand. Death is a *punishment* inflicted on the children of *Adam*; "in him we all die; for from man came death;" but behold the arm of God extended forth to relieve, and to support us! For although "in *Adam* all die, in *Christ* we shall all be made *alive*." Thus by the

(a) For a happy death.—O eternal God, thou merciful Father of men and angels! I beseech thee arm me with such strength, that the terrors of death may not affright me, nor my spirit be dismayed. Grant that I may triumph in the thought of being delivered from the possibility of offending thee! Thou art gracious, and full of mercy! O give me wisdom to behold with an equal mind all the fleeting joys and transient miseries of the present life, and to look forward beyond the grave to that happy place, where the weary are at rest!—I have offended thee in numberless instances!—I have left undone those things which I ought to have done, and I have done those things which I ought not to have done; and therefore I tremble and am afraid: but thou, Lord, art the spring of mercy, and the stream of universal love, to those who are sorrowful and repent! And thou, blessed Redeemer of the world, who didst pay the ransom for repentant sinners, O direct my steps towards the mansions of *eternal bliss*; and bring me with *joy* into the presence of my *Father* and my *God*!



the all-merciful and wise appointment of the great Parent of mankind, if death must be called an *evil*, *good* comes out of it.

*D.* I apprehend the *love of life* is so natural, that very few can bring themselves to an entire reconciliation to the thoughts of parting with it.

*F.* Entire reconciliation, in the common sense of these words, comprehends too much, when we talk of death, except in particular cases. Many think *justly*, and submit: many do not think. Those who from a dastardly temper suffer a foreboding of death, and are alarmed with every slight disorder, are condemned to live in pain. People of great sensibility are apt to imagine themselves dying on very trifling occasions; but the *firm*, the *truly pious*, and the *brave*, never die in the sense which I am now speaking of. When their hour comes, they *expire*; but death, as an object of terror, seems to have no power over them. Which of these conditions would you chuse?

*D.* That in which there is the least fear. We are told that "*love casteth out fear.*"

*F.* Those who are happy enough to possess their minds with an habitual sense of the presence of God, in every place, with an assurance of his protection; and a steady faith in the promises made, as delivered down to us, in the New Testament: though it may be justly said, *they went out their salvation with fear and trembling*, so far as regards the *awful* condition of mankind with respect to a judgment to come; yet their *hopes* in what *may come after death*, elevate them to a degree, far above painful apprehensions. Those who are actuated most by *fear*, live under the bondage of sin; their very tears being a sinful distrust of the mercies of Heaven. No, my dear child! satisfied as you are what course you ought to steer, banish all terror. Let the tempests of adversity rise; or your thoughts be sometimes agitated by the sickness of your *fancy*, you will find comfort in your breast, that you had one great object in view; and that the righteous God, whom you sought to serve, is *merciful* beyond your scanty powers to fathom.

*D.* I believe that some grow melancholy from the fear of death, hardly knowing the cause.

*F.* So I apprehend: the object of the perfection they aspire at, is placed out of their reach: and not knowing how limited their powers are, they lose the degree of virtue they might enjoy by fixing their thoughts so intensely on the sin-

ful, weak, or foolish part of their character and conduct; and by not rejoicing in their *sorrow* for their sins, they lose the balance of life.

*D.* Rejoicing for sorrow, my father?

*F.* If there is joy in *heaven* over a sinner that truly repents, should there not be joy on *earth* also? And is not the sinner, who forsakes the evil of his ways, to take his share in the joy, by the applause of his own heart?

*D.* You speak of the *good* part of mankind, who are apt to indulge too much *fear*, and too little *hope* in death.

*F.* You must be sensible that there is nothing in *fear*, but what is painful: and we naturally fly from pain. Why should we poor mortals, who have many things to guard against with great precaution, in evils which are *avoidable*, suffer death, which is *unavoidable*, to torment us?

*D.* But does not *fear* come from *education* or *constitution*, as well as from a *sense of guilt*?

*F.* It depends much on habit also. The *mariner*, who professes a sea-life, encounters the *storm* with a more composed spirit than the *landman*, who was never before at sea. The best of us can *blazon death with the tongue*, better than we can *see it with the eye*. Those who talk most of death, are not always the least afraid of it. But still to be at peace with God, and *hope* in his mercy, is a sovereign balm to the soul. It is by *thinking* and *discussing*, that we learn to form true notions of any thing; and many a one has been talked *into courage*. We all adopt *principles*, or rules, right or wrong, according to the books we read, the company we keep, and the measure of our understanding, by which we discern *good* and *evil*: but perhaps the best way to think familiarly of death, is to hold the world in *little estimation*: and this is a lesson we should soon learn, if we duly considered how short and uncertain the tenure of life is, and how pregnant with pain and sorrow.

*D.* But still it is glorious to behold the sun, and be surrounded with the innocent delights which nature furnishes in our present state.

*F.* Elevated with the *vivacity of youth*, or *perfectly* contented, if such perfection is to be found, life is the more desirable: if we employ it innocently, it is joyous.—But, as I have just said, how small a part of mankind pass through life, without a large portion of *pain* and *sorrow*. Granting it is glorious to behold the sun; how much

much more laudus, and I deeply bow  
 my forehead to the face of *His*  
*eternal glory, and to all his glorious centers!*

D. I cannot deny this, my father; I speak  
 from my present feelings; and that so long as  
 life continues, we are bound to cherish it, even  
 when it ceases to be *pleasant*.

E. Where there is a deep conviction, and  
 lively sense of the great truths of Christianity,  
 and a steady expectation of joys in reversion,  
 which *you both not join, nor both not heard, nor*  
*the want of them considered*, it is not possible for  
 the soul to rest a day of such a great station,  
 even though we must require it by passing  
 through the gates of death. A just and true  
*sense of death*, is one reward of a graceful sub-  
 mission to necessity; and the *hopes and expecta-*  
*tions of grace supplied* in a line to come, than  
 we now enjoy, naturally leads to such notions.

D. If something of this kind did not dwell  
 in the heart of every man, what a *dreadful* thing  
 would life be!

E. The God of nature, merciful in all his

works, hath so framed us, our *peace* here must  
 arise from our *faith*, and our *trust in God* for our  
 state *hereafter*: and we should moderate our love  
 of life, by considering that *to live* is a *gift*,  
 but to *die* is a *debt*: and *reluctance* to pay a  
 debt to our Maker, who intends to make us so  
 much the happier by it, is *folly and churlish*.

D. This reasoning is *unanswerable*: but the  
 Almighty, who made us what we are, hath  
 deeply implanted in our nature, such a fondness  
 for life, that I find *no body chafes to part with it*.

E. I beg your pardon: there are cases in which  
 death is *preferable* to life. With respect to the  
*love of life*, and the *fear of death*, these are ge-  
 nerally the deepest impressions which nature  
 hath made on the heart: the foolish are not very  
 sensible of it, because they do not *think*; and  
 the wise, by the force of the *manly courage* which  
 reflection is capable of producing, assisted by the  
 kindness of nature, in keeping death always at  
 a distance, overcome their fears, and banish  
 them.

## CONVERSATION II.

*Computation of the life of man. The vanity of longing for greater length of days than Heaven has appointed. The distinguished kindness of Providence in concealing from us the time of our death, so as to make it always appear distant.*

D. THERE can be no dependence upon a  
 regular course of years: many are cut  
 off at every age; and whether we fear or not,  
 we had need be always *watchful*.

E. I have heard my master talk with great  
 confidence upon this subject, both from his own  
 observation, and from approved calculations  
 made for the purposes of allowing incomes on  
 lives: perhaps it may administer to your virtue  
 to know what I gathered from him concerning  
 the *ordinary duration of life*.

D. I should be glad to know what it is.

E. You have no apprehension, perhaps, that  
 your father is now trading on the *last fifth part*  
 of his stock of life (*a*). You see me chearful and  
 in good spirits, but nature is gradually decaying,  
 and I am *one in four* who is to die in *five years* (*b*).  
 It is not in my power to pronounce that I shall  
 be dead at the end of *five years*; but this I  
 know, that if the whole four should live beyond  
 this time, a greater proportion than *one in some*  
*other four*, upon a general view of the *chance of*  
*life*, will die—as it were in *my place*.

D. I hope, my dear father, that the *fatal hour*  
 may

(a) Of 1000 born, 785 are dead by the age of 50, which is so very near 4 in 5, we may well say that only 1 in 5 remains alive.

(b) From the age of 55 to 60, 33 in 173 die, which is near 1 in 4.

may be more distant from you : these are awful considerations ! Pray what is my chance of dying ?

F. Do you seriously make this inquiry ; and would you draw useful instruction from my answer ? You talk of *fatal hours*, as if *death* were a dreadful calamity.

D. We are apt to speak of it in terms as if it were so. If you tell me of my own chance of life or death, I hope to hear it with the same calmness as you speak of your own ; and knowing so much the more of life, I may learn how to value and employ it well.

F. Then, my dear child, hear me and learn ! “ Nothing is so bold as *truth*, nor so cheerful as *innocence*.” Learn the value of life, from considering the *short* and *uncertain* duration of it. Your chance is *one in five* to die in *fifteen years* (a). If you take a *general view*, so great a part of mankind die in infancy, the duration of life, on the mass of all who are born, is *twenty years* ; or as some compute, but *seventeen*. Look round ! See how the scythe of *death* mows down the children of men. Figure to yourself the procession of human life : observe the *reality* of what is passing before your eyes : behold the *rich* and the *poor* ; the *wise* and the *foolish* ; the *virtuous* and the *wicked* ; those who make much noise, and those who are never heard of, beyond the small circle of a few acquaintance ! they all fall into one common grave, which is *always open*, but *never full* ! The knowledge I now communicate to you, is built on *experience*, and a strict examination of numbers and real events. It is not that each should attempt to know exactly how long he shall live, for this would be highly presumptuous and absurd ; but in general we learn from *facts*, what we cannot otherwise know, or be aware of. Mankind deceive themselves strangely in regard to the length of their days ! Have you not often heard people say, when they approach to sixty, “ *Threescore years ! — O ! this is no age !*”

D. It is not the age, I suppose, at which they think it probable *themselves* shall die ; but I al-

ways suspect, that being *partial*, as well as *judges*, they are partial to themselves. For he that says *sixty is no age*, may not have one year longer to live : and if he lives *ten years* longer, it may appear like a miracle.

F. This proves what I told you before : but we abuse the kindness of Providence, when we put off the work of *repentance* and *amendment*, on the presumption of *living long*. The case stands thus : we know that some live to *threescore years and ten* ; but we know not, or generally do not believe, that half the number of those who reach to *sixty*, will be dead before they come to the age of *seventy* (b).

D. Alas, poor ten years !

F. Aye, *Mary*, — poor indeed ! for how seldom we consider these *ten years* as divided out amongst the number of candidates, in broken fragments, some having only *one* or *two*, although others have *eight* or *nine* : one with another, they hardly obtain above *five* or *six years* of the *ten*.

D. But do not many live to be *four* or *five years* of age ? (c)

F. Very few : only twenty-seven in a thousand born : yet every one may ask, why may not this be *my lot* ? why should not *I* reach the same term ? Many are so unwilling to die, they envy *ignorance*, *poverty*, and *pain*, where there is a prospect of *living* : and it is a yet greater misfortune, when we do not live as if the *present day* might be our *last*, but still consider *death* as remote.

D. The *eldest*, as well as the *youngest* of us, have designs and projects, hopes and expectations, which require time for the completion, perhaps beyond the *chance* of their *continuance* in life.

F. No doubt : and it is well for mankind that it is so, if their lives are *innocent*.

D. Seeing that death will come, the *reprieve* so fondly desired by the *aged*, can remove them but a small distance from death. — But is it *really* true, that only twenty-seven in a thousand born, live to be *four* or *five* ?

F. It

(a) This is founded on 502 of 15 years old, of whom, by the time they reached 30, 94 were dead ; so that this account brings it near to 1 in 5, dying from 15 to 30.

(b) Of 135 (the remainder of 1000 born) being 60 years of age, before ten years are expired, 63 of them die, which is not far short of an half part dying before any one reaches to 70 years.

(c) Of 72 persons (the remainder of 1000 born) being 70 years of age, by the course of mortality, 55 of them die within ten years, and consequently only 27 of the 1000 remain alive at the age of 80.

F. It is certainly so, according to the best accounts. And is not this time enough to live, if we live well, and make our peace with Heaven? And if we do not live well, it is much too long to trouble the world with our bad company. As to *youth*, in the ordinary course of the vegetable world, *green fruit* is often cut off by a blast, by violence, or other various accidents to which it is subject: this is, in some measure, the case of those who die *young*: but as fruit that is ripened by *time*, must in its proper season *fall*, so the *aged must die*. Nature is the husbandman that gathers us all in.

D. Young as I am, I have observed the rapid progress of life, how quickly *infants* pass into *childhood*; *childhood* into *youth*; and *youth* into *manhood*; still running forward towards *their end*.

F. It will not be long ere you will see how *men* slip into *middle age*; then again into what we call *advanced years*; and from thence they soon fall into *old age*. This progression of life, to people of observation, appears amazingly quick! You hear from every one's mouth, "Bless me! is it possible! It seems to be but yesterday such an one was a *child*!" Nor is it less true, that nature keeps nearly an equal pace, as to the numbers which come *into* the world, of both sexes, and the numbers who march *out* of it, at the several stages of life. Does not this circumstance also prove to us, that there is a *God*, who superintends all the affairs of *life* and *death*? Those who are *captivated* with *this world*, or *afraid* of the *next*, generally reckon upon *years*, even when their situation is such, they have but little security for *months*, *weeks*, or *days*: they banish the thoughts of death, as if the putting him *out of their memory*, would hinder *his approach*: when his *fore-runners*, *sickness* or *age* are at their doors, still they unwillingly believe death will follow.

D. He takes such a variety of forms, we cannot well distinguish him, till we feel his dart. Your *calculation of lives* is entirely new to me, and indeed startled me at first: I did not think the chance of my dying was so great; yet I can recollect numbers who have died between the *fifteenth* and *thirtieth* year of their age.

F. I believe it is near the mark. The lesser hazard of middle age, arises from the hardiness and strength acquired by time; and we are less subject to *fevers*, and the effects of the *passions* of the mind, than when we were young.

D. Surely this is a lesson which *youth* ought carefully to learn.

F. It would be productive of happy fruits, if they would *attend* to it; but in the youthful state, we are generally too giddy to see such things in their proper light! In the mean while, the *time of our death* being, for good reasons, concealed from us, every distinct person flatters himself, *he shall not be* of the number who must leave the stage of life, within the ordinary period *experience* points out: and if it were otherwise, it is not probable the affairs of the world would be carried on, in so proper a manner. Providence is indulgent to us, as if it were intended to alleviate the natural abhorrence we have to *death*, and animate our endeavours to take care of *life*, as the choicest blessing; for though every day brings us *nearer* to our end, *death never seems near*: the time being concealed from us, we enjoy this happy turn of mind, and suffer no *fruitless* pain.

D. This is true; and amazing it is to think of!

F. I observed the other day, two of my acquaintance, both far gone in their disease, and both deemed *incurable*: each thought the other would die soon, and openly declared his opinion; but neither seemed to imagine his own death to be near.

D. If they lived well, it was so far happy for them.

F. I mention it as a proof of the mercy of Heaven in making us happy almost to the last hour. Every body should endeavour to make the *present time* comfortable; always living mindful of the *life to come*; not deceiving themselves with vain hopes and fruitless expectations of some distant good, without knowing what the *good* is; what they aim at; or how to come at their object.

## CONVERSATION III.

*The advantages derived to mankind from the shortness of life. Reasons for submitting patiently to the dispensations of Providence. The longer we live, the more we see of men's follies and vices. Our longings after happiness prove our immortality. The power of God displayed in the life of man, and our daily preservation. A prayer in sickness. Advice how to conduct life in respect to death. A prayer for pardon of sins in sickness. The rapid progress of our days. A Christian's title to happiness. The prayer of a good father for his daughter.*

F. OF very little consequence, compared with the *conduct* of it. What does the duration signify, provided the great end for which it was given, be answered? Nature has passed sentence on us all, as much as any judge ever pronounced sentence of death on a *malefactor*: there is no room for *complaint*; and as we are ignorant of the hour of death, the greater is the necessity of keeping ourselves in a state of preparation for it, to be ready at the shortest summons!

D. If life were not so short and uncertain, to what height might not the wickedness of mankind be brought!

F. Aye, my child. It seems to be happy, that life is of no longer duration. If we consider *death*, with regard to its influence on men's lives, we are much *indebted* to it for numberless advantages: it checks and controuls the ravagers of the earth, and the disturbers of the peace of mankind: and whilst it warns us of the danger of *sin*, by the numbers it cuts off in the career of vice; the thought of it *prevents* a thousand crimes, which otherwise would be committed. It reconciles us to the condition of human life, in the unnumbered calamities it is subject to; it calms the throbbings of those hearts, whose true or false tenderness disturbs them; and such, whose spirits, from a thousand causes, feel the daily afflictions that "flesh is heir to." It frees the *captives* from his chains, and dries up the widow's tears; teaching the *humble* to submit with resignation; and those who are torn and with disease and pain, to bear with *patience*. *Hope* assures them they shall be soon relieved!—To learn how to think of death, we should consider

also what there is in *life* to make us *fond* of it. In this view the humble in spirit, and the humble in condition, are not the least happy part of mankind. Examine candidly, and you will find how often we estimate falsely, even the good things of this world. Is it for the sake of riches we so anxiously desire life? These often make themselves wings; and frequently prove the more immediate cause of disease of body, and anguish of mind; creating more *bitter cares* than even *poverty*.—Is it for *honours*? These fade at the *frowns of princes*, or the capricious humour of the people.—Happy for such as you and I, *evils* of this kind cannot reach us!—Is it for the sake of *beauty* we wish to live? This falls not to the lot of many, and some rue the day it was given to themselves or others, being rendered emphatically miserable on this very account; and it is true, even to a proverb, that the *fairest lilies* soonest fade.—Is it *health* that enchanteth? This is a  *blessing indeed*, but it is subject to change, almost as the *weather*; and the *strength* which goes with it, always abates as life draws to its close.

D. These advantages are blessings, and very desirable: it is only when we over-rate their value, and set our hearts upon them, they become *evils*.

F. If we over-value them, in the eye of religion and true wisdom, they are objects of *vainety*. *Innocency* and a virtuous life, are the things most worthy our solicitude. Be virtuous, and your days will wear away with pleasure; and *death* will be to you, only as lying down to rest, and falling into the arms of sleep.

*D.* You give me a pleasing notion of a *life of content*, by thinking of to *calm a death*.

*F.* *Such a life, and such a death, I trust in God you will have.*—You are going into a bad world; yet think not so badly of it, but that you may be *just and good* if you will carefully remember and carry into practice the counsel which I have given you. *My life is passed away like a watch in the night*; yet, compared to the great mass of my fellow-creatures, it hath been *long*. You can only say you *wish to live long*: I have had my *feast of life*; but the longer I live, the more I *feel* my own faults, and see other people's. Some *passion* or *opinion*; some *conscious folly* or *neglect*; some *ambition* wish for the happiness of the public, or the welfare of an individual, has often *dissipated* my breath, and levied a heavy tax upon my *life*.

*D.* You might perhaps condemn yourself for giving way to too much zeal or humanity. “*Be not righteous overmuch*; why shouldst thou destroy thyself?” The same will hold of zeal.

*F.* *Virtue borders on vice*; and the mind should measure its own powers. I no longer flatter myself I shall find any uninterrupted rest, on this side the grave, were I to live *twenty years* longer. I do not consider my situation as any proof that I am uncommonly perverse: Like other men, the longer I live the more I learn. We see and deplore the evils we suffer; and are sometimes so *unreasonable*, as to quarrel with other people for being so much like ourselves.

*D.* This will be my case, I suppose, when I know as much of the world as you do.

*F.* With regard to the duration of life, *Mary*, it was said by a *virtuous heathen* and a great prince, that “if men would reason right, and compute on eternity, they would not be much concerned whether their lives ended *to-morrow*, or a thousand years hence.”

*D.* In the great view of an *everlasting*, what is *time*?—And what is the *time allotted to men*?

*F.* In the *great view of eternity*!—So we phrase it, indeed!—But it is as invisible as the fountain it flows from. We see *God*, in his works; but we comprehend him not! We talk of *eternity*: we have not adequate ideas of *time*. We know that the life of *man* is but a span. Scarcely do we find out what it well means, when we feel it closing, like the approach of night. Divide it into parts, my child, and give

each its *duty*: and thus will you discover its solidity. Let every hour be *profitable* by listening to *good advice*, particularly That which you will find in your *New Testament*: That is the *law of life*. Compassionate the folly and ingratitude with which the world abounds, and in proportion to the *wants* you find, let your *labour* abound. *Never be tired of doing good*. You will not reach the perfection your mind aspires at; but is it not a happiness to press forward, for the prize of your *high calling*, as a faithful disciple of *Christ*, in assured hopes of finding it in the regions beyond the grave?

*D.* *My dear father*, your words are full of *comfort*. I believe no mortal ever attained the degree of perfection he apprehended himself capable of.

*F.* This proves the soul is not at home: it longs for the life to come, where that perfection dwells. All things here below are *mixed*; good is blended with *evil*; we wait for *death*, the great instructor of mankind, before we can know what is meant by true and *unmixed happiness*.

*D.* Still it is a *serious thing to die*.

*F.* And is it not also a *serious thing to live*? We cannot separate *death* from *life*: *foolish* people imagine, that *seriousness* and *joy* are incompatible with each other: they are apt to think that enjoyment consists only in *mirth* or *dissipation*, which of all kinds of joy is the *lowest*, and *least durable*; and when attended by *intemperance*, always leads to *ferrow*.

*D.* But when *all things go well with us*, is it not natural to rejoice that we *live*?

*F.* Beyond dispute: I have acknowledged, that we owe it to the great Giver of all things, who accepts our joyful gratitude in payment of our debt: and I beg you will observe, that in the just estimate of life, things cannot go well with us, unless we consider the tenure by which we hold life. And what is this, but to be *ready to part with it* whenever the great Proprietor shall call for it? Behold his *mercy*! behold it, even in the scanty apprehensions of mortal man! Doth it not dart forth inexhaustible streams of glory? He demands the return of the life which he has given; given as a *probation*; a *trial*; a state of *discipline* to fit and prepare us for the inheritance of a kingdom of immortal happiness, purchased at no less expence than the blood of his own dear Son!

*D.* O my father! you open my mind to a view

view of life, which, though not *new* to me, it surprizes me with *joy*. The apprehensions which hung about my heart seem to be dissipated. Your words fire me with *courage* and *resolution*: Methinks I feel as if the arrows of death were taken out of my bosom, by the *all-healing band of the Son of God*; and the wound cured by those *precious* drops of blood which fell from *his side*!

*E.* Then, *banish your fears*, and be at *rest*: embrace the dispensation of the *gospel*; put your trust in the propitiation made for the sins of the world; lead a sober and godly life; and *death* will be only a passage through a state of *trial* and *trouble*, to a state of *glory* and *happiness*. The only thing of death is *sin*, and the apprehension of punishment for sin. Comfort yourself, I say, under all circumstances. Be never sorrowful as one *without hope*. If *sickness*, *poverty*, or *pain* invade your bed, and draw their dismal curtains round you, open your heart to God (*a*); apply to him with sincerity and confidence; and if you fall a prey to death in the *bloom of youth*, yet light will spring up to you in darkness, and you will still be *safe*. If you should reach a *good old age*, and drop like the *ripened grains of corn*, having seen so many the more years, and beheld so much the more sin and sorrow, as well as piety and joy, you will naturally look forward to something *which is to come*. If you enjoy *health*, shall you have less reason to express your gratitude to the *great Giver of life*? Every day you live, reflect to whom you are indebted, and your thankfulness for life will add piety to your wonder, *how* you are preserved. The wisest man cannot unravel the amazing influence of his *soul* on his *body*; nor how the bodily organs act on his soul. Consider *every morning* you rise from your bed, that it is a resurrection from sleep, the image of *death*; and that you begin another day, added to the number which make up the *sum and amount of life*.—What is it we live by, but the *breath* we draw? And at whose command

is every part of nature? Can a minute pass without our receiving a fresh *reprieve* from *death*? How easily, by a small disorder, may the *ear* cease to do its office; the *eye* to lose its beauty and use! Every power in your soul and body, as you well know, depends on the quality of the air you suck in. Thus *life* seems to be a *perpetual miracle*, and *death* the familiar companion and only master, possessed of the sovereign art of relieving us from every *pain* and *grievance*. How amazed I am when I recollect what racking pain I have sometimes suffered, seeming to threaten immediate dissolution; and yet, by the decree of Heaven, *I live*!—Is not this a blessing? Is not the greatest of all blessings, the *time* afforded us to repent of our sins? Can any thing be more obvious, than that in God we live, and move, and have our being?—It is the appointment of Nature that our *temporal* being should have its *period*, and this material frame *dissolve*! We see the hardest and most resistible wood, stone, and metal, *dying* by time.

*D.* I am perfectly sensible of this: and think how merciful is God, in not cutting us off more frequently when in the rebellious career we run, we act as if the multitude of our transgressions, were a warrant for sin.

*F.* When you are conscious of sin, and who among the children of men, having any portion of virtue, is totally insensible, let your prayers wing their flight to the throne of mercy. In the mean while, enjoy the blessings of your present state with innocence:—bear the afflictions of it with patience, and be humbly reconciled to the important change we must all undergo. Thus you will rise superior to the *fears of death*; and your spirit being framed to the enjoyment of the society above, will rejoice in the summons which calls you to their *blest mansions*.—Mark my words, if you are wise, let it be the rule of your life, to *make up your accounts every night*. Consider, what you have *said* and *done*; nor let your  
thoughts

(*a*) *A prayer in sickness*.—*Most righteous God*, in whose hand is the appointment of life and death, grant I may perceive thy justice and mercy, and look up to thee for *strength* to bear, and grace to profit by my sickness. Let me consider it as a scourge for my sins, and a medicine to heal the diseases of my soul. Grant, O Lord, it may answer these ends, that trusting in thy gracious promises, I may behave myself submissively, patiently, and devoutly; and if it be thy pleasure to restore me to health, let me constantly send up my heart in praise and gratitude to thee, and spend the residue of my days in thy service, and to thy glory. If it is thy will this sickness should be unto *death*, forgive my manifold transgressions; and prepare my spirit, that I may stand accepted before thy throne. Receive me into thy favour, O Father eternal! Look down in mercy from thy throne, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died for the sins of men, and rose again for their redemption!

thoughts go unchastised. You will then be able to state your reckoning fairly; and “if your sins die before you, you will have nothing to do when death comes, but to die.” In a right state of mind, it signifies little whether we die by a slow or a quick death. If you go off by a lingering disorder, pray continually to God for signification (a).

D. Your lessons, I hope, will live in my memory as long as I draw the vital air. Though you and I must part ere long, you will dwell in my heart; and while I lament your absence, I shall rejoice in the recollection of what you said on such and such subjects.

F. You express yourself as if you felt pleasure in hearing me talk. Be assured, whether we live in sorrow or in joy, in good fortune or in bad, death must soon entirely divide us. You perchance may go before you think of it: *I must go soon!* Let us both prepare for That journey, as the *last thing* we shall have to do, before we enter *on our state of immortality*. I need not tell you, that even these transient minutes which I pass with so much pleasure in your company, bring us so much the nearer to our end.—There is a kind of *seeming flow in life*, so far as regards the renewal of health, but in fact it is a *real ebb*; since every moment, I say, brings us nearer to That end, in which the last drop will ebb out, and the fountain be dried up. Consider the goodness of God in *giving you life*, and in offering you happiness. Adore him with a grateful heart! Let your hour come, when it may come, “Be not against the pleasure of the *Most High*: there is no inquisition in the grave, whether you have lived *ten*, or an *hundred*, or a *thousand years*.” And as no one born of woman escapes, live prepared for *your turn*, to be gathered to the *thousands of millions* who are gone before you. And whether you die *young*, or live to *old age*, remember, “that honourable age is not That which standeth in length of time, nor That which is measured by number of years; but *wisdom* is grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age.”

D. *Thousands of millions gone before me!*—Yes, and perhaps *millions of millions!*—O my father, the wisdom here meant surely teaches me to “remember my Creator in these days of my youth;” and apply my heart so diligently to please him, that the joys of heaven, so far as hope provides a *foretaste*, may be always present with me, and *entire* my pursuit.

F. Such provision being made, you will rejoice even in death. It is the *Christian's joy*, that he has not a nominal or *visionary* pretension, but a *substantial title* to everlasting happiness, founded on the promises of the God of *truth*. Be careful so to conduct yourself, that you may not be disinherited for *disobedience!* I charge you to remember, whilst memory holds its office in your mind, that this great truth is confirmed by no less a person than the *Son of God*. Your life cannot be wretched, whilst you remain in the practice of virtue; nor will you look on death, but as the *means of conveyance* to a state of *boundless happiness!*—Learn, I say, from such considerations to *rejoice!*—How highly valuable are you to yourself! How watchful ought you to be of the safety and freedom from pain which you may enjoy in the possession of *virtue*, even in this world.

D. You have often told me, how necessary *courage* is: it must be most so in respect to death.

F. You may judge how a *veteran*, going into the field of battle, enjoys the freedom of his thoughts beyond a young raw foldier: so by a *habit* of obedience to divine laws, you may acquire a superiority over death. And I entreat you will, for your own sake, avoid *fear*; the fear of any thing but *sin*. There is nothing so base, which has not been done to *save life*; though it may have been the cause of *losing it*: Nothing is so *generous* as being superior to the *fear of death*. *Fear* conquers the mind, and makes our days pass in a slavish submission for a scanty portion of temporal felicity; but when the mind is possessed by a *conscious rectitude of will* to serve God, it acquires a degree of strength and

(a) For pardon of sins in sickness.—Hear me, O almighty and most merciful Father, and extend thy goodness to thy servant! Sanctify, I beseech thee, all thy corrections to me, that the sense of my weakness, may add strength to my faith, and seriousness to my repentance. Give me grace so to take this visitation, that I may resign myself entirely to thy will; and whenever my dissolution comes, O remove me to the regions where sickness, pain, and sorrow cannot enter; that I may enjoy thy presence in everlasting glory. This I beg, through the merits and intercession of my blessed Lord and Redeemer, whose blood was spilt for me a miserable sinner!



and vigour, which wrestles with mortality. Our progress towards our perfection, dissipates those fears which first gave death the name of *the king of terrors*.

*D.* This appellation must be acknowledged very proper when applied to those who leave *sin*.

*F.* Fear, like the other passions, must have its object; and with respect to *death*, what can this be, but the apprehensions of future *punishment*? If we are conscious that we live *unfit to die*, is it wonderful we should *fear*? or that *fear* should hold us in *bondage*?

*D.* It seems to be a double calamity to be held as a *captive to sin*; and to be further enslaved by the fear of punishment *for it*.

*F.* But so it is: *virtue* and *pleasure* go together; as *pain* follows close at the heels of *vice*. To the *virtuous*, the change from *life* to *death*, is from a bad state to a good one; and if we give our reason fair play, our doubts will yield to our hopes. The whole rests on this issue; to cultivate our *reason*; to strengthen our *faith*; to endeavour to keep a conscience as void of offence towards God and man, as our *frailties* will admit of; neither *desponding*, because we are *not perfect*; nor becoming *presumptuous* by any false construction of the Scriptures. Conscience, un-

der the guidance of the word of God, must still be the rule of life. My prayer for you and myself, is

*O Almighty Father and sovereign Protector of my life! Thou, in whom all the glories of immortality center! grant that I may live, the remainder of my days, in thy fear, and to thy glory; and at length die the death of the righteous, that my last end may be like his!—Further, I implore thy mercy, O God, to my dear child, the choicest object thou hast been pleased to give me: grant that she may form her life and manners on this great principle, that virtue is the supreme good of mortals here below, in all the several stations which thou hast assigned them, that in thy good time she may also be received into thy glory! This petition I offer at thy throne, O God, in the name, and through the mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross, that we might live for ever!*

*D.* My dear father, Heaven grant your petition!

*F.* Forget not, that although in *Adam* we all die, in *Christ* we all are made *alive*. Let this be your consolation at all times, in the day of sickness, and the hour of death! God preserve thee, my child, and keep thy soul from all harm!

## CONVERSATION IV.

*The folly of deferring our reconciliation to mortality upon a steady principle of belief in the immortality of the soul. Our ignorance of every thing that regards a life to come, beyond what is revealed in the Scriptures; and the satisfaction which may be drawn from thence. The familiarity of death demonstrated by the easy manner in which most people seem to die. The gross folly of neglecting to make wills, from an apprehension of hastening our mortality. Hope in death renders life pleasant.*

*D.* IT is a duty then we owe to our own repose, to divert every *useless thought* of *death*.

*F.* *Useless* thoughts may always be deemed *foolish* thoughts. The great object of mankind is to distinguish what is *useful*, and prefer what is of the greatest consequence to them.

*D.* Most people being fond of life, I believe delude themselves into an opinion that no re-

flexion on death is *useful*, because no reflection can prevent it.

*F.* That is foolish reasoning. They certainly cannot prevent mortality; but they may, in a great measure, and by divine assistance, take out the *sting of it*; which is the chief end for which men should wish to live. One of the most melancholy reflections is, that many having the fullest enjoyment of this world, and filling up  
the

the measure of their desires, being deficient in religion, grow tired of life, and do not cherish it as a  *blessing* : some few even put an end to it by desperate violence, not as some imagine, in  *contempt*, but  *unmindful* of the great Giver of it. You may be assured, that the most fortunate find, that there must be something more than life can furnish, to equal the  *longings of the heart after happiness*. We all wish to  *live long*, with a view to the  *enjoyment of life* ; and yet as  *old age* creeps on, we become disqualified for such enjoyments. And who can say he will live till tomorrow ; or that he shall be more  *virtuous* twenty years hence, than he is to-day ? Time too often brings on more  *guilt* and more  *sorrow* ; yet when it opens new lights upon the soul, to direct our steps, as we approach to the verge of eternity, and reduces the passions to a state of obedience to reason, then it is  *desirable* : but he who trusts that he shall live to be old, for the purpose of regulating his passions, without endeavouring to subdue them  *immediately*, thinks not how little merit he may have, if he succeeds ; and will find that old age hath many passions and infirmities peculiar to itself. The young sinner will certainly become the old sinner, if he lives, and changes not his course.

D. It must be  *foolish*, as well as  *presumptuous*, to defer this  *necessary work*, in expectation of  *long life* !

F. Foolish indeed, to trust one's whole fortune on a bottom, which hath wrecked so many millions ! The only way,  *Money*, of making sure of all the  *good effects* of  *living long*, is to  *live well* ; and to  *live well*, humanly speaking, is in our power ; but to  *live long*, is not in our power. As to  *fame* and  *renown*, which captivate the  *great world*, what are these but the mere whistling of a  *name* ? How short a time destroys such distinctions ! I who am destined to an humble fortune, and now approaching to my end ; if it should please Heaven to afflict me with a stroke of the palsy, or an apoplectic fit ; or if I were labouring with grievous pains of the  *gout*, or the  *stone* ; and at the same time became possessed of an income of a  *thousand*, or if you please,  *ten thousand pounds* a year, what would it avail ? What  *comfort* should I draw from it ? How desirable soever it might appear to those who belong to me, it could have no charms in my eyes !

D. What is it then that makes the  *aged*, and

those who must leave the stage of life very soon, either  *covetous* or  *ambitious* ?

F.  *Pelly* and  *stage* : want of  *sense*, and want of  *faith* ; it is the  *force of habit*, and in both cases, a misapplication of the understanding. But still observe, there are many actions, of which the world judges  *falsely*, and imputes to motives of folly or impiety, when they are frequently the result of  *prudence*, and flow from  *affection* to  *children*. The  *great* may sometimes have a view to the love of their country ; when, to vulgar eyes, their conduct is  *weakness* or  *vicious self-love* : for they may set but little value on such enjoyments, with respect to their own state and condition ; and yet indulge a very rational satisfaction in thinking those whom they love most, may be much the better for them : therefore be not rash in your conclusion : always judge with candour and tenderness ; and consider  *folly* and  *weakness*, in some shape or other, as clinging to all of us  *poor mortals*.

D. I have been lately talking with my friend  *Jane Anguish*. She says, it is not so much the  *love of life*, as the  *fear of death*, that makes so many  *unwilling* to die.

F. I believe she is in the right. “  *That something after death,*” which  *we must die to know*, may be the cause of their uneasiness. We brand  *death* with the odious name of  *tyrant* ; but we are really indebted to him for our  *freedom* from the yoke of life, when it grows burthenfome. Unbelievers consider  *death* merely as depriving us of breath : this falls very short of the true notion of it. You must take in the whole compass of the wonderful dispensation of Providence, respecting us mortals, so far as we know. Those who have faith in the fundamental article of the  *Christian* religion, are persuaded, as I reminded you in our last conversation, that as by  *one man* death came into the world ; by  *another* came the resurrection of the dead.  *Adam*, by his offence, brought death :  *Christ*, by his propitiatory sacrifice and spotless life, brought life and immortality, which are promised to all, without exception, who are obedient to his laws. We are informed of nothing, with certainty, of the state beyond the grave ; except that  *rewards* or  *punishments* will be dispensed in it, for what we have done in this world. These are objects of  *faith*, because we do not  *see* them ; but nothing can be more reasonable to  *believe* : and if we act under the influence of such  *belief*, we shall apply ourselves

ourselves diligently to avoid the *mifery* threatened, and obtain the *happinefs* promised, in the fame manner, and with the fame zeal and affiduity, as if we were not obliged to pafs through the gates of death, to fuffer the one, or enjoy the other.

*D.* In the general view of *death*, I confider it as paffing over from *time* to *eternity*. Virtue, I am convinced, opens the doors to a happy *immortality*; and though attended fometimes with *pains* and *fufferings*, is abundantly recompensed.

*F.* The *fufferings* fhould be confidered as abundantly compensated by the hopes. Your notion is juft; and where there is a manly fenfe of religion, there can be but little pain or fenfibility on account of *death*. Though the *dread* of death is an apprehenfion of fuffering, it is a flame to be terrified with *apprehenfion*, whilft we fee the moft part go calmly off the ftage of life. Think then only of the eflential duty, and pray to God for a *happy death* (*a*).

*D.* I have heard that fome people are fo afraid of dying, they will not even make their *wills*; alledging, that *wills* are the fore-runners of death.

*F.* The not making them, is the *fore-runner* and *companion* of folly. Some die the fooner, from the frequent anxious recollection that they have not difpofed of their worldly concerns. Thofe who fo far neglect their duty, that they cannot bear the thoughts of death without pain, wear out the fprings of life; whereas a calm reconciliation to death, fills the mind with comfort, and gives fuch a relifh to our enjoyments, as prolongs life. Men often terrify themfelves where there is no real caufe of terror; and they *fear death* as *children fear the dark*. Every one pretends to know what life is, and we certainly know that *death* is fomething contrary to *life*; but we cannot precifely tell what it is to die, any more than we can tell at what time of life, or under what circumftances death will come to us. This, however, we are fure of, that it is impoffible, on any rational principle, to

enjoy any confiderable degree of happinefs, if we are *afraid of our own thoughts*; for in thefe only can we find true fatisfaction and comfort; thefe alone can make us truly fenfible of the *bleffing* of life, or enable us to bear the *evils* to which it is fubject. By calm and ferious reflections upon death, we draw out its fting, and obtain a *noble fuperiority over the world*. This feems to be the ready way to acquire a relifh of the enjoyments of life, beyond all the means that wealth or honours can provide.

*D.* If we bring ourfelves to have *hopes* in *death*, greater than we have in *life*, which may eafily be; it *will*, it *muft* make life fo much the pleafanter, from the very confideration of the pleafantnefs of hope.

*F.* Our happinefs here depends on our *hopes*; and thefe rife or fall in proportion to the confcioufnefs of our integrity, and the *finerity* of our defire to pleafe God. Let our condition be what it will, the effect will be the fame, at leaft on the minds of *Chriftians*.

*D.* *Faith*, and a religious life, being the only foundation of happinefs in a life to come, as we decline in piety and goodnefs, I apprehend our *hopes* alfo will decline, and our comforts vanifh.

*F.* Being convinced of this, do *you* ftudy to cherifh and increafe your hope of the *divine favour*, by keeping up a fervent devotional intercourfe with God. Seek earneftly the affiftance of his grace.—Read the Scriptures with attention.—Treafure up the divine truths which are in them revealed. *Attend the table of our Lord*: there folemnly renew your covenant with God. Shew the happy influence of thefe facred exercifes in greater degrees of purity and holinefs. In a word, difcharge your feveral duties *with pleafure*, fo fhall you triumph over the *king of terrors*.

*D.* Days fo fpent, I doubt not, will render my life happy, whilft it opens my mind to the moft joyful expectations in *death*.

(*a*) *For a happy death*.—O God! whofe blefled Son was manifefled, that he might triumph over death, deftroy the works of the devil, and make men heirs of a blifsfal immortality; grant, I befeech thee, that having this hope, I may be purified in body and in foul, and fo conform my life to the precepts of thy gofpel, that finally I may calmly resign my breath to thee, O Father of fpirits, trufting in thy boundlefs mercy, through Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of life and Redeemer of the world!

## CONVERSATION V.

*The comforts of death to true believers. Anecdotes of the deaths of a reprobate—of a careless liver—of a young gentleman who squandered away his health in vicious pursuits, and plunged his father into great distress.*

D. SINCE from the moment we are born, we enter upon an *eternal* state; since *death* is a necessary passage to it, and this transient scene of probation of such small duration; nothing should be so pleasing to the mind as the contemplation of our conduct in it.

F. When we make it such as in all reason it ought to be. Our capacity of imitating the best of mankind we read of, in *their* last hour, is a reflection of the highest moment.

D. Nothing in the world gratifies my reason so much, or fills my mind with such joy, as the assurance that I am pursuing my greatest good; and for the same reason, I find the consideration how I shall behave when I take my final leave of this world, as necessary to the health of my soul, as food to my body.

F. I always receive the highest satisfaction from hearing you talk like a *rational being* and a *Christian*. O my daughter, how happy it would be, if we all attended to our *true interest*! If religion rightly understood, were duly practised, how amiable should we mortals appear in each others eyes!—All would be *peace and harmony*! The time we spend on earth might appear the *shorter*, because it would be the *happier*; but we should not therefore lament the swiftness of its flight, believing that it leads to greater happiness. Taking things as we find them, what shall we say of the *generality* of mankind? We have hardly time to look about us before we die; and yet we squander away *whole years* in a succession of *idleness*, without doing any thing worthy of record, either for the *world*, or even for *ourselves*. I say for *ourselves*; for however insignificant some may imagine themselves to be, in the great view of life, every one who comes into the world, is charged with a commission of the highest importance, in his own person, even

the preservation of an *immortal soul*. At best “we see as through a glass *darkly*.” But of this you may be assured, the more your *faith* and hopes are enlivened, the calmer your mind will be, and in so much the greater splendor will appear these glories of creation, now before your eyes. It is *confidence in God* which rejoices the heart, and dispels the gloom with which *folly* and *iniquity* are so apt to overwhelm us. But tell me truly, *Mary*, have you *really* thought on your pillow, of such subjects, without feeling any mixture of *terror*?

D. You have taught me to *think without fear*. Reflections on death were once frightful to me, but by your pleasing art you have led me by the hand to the verge of *eternity*, and I look forward with an undaunted spirit.

F. Both worlds are objects, in which you have a great interest; this as a means by which you discharge your duty to *God*, preparatory to the *world to come*.

D. In this point of view I survey it, convinced that the more my mind is exalted with love and gratitude towards my Maker, the more comfort I shall receive in the blessings of *the present life*. Nor am I less sensible, that the greater my industry and attention to social duties become, the better I shall answer the designs of Providence in the general happiness of my fellow-creatures.

F. Your observation, *Mary*, might put many to the blush, whose education hath been far superior to yours: but *common-sense* is the best sense, and we are *all reasonable creatures*. Our reasonings, when founded in truth, and supported by experience, will ever stand as a rock, against which iniquity is dashed in pieces. The ways of wisdom are no less ways of pleasantness: but if *all her paths* are peace, where leads the path of *folly* and *iniquity*?

D. To

*D.* To *mifery*. Your age, and your experience, my father, muft have furnifhed you with many ufeful leffons drawn from the lives and deaths of other people. *Example*, joined with *inftruction*, makes a more lafting impreffion than *inftruction* only.—Do you recollect the manner in which any perfons you have known, have taken their leave of this world ?

*F.* It will give me great pleasure to inform you : but you are not to expect fo great a variety in mens characters as is generally imagined.

*D.* When I think of the truths of *Chriftianity* reduced to praftice, on great occafions, the ftory you once told me of our countrywoman Mrs. *Afkew*, occurs to my thoughts. She glorioufly refigned her life, rather than fay fhe thought what fhe did *not* think ; or that fhe *believed*, what fhe conceived to be *fafe*.

*F.* Thofe who fuffer upon a right principle, rejoice that they are counted worthy to fuffer : and to refer their caufe to the judgment of *God*, is furely a higher proof of wifdom than any appeal to an *earthly tribunal*. We fee with our eyes the bounties of Heaven diffufed, the fun fhining upon the *unjuft* as well as the *juft* : but we are equally fatisfied in our hearts that the *diffinction* will be made after the prefent fcene of life is clofed ; and the *applaufe* given where infinite wifdom fhall judge it to be due. I have received great benefit in my own fpiritual concerns, from reflecting on the laft hours of fome of my departed friends and acquaintance : my enquiry concerning them has always been, not how much *money* they died worth, (which is the *ufual queftion*) but how much *virtue* and *religion* they feemed to enjoy, by the fentiments they appeared to entertain, when they were juft launching into *eternity* !

*D.* *Money* is nothing to the dead. You have been a witness to the behaviour of many ; I fhould be glad to know how they behaved.

*F.* Our laft hours, like our latter days, have generally a great affinity with the ordinary courfe of our lives : as we *believe* and *live*, fo for the moft part we *die*, with a greater or leffer mixture of *fear* or *hope*. I could tell you a tale, my daughter, would chill your young blood, or make it fly fo quickly to your heart, as would leave your cheeks pale as the lifelefs corfe. I have been alfo witness to fome fcenes of departing fouls, the relation of which would diffufe a genial warmth throughout your frame, and infpire

you with joy, far beyond the livelielt tranfports of felicity !

*D.* I hope both will have a good effect on my mind.

*F.* The confideration of the departure of the *righteous*, fhould excite your earneft wifhes and endeavours, that your end may be like theirs : while the *fad finifhing fcene* of the wicked teaches you to flee from vice.——You remember our neighbour *John Short*, That miserable man, who appeared to have no fear of *God* before his eyes. He regarded not the inconveniences and difficulties which he brought on others, provided he could fatisfy his own wants, and gratify his own appetites. Though there was nothing felt in his fpeech to *deceive*, yet he had fo much  *cunning*, he impofed upon many : *John* had *wit* in defigning, and *refolution* in executing his projects ; and fo much skill in evading law, he often baffled the attempts of his neighbours to reftrain him. In the midft of his career, he was brought to his death-bed. In this fituation he did not feem to feel any remorse for the paff, nor any dread of the future.

*D.* Had he no fear or apprehenfion of the punifhment appointed for the *wicked* ?

*F.* He appeared to have deftroyed the natural fuggeftions of confcience, by an habitual courfe of fin ; till at length he acquired fuch a degree of obftinacy and blindnefs, it feemed as if he could not difcover himfelf to be in any danger : but *conviction* muft come at laft : if the guilty do not feel it here, the more miserable they will be hereafter.

*D.* What a dreadful fituation was this !

*F.* You knew *Richard* too, they run together the fame courfe ; and he too, for a time, followed all the defires of his heart, but he was not fo obftinate and opinionated. His confcience fmote him ; he was oppreffed, and exceedingly forrowful. When he fell ill, I faw his diftreff upon his countenance, and asked him the reafon of his fadnefs : I fhall never forget his answer. He faid, “ Alas ! my friend, “ the foul is a moft important ferious thing ; “ I have neglected the care of mine. I *feel* “ it now ; and far better it is to feel it here, “ than languifh in *mifery* for ever !” I have reafon to believe *Richard* died a *penitent*.

*D.* You are always ready, my father, to do good offices to others, even at the verge of the grave : I remember your going to fee *young*

*Peter* in his last illness: what was his behaviour?

*F.* *Peter* was a lad of lively parts, and of a promising capacity. He was active and laborious in whatever he undertook; his great blemish was *inconstancy, diligard to truth*, and the modern careless way of living. Convinced of his folly and guilt, his anguish burst forth at the approach of death: At the time you mention he said, "Good God, what have I been doing, and whither am I going!"

*D.* These were good beginnings, and afforded you a fair opportunity of giving him advice: did he send for the minister of our parish?

*F.* Yes; and according to his constant custom, he as readily came: the neglect in this instance is generally owing to the *sick persons* themselves, or to their friends, who consider the minister as the fore-runner of death, and seldom require his assistance, till the sick man has lost the power of *discussing* or *praying*. I have reason to believe *Peter* made his peace with God.—Do you remember young *Wiliam*?

*D.* O, very well!

*F.* When he found his health declining, he began to prepare for another state, and desired the assistance of a reverend gentleman for that purpose, with whom he had many serious conversations upon the nature of *repentance*;—the certainty of *rewards* and *punishments*;—and the happy means of attaining the bliss which God hath promised in his gospel to those who obey his laws.—This pious and friendly intercourse was attended with many happy consequences with regard to his patience, resignation, and contrition. Toward the end of his life, his father came to visit him. The good old man was in great affliction, and the young gentleman looking at him, with tears in his eyes, said, "Weep not, my father; you have ever been kind to me; but contrary to *your* intention, I made a bad use of your kindness: let not *your* sorrow add to my *present distress*!—The ample supply you gave me, has been employed in feeding my passions, and gratifying my appetites. Would to God I could live over again the few past years of my life; but this is a *vain wish*!—God knows my heart; and I have the deepest sense of his mercy!—I embrace the terms which he has offered to sinners! I sincerely repent of my sins,

and trust in the mediation of *Christ*, that my repentance will be accepted.—My days of lawless pleasure now are gone: they are wasted; they are passed away: the remembrance of them stings me to the heart. I look back with *horror*!—but God, who knows *my guilt*, has seen *my sorrows*!—He who scans the heart of man, and weighs his inmost thoughts, beholds my contrition! Could I convey to their knowledge one half the sad story of my conscious guilt, and the griefs which wring my soul, *angels* and *men* would pity my distress! My time grows short—but I am *ready*!—my doubts and anxious fears are ceased!—I trust that my pardon is sealed. I hope for forgiveness at the hands of God, though I have so grievously offended him. O my father, let your prayers be offered at the throne of mercy in my behalf! You, whose tenderness I have experienced from my birth, even to this hour, happy should I have been, could I have made *your old age*!—My dear *Mary*, you change colour!—Why do you look so pale?—

*D.* Don't be surprized, my father: I am much grieved to think of the death of so young a man: surely he was led astray; had he recovered his health, he might have proved himself worthy the esteem of all mankind. I remember him well: I believe I was near ten years of age when he died. Oft as I met him when I passed over the lawn to school, he asked me kindly concerning my health, my improvement in reading and working; and if I could say my prayers. He constantly enquired after *you*: he called you his *friend*, and desired in the kindest terms to be remembered to you. Those new six-pences which now lie wrapped up in my box, you may remember were his present to me. I thought him a good young gentleman: I was pleased with his notice of me; my little heart was full of wishes for his happiness: surely he could not be a *hardened sinner*; he was mild and generous!

*F.* He was indeed a youth of expectation; of a noble, friendly, and humane disposition, with an excellent understanding; but *too large an allowance*, owing to an imprudent indulgence on the part of his *father*, instead of keeping him *out* of vicious company, carried him *into* it; and the tenderness of his nature became a snare to his innocence. The true principles of religion

had

had not been sufficiently infilled into his tender mind, to guard him from *vice*; and he died a victim to it at *twenty-one years of age*. He died however in a happy christian state of mind; he died *repenting*; not that he could sin no longer,

but that he had sinned so long. I believe indeed he departed in a steady hope and expectation of being received into that happy place, where sin and sorrow cannot enter!

## CONVERSATION VI.

*Anecdote of the death of a person who made a great noise, vicious in private life, and seemingly actuated by an excess of pride and vanity, in his public capacity: his political penitential harangue in his last hours. The reflections of a good man in public life on his leaving the world.*

D. THE death of the poor young squire runs in my thoughts. There was another gentleman in this neighbourhood, who made a *greater noise*, whose name I have forgotten; the country people said he also died a penitent, but under very different circumstances.

F. I believe you mean Sir *Benjamin*: his was a distinguished character. After his physicians had pronounced him to be past hope, he addressed his dependents and relations after this manner: "You have heard that my life is despaired of; and I believe I shall die within a very few days. —O death, what art thou?—the Lord have mercy on me! I have lived to be just turned of half a hundred, and a conceited noisy man I have been, particularly since I became possessed of a *large fortune*. What I wanted in *piety* to God, and in *charity* to my neighbour, I attempted to supply by a presumptuous confidence in my *wealth*. It is the weakness and *fervility* of mankind, and perhaps it predominates most in a free commercial country, to shew a peculiar indulgence to men who are esteemed *rich*, whatever they may be in other respects. I took this advantage of *their* folly, and have acted *boldly* without *resolution*, and seemingly determined, even when I knew not what my real object was. I mean, that I have asked what I did not desire to obtain; and solicited for that, the granting of which had probably involved myself and my country in deep distress. The native imperiousness of my temper was increased by *habit*; and my ruling passion and thirst of applause, by the flattery of those who foolishly imagined they

should come in for a share of my *imaginary* glory! In my turn, I have offered the meanest praises to my inferiors; and the more *they* flattered me, the greater follies have I committed. If my conscience had not thwarted me, and my secret fears restrained me, I know not where I should have stooped. I endeavoured to propagate a belief that our government is *tyrannical*; whilst the prudence and lenity, the candour and forbearance which I experienced, put me to the blush: yet, strange to tell, I took *all* occasions to sow discontent, and promote discord; though upon cool reflection I was sensible, that such *example* might operate to the dissolution of all government. The complex frame of our constitution is of such a nature, no one can *govern* by his own *will* and *inclination*: Yet, in these days, the *will* seems to be the law; and that the *doing evil*, with a view to the *good* which may come of it, is a true maxim. But *so it is not*, either *in office* or *out*: be assured from me, who discern the truth as a dying man, that rectitude of will is the first consideration; though it may not seem to avail in all cases. In public life I made no allowance for others; not even for the imperfections inseparable from all human affairs. On the contrary, I strove to *aggravate* every blemish, and to impute crimes, where I knew there were none. I vilified rank and dignity: I defamed and persecuted wantonly with the customary rage of party contests, little attentive to the consequences, whether it raised a rebellion or not, provided I carried my point. I thank God his providence has preserved us; and

and if any good comes from my conduct, that he has converted the *evil* I committed, into *good*. What other satisfaction can I now make you?—Alas, my friends, this is a language you will hardly hear in the warmth of *debate*, or the dissipation of a *banquet*: but *death* undraws the curtain, and exposes the hidden things of the heart. O *vanity*! O *revelation*!—what are ye?—Why have ye *deceived* me? Had I been *poor*, I might have been *humble*, and my humility shewn me things in the calmer lights of mild philosophy and *christian* meekness. Would this have rendered me more penetrable to the arts of corruption? No, surely: that which best secures our innocence, cannot at the same time tempt us to *guilt*. I should have been more independent, because my mind would have been more free. I ought to have wept at the party prejudices, and caprice of others, which *could* not be removed, and never employed any *bad* means to accomplish even a good purpose; nor under a dissimulated love of virtue, have attempted to *destroy* them, whom I knew were labouring to preserve their country. To say it is the *custom* of our nation to act thus, is saying nothing in excuse of my want of charity and uprightness. Had the true honour and glory of my country been my *first* object, I should have been *temperate*: reason demands a patient ear: and the dignity acquired by listening to her voice, even in the extremity of a *just* resentment, supports the character of the *patriot* and the *Christian*, the friend of his country and of human kind!—O God, forgive my offences, and remove the guilt which now oppresses my soul!—He then paused, and looking stedfastly at his friends, he sighed, and renewed his harangue by saying, “I hope it will please the Almighty to inspire *your hearts* with such wisdom, as may enable you to consider *popular applause*, in this country, as the *fancy* of the day, often bestowed on the worst of men. Those who court it, must appear, in the eye of the discerning world, as vain-glorious, turbulent, and weak; and consequently least deserving of it. You will always find, that where the most *sound* prevails, there is the least *sense*; and that such applause is no *critereon* of the sentiments of a nation.—If I am worthy to *advise* you, let one *self-approving hour*, supported by the testimony of a good conscience, be more valuable in your esteem, than the shouts of the people! The

truest expression of regard for the populace, is to give them the highest impressions of government, when they are *not* injured; and to represent their grievances with decency and candour when they *are*. This is the way to govern them happily! Indiscriminate and unjust reproaches of men in office, lay waste all confidence. Such conduct is as dangerous as the most servile flattery which can be offered at the feet of tyranny and oppression. *Insolence* and *adulation* are equally productive of *violence* and *distress*.”

D. What did he mean by the last part?

E. I suppose, that if the *great insult their inferiors*, they rob them of their rights to good treatment; and if they *flatter them* by insidious arts, they will rob themselves; for it is no uncommon event, to see such rights servilely yielded up by the means of flattering the silly mob. He went on, “You will grant, that I have gone greater lengths than any man of my time!—it was not because I had the *best parts*, or the *most courage*, but the *most presumption*, and the *most confidence* in being supported. Yet I had no design to hazard my *person* or *fortune*: If I acted as if I wished to overturn the constitution of my country, I did not *mean* it; for I knew not how my large property could be half so well secured to me; nor how to form any *practicable system* half so good. I have often said, that the vital principles of it were totally worn out: it suited my purpose to say so, but I did not *think* it: I believe you and your children will enjoy many happy days under its benignant influence, unless this leaven of pride corrupts the whole mass. Hurried on by an excess of vanity, under a pretence of *independency*, I became the tool of a boisterous *mob*, whom I durst not disoblige, lest all my mock grandeur should suddenly dissolve. I rested my cause on the issue of their *approbation*; and I might as easily have become the first sacrifice to their *resentments*.—The thirst of dominion, and the pride of conquest is inherent in the human soul; but *individuals*, as well as *nations*, have been frequently undone by their *victories*: and I believe mine would have cost me very dear.—The times are pregnant with faults! We are as naturally querulous, as we are generous and bold; but we aspire at more than Providence seems to allow to mortals; and our appetites increasing with our enjoyments, we grow dissatisfied with indulgence.



gence. Great expensiveness in living, and straining the sinews of property, put invention on the rack for a supply. How often have we seen the barriers of moral obligations broken down, for an individual to get at the means of satisfying his wants; under the pretence of patriotism, endeavouring to sap the foundations of authority, and hazard the throwing down the whole fabric of government!"

*D.* *Politicks* ran so much in his mind, he seemed for a while to forget that he was on the *bed of death*.

*F.* Not so: his sickness roused his mind to a candid confession. Among other things he said, "We are born with the seeds of our mortality, which gradually produce our *natural* dissolution: and the contempt of *just authority*, is the source of *political dissolution*; for in proportion as such contempt is diffused through a nation, it creates a malady in the state, as excess or intemperance produces the diseases in the natural body which accelerate death. Had I acted with temperance and moderation, the love of *God*, and my *country*, would have operated in my heart with united force as one motive: but alas, *religion* had no share in my *politicks*!—What the world will say of me, is of little moment: but you are witnesses to what *I say of myself*, when the secrets of the heart fall from the tongue.—*Historians* will report me differently, as their passions, and the lights which they receive, may direct them. The most candid and judicious will weigh the principles and motives of my actions, and examine what portion of *good* could possibly come from them!—I leave the world with *ferrow*, for the corruption of manners in which others are involved, as well as myself. The *infidelity* that reigns amongst us, and the unmanly dissipation which prevails, equally obstruct *political* and *moral virtues*. And now that the mist of party prejudices is dispelled, and *I behold things as they are*; be witness, that with my latest breath I pray to the almighty Ruler of the world, *O save my country*!—I am going off the theatre of this vain world, to appear in a far different scene, where *truth*, arrayed in all the splendour of omnipotence; and *justice*, clothed in awful majesty, sit enthroned!—O almighty God, forgive my foul offences, and let the *influence* of thy compassion cheer my trembling soul!—My friends, farewell!—Leave me with That reve-

rend gentleman (pointing to his chaplain) and my own meditations; that we may seek, if amidst the mighty stores in heaven, any comfort can be found for *me*."—Here he ended his *harangue* and *confession* to those who attended on his bed.

*D.* Did this poor gentleman, whose head was so full of *politics*, die so soon as he imagined he should?—And was his conduct as faulty, as himself represented it to be?

*F.* He died in a very few days after. As to the nature of his offences towards the *public*, we are not to suppose he intended to aggravate it; a consciousness of guilt, with regard to the general tenor of his life, might add to the stings which he felt. He knew that *truth* and *justice* are due to the *highest*, as well as the *lowest* of mankind; and respect to authority essential to the very existence of *government*, and the happiness of mankind. He might possibly have good grounds for objections to some part of the conduct of others: but not less conscious that he had trespassed grievously, by departing from *truth* and *justice*: and it is not wonderful he should make this confession, and give this relief to his mind.

*D.* Do all fierce party-men in this nation, occasionally act the same part?

*F.* Few see things in so bright a light as Sir *Benjamin* now did; and I hope few err so much. I have told you what notions I entertain of public liberty, and of the contests concerning this great object. In regard to our present subject, I have often heard my master talk of a certain *great* and *good* man, who had been employed in many high offices, and made a considerable figure in the world. In his last hours *he* said, "After so many years experience in business, noise, and splendour, I am convinced that the greatest wisdom is *seriousness*; the best physic, *temperance*; and the best estate, a *good conscience*. Were I to live over again the time I have spent in the world, I would prefer retirement to the court, and the chapel to the palace. Now all things forsake me except my *God*, my *duty*, and my *prayer*!"

*D.* Resolutions and promises extorted by *sickness*, and the sight of danger, are not always to be depended on; but this gentleman was of a different turn from Sir *Benjamin*.

*F.* Judge on the fair side of the question: it

is plain in what light the *shortness* and vanity of life appeared to him, as it does to other men, who have lived long and are wise. They know how much better it is to set the heart,

in our earliest days, upon the pleasures which are *lasting*, than upon the perishing enjoyments of this world!

## CONVERSATION VII.

*Reflections on the duties of Christians with regard to baptism, confirmation, prayer, and the communion, or supper of our Lord, as preparatives for death. Enquiry of a sick gentleman into the nature of the Christian religion, and the scripture account of the fall of man. The reason of impenitence, and the happy effects of disowning with learned and sensible divines.*

F. AYE, my child; from the moment we behold the light, or from the first dawns of reason; even from this early period of our existence, we should learn and practice those duties which fit and prepare us for *death*. This is the only passage to that immortal state of happiness, to which we are born heirs. It is a sad consideration how many act as if they meant to forfeit their inheritance. We generally esteem the *present*, as an age of *politeness*, and in most instances it is so: but with regard to *religion*, you will find many in a very rude and uncultivated state, pretending however to high polished manners. The name of a *Christian* carries with it more dignity and respect to the duties, and most polished offices of humanity, than the world ever knew before, or since the time our Saviour appeared upon the earth. But is there not something of a *savage ingratule*, in those who carelessly pass over the considerations of his *sufferings*, his *death*, or his *doctrines*? These are objects of the most refined civilization: these are objects of a *particular distinguished law of life*, to which we stand bound by every tie, which the thoughts of the heart can suggest. But do you find this to be generally observed? When an infant is *baptized*, especially when our neighbours attend this holy office, do they appear as duly impressed with a sense of its being commanded by *our Saviour*, as an ordinance figuring the mystical washing away of sin? This *mystical*, or figurative washing away of sin, is an emblem of that purity of soul, which our holy religion so strongly recommends.

D. I am afraid this is a note above *common apprehensions*, or rather above the *common practice*, however easy it may be to understand. We seem to require frequent lessons upon this very subject; and perhaps still more on the importance of *confirming our baptismal vow*, particularly signified by *confirmation*, as required by the good order of the Christian church.

F. Certainly nothing can be more agreeable to *common sense*, than that when reason is sufficiently ripened, the baptismal vow made for us in our infancy, should be taken on ourselves, by a formal religious act. But is this neglect any subject of wonder, when we daily see so many depart from the spirit of Christianity, some even to adopt *principles* and *opinions* diametrically opposite to the native *purity* and *humility* of our holy religion? Observe the languor of the spirit of prayer! would not one imagine Christianity was the most lifeless *arsuzj system* the heart of man ever entertained, though the direct contrary is *true*? Do we offer up our souls as a living sacrifice to our Maker?—And with regard to the *supper of our Lord*, which he commemorated *just before his death*; do they frequent his table as if they were really in earnest as his followers? We condemn those who *think* or *talk of Christ* in such terms as denote *enthusiasm*; but what shall we say of those who scarcely ever think of him, or in any part of their lives adhere to the rules which he has laid down? They talk of a *good life*; but whatever their hopes may be in a future state, many a *heathen* has practised more humility, more temperance, chastity, patience, and

and resignation to divine Providence. If they do not think of the peculiar and distinguished properties of the *Christian* religion, as distinguished from a system of mere *mortality*, though it comprehends every moral duty, we can with no propriety call them *Christians*, whatever they may please to call themselves. Not to purpose to do any harm, and sit down contented, *is not doing good*: it is not loving our fellow-creatures, as *Christ* hath loved us.

D. I fear this has been too much the case in all ages, which makes death so terrible to many of us. You flattered me with the hopes of further accounts of persons, from whose behaviour, at the time of their death, I might learn something useful.

F. I have been lately entertained with an account of a gentleman in this neighbourhood, who makes a considerable figure. He sent for the minister of the parish, and talked to him on the subject of religion, with much greater attention than he had been accustomed to. Upon discoursing concerning the scriptural account of the *fall of man*, he said, "I do not rightly understand, whether it was a form in shape as a serpent that deceived *Eve*, or some angelical appearance, which could make such an impression on her." The minister answered, "Some of the learned construe the word, *fiery serpent*; others pretend the original word may be translated, a *flaming angel*: But what doth it signify to the main question? We must suppose *Eve* to have apprehensions like us, in her first state, *sin exempted*. She was made *free*, as we are; and the event proved, that she disobeyed the command of her Creator. Her innocence had not been tainted when the tempter employed his power against her: and That power, we may presume, was *great*, as the design was *dreadful*. To her, the reasoning appeared specious: her *curiosity* was *strong*: her desire of *happiness*, *powerful*: and the deceitfulness of appearances prompted her to do That which was *forbidden*. The account corresponds exactly with what we now see every day transacted in the world, with respect to the *weakness* of the human heart; and how it happens that we *yield* to temptation. As to poor *Adam*, no angel could take a form more captivating to him than his wife fatally possessed. His judgment, as *we* now often experience, was led in chains: it was not deceived, but taken captive by the power of *female charms*."

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D. *Power of female charms!* But still his *weakness* was his crime. He had the power of resisting the importunity to sin.

F. Most undoubtedly; or he would not have been criminal. This learned minister of the gospel went on in his discourse. "The divine compassion for *Adam* was held forth: the almighty wisdom and mercy were displayed in his favour. It is evident from what we *see* or *other* men, and *feel* within ourselves, let the temptation be what it may, God hath given us an ability to wrestle with sin, and a power to conquer. When we give way, we may rally our forces, and by repenting, that we were thus moved to give way, again rear the arm of victory, and through the merits of our great Intercessor, subdue *death* and the *grace*. To doubt of what we *can* do, by the aid of Omnipotence, or of what is proper for man to do, is altogether as absurd, as to dispute whether there be any *revelation*. Every man of candour feels what it is to return to a sense of duty. We were made to be as sensible of *sorrow for sin against God*, as to mourn for any thing else; and nothing can prevent such impressions but *ignorance*, by having been never taught in what sin consists; or *carelessness* with respect to our attention to it. *Pride* and *presumption* often lead men into presumptuous sins against God; but we must discard our *probity* and *sincerity* of heart, before we can cheat ourselves into a *disbelief of Revelation*. We cannot totally efface the impression once received, nor suspend our assent to the eternal difference of *good* and *evil*, as handed down to us in the Scriptures. You are, in a great degree, a proof of this. You have gone on *doubting* and *offending*, *repenting* and *offending* again, till at length it is become a question whether your doubts and offences shall conquer your *heart* and *understanding*, or these subdue your *doubts* and *offences*, and bring you to a *just sense of religion*. Let shame and a true consciousness of guilt take place in your heart, and the darkness and shadow of death, under which you have so often hid yourself, will be dispelled. The *poisoned spider's web* which you have spun, will be broken. God will assist you with his grace! You will perceive comfort arise in your heart: and as *the soul that sinneth shall surely die*, I am authorised to tell you that the soul that duly repenteth of sin, shall live. Hope therefore, *and be at rest*." To this he replied,

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“ You comfort, whilst you condemn me. We cannot possibly judge of things, but by the measure of the powers given us. I do not mean to puzzle you by acute and abstract reasonings, which some learn as the art of *deceiving* and *confounding* themselves, but by plain deductions from the common sense of mankind to receive your advice and assistance.” To this the *reverend* gentleman answered, “ Is this your resolution? To such plain deductions and common sense then do I appeal, and entreat that you will silence the *babble* of reasoning pride, and humble your heart before God. Then shall you see the prospect clear up, and all look bright as the meridian sun. Comfort your spirit, with respect to your prospect of a life to come. Consider this world, and the misfortunes which befall us, both in temporal and spiritual concerns, how easy it is to trace the most part of them to our *folly* or *wickedness*. If God in his *judgments* did not remember *mercy*, how often would our lives become a sacrifice to the malignancy of sin! As in the *natural* world the air is tainted by noxious vapours from lakes and marshes; in the *moral*, the soul is polluted by iniquity. If our crops are blasted, or disease invades our cattle: if floods drown the fruits of the earth, or dryness hardens it like iron, to become unfruitful, it is in the ordinary course of nature, and sometimes happens: in spite of all our precaution we cannot avoid such *natural evils*, as we suppose them to be, for the present: but who can say, *I have committed sin, but I have no fault; I am in no degree criminal?* If we did not sometimes smart under the rod, we might sin without *repentance*, and be lost for ever! But if *sin* is constantly attended with *pain*, to those who are *not lost*, we may thank the great Father of mercies for what we *suffer*, as well as for That which we *enjoy*. He that hath grace to bear patiently

whatever befalls him, and make his sorrow bring forth repentance, is sure to be a gainer, even by his *misfortunes*. If we implore the Almighty to withdraw his *afflicting hand*, it is so far a proof of *reformation*: for who can wilfully continue in his sins, and yet ask for mercy of Him whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity? Were you stripped of all, and as naked as you were born, you brought nothing with you into the world; and when you leave it, you want nothing it can give.—But it is evident, beyond all dispute, that the soul may be rich in the favour and loving kindness of That Being, which cheers in all extremities, and makes even horror smile. From the midst of darkness, and the shadow of death, *comfort* springs up in the breast; and we behold, in the common lot of men, with respect to death, how penitents stand on the high ground, and look forward, cheered with the prospect of the world unknown. *Health* and *strength* are things which in their nature are uncertain, and at best of *short continuance*. The *spring*, the *summer*, the *autumn*, and the *winter* of life press hard on each other, and soon pass away. Let no evil day come when you may say, *you have no pleasure in thinking that you must leave this perturbed scene. Leave it you must*: and if you have hope in heaven’s joys, That heaven lies beyond the grave. The passage to it may look dreadful, but it is *dreadful* in the sense of *unmanly fear* and *unreasonable sorrow*, and only to those whose hopes are clouded by their *sins*, their *carelessness*, or their *distrust*. Let them examine their hearts, and search for the *evil* that is in them. It is a heart of unbelief which generally darkens the prospect, and makes it horrible.”

D. Did the *minister* make any impression?

F. A very good one: this gentleman became a penitent, and lived many years in an exemplary manner.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N    V I I I .

*Anecdote of the death of a libertine in a middle station of life. Enquiry made by a courtier on his death-bed, in relation to the sacred writings. Declaration made by a pious courtier on his death-bed. Men in office, their virtue tried. The sudden death of a boy, and the grief of his mother. Devastation of human life created by war. The happy effect of a benevolent active mind, in the most scanty fortune. Reflections on mortality, and the duties of humanity.*

D. I Have reflected on the circumstances of the gentleman you gave an account of in our last conversation, with much pleasure.

F. The contemplation of the characters and the behaviour of men in the least degree distinguished, when they leave the stage of life, is one of the most interesting concerns of it. Do you remember *Nicholas Tankard*? He maintained a kind of reputation in the world, among a certain class of people, who were not very exact livers themselves; but he was much addicted to pleasure and sensual gratifications, forbidden by the law of *Christ*. He did not understand much of any such law, for he scarce ever looked into the sacred writings; and if he occasionally went to church, it was rather in compliance with custom, than with a spirit of humility to receive instruction: I do not recollect I ever saw him partake of the *Lord's supper*.

D. The world may shew what quarter it pleases; but can such persons be properly called *Christians*? Is not the title *misapplied*?

F. I am afraid he had no just claim to it, either in the course of his life, or at his death. In his last illness, he seemed much confused in thought, and wrapped in gloom and melancholy. Some expressions implying the *fear* of an avenging Judge dropt from him; but he gave no sign of any comfortable expectation, or trust in the blood of a Redeemer.

D. Alas! what a sad condition are they in that live in the forgetfulness of God, who is the only spring of comfort and joy! What a wretched case, to pass their days regardless of a *Saviour*, by whom alone they are enabled to overcome death, and rise to life immortal!

F. Your remark, my dear *Mary*, makes my heart bleed! When I consider what numbers are pursuing the same unhappy course as *Nicholas* so foolishly ran, treasuring up to themselves the vengeance of heaven, I tremble!

D. You was acquainted with Sir *Ralph's* butler, and must have heard the particulars of his master's death.—Was not Sir *Ralph* esteemed a man of great probity?

F. I understood, that a few months before he died, he desired the reverend minister to collect some passages out of the sacred writings, on the plainest and most exact way of making his peace with God; observing, with a sigh, *how few men consider to what end they are born into the world, till they are near the time of leaving it!* Sir *Ralph* had many virtues, but you see how miserably poor he was with all his *wealth*: and how ignorant, with all his *learning*!

D. Is it possible so great a man could be ignorant in so very material and interesting a concern?

F. How could it be otherwise? Can the most ingenious watchmaker make me a pair of shoes so well as our neighbour *Crispin*; or *Crispin* know how to plough and sow so well as myself? The science or business which people have not been used to think of, and never practised, they cannot enter into the spirit of: This is the case of many among the *great*, as well as *little*, in regard to religion. His acquaintance, the generous Sir *Anthony Freeman*, had read the Scriptures with care and attention; and therefore was at no such loss: With his last breath he spoke to his friends these memorable words, "*My good friends! the most valuable bequest I can make*

you, is my entreaty that you will govern your conduct and affections by the will and word of God. I have lived in what is called the highest part of life, yet in me you may behold the end of this world, and all its vanities; to me they are now passing away like a swallow! I repent of all my life, but that part of it which I spent in communion with God, and in doing good!"

D. He was a courtier, it seems; and yet a good man?

F. Do you imagine that courts are so much worse than other places? Office indeed is apt to make men insolent; and there are but few in the world who are much exalted, and possess all the virtues of an humble condition. Yet place can honour men only as they do honour to the place, by discharging the duties of it: and it is always a duty to be humane. Never object to a courtier, merely on account of the office he fills: the prejudices of foolish people, in all countries, make them imagine very absurd things; but it cannot be supposed that any office, in itself honourable, dishonours the man.

D. Do not people at court frequently wear two faces?

F. It would be happy if masks were worn, only by such courtiers as talk a language foreign to their hearts: religion is often made subservient to worldly ends; but this is no more the case at courts than in other places; and neither rulers nor people can flourish, where their morals and manners are corrupted. "If we take away the real awe of religion, all the fidelity and justice necessary to the maintenance of human society, will soon perish, and the whole political frame be dissolved."

D. You think then, that those who are in office have more virtue than those that are out.

F. If office spoiled the morals of all men, there could be no such thing as virtue or justice in any government; but so long as we see things hold together, and that authority and power try men's virtues, we may rather suppose that men in office have the most virtue. I know that the contrary is vulgarly imagined; for public censure taking in very little of what is passing in private life, all the satire falls on men in office.

D. Pray tell me how did Stephen Wild take his leave of the world.

F. He was a remarkable instance of carelessness. Thinking he was on his death-bed, I visited him, and asked him if he thought of God.

I am shocked when I recollect his answer: O, says he, it is not come to That yet.

D. He flattered himself, I suppose, with a continuance in life, and was for putting off the evil hour of repentance (as it is often called) as long as he could.

F. You are right: but how mad is it to trust a business of such importance to that precarious hour! And how weak and foolish was it to imagine, that one Lord have mercy on me! when his breath was departing from him, would avail; and yet this man had been often advised by our worthy curate to read the Scriptures, to pray, and amend his life!

D. Sad end indeed! my blood runs cold when I think of such careless people, whose indifference would make one imagine they had no apprehensions of a judgment to come.

F. Much happier was the untimely death of a poor boy, who fell most unexpectedly! It was a doleful accident which happened the other day to dame Catharine's only son! He was a fine spirited lad, and might have proved a most valuable man; but his activity occasioned his death. He went to the squire's horse-mill to offer his service; and humourously rallying the driver for laziness, leaped on one of the bars of the mill-post as it was working round; and not having looked before he leaped, was in an instant crushed under a beam. His mother being acquainted, came in an agony of grief, and throwing herself on the dead body, cried out, O Jonathan! my son, my son!—Thou wert all my hopes of comfort!—Oft hast thou promised me, that whilst God should give thee life and means to labour, I should never want. O my dear child, my much-lov'd boy, thou art gone from me for ever!

D. This was a melancholy scene, and the mother's case exceedingly pitiable. What part did you take?

F. She was so much agitated, I feared some deadly consequence. I bid her be comforted, and not destroy herself with excess of passion; begging she would leave the body, and do her best to consider that this was the hand of God; that the lad's death seemed to come as it were by lightening from heaven, whither we might presume he was gone: the generous disposition which he was of, securing to him the rewards of his virtue, as he was no longer in any state of temptation, to depart from it: adding, that I would

would endeavour to repair her loss, by being myself as a son, a brother, or a friend to her. Indeed I knew her to be a good woman; I felt great sorrow for her distress, and intended to relieve her.—My last words seemed to make some impression; but whilst she looked at me with a wild surprize, plentiful streams of tears gushed from her eyes. At length, unable to bear this conflict, she swooned; and it was with great difficulty we could bring her to give signs of life.

*D.* Such events should teach us to live prepared for *death*, and likewise not to fix our thoughts too much on the world; since the things of it which we most delight in, may be so easily snatched from *us*, or *we* from them! Could there be a case more dreadful than this!

*F.* Yes, my dear *Mary*: what was this, compared to a *battle* by sea or land, by which great numbers as suddenly become widows and orphans, and parents lament their sons! What do you think of a single ball, which may mow down a score or two of men, or mangle their bodies, and render death more dreadful! yet you hear people talk over their cups, as if war were a very *fine amusement*; and some rejoice at the sound of the trumpet, and the roaring of cannon.

*D.* This I believe; but private *evils* present generally appear as the worst.

*F.* It is true indeed, that we bear evils *past*, and evils *to come*, better than we support the present calamity.

*D.* Pray, my father, what did you intend by saying, *you* would be to her as a son; what can *you* do to serve her?

*F.* As much as her son, he being yet poorer than myself; for either by my hand or heart, my own purse, or by application to others, I hope to obtain some relief for her. I have found such wonderful resources, as hardly to despair of any help in a good cause! The greatest part of mankind act as if poverty were *infectious*; and fear to devote much time in begging for others, lest they should become beggars themselves. But I, who have considered this matter, and see what the condition of human life is, esteem those the true instruments of Providence who act as almoners to the *rich* and *happy*, in behalf of the *poor* and *miserable*.

*D.* Is not the most part of those whose fortunes best enable them to act as such instruments, disinclined to undertake the office?

*F.* The higher the *opulent* are placed, the more they are out of the reach of misery, and the less they know or think of other people's *distress*: this is one of the *calamitous* circumstances which attends wealth, and abundance of the enjoyments of the good things of life.

## CONVERSATION IX.

*Description of a man perplexed in thought in relation to his latter end. The advice given him how to make his peace with God, and form his hopes on reasonable principles, as necessary to faith. Neglect of reading the Sacred Writings, the cause of immorality. Reflections on the sacrament. The necessity of application to a man's own heart to correct the evil of his own ways. The advantages of friendly advice.*

*D.* [ Remember to have heard you talk of *Henry Rich* as a very singular character.

*F.* He was what is commonly called a *sober* man; but like the most part of the world, unwilling even to *think* of *death*.—When he fell ill, he desired to see me.—I was hardly seated when he began to speak. “ My friend, I am glad to see you, and know you are glad when you can administer to the happiness of any fellow-

creature. It is in your power to serve me in the most important circumstance. Pray tell me your thoughts, how I may proceed in my present situation. I have been reputed a *sober* man, and it is true I am not a *drunkard*; but I have been as careless as most other people—and now if it does not please the Almighty to answer my prayers, and remove my disease, I shall probably be soon numbered with the *dead*; and God knows how

how ill I am prepared to die!—I answered him by saying, I was much obliged to him for his good opinion; but as I did not think myself qualified to give him the advice and assistance which he seemed to think necessary to his salvation; I begged him to send for the minister of the parish. He still insisted that I should let him know *my thoughts*; earnestly alledging, that I knew more of him than any clergyman of his acquaintance; and that he did not much like to talk to *strangers*. I rallied him on his notion of *strangers*; and in reply, added, ‘if you insist on knowing my opinion, you must permit me to speak the language of my heart.’ This, he said, was the very thing he desired: I then proceeded, “You, my honoured friend, have a plentiful fortune for a person in your station, and death is bitter to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions, and to a man that hath nothing to vex him, but hath prosperity in all things.—This, however, is not entirely your case, you complain of *sickness* and *anxiety*; you have been accustomed to think of the improvement of your fortune and worldly concerns, as your *first object*; this alone is sufficient to create such a disturbance in your bosom, as will render you the more unhappy, now that you think you must part with them. If it be so, consider that men, ten times richer than yourself, die in common with others; that the use of riches is for the *living* only; that we cannot *buy life*, and can live here only a certain time; and in That time we may outlive the relish of all the stores of pleasure the world can furnish. After suggesting so much, I must add, that I do not see what use it can be of to question you concerning the state of your mind, were you disposed to tell me; but for the very reason you say you do not think yourself prepared for death, I presume you have not attended to all the duties of a *christian*, either in fervent *prayer*, or *faith*; in *zealous hope*, or *tender charity*; in *christian purity*, or *manly temperance*; in such virtues as these you have not been so attentive as you ought: the neglect constitutes crimes common to us, who justly stile ourselves *miserable sinners*! As to your approaching dissolution, my friend, what time can you reckon upon at *your age*? A year is a considerable addition! Who can tell how soon you may think that a few days added to your number, will be next to a miracle! But if you aspire at the *name of a*

*man*, let this be your least concern. Man is *born to die*! Endeavour to *live* as you ought, and leave the duration of life to heaven! I am sorry you have not had a nobler object for your prayer than *length of life*. If you should not recover, you must be sensible that it often pleases the Almighty to make our lives *short*, in order to make them *good*; and, as the best of us, upon the renewal of a lease of life, may renew the lease of sin and folly, we should not be anxious about so precarious an event, but seek a *certain* and permanent good. Submit gracefully to the dispensations of Providence; and if you consider yourself as under the protection of God, you will rejoice even *in death*. The intimations of mortality which you now receive, may be of the highest benefit to you, if you graft *piety* on your *disease*: if, as your life ebbs out, your hopes of happiness flow in, your soul will be invigorated. Whether this *sickness* be intended to prove your *virtue*, or designed as a punishment for your sins, in proportion as you amend your life, you may justly esteem yourself an object of divine mercy!—Permit me also to recommend to you, that whatever you ask, let it be in submission to the supreme wisdom of God; and let it be in full faith and trust, that you shall obtain it: I do not mean by any enthusiastic presumption, but a faithful and humble confidence. Keep your mind steady in this persuasion, and you will think of it with profound humility and hearty repentance. It seems to be impossible to *think* of God, and not be anxious to *please* him; and when you have reason to hope your conduct is acceptable to him, your temper and disposition will be free from peevishness and embarrassment, and become gentle and easy. We are commanded to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation.—You are sensible that the present idea naturally effaces the former, or prevents its operation. When we strongly desire what our reason and religion inform us, we ought to deny ourselves, then it is that we stand bound to oppose the torrent, and divert the current of our passions into its proper channel.”—Upon this he said, “Have we not desires which do no harm to ourselves, or others; and yet we may think them displeasing to God?” I replied, “Then I should incline to the opinion that we really do ourselves harm if we comply with such desires, at the same time considering the wisdom and goodness, as well as the *justice*

of



of God, without indulging any opinions which may lead us into presumption. I hope *mercy* may be found for such doubtful offences as well as for others. The cheat on ourselves is generally to think too well of our condition. The corruption of the heart plays a thousand tricks to deceive us; but it is essential to repentance to suffer pain when we think we have done evil in the sight of God. Weak minded or superstitious persons often carry their apprehensions beyond the limits of reason and true religion; but many more, I say, cheat themselves into a belief that things really evil and tending to greater evil are not offensive."—Upon this he asked me, "Suppose a man returns to a sense of duty, or a virtuous course, feeling within himself a complacency, is not this apt to make him forget his sins and follies past?" I answered, "Men may err in this respect, but the more virtuous their habits are, the more *humble* they will be; and as a consciousness of errors past is the foundation of humility, their sins will consequently recur the oftener to their thoughts to condemn them; and they will the longer mourn for having been so weak or wicked. *Repentance*, my friend, is the first concern of life. It is the supreme object of accountable beings who are in search of happiness. Nothing can be of any consideration compared to it: the felicity which it promises as a reward, and the misery it threatens for the neglect, surpasses all language to describe.—And that a *man* should prefer any object on earth to it, can only prove his defection from reason; and that he is morally insane; call it the corruption of his nature, or what you please, but he acts like a madman."—"Insane," says he: "Do you think men are *mad* when they are wicked?" I replied by another question, "If they are not mad in head nor heart, could they do what we see done every day of our lives? Your business at present is to exert your powers. It is obvious, that vigilance and activity are as necessary in the concerns of the *soul*, as industry and prudence with respect to the body. The more earnest you are in your petitions to God, the more you will *confide* in him; and the deeper sense you will entertain that you truly receive what is most expedient for you, either by some peculiar providence which more immediately shews the hand of heaven; or by such peace and comfort as the mind feels when it rests with sincerity on the *mercy* of God. This is more easy to feel and

understand, than it is to describe: I hope you are sensible of it; and I need not add that *you* ought to lose no time in the application of *all* your powers to the *practical part*.—You perhaps have found the effect; though you may not have traced the cause. A great part of mankind, who think they are inclined to do the *will of God*, take but little pains to know *what his will is*; but being well satisfied that there is a revelation, they sit down contented without reading the *New Testament* with attention. If you will read *this book* as you ought, you will find it the readiest way to accomplish your good purposes.—The most obvious truths are oftentimes the least regarded, as if their being plain and level to the common apprehension of mankind, rendered them the less necessary to their happiness. The less mindful we are of certain duties, particularly *prayer*, the *celebration of the Lord's Supper*, *attention to God*, and *trust* in him, the more *negligent* and *defective* we become in our general conduct, till at length these considerations are blotted out, and remain no longer in legible characters on the mind.—How it fares with you in these particulars, it is not so necessary for me to *enquire*, as for you to *correct*, if your heart reproaches you. A day, an hour, of truly rational and religious conduct, is incomparably more valuable, than a whole life, halting between virtue and vice, wisdom and folly, without any determinate rule by which the course of the thoughts and actions are regulated."—Upon mentioning the *Lord's Supper*, he observed to me, that he had been accustomed to consider it as mysterious, and had therefore contented himself with an indolent evasion of this part of the duty of a Christian. To which I replied, "It is true, my friend, the word *Mystery* occurs often in the Communion Service, and so far as it is expressive of our finite knowledge it creates awe, and I do not presume to say, there is any impropriety in the expression; but still we must revert to infinite wisdom, which never required of man That which is not level to the understanding of the meanest person."

*D.* Can any one pretend not to understand why *Christ* should require us to *remember* him, and why he should require a *token* of such remembrance? This appears to me as a *wonderful proof* of the perverseness of mankind; and of their want of candour, in finding out reasons to be negligent.

*E.* Well observed, *Mary*: it is even so; and I told him, that *mystery* taken in any sense beyond That which I have mentioned, would be *abjurd*, because it would require me to do a thing I did not know the meaning of, or to understand a thing totally unintelligible; neither of which could be for the honour of God.

*D.* Might not the word *mystery* be as well omitted in our liturgy?

*E.* That is not for you nor me to decide upon. It is not the *word*, it is the listlessness; the disinclination to devotion; the secret reserves, and want of a resolution to exert the power of resisting sin, in which the evil consists. They seem to me to act as if they meant to avoid this particular act of Christian devotion, deeming it the most solemn of any other, as if the omission could give a licence for sin.

*D.* Is That possible!

*E.* I satisfied my friend by saying, “I cannot but consider the communion of the Lord’s-tupper as an absolute duty on all who believe in the name of *Christ*, and know the word of God. No words nor sense can possibly be clearer to people who do not take pains to puzzle their own cause. When you consider yourself as a reasoning and accountable being; your present life of so short a duration; and your prospect of eternity; you will stand amazed at your carelessness of conduct, with respect to your eternal state!—The mind is so framed, that whatever its favourite object, or ruling passion is, it takes deep root in the heart, and from thence the habits of our lives are formed. Where can you appeal, but to your own *heart*, with regard to the thoughts of it, and the habits of your life? There you will find the causes of the *good* or *evil* which is in you. Inveterate habits of sin are beautifully described by the question, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin; or the leopard his spots?* Your habits, I believe, are not so inveterate, for the very reason that you now feel so much *compunction*; yet I presume you require the utmost vigilance and strength you are master of, to correct your omissions, or suppress your actual sins.—Reason is given us to be our guide; and we never exercise it so well, as when we *learn* the will of God and *do* it. Yet, obvious as this truth is to every man’s understanding, we know our passions are continually attempting to *bribe* reason to come over to their side: and when faith and conscience do not interpose, I need not say

what the event is. We must thank the great Author of nature for ordering things in such a manner, that wickedness generally condemns itself.—Perhaps it is still more amazing to consider how defective most people are, in the plain and simple operations of the mind, with regard to the *attention* of the soul to God, and its *trust* in him. You who are capable of thinking closely in *other studies*, seem to have been dissipated in this. You tell your children, *Mind your business*—attend to what you are about—and it is supposed that when they do attend, they trust their labours will be rewarded by the accomplishment of the end they have in view. And what are we but *grown children*? The *fewer ideas* we have, the more easy our work becomes, and so far the *unlettered* have the *advantage*. Notwithstanding the falshood and injustice, the foolishness and incapacity of men, which you have experienced, you have often reposed a trust in them: Will you not then trust in the truth and justice, the wisdom and power of God?—It cannot be less obvious to you, that *religion* is difficult, only as the mind is dissipated, or the *passions* oppose the dictates of *reason*. Those who act as if piety towards God would visit their souls, as hunger or thirst affect the body, without any *labour of thought*, have as little *sense*, and probably not so much *piety*, as those visionary devotees, who ascribe all to a marvellous *compulsive agency*, a sensible operation of the Spirit of God; as if *Christ* had done so much for them, they need not do any thing for *themselves*. You comprehend that what I contend for, is a *constant attention to God*, and a *steady trust in him*; presuming that these words convey such a meaning to *common sense*, they cannot be mistaken without great pains and ingenuity.”—This was the amount of what I said to *Henry*.

*D.* Was he offended at your reasoning so liberally, and so home to his condition?

*E.* No: he replied, “I thank you heartily for your friendly expostulation. I acknowledge the force of what you have said; and be assured, I will hereafter request of God only such things as concern my true happiness; and above all, implore him for That *lively attention* and *steady trust* which you have recommended. I feel myself happy in the restraint you have suggested, with regard to my wandering into a wild field of *confused* thoughts. If I can *fix* my mind on objects

objects so comprehensible and interesting, I shall be at rest. I have too often felt myself wretched, for want of a compass to steer by; I mean the *advice of a friend* to suit my *particular situation*, when I might by the means you propose, in the most easy and pleasing manner, have collected my scattered thoughts; and by my *attention to God*, and my *trust in him*, have rendered myself acceptable to him, and enjoyed all the happy effects of his favour."

D. Did he follow your advice in good earnest, or only *reason* upon the propriety of it?

F. He adopted it in *opinion*, and reduced it into *practice*, and soon became a new kind of being. He was more pleasant in his conversation in *sickness*, than he had usually been in *health*: he became every day more indifferent to *life*, regarding it only as he employed it in *doing good*: he assured me more than once, that he wondered at himself, how he could pass away so many years of life in such an *insensibility*, or rather *ignorance* of its greatest joy.

D. Is not this generally the case with mankind, when they live *carelessly* or *dissolutely*?

F. If we are not *attentive* to God, and *trust* in him, we grow *numbed* with irreligious cold-

ness, or a habit of *indolence*, totally inconsistent with the joy and peacefulness which religion inspires. Have I sufficiently explained myself to you?

D. I understand, if I am *attentive* to God, I shall think of his *wisdom* and *power*, his *justice* and his *mercy*: if I *think of him*, I shall also feel his *presence*, and be awed by a sense of *duty* to him; and the more dutiful I am, the more I shall trust in him. My mind will thus acquire *strength*; my temper *cheerfulness*, and my hopes become *joyful*. Religion will not be burdensome to me, but easy and familiar, and prove what our Saviour says of it, "*My yoke is easy, and my burden light.*"

F. My dear *Mary*, I perceive nothing is lost that I tell you.

D. I am *attentive* to what you say, and hope I shall profit by it. But pray, my father, did *Henry* live long after this conversation?

F. He lived above three years, and died in great tranquillity. He was full of the warmest expressions of his gratitude to me whenever we met, and he left me a small legacy as a token of his friendship.

## CONVERSATION X.

*Character of an obstinate conceited man, not abandoned to vice, yet doubtful of a life to come. Anecdotes of the death of an honest man enquiring after future happiness — Of a virtuous young man poetically turned. — Confession of a dying penitent, who had been formerly of a club of infidels.*

F. DID you ever see my cousin *Jacob*?

D. Yes, my father: he called on you the summer before last; I know that he is *dead*: was there any thing particular in *his* character?

F. He was very singular in several instances. I once entertained a most cordial regard for him; nor did I forsake him in his *last hours*: I frequently watched by him, in hopes of an opportunity of making him sensible of his situation. He often talked upon the *nature* and *necessity* of *virtue*, and the obligations of it with respect to *this world*: but alas! when I would have led him to the happy effects of it hereafter, and the

glorious rewards prepared in heaven, through the infinite mercy of God, he seemed cold and unaffected; *reserve* was visible in his countenance, and his expressions were confused, inasmuch that he left me at a loss to know what he thought.

D. Is it possible he could *doubt*?

F. What is it *pride* cannot do? How many walk about this world *mad* with their *own conceits*! In short, when his hour approached, I urged him still *closer*, desiring the satisfaction of hearing if he had hopes of heaven, till at length his speech failed him. I know not

whether I was urged most by *curiosity* or *grief*, when I saw him in a state which appeared to me hopeless; and I begged him, if he could not speak, to hold up his hand as a signal of his hope of heaven.

D. What was the result?

F. He sighed, and shook his *head*, but held not up his *hand*!—Alas, the remembrance of it is painful to my heart!

D. Whence did it arise that he was so *reserved*, or so *hopeless*?

F. Such a flimsy kind of goodness, as carried him no further than to confess virtue to be productive of *good*; and vice of *evil*, in this world; and not to believe that virtue will be *rewarded* with everlasting happiness, is of little value. Could this fire his spirit with a heavenly joy?—*Jacob* might, in most instances, do as he would wish to be done by; and not destroy another man, lest himself should be destroyed in his turn: Not having any violent propensity to unlawful gratifications, he might, from various prudential considerations, refrain from such evils.—He might also, from mere indolence of temper, be fond of peace, and the frame of his mind incline him to be patient: But is this *only*, the true glory and interest of a *man*? I believe it rarely happens, without the help of religion, that such qualities exist in any eminent degree; but it seems to have been the case of our cousin. If he did not act from a sense of obedience to God, nor a belief that *virtue* would be *rewarded* in a life to come; neither could he think that *vice* would be *punished*. What a *flimsy* kind of virtue, I say, must his have been? And accordingly we see that when he came to die, his hope of happiness after death failed him. *Religion* rewards itself in the peace which it affords; but *virtue* without *religion*, is a phantom. True *peace* must spring from our *hopes* in immortal happiness; in the same manner as we are restrained from vice, by the *fear* of punishment. Happy it is when we *are restrained*, though it be from this double consideration of *hope* and *fear*; fear of temporal chastisements and everlasting misery. Poor *Jacob* was crack-brained; or at the bottom, a proud foolish man. I mention him as a very singular instance, amidst the variety of characters there are in the world, and to inform you what care you should take in conversing with

people who are strangers to the advantages which the *true Christian* enjoys over all others.

D. I am sensible that young persons should be particularly on their guard, and more especially women. What was *Jacob's* character when he was a *young man*?

F. We used to think him very conceited; for he treated every body as inferior to himself in understanding. You see how *pride* goes before a fall; and that pretending to be wise, he was at heart a *fool*, though he had too much decency publicly to avow his false principles and belief. As he advanced in years, he increased in obstinacy; and at length he shewed what I have often remarked to you, that we ought not to expect any miracle will be wrought at the time of our death; for as we *live*, so we probably shall *die*!

D. Indeed I believe this generally happens: *Jacob*, with all his pretended virtue, was in a deplorable situation!

F. *Michael* was a very different kind of man from our cousin. Though he had formerly been careless, yet in the issue he changed much for the better. In consequence of the uneasiness which hung on his mind, he applied to the minister for advice and direction how to make his peace with God; and he gave him the following instruction: “When you pray, consider the weight and purport of every word you utter. Read the New Testament; God may, with great propriety, be called the author of this book: the end of its being wrote is the salvation of mankind; it is *truth*, without any mixture of error: it contains the words of eternal life.—If you are persuaded of this, you must consider it as the rule and guide of your life, or you will be as deficient in reason as in religion.”—*Michael* pursued the advice; and having experienced the happy effects of it in the peace and comfort of his mind, he embraced every opportunity that offered of reading some portion of the Sacred Writings, such as he clearly understood, and considered as interesting to his everlasting happiness. He used to say, “When armed with this little book, I stand firm under all the calamities of life, and feel myself proof against the terrors of death. I subdue temptations, and triumph over the evil spirit.” And accordingly he left the world with as much satisfaction, as a philosopher, who has made a temperate meal, rises from table,

table, not seeming to regret the loss of life, in any degree the more for leaving his wealth behind him!

*D.* This was a great happiness indeed: what is necessary to be done, should be performed *gracefully*.

*F.* It is necessary to die, and many die with great composure, and some even in a cheerful humour.—In the mean time, every one amongst us has a peculiar character, which is often carried through life. My master used to speak of a friend of his, who was poetically inclined, and accustomed to speak in a certain harmony of words: The speech he made in his last moments, was remarkable in this, that it chimed in verse. In giving a detail of his own history, he set off a little vain-gloriously, if not pedantically; but he soon corrected himself; and spoke so much from his heart, as men are supposed to do on such occasions, I think you may draw instruction from it. He said,

“ I never found delight in irksome sloth!—  
 Early I rose and late I took my rest,  
 Zealous to serve my country and mankind;  
 I strove by deeds of charity, to heal  
 The deadly wounds which sin and folly make!  
 And now I trust in thy transcendent love,  
 O Lord of life, to heal my *own* disease!—  
 Though oft disturb'd by *passions'* restless force,  
 I paid the tribute of a tortur'd mind;  
 And Heav'n, indulgent to my anxious soul,  
 Cheer'd me with comfort and angelic peace!  
 When *Terror's awful prince* held up his dart,  
 With grief unfeign'd I offer'd up my pray'r;  
 And still thy hand, O Father, interpos'd!  
 'Twas not my arm, nor all the strength which I  
 Could boast, had pow'r to shield me from the  
 grave.  
 Good heav'n inclin'd to give me days of life,  
 To shew my gratitude and purest love,  
 And tell of all thy mercies, O my God!  
 That *God* unseen by eyes of flesh and blood,  
 Who gives all nature energy and life,  
 Reach'd out his friendly and benignant arm,  
 To save me from the false and flattering snares  
 Of *sin*, and all the treach'ry of *earth-born pride*!  
 What other hand could save me from myself,  
 And all the secret lurking paths of vice?  
 Like the rich dress of flowers which charms  
 the eye,  
 And with their fragrance captivates the sense.

I feel the joy which *virtue* ever gives.  
 O let me prostrate fall at Heav'n's high throne,  
 And hope for *mercy* now my life is spent!  
 Thanks be to God that I have liv'd so long!  
 Thanks be to God that now I end my life!  
 O Father, shield my soul from death's dread  
 sting,  
 And let my spirit wing its flight to thee!”—

*D.* I presume he was a good young man his words chimed well: perhaps I may remember them the more easily from their being in verse.

*F.* I hope you *will* remember them, or at least the substance of them. My master once came home full of reflections of a different kind, occasioned by one of his dying acquaintance. The gentleman, in his younger days, had been of a club of *reprobates*, who used to cherish each other's *infidelity*. He had sense enough to separate himself from them many years before his death; however, the remembrance left such impressions on him, that when he came to die, he made some very interesting confessions of his opinion, and the state of his mind. You will easily understand the sense of it, though some of his words may not be familiar to you. After assuring my master of the sincerity of his heart towards God, he said, “ O my friend, I feel the hand of that Being which gives the *air* the power of life and death!—which governs *earth's* ponderous weight; this vast expanded mass which hangs by nothing but the almighty power of God!—I stand amazed at the infinite space around me; at the *waters* which know their bounds; and the fierce raging powers of *fire*; how all are kept controlled! These all combine; or else, by elemental strife, under the influence of the heavenly bodies, produce this vast stupendous harmony! Who made them as they are, or who restrains their force, but That *Almighty Power* which governs all?—I stand amazed when I consider, who first gave being to *man*, this wonderful *epitome of all*; this Being, whose thoughts extend down to the deep abyss, or soar beyond creation's empireal bounds, if bounds there are to Heaven's great workmanship! Who hath done this, or who upholds this frame, but Thou, O self-existent Being, most wise—most just—infinitely good—infinitely merciful—omnipotent God!”—Here he paused—and after

some time he went on: "You know, my friend, that in my younger days, (I thank Heaven they are long since fled) I often listened to the idle tales of real or pretended unbelievers: they affected to be *mighty wise*, while all the nations of the earth, each with their systems of religion, and peculiar modes of worship, agree in this great article of human faith, that there is a *first cause*, one great, one only, *Sovereign Lord of all!*—Where shall we look for any traces of those days, before the almighty mandate issued forth, to form this wondrous frame! But if this handy-work of God is wrought with such transcendent art, such glory and magnificence, what shall we say of the great Author of it?—In the fond searches of the human heart, I have sometimes asked my *busy thoughts*, why are we surrounded with so much *evil*? *Why* was the storm which buried so many thousands in the bosom of the deep?—It was but *death*, the common law of *nature*: perhaps it came a little time before the *ordinary course* she runs. And in reflecting further, I saw this very storm might purge off all those noxious particles which frequently infect the air, and thus ward off the dreadful plagues, or burning fevers, which might destroy a much greater number, and render the houses of more widows desolate.—All things that happen may be resolved into some cause, which proves that God is *wise* and *good*, though man is *weak* and *sinful*; and when he presumes to *find fault*, then most he errs. Short-sighted and defective as he is, within the narrow circle of the government of *kingdoms*, or of *small communities*; of a *family*, and even of *himself*; in his *reasonings*, he would divest Heaven of its power, and invade the province of the Deity! Such are the effects of earth-born pride, when uncontrolled by religion!—Man is like a thing of nought: if a vapour from the earth, or wind from heaven, can level him with the dust, *of what can he boast?*—When *sickness*, with pallid cheeks and hollow voice has paid me a visit, unpleasing as she seem'd in form, she taught me *penitence* and *godly hope*: my thoughts grew cool; my heart more *true* and *candid*: and *piety*, my best and surest friend, soothed my solitary hours, and lulled my soul to rest.—When I looked back, and thought on the partners of my jovial days, and trod their wonted haunts, under their gilded roofs, many a melancholy tear has tickled down my cheek. Thy long since have tried

*what it is to die!*—Heaven grant them pardon!—Some sunk beneath a load of *vice*! Some, stung with deep remorse, finished their days in *heart-piercing woe*!—O thou most merciful, most benignant *Lord of life*, thy precious balm cheered *my spirit*, when in penitential sorrow I applied to thee!"—Again turning towards my master, he continued his discourse: "Conscience, my friend, has often guarded me in the day of danger. Even amidst the noisy mirth of my once-lov'd companions, and in the clamours of their *tumultuous joys*, conscience hath often whispered me, *All is not right*. My heart reproached me, as if *justice*, in her majestic form, already sat in judgment on my soul—*Reason* and *passion* had their alternate sway; but never did I lose sight of those bright paths which lead to heavenly happiness. In spite of all the cordial drops which vice could furnish, I found my cup embittered; nor could I ever taste the sweets of peace and comfort, till I entirely forsook my *wild* companions. For some of them I had great friendship, if friendship could exist devoid of virtue: others were delightful in their conversation: when I attempted to check their folly, they begged to know how long I had been seized with *melancholy*. *Enthusiasm* was their next plea against me: at length I kept aloof, and sought how to secure myself: I saw the approaching day of retribution. It was in vain to argue with *them* on the true principles of *Christian faith*: they had no hopes of bliss beyond the trance of giddy joys, which for the moment scattered all their fears.—Thus happily escaped, I applied myself to the study of my religion; and I am well convinced, that man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain, whenever he departs from That rectitude which is essential to his make; or neglects his immortality!"—After some pause, he continued, "And now, O Lord, what is my hope? Where shall I repose my confidence? To thee I devote my heart, and to the last expiring moment pray for mercy, for his sake who died upon the cross for sinners who repent! O save me for thy mercies sake; and in thy goodness hear my prayer, and spare my *country* and my *friends!*"—After taking a formal leave of his weeping friends, for many loved him much, he died, much regretted by all who knew him.

D. He seems to have spoken from his *heart*, and with uncommon energy.

F. This

*F.* This gentleman was the only man of the whole club, of whom we have any honourable account; or from whose history we can learn any thing useful, except it be to avoid the sad and dreadful effects of *vice* and *infidelity*.

*D.* Such an example of repentance ought the

more to be recorded. We complain of our superiors when they do ill, it is but justice to *praise* them when they *reform*.

*F.* True, my daughter: I hope they will give us more frequent opportunities to follow a *good example*, without hazarding their *own salvation*.

## CONVERSATION XI.

*Anecdote of an English Duke on his death-bed. Reflections on life. Death of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Death of a punster. Death of a ceremonious gentleman. Custom in Russia when people die. Behaviour of Phocion, an Athenian general, when condemned to death. Death of Epaminondas. Behaviour of General Wolfe in his expiring moments.*

*D.* THE stories you have told me, are very interesting, and excite my curiosity: I still wish to hear more. There is something very particular related of a great man in the neighbourhood, who died lately.

*F.* Aye: a noble duke (*a*) who was a *good example*. His hour approaching, he desired a young lady of his family to sing to him the 104th psalm, in which he joined very devoutly and audibly. He requested it to be sung a second time, which the lady performed, though under a great oppression of grief: and you may imagine it was not without great difficulty she performed the task. When she had finished, he calmly resigned his soul to God.

*D.* Was not this a *rare* instance of piety among persons of his high rank and condition?—Was he rich?

*F.* I mention it as singular, and the more the pity! He was immensely rich, and distinguished in the political world; but not therefore the less a *Christian*.

*D.* What did the world say on the occasion?

*F.* Some smiled, as if it were a thing out of character for a *duke*! Nobody could, with any decency, condemn him; though few had piety enough to applaud.

*D.* And fewer still may have the grace to imitate him.

*F.* I hope you will draw instruction from every circumstance, and learn how to shun the evil effects of carelessness. Humanity, as well as *Christian* charity, should lead us to lament the condition of *others*, with regard to a *future state*. And a due sense of *our own*, ought certainly to

employ a greater portion of attention. It is always a duty to pray for the happiness of others, and to promote it by all possible means: this is one way of advancing our own eternal welfare.

*D.* The greatest evil seems to consist in the *thoughtlessness* of mankind.

*F.* They acknowledge the *being of God*, which all nature proclaims: they do not deny there is a state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death, which revelation has laid open to the *Christian* world. The *Mahometan* and the *Pagan*, as well as the *Jew*, profess a belief in such future state, and acknowledge it depends on their conduct in this life, to be happy or not. We are all conscious of our own rationality, and we generally distinguish good from evil; but, like untoward children, we frighten ourselves with imaginary difficulties; and crying, *there is a lion in the way*, where, in reality, there is no other path safe and secure, we grow indolent, indulging those propensities which ensnare our souls.—Whether it is by the tyranny of *custom*, or the want of industry in the only important business of our lives, but we contract a habit of disobedience to our great Parent and Protector, till at length we think very little whether we *please* him or not.

*D.* This seems to be the *short history* of a large portion of mankind.

*F.* In the mean time *death* approaches: but still I fear we think more of what we *shall* lose, than of what we *may* gain. As to the simple act of *dying*; separate it from the consideration of the life to come, it is little more than a *soft sleep*. Some who are afflicted with a troubled mind,

mind, bemoan their condition; others make no lamentations! We cannot certainly tell all that passes in their minds; but we know that *out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh*. Indulgent Nature, or Divine Goodness, call it by what name we please, prepares us gently for death. As far as I can observe, it is the *surviving* that *weep*, not those who are on the verge of eternity. I have already communicated to you many thoughts on this subject; and must add, there is a peculiar happiness in a cheerful temper demonstrated even in *death*. Many who were distinguished for facetiousness, have maintained their character to the last breath.

*D.* Can you recollect any instances of this kind?

*F.* I remember more than one. In days of less politeness, *Mary*, it was a *custom*, even among *scholars*, to torture words, and put common sense on the rack, to make a jingle of mere sounds, or false similitudes, which they called by the name of *punning*. It is said that a person of this cast, being on his death-bed, a cordial was offered to him, and he was pressed to take, *were it only one swallow*; he answered, "*One swallow never makes a summer*," and immediately expired.

*D.* This was however a decent pun.

*F.* It was a more respectful fancy of a great man of our time (*a*), who in his last hour said to his friends, in the height of good humour, "*Hill, my friends, I am going over to the majority!*"

*D.* What did he mean?

*F.* This was in allusion to his situation of being then of the *minority*, or side in opposition to the ministers; considering also the greater portion of mankind who inhabit the regions beyond the grave. This gentleman was distinguished for his probity and candour, with much application, and a superiority of understanding; yet politically disgusted. One would imagine he had lived long enough, to look down on the world, majorities, and minorities, as little things.

*D.* I should judge that he was a man of virtue and good humour by the expression of his reconciliation to death.

*F.* You may, perhaps, be equally surprized at the complaisance of the gentleman, who being suddenly attacked by a mortal disorder, sent his excuse to his friend with whom he was engaged to have dined on that day, in these fami-

liar words, "*I cannot have the pleasure of waiting on you to-day, for I am going to die.*"—This brings to my mind a custom practised in *Russia* on the death of a person: they send notice to his friends, to let them know that he wished them a long life, or, as they term it, *bid them live long*: his relations thus giving notice of his decease, and supposing that he *thought* of his acquaintance in his last hours. It is natural to imagine, when a good man leaves the world in friendship with it, he may wish such a communication should be made.

*D.* Would not this, were it practised, appear fantastical amongst us?

*F.* Where refinements take place, and the simple paths of friendship and truth are in a great measure departed from, I fear it might be derided; yet this custom carries with it something generous, friendly, and benevolent. If we view life from a true eminence, we shall adopt good principles, and adhere to them, even if we should be condemned to death, by the mistaken judgment or iniquity of others. This hath been the case of many distinguished persons in all ages, who have preserved their *good humour*, as well as their piety, to the last.—I have read of *Phocion*, a great and good man, in ancient days. He was a general at *Athens*, the renowned city where our great *St. Paul* preached to the people. When they were leading him to death, one of the rabble spit on him; upon which he called, with the authority he had been used to, "Is no one at hand to teach That fellow how to behave himself?" A person of inferior condition, who was going with him to execution, bemoaning himself unmanfully, he asked him, "Is it no consolation to such a man as thou art, to die with *Phocion*?" His intimate friend *Nicoles*, being under the same sentence, desired he might die first: *Phocion* said, "This is a difficult request indeed; but I never denied you any thing, and therefore I will not refuse you this." Being asked what commands he had for his son, he answered, "Tell him my commands are, that he should forget this injury done to me by the *Athenians*,"—and then died with all the tranquillity which innocence and resolution can inspire.

*D.* Was he accused falsely?

*F.* Those who made a crime of his political principles, were afterwards put to death themselves, and his very murderers paid honour to his memory.



memory.—*Epaminondas*, a general at *Thebes*, having received a mortal stab in battle, and the sword remaining in his body, would not suffer it to be drawn out, till he had received intelligence that his troops had obtained the victory; and then he said, “This is not the end of my life, my fellow-soldiers; it is now your *Epaminondas* is *born*, who dies in so much glory.”

*D.* Have we not some great captains of our own as good and famous as these?

*F.* In those days, it seems that philosophy and military glory kept a more equal pace: but we find many strong proofs of higher and more generous sentiments in the characters of brave *Christians* of our own country: I hardly believe any nation ever exceeded ours. General *Wolfe* having executed a military plan at *Quebec*, conducted with the greatest wisdom and most consummate

bravery, received a mortal wound: while his breath yet remained, he heard it said, *they fly*: he asked, “who flies?” when he was told the enemy, he said, “Then I die contentedly;” and he expired, as it were in the arms of victory, crowned by virtue.

*D.* Was he as much distinguished for his religion as his bravery?

*F.* I have no reason to believe but that he was a *good man*. Soldiers, from the nature of their occupation, ought to live, if possible, in a more constant readiness for death than any other class of mankind, though I am afraid this is not always the case. From acting in a crowd, they are apt to become thoughtless of what may happen to them, either in this world or the next.—I mention these instances only to prove in what an easy familiar manner some men die.

## CONVERSATION XII.

*Anecdote of Sir Thomas More on occasion of his death.—Dying words of a clergyman who had been successful in promoting the duty of receiving the sacrament. Death of Trueman’s master—his life and character; his generosity to his faithful servant.*

*F.* WE need not go out of our own country for instances of reconciliation to death. Those who have died by the hands of the executioner, on account of their principles, and in the firm expectations of the rewards of a good conscience, have had more than a common motive to behave manfully. A celebrated statesman of our country, *Sir Thomas More*, is distinguished for his good humour. He expressed himself on the occasion of his exit with a peculiar jocoseness, by telling the executioner, “You must take care not to hurt my beard; your commission extends only to the cutting off my head:” and it seemed as if the severing his head from his body was not a circumstance which in the least disquieted his mind: he did not shew any unusual degree of sorrow or concern on the occasion, not appearing to be in the least dejected or terrified.

*D.* What was *Sir Thomas’s* crime.

*F.* He disputed the regal supremacy, for which he was brought to the block; not having wit nor good-humour enough to discover upon what basis true *Christianity* stood, independant of *pope* or *king*. He seems to have been an honest and a pious man,

yet not *patient* enough to observe how *time* discovers *truth*; and Providence accomplishes the greatest ends by the *passions*, as well as the *understandings* of mankind. A conscious superiority of genius, a common fault among *politicians*, seems to have cherished a pride and vanity of heart in him, which operated against the humility which his religion might have taught him; giving evidence of the depravity for which the best so justly complain: and we may with as much truth add, that no human character is perfect.

*D.* Are these instances of jocularity certain proofs of a true preparation for *death*, and confirmed expectations of happiness in another state?

*F.* In general I think they are *strong* evidence of *hope*. Gaiety of temper only, may prove that as a man lives without reflecting on his end, so he may die in mere levity and childish carelessness. One dies in great composure, as a true effect of *virtue*; another doing the same, may prove that he is *mad*.

*D.* But where there is a consciousness of a well-spent life, it is not wonderful the prospect

of eternity should be pleasing! If people in common life were to affect this manner, it might be attended with evil consequences; and whether their cause be good or bad, they might think more of the opinion of the world, than of *repentance* for their sins.

F. Do not be alarmed, my child: our natural fears of death are sufficient guards against any improper imitation of such examples; I dare say there are many proofs of greatness of mind, in common life, more than are recorded in story. These instances seem to teach us to triumph over death; at least they point out the advantages of a cheerful temper.—No behaviour in the last moments of life, affords me greater satisfaction, than that of a *clergyman*; the subject of whose joy turned upon his success in *converting domestics to a sense of their duty, with regard to the supper of our Lord*. You remember my reasonings and complaints on this subject, and how self-evident it appeared, that all doubts and fears concerning it, were founded in *stupid ignorance, or childish carelessness (a)*. This judicious minister of the gospel, who may be justly stiled a true disciple of our Lord, acknowledged, that for many years of his life, he had been remiss in not recommending this part of *Christian duty*. Being warmed with a true remembrance of his great Lord and Master, before whom he was going to appear, he made this declaration on the subject of our Lord's supper. "According to the best of my observation, many are alarmed at the words in our translation, *eats and drinks damnation to himself, if he receives unworthily*; but this passage is so easily explained, it is next to impossible for any person of common-sense not to see that it related to the *Corinthians*, who converted this supper of our Lord into a common meal, at which they debauched themselves with excess. Our neglect arises from another cause: it is the fault of such as myself, who have been remiss in their duty, by not urging this doctrine home, with zeal and strength of persuasion, not *occasionally only*, but with unremitting labour. Too often and iniquity of heart hath led many to imagine, that the *commemoration* will be some restraint upon them, therefore they do not chuse to *receive*. They do not openly avow it; but they secretly rest upon this principle. Some are governed merely by chance, without thinking at all; or imagine, that after receiving the Lord's

supper; the sins which they commit will become the more sinful. Though they acknowledge they labour under a sense of sin, they neglect this method to ease themselves of the burthen. What would any one think of the person who should say, I will not attempt to cure myself of the *cholic*, which pains me much, and may kill me if I neglect it, lest it should turn to the gout in my stomach? Good God! what any creature, endued with reason, and exercising the faculties of a man, should, in a matter of such vast importance, *argue* so unwisely, and *act* so foolishly! We give a solemn assurance at the table of our Lord, that we mean to lead a new life. Now what is this but a second baptism, or a *confirmation* of our baptismal vow? In consequence of this act we have really a deeper sense of the transgression *when* we sin, is not this the very motive which urges us to exert our powers to *prevent* sinning, to keep the mind in awe, and to implore the mercies of Heaven when we offend?—Every child may understand this to be a happy circumstance, as it naturally tends to *prevent sin*; and may, in the course of time, produce as *sinless* a state, as human nature is capable of. No one can be so senseless as to imagine, because they were obedient to their Lord and Master; and at a certain time did what he commanded them to do in remembrance of him, that for *this reason* he will resent their conduct the more, and not plead their cause at the throne of heaven, if they transgress again, although they should again repent. We may lose our souls, if we persist in presumptuous offences; but we shall not lose them, merely because we were pious and obedient at a certain time.—They must be very little acquainted with the world, who do not know that the lives of the best of men are a mixture of *good* and *evil*: no man is *sinless*. This matter, therefore, rests upon the dictates of common sense; it depends on the circumstance, whether the party *doubting* or *offending*, thinks upon the whole, that it is his interest and duty to follow the *master* he professes to serve, or not; remembering, that if he does *not* follow him, he must shew him the highest affront, and disobey his commands."

D. Did he reason thus on his death-bed? He must have had his subject much at heart.

F. So it seems: he went on thus with his argument: "If at the moment we *Christians*

are

are convinced that our Lord and Redeemer is giving the highest proof of the *greatest love for us*, we treat him *disrespectfully*, and neglect his commands, do we not act monstrously foolishly and ungratefully?"—Then addressing himself in a more particular manner to his *own servants*, he said, "By such kind of arguments, I prevailed at last; and I have received a satisfaction far beyond any other my life affords; a satisfaction which now fills my heart with joy and gladness, in that I have seen fifty or sixty domestics in livery, and others, who were long accustomed to neglect this duty, appear at one time, at the communion-table of my church: This was the thing I wished to *live* to behold.—And now, O God, let thy servant depart in peace!—With my last expiring breath, I charge you all to remember your great Lord and Master, in the way he hath commanded you to remember *him*, that *he may remember you*, on That day when he shall appear arrayed in all the majesty and glory of the Deity!"

*D.* This indeed was a subject of joy to a good man, even in death!—O my father, it is a sad story that so few attend the table of our Lord! But I hope our obedience in this instance, will hereafter be no *wonder*; and that the common duty of *Christians*, will be familiar to people of all conditions in life.

*F.* *Poverty* can never be pleaded in excuse for impiety; and those who are not born to fortunes, cannot be in their right minds, if they refuse the riches of the mercies of God. This will endure when the fashion of the present world is passed away; and all distinctions lost, but that of everlasting happiness to the *good and virtuous*, and everlasting misery to the *children of disobedience*. I am glad, my daughter, to hear you express yourself so earnestly on this *interesting* subject. May the God of mercy keep you in his remembrance, that you may never forget, neither the sufferings, nor the cause of the sufferings of our crucified Lord! And so long as it shall please the Lord of life to preserve you from the grave, I hope you will never neglect this sacrifice of gratitude and praise; nor cease to commemorate the death of so mighty and good a friend, in the way which he hath commanded!

*D.* I will follow this worthy divine, in his precept and example, to the utmost of my power.—You mentioned the other day your *master's*

death; how did *he* take his leave of the world? and what was his opinion of it?

*F.* In his days of health he used to say, "I have lived long enough to see mankind in motion each other and themselves, in a manner oftentimes so shameful, I know not how to relate it. The evil is inherent in our nature, and will show itself in our passions and perverse dispositions: but however this may shock the reason of a philosopher, a Christian, or a man of common sense, one of the most melancholy considerations is the *futile* *impositions* which are introduced under the name and sanction of *religion*. All the trumpery of *Romish* relics which I have seen abroad, intended to awe the *vulgar* with reverence, is so far from being of service to the cause of *truth* and *religion*, it serves the cause of *falsehood* and *impiety*. Such pageantry in this enlightened age of Christianity, is horrible *wickedness*, or the *tyranny of custom* to those who believe it: but mankind are fond of being abused; the prejudices of education are often invincible: and if those in authority, who see them, are afraid to attempt the correction, how is the world to be amended? Some become infidels, and think it of no consequence to their happiness to *undecieve* the vulgar. We see amongst ourselves variety of *sects* and *opinions*, and many so zealous, they would die rather than forsake them. For my own part, I am as well satisfied as they are; and though I see errors in practice, I am satisfied that the *Anglican* church is the most pure and true, and the most sensible mode of faith that exists in the world. When I say the most sensible, I mean That which harmonizes most with my reason. I endeavour to render my being a uniform and consistent series of *thought* and *action*. My first concern is to lead the blind in morals, and preserve their souls by every mode of instruction I can devise. I then take care their bodies shall be nourished by food and raiment, and a house to cover them; and that these things should be procured by the means of their own labour and industry: by *taking care*, I mean, doing my best endeavours. In the mean time, if I can procure for myself the conveniences of my rank and station, with moderate cares, mixed with cheerful diversions, and preserve my soul from impurity, I live in expectation, that as my days ebb out, my hopes in a life to come will increase. You are a younger

man, *Thomas*; I shall wish, when I die, to make the remainder of your life easy. In the mean while, I know you will consult my pleasure on principle; for I perceive you are then most happy, when you see me so. I dare say you would rather go to plough, than serve some of my acquaintance, who have so far lost their wits, they do not consider religion as the one thing needful; but spend their time in an eager pursuit of *pleasure*, without being ever *pleased*. Those who are of the most lively disposition, you may be induced to think are the most happy, *good spirits* and *good humour* being the next thing to a *good* or a *pious mind*; but where this is wanting, I esteem my friends as *insane*, and hope they will return to their senses.—But when I consider how often I have resolved, and re-resolved, and again fallen into the same *errors*, *infirmities*, and *faults*, I might say, *sins*; I have had just the same reason to be *ashamed of myself*. I am sure the defections from reason which I have often seen, are proofs of madness, whether it be of the *head* or the *heart*. You have as clear comprehensions of the nature of the religion you profess, as most men of much superior education; and you know what use to make of your knowledge. I do not mean but that you have your faults; but you contend with them, like a man who aspires at heaven. Forget me not in your prayers.”——Thus would he talk; for with all his *infirmities*, his *mind* was moral, and his *heart* overflowed with humanity and love for his fellow-creatures!

*D.* Few masters entertain such an opinion of any of their servants; and perhaps few have the fortune to be served by one, entitled to so good an opinion: but how did he go off the stage?

*F.* He died without any parade. During his illness, he commanded me, more than once, to read to him certain parts of the *New Testament*, and likewise *Sherlock on death*. Within a fortnight he received the sacrament twice or thrice, and expressed great satisfaction upon these occasions, in his grateful remembrance of this solemn propitiatory sacrifice; declaring himself ready to follow the steps of his *crucified Lord*.—Finding his last hour approaching very fast, he commanded me to sit down by his bed-side, and after some pause, he said, “*Trueman*, as the world goes, you are an honest man, and I believe more ambitious of being a *Christian*, than you are of any honour:

You are in the right: you see in me, what slender footing the most cautious and thoughtful have; if I were worth a *million*, would it signify any thing to me now? And as to other people, whether *they* or *I* leave great wealth to posterity, the good is the same. I am going to try what it is to live in that unembodied state, in which true *Christians* have such a steady faith: it is therefore necessary I should put *my house in order*.—I think you will make a good farmer, and may live many happy years, and breed up your *daughter* in the fear of God!—The greatest prince on earth cannot give her so good a dowry. I have left you a *stock* to begin with.—I have often spoken of you as *my friend*, as well as *my servant*; and I have found but few men in the world who have deserved the name so well. I believe your prayers are heard; therefore I hope you do not forget *me*, who have daily solicited Heaven in *your behalf*. God preserve you, and make you happy in this world, and in That, to which I am going; where, perhaps, we shall meet again. We have both *endeavoured* to be faithful to *our common Lord and Master*, in whose blood we trust. For the *rest*, I can tell you nothing of any moment, but what you are perfectly acquainted with. You know, *Thomas*, that I have many *faults*, many *infirmities*, many *sins*; but God is infinite in his mercies! I have not been one of the greatest slaves to the caprice of this poor world; nor so anxious to be well spoken of, as to do well.”

*D.* Was this true? I believe the contrary happens to the greater part of mankind.

*F.* It may be so: his infirmities were not all level to vulgar eyes; but neither was his heart open to them. He languished with the love of *virtue*; and no man could weep with more sincerity than himself, when he saw her in distress: and though he mourned over the *vicious*, his heart revolted against their conduct.—On this occasion, as I was about to tell you, regardless of the ordinary distinctions of *master* and *servant*, he prest my hand, and said, “My honest friend, and faithful attendant of many years, *farewell!* Serve your God with zeal and fidelity!”——He seemed desirous of saying more; but his voice failed him, and in a few minutes he dropped on his pillow, and *expired*.

*D.* Alas, good gentleman! Had you no time to make him any answer?

*F.* The occasion was too interesting for *words*.

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I kissed his dying hand, and washed it with my tears. He had so often honoured me with his discourse, and assisted me with his counsel, during the course of twelve happy years, this parting seemed to be like a finishing period to all the labours of my days; for though by his kindness I had now a fair prospect of living with some degree of comfort, methought I could with pleasure have died to preserve his life.

*D.* Was it that you had so sincere a love for him? You have occasionally told me some anecdotes of his character, as if it were not without blemishes.

*F.* It is difficult for me to speak of him as I ought: and I must be suspected of partiality. When I reflect on the *good parts* of his life, a thousand tender thoughts rush on my mind. I venerate his memory, while my heart bleeds with affection and gratitude. His infirmities were to me objects of compassion, seeming to arise from an excess of tenderness. You will not live many years, my child, before you find that the *wisest* of mankind have their *follies*, the *best* their *failings*.

*D.* Was he *proud*? There is nothing I dread so much as pride in *master* or *mistress*.

*F.* I have been sometimes tempted to think him *imperious*, though he was of a *placable* temper, and held it as a maxim to be tender in reproaching those who are obliged to submit. When he could do any good, he would bend himself to the level of the lowest of mankind: but he complained of the necessity of admonishing, not his servants only, but his friends and acquaintance. As to his domestics, when he detected any one in a lie, or found him repugnant to obedience, in either case, he thought himself unhappy: and, as every man ought, he considered how he could reform such a servant; or whether he should try his chance with another. He could not submit with indifference to any reprehensible conduct. His starts of resentment sometimes carried with them the appearance of *pride*; but they rather proceeded from his constitution, which was naturally impetuous, than from a high conceit of himself. In general, he suffered and forgave, even to a fault; observing, that “too austere a philosophy makes few *wise men*; too rigorous discipline, few *good servants*; and too hard a religion, few *religious persons*.”

*D.* His rules might be easily carried too far.

*F.* True: but knowing his own infirmities,

he made great allowance for those of others. — He delighted in *making peace*, which he considered as seeking the relief of *misery*. His ears were open to the wretched, from whatever quarter they came; often quoting the ordinary form of begging in *Italy*, *Do good for your own sake*. with this reflection, that if we do no good with what we possess, it *can do us no good*. He was always at leisure to perform every kind office in his power; hardly ever making his *amusement* or his *business*, a reason for declining any duty of benevolence. He sought the *pleasant* and the *useful*, and frequently found them together; his ruling passion being the gratification of his humanity and tenderness.

*D.* Which was most distinguished, his *heart* or his *head*?

*F.* Hearts are more difficult things to fathom than heads. He always seemed ready to do all the good he could, and to shew respect to persons and characters; so that I never doubted of his good intentions.

*D.* He must have been amiable to my sex, which I apprehend is most observant of the tender part of men's characters. Was he *rich* and *fortunate*?

*F.* Neither: but he always lived like a gentleman, and had something to bestow in charity. He used to say, “that one month in the school of affliction, taught him more wisdom than the gravest precepts in *seven years*; and that no man could have a thorough taste of *prosperity*, to whom *adversity* never had happened.” He has often told me, that he meant to devote his days to *charity*, and treat the *vanity* and *parade* of life with disdain: whether he acted up strictly to this principle, in all respects, I cannot say; but he used to observe, that “charity, rightly understood, and founded on a steady belief in the gospel, contained all christian graces; — that those who have not this divine principle, can hardly be said to have any good in them; adding, that this is enough to condemn them at the tribunal of *eternal justice*, without enquiring what *evil* they have done.”

*D.* I believe he was in the right: but if he was so charitably inclined, I suppose he did not spend much money in *dress* or *amusement*.

*F.* He bestowed no great cost on either. His *temperance* did not seem to be so much the effect of any austerity in the virtue of his *mind*, as from his not being of a robust frame of *body*. He thought it more easy to *prevent* diseases than

to cure them. He was no advocate for *public shows* or *entertainments*; condemning the wild absurdity of sacrificing *health* and *happiness* in pursuit of *pleasure*. He mourned over those who lived assembled in a crowd, as they appeared to him in a combination to destroy each other.—Upon the same principle, his first object, in his dress, was to guard against the inclemencies of the skies, not neglecting a certain portion of elegance. He bestowed little cost upon his food; hating to sit long at table; and the amusement of *cards* he considered as losing so much time. He was always in search of something beneficial, particularly in the service of the poor in their most defenceless state; contriving several *plans* of salutary police, and the promotion of industry, in some of which he was fortunate: yet I never could discover that he appeared fully satisfied he had done any thing, while any thing he could possibly compass was not done. This propensity checked his self-applause; yet his *communicative temper* sometimes led him to talk of himself beyond the bounds which wisdom prescribes. *Humility* and *pride* are frequently imperceptibly combined in the same character.

D. May not a man humble himself to the dust, yet from a principle of levity in temper, or delight in the *social* pleasures of humanity, talk of his exploits, as subjects he is best acquainted with?

F. Your question is to the purpose; for this seemed to be my master's case. From his youth up he had reason to think his life *precarious*. This, I heard him say, gave a turn to his fortune; yet he had been more *enterprising* than *cautious*; and frequently biased by other people's opinions, when he should have taken counsel of his own heart. He thought better of the world than it deserved, and therefore was often *deceived*.

D. Did not this sour his temper, and excite a disgust towards mankind?

F. Just the contrary: he said, "the more bad men I find in the world, the better I learn how to treat them; and the more I think myself, and all well-designing persons, obliged to defend the innocent."—As to wealth, he used to treat it as his *servant*, using it *generously*. On some occasions he suffered sorely by his confidence in others; but he comforted himself by observing, that it was a much greater misfortune to be plunged into all the

fooleries of a *large* estate, than to be denied some gratifications which a man of taste and virtue might naturally wish for. He was always incomparably better pleased when he could relieve the distresses of one below him, than when he partook of the splendor of the opulent, on which he had learnt to set but a small value. He did not see how *greatness*, as vulgarly understood, could be an object of *envy* to a wise man; nor what solid satisfaction could be derived from *more* than a man could innocently enjoy.

D. Had he any employment in the service of the *public*?

F. He had an *office*: but he courted no favour; nor on any occasion, that I observed, departed from his candour from any hope of advantage, or fear of inconvenience. This rendered him of little significance to any *party*; and shut him out from that promotion he might otherwise have challenged. In regard to *virtue*, *moral* or *political*, he made no difference: he said "Truth is the foundation of both; and one bad inclination gratified, may make a man *vicious*; but many good ones are necessary to make him *virtuous*." adding, "few are proof against the temptations which *affluence* throws in their way; and great wealth is apt to lay waste *humility*, and destroy the wholesome *temperance* and *gentleness of manners*, in which the essence of *virtue* consists: Therefore, as I suppose I should err, as I see other men do, I thank Heaven for what I *have not*, as well as for what I *have*:" and indeed he seemed to be as sincere in this, as in other instances.

D. I presume, however, he would not have been displeased, if *fortune* had tried his virtue.

F. I do not understand what you mean by *displeased*: if he thought virtue his supreme *good*, virtue must have appeared to him better than riches; or, in other words, to be preferred to riches: and he did not *wish*, or was not *unhappy* because he was not tempted, but rather triumphed. Seeing the vanity of life, in *many cases* he shewed more inclination to *laugh*, than torment himself on the score of his own *foibles*, or those of other people. Upon the whole, he considered his life as prosperous in all such instances, wherein he could look backward or forward with satisfaction.

D. He supposed then, that his sins and infirmities would have been greater, had he been possessed

fessed of greater means of gratifying his vanity, or inflaming his passions: and so far he shewed the superiority of his understanding.

F. I am far from being sure he would have been the *worse* man, had he been richer; but I apprehend, riches could not have made him *better*, if, being as he was, he did all the good in his power.

D. What part did he take, with respect to the *politics* of the nation?

F. Politics, *Mary!* I have told you, he ranked with no party; nor kept aloof from any men but knaves.—Every *tinker* is now a *politician*; and thinks himself as capable of correcting our *customs* and *laws*, and reforming our *manners*, as he is of mending our kettles. You may conclude that a man of *reading*, or what is better, of *thinking*, founded on what he had seen in the world, had his opinions of *right* and *wrong* in most cases: my master, however, used to say, “There are many affairs of *state*, and *law*, which I do not understand, and therefore I form no opinion: I leave them in *their* hands whose proper business it is to judge.” He observed further, “Mankind seem to be governed more by their *passions*, than their *reason*: *Wisdom* and *folly* depend on social intercourse; but passions creep into our *political faith* and rule of conduct, as much as in any thing besides; and it is in *politics* as in *religion*; if we set off with prejudices, it is difficult to bring ourselves back, let us err ever so much; for in spite of the calmer dictates of the heart, such prejudices gain strength, from the numbers which unite, and encourage each other. Individuals incline to throw off all doubts, and think themselves warranted in so doing, merely because their numbers are strong.” Thus he talked.

D. I am sensible of the strange tricks which the heart of man plays off to deceive his understanding and common sense; but I cannot comprehend how it is consistent with honesty for parties to *say* what they do not think, or *do* what their consciences condemn?

F. This is a mystery, which my master said he could never fathom; but they all call themselves *honourable men*.

D. It seems no less wonderful, that people of distinction, who are supposed to have studied their own hearts, should give so few proofs of being compassionate, moderate, just, or candid towards

others, whether they approve their politics or not.

F. Alas, my child! the most part of mankind study any thing, rather than their *own hearts*; and they are the blindest who *will* not see; for you are to observe, that in general it is not so much from the *dislike* which one man has to another, as from a *partiality* to himself; *want* or *ambition* urging him to supplant another, and take his office from him if he can.

D. But how is this to be reconciled with *wisdom* or *uprightness*?

F. Wisdom, child!—it is the *wisdom of the world*.—I tell you it is a mystery to me how this can be reconciled with common honesty: But in these days, *party* considerations, and *foolish talk*, make up a large portion of the *lives* and *conversations* of our *fellow-subjects*.

D. I have heard you say that your master never was *married*; how did he reconcile this with the love of his country?

F. He thought every man *should* marry, unless they could give very satisfactory reasons why they *should not*. Upon the whole he *pleaded guilty* to the charge; alledging, that many untoward accidents had intervened; confessing, that although he had strong social affections, he had been *too proud*, or *too delicate*. He observed that Providence orders things for the *best*; for since he could not be married to his mind, he had endeavoured to make ample satisfaction to his country, by devoting a large portion of his time and fortune to the service of the distressed, of both sexes, particularly in their *infant* state, as I have just had occasion to mention.

D. He was reputed an honest man, I presume.

F. If he had been influenced by no other motive than his humanity, it would have led him to be just. He often expressed a consciousness of the corruption of his heart; and instead of the common complaint which we hear from every one's mouth of the want of *memory*, among his friends he often mentioned instances of the defects of his *judgment*. He esteemed those talents the best which are the most *useful* to mankind. His humanity and zeal often led him so far, that the world had no comprehension of his meaning; for instead of a *spur*, he required a *bridle*; being sometimes anxious for the *good* of others beyond the bounds of moderation.—The interested part

of mankind are apt to measure other men's virtues by their own scale: my master, I believe, had no smaller motives in any thing, and therefore did not much concern himself about the opinion of others. In strength of judgment, abilities, and happiness of expression, many have exceeded him. In labour of thought, uprightnes of intention, assiduity, and resources in whatever he apprehended to be advantageous for others, within his sphere, he had not many superiors.

*D.* Was he esteemed *particular*?

*F.* He was generally considered as *particular*. He used to say, "The *glory* of a man is the exercise of his *reason*; and the glory of reason, the love and practice of *truth* and *candour*. How can any man entertain a thought of transmitting his name to posterity, if he does not attend to this lesson, which religion and philosophy so strongly recommend?—Mankind are apt to esteem all those as *particular*, who differ from themselves, or do not make the opinions of the generality, the measure of their behaviour; at the same time nothing can be more contrary to the rules of sound wisdom and useful experience, than this maxim."

*D.* Rational particularities, I apprehend, are frequently imputed to *pride*, or a contempt of the world.

*F.* If a person is consistent in his conduct, and whilst he wishes to be indulged himself, does not despise those who differ from him, he should pass unheeded. I have observed many with superior talents, tormented with ambition, vain-glory, and restless intemperance, while my master turned his mind to improvement in things out of the reach of common accidents. Piety and candour, probity and charity, seemed to be his studies: he used often to say, "I do not wish to out-live the faculties of my mind, or grow sick of the repetition of the same amusements and in-

nocent pleasures, or cease to be affected with the emotions of sorrow and joy. I think it a much more melancholy consideration that men should live *without virtue*, than that they should *die with it*: and nothing is so truly glorious, as uniformity in actions; or so desirable as to preserve to the last, every thing that is beautiful in character."—And indeed, according to the best of my observation, he was constant to his principles: being free from any *party* shackles, he found no difficulty in declaring his thoughts, according as things appeared to him in different lights; concluding upon the whole, that those cannot be in the right, who *never* found and acknowledged themselves to be in the wrong.

*D.* Did his acquaintance regret him?

*F.* Few of them thought of him with total indifference. — With regard to a remembrancer after death, he used to say, "A man were better forgotten, who hath nothing of greater moment to register his name by, than a tomb;" yet he had his *fancy* in this respect, so far as to approve the notion of Sir *Thomas Friendly*, and gave orders for something of the same kind (*a*). He said, "All the circumstances of my life, of which some have been *interesting*; and all the events which have happened, in my time, even to *nations*, much more the *clashing interests*, *humours*, and *opinions* of private persons, whether *friends* or *foes*, appear to me but as a *dream*." He absorbed the whole, which concerned himself, in the consideration of *God* and *his own soul*; and said, when he died, that nothing beyond this seemed to him to deserve the name of *existence*. After a life of above sixty years, he departed in the steady hope of a *joyful resurrection*; praying for mercy for himself, and imploring the goodness of Providence in behalf of his *country* and *mankind*.

(a) Vol. I. page 36.



## CONVERSATION XIII.

*Deaths of Women.*

*Reflections on female characters. Death of a pious and affectionate daughter. Grief of a brother on the death of his sister.*

**D.** GLOOMY!—No, my father; nothing affords me a higher *pleasure* than the consideration of characters distinguished in the last hours of life. The *instruction*, as well as *entertainment*, I have received, makes a deep impression on my mind; but your tales have been confined to the characters and deaths of *men*; I wish to hear some good of *women*, whose behaviour in the *solemn hour*, may serve as an example to me when *my hour* shall come!

**F.** It is not in my power to tell you so much of *your sex*, as of *my own*; and perhaps there is not *so much to tell*. I believe *women* are comparatively most free from atrocious guilt; and from a habit of *obedience*, live most submissively to the decrees of Heaven. Perhaps my partiality for the sex, inclines me to this opinion; but I really apprehend they are less reluctant to die, than men appear to be. They are not so deeply engaged in views of *avarice* and *ambition*: their guilt consists chiefly in *envy* and *vanity*.

**D.** These offences lead both sexes into monstrous excesses.

**F.** Granted: but men are affected most by *avarice* or *ambition*. Comparative distinctions are not always productive of good; but I will tell you of *one great difference* in the sexes which generally most affects a *woman's heart*.

**D.** What is That?

**F.** *Beauty!*

**D.** Is not this chiefly owing to the *weakness* of men?

**F.** Be it what it will, women too often shew more regard to it, in their own persons, than to goodness of heart, or strength of understanding: or any thing—except the *means* of gratifying

their vanity: which of the two sexes discovers the greatest want of wisdom?

**D.** Contrary to your usual tenderness, you seem to be severe. This is a point, my father, we will waive the consideration of for the present, as it will be of no use to my enquiry.—I wish to know, which of the sexes you think is most *afraid of dying*?

**F.** *Women* are certainly the most *timorous*; they tremble most at a musket-ball, or a drawn sword: they are most afraid at the approach of an enemy, from whom they cannot flee, or are not able to resist. This seems to be owing to their education, and the weakness of their bodily frame; for in the ordinary course of mortality, they usually express the least fear and apprehension.

**D.** Then you give it in favour of women. I hear *Sophia* bears her illness with great strength of mind and resignation: I hope it is not so dangerous as some represent it.

**D.** Alas, my dear *Mary*, I called yesterday upon her father, my much-loved friend *Simeon*; his eyes, which used to sparkle with joy when we met, were sunk and almost closed with grief: his hoary cheeks were bathed in tears, which flowed in more copious streams as I approached him. The sight of a friend, after some sad disaster, softens the heart, and from a kind of sympathy in minds, makes our wounds bleed afresh.—

**D.** Is *Sophia* dead!—

**F.** The good old man seized my hand; he pressed it between both his—he watered it with his tears—I immediately concluded his daughter was dead—I would have spoken, but my sympathy

sympathy forbid my utterance.—At last he said, “O my friend, it hath pleased Heaven to chastise me for my sins: my daughter, my much-loved child, is dead!”—Then leading me into the next room, he cried, “There! there she lies: behold what one short month has done! You saw her a few weeks ago, smiling in health, blooming as a flower in *May*! Alas, how blasted, withered, and cut off! She was the delight of her friends, and the joy of *my* heart! Now behold her livid lips—feel her clay-cold cheeks, her spirit has taken its flight—and all *my* comfort is departed with it!

*D.* Sad news indeed! Well might a father weep for a daughter so deservedly beloved by all who knew her. She was so good, that even *envy* was silent at the mention of her name.—Did he give you any account of her death?

*F.* Yes: having recovered himself a little, he said in broken words, “She was sensible of her approaching change, and bore her *illness* with remarkable patience and submission to the will of God!—She retained her understanding to the last, and employed herself constantly in acts of devotion, pious meditation, and in giving the *good advice* to her friends, which she was well qualified to do. She desired me not to lament her death, but rather rejoice at her removal, as she had good reason to hope it would be greatly to *her* advantage; and that we should all meet hereafter in a state of happiness, *never to part again!*”

*D.* You used your endeavours to comfort him: Was you able to alluage his sorrow?

*F.* The way to mitigate grief, upon the first stroke of such a misfortune, is to indulge it: we must not oppose the torrent, but give it room to divide its force. The spirit must have time to heal its own anguish; yet as I knew him to be a *good man*, and my friend; as soon as I found a proper opportunity I reminded him of *her last words*, and led him into some comfortable reflections upon them. I said, “Had not your daughter been so good a young woman, you would have had reason to mourn with a deep and bitter sorrow. The death of those who have *neglected God*, and the care of their souls, is indeed a subject of *grief and lamentation*; but your daughter’s deliverance from a bad world, her soul being so fit an offering at the altar of divine mercy, must have been a *song of joy to angels!*—You, my friend, have stood the shock of many changes

and chances in this frail and uncertain state, like a *man*, and like a *Christian*. Perhaps Heaven rewards your *virtues*, by thus securing *her’s*; and do not think your loss in her is intended as a *punishment to you*, more than that her early death is a *chastisement to herself*. Heaven is merciful in all its dispensations!—How hard soever the lesson may sometimes be, the Almighty shews the greatest tenderness to us all!—He who gives the stroke, heals the wound! Bear the heat of the furnace, it will purge away your *dross*, and purify your soul. The sharpest sorrows often wean the heart from this world, and prepare it for the next. Your heavenly Father demands your submission to his will! It will not be long before you will follow your daughter, and dwell for ever with her, in the exalted glory of the *blessed!*

*D.* Did he attend to such soothing reflections?

*F.* The good old man, tears falling from his eyes, heard me with attention; and after a deep sigh, answered thus: “My friend, you have known me for many years; and may well suppose, that in the acutest pangs of my sorrow, such reflections have not been strangers to my heart; but I feel as a *father*, and I *must mourn!*—You who have a heart to feel, have a daughter also, whom you dearly love, and I am sure you will make allowance for my *present sorrow*. Heaven grant you may never know it by experience! Pity the weakness of human nature, and not impute my mournful complaints, to any repugnance to the will of *God*; in humble submission to which my tears bend my heart so much the lower. I hope my *humiliation* will be accepted as an offering of gratitude, for the blessing which I once enjoyed!—If ever the soul of any mortal, of my daughter’s age, left its earthly habitation truly *pure*, my *dear Sophia* died untainted.—Her mind seemed possessed intirely by *religion*. Equally ignorant of the *wickedness*, and the *vanities* of the world, she lived without fear, and died without regret!”—Here he paused. I answered, “Indeed, I acknowledge all you have said: I do not reproach you; but I most firmly believe it may have pleased the Almighty to reward you for your care of your daughter, by taking her to himself, to *secure* her from the miseries to which she was subject.—I know your breast is warm with zeal for the honour of God, and your heart devoted to *his* service. It is only on such occasions we learn

learn what manner of spirit we are of."—He seemed upon this to collect his powers; "I thank you," said he, "it is enough; if I have erred, I hope God will forgive me: I will endeavour to convince you, that you are not mistaken in your opinion of me, even though my grief should appear to exceed the measure which is allowed by *reason* and *religion*."

*D.* Did you hear how her *brother* behaved himself on the occasion?

*E.* When the father became calm and composed, I made enquiry after *him*. I knew his affection for his sister was very distinguished; and I have a great esteem for the youth. During the last stage of her distemper he was lost in a kind of *insensibility*; but as soon as he heard she was dead, *reason* began to resume her empire, and his *piety* triumphed over his *grief*: But when her body was put into the coffin, he entered the room with slow and solemn steps; and leaning over her, he burst into a flood of tears. Then, as if he meant to chastise himself, he seemed to recover; and kissing her cold lips, he said, "O my dear sister, and my dearer friend, the companion of my childhood, and my gentle monitor, *art thou gone?*—Hast thou left me *for ever?* With whom shall I now converse?—To whom shall I open my heart? Why should I not *follow* thee? If this be all there is in *death*, methinks I too

should be *glad to die!*"—H. father, who had watched his steps, gently interrupted him; and taking him by the arm, prevailed on him to retire.

*D.* The effects of grief on some people are violent! I hope *his* mind is not hurt by this event. He is a pleasing young man.

*H.* I believe he is in no danger: he has been accustomed to a *religious life*, and the discipline of his passions. Grief, like other tender affections unrestrained, verges to *madness*; but true religion calms the rage of sorrow. Alas, *Many*, there are many who become dreadful victims to this passion; but many more to *vanity* and *pride!* We learn how to govern our passions by the actual trial and exercise of them, when the occasion comes; *not merely by talking, or by reading* of the government of them. This young man will be so much the more endeared to his father, by the tenderness and manly affection which he shewed upon this occasion: and *time*, the sovereign remedy for all complaints, will lighten the fore burthen of grief. Nature retires under a heavy load; and if we give her fair play, she will throw it off. Thus by degrees the tranquillity of our minds is restored. Violence in passion, of every kind, is *sinful*; and to refuse to be comforted, *foolish*.

## CONVERSATION XIV.

*Declaration of Margaret Faithful, a virtuous young woman, on her death-bed. Generosity exemplified in death, in the conduct of a French lady. Reflections on the merits and resolutions of women.*

*D.* YOUR stories afford me the most sincere delight and satisfaction; but you must indulge me, in my turn, to relate the tale of my dear *Margaret's* parting with this bad world, which I do not remember I ever related to you.—I visited her in the last stage of her consumption; and allowing for the weakness of her frame, she received me with the pleasing vivacity, and amiable simplicity, for which she was distinguished. "My dear *Mary*," said she, "it is a great pleasure to me to see you. Your visit gives me spirits,

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and does me *good*; I hope it will *do you good* also. You see me reduced to a very weak and languishing condition, for I am become a skeleton. The *roses*, for which some weak mortals have occasionally flattered me, as you know, are totally withered: the sparkling eye is dim; and all my charms, if I really ever had any, are vanished or turned to deformity! The *flattery* which has been offered me, never led me into the paths of *vanity*: I knew the perishing nature of *beauty* and therefore never set my heart upon it; nor

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does the loss affect me. I am now in my *twentieth year*, and my days are come to an end!—There is nothing strange in dying young! Many within the short compass of my experience have been cut off in the bloom of life: some, who in the first attack of my distemper, seemed to weep over me, are *themselves* become instructive lessons, that youth is no security against the mighty conqueror death. I hope I should have been happy in *another state*, had I been called *suddenly* out of this; for my pious parents led me, in my earliest days, into the paths of heaven: however, I am the more thankful, for this *timely notice*; and for the assistance which it hath pleased God to grant me. *You* also are happy, far beyond many of the children of the *great and wealthy*! You have a *good*, as well as a *tender father*, who supplies the loss of your mother, who died whilst you was yet a child. Mothers are generally the best guides and guardians of their daughters: mine has often defended me from danger. Next to the care of Providence, I owe my *virtus* and my *peace* to her prudent advice and friendly caution. O I could tell thee of such contrivances to ensnare unwary girls, as would make thee shudder! Happy are those young women who know the value of parents, whose experience enables them to preserve their children. Let me advise *you* to consider your *father*, as your best and truest friend!—*Mary*, I know you pity me, because I have so short a time to live: and it would seem *affected* and *absurd* were I to say, I pity you, because at present it is *not* likely you will die soon. No, *my dear friend!* I hope you will live long; happy in yourself, and happy for the rest of the world, with whom you may be connected. But since it is the will of God that I should leave this scene of transitory things, in these my early days, I am happy in considering death the only absolute security against all the blandishments of vice, and the deceits of the world. When in this view I contemplate my dissolution, it seems to me as a deliverance; for believe me, *Mary*, I had much rather die, than stain my soul with guilt, and offend my Maker!—What is death!—I do not apprehend there is any pain in dying; nor do I suffer any, in thinking that I am leaving this world. There is nothing in the prospect of *eternity* which appears to me dark and dismal. I think I shall rest in *peace*, and at the appointed time be received into *glory*!—We are *all* equally born to die; and we are all in the hands of God, unable of ourselves to add one hour to our days

of life. You are healthy, as well as young—yet how soon may you be nipped in the bud, and all your vernal beauties withered! But supposing that you live for forty or fifty years, whether in living so much longer than I shall do, you will be more *happy*, is a question no mortal can decide!—We often think *That* to be *good*, which turns out *evil*; and *That* to be *evil* which ends *happily*. Be you thankful for *life*, but take care *how* you live, that you may never with your hour-glass had run out with mine. Your heart, my dear *Mary*, is formed to *virtue*! You have long been high in my esteem! I should be glad to confirm and improve your good sentiments; therefore I beg you to store up in your heart the dying words of your most true, most affectionate, and tender friend!—It is now about three years, *Mary*, since I entered into a more strict and solemn examination of my heart, my life, my opinion and conduct, than I had ever done before. I do not mean in any visionary fanatical sense, but that I devoted all the faculties of my soul, all my mind and strength to the service of my Maker! I confirmed my promises at the communion of the supper of our Lord, which I have since regularly attended. The times and opportunities of public and private prayer, were always acceptable to me.—Weak and imperfect as my devotion hath been, it was crowned with *pleasure*; and I have endeavoured, with humble dependance on the grace of God, to converse with simplicity and sincerity, and to live *freely* and *righteously*. I feel the happy fruits of it in the comfort which now glows in my breast, and in the peace which my mind enjoys!—O *Mary*, let *God* be the first and constant object of your affection: let the world go as it may, think of your *end*! What should I now be the better, if I were the mistress of *both the Indies*? I would not give a grain of virtue for the wealth of all the world! The case will certainly be the same to *you* when you die: therefore, for Heaven's sake, be on your guard! Let nothing tempt you to do wrong. Your hour will come as *certainly*, though probably not so soon, as mine. I conjure you, by the affection you bear to me; by the love you have for your own soul; and for the sake of *Christ*, whose blood was spilt for us all!—I conjure you, as you love and honour your *father*, and hope to reach the mansions of *eternal bliss*, or fear to fall into *everlasting misery* with the children of disobedience, that you walk in the paths of your religion!"

religion!" She then ceased, as if unable to say more.

*F.* O happy girl!—How fragrant is thy memory!—You see, *Mary*, that she had been used to consider life as hanging by a slender thread, and not as the generality of mankind, who act as if they held it by a tenure stronger than *time*, and out of the reach of *accidents*. This is the sad cause why so many put off their repentance to the last remains of life; and though experience proves, that in sickness the *body* is hardly able to bear its own infirmities, or the *mind* to preserve itself from peevishness, they presume on strength and ability to heal all the wounds which sin and folly have made in their souls! But tell me, my dear *Mary*, what part did you act in this affecting scene? What reply did you make to such expressions of goodness, which flowed from the heart of your kind friend and monitor?

*D.* I was unable to utter many words: my tears spoke my *gratitude* and *love*—Indeed I told her, in broken accents, I should always cherish a dear remembrance of her friendship: that her advice was engraven on my heart, never to be effaced: that I would always look up to her as an *example* and *model* for the conduct of my life; and therefore she could not fail to live in my memory!

*F.* I hope you will keep your promise sacred, and observe it with zeal and constancy. We have already had occasion to take notice, that in making such visits, it is usual to flatter the patient with the delusive prospect of recovery, against our better judgment.

*D.* I should have thought it unfriendly and unjust to flatter *Margaret*: I apprehend, that those who are insensible of their danger, should be informed of it, in proper terms; that whether they *live* or *die*, they may prepare for *death*: and they who see their danger, should be encouraged in their resignation. She saw her dissolution approaching, and was *prepared* for it.—It would have been *cruel*, if not *deceitful*, to draw her mind off from the great object on which it was so *firmly* fixed. Nor had I any temptation to do it, for I rather *envied* than *pitied* her condition.—She lived but few days after this, and expired with her hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, with the piety and resignation of a saint!—I pray God that I may yield up my breath with the same composure and tranquillity!

*F.* There are many instances of women who have shewn remarkable resolution and greatness of mind in the hour of death. My master has frequently talked of the courage and fortitude of your sex upon such occasions: he used to tell a story of a *French lady* (*a*), which always struck me as an instance of true generosity of spirit. Being out of order, she sent for a surgeon to bleed her: this person, whose condition was much inferior to her's, was known to have entertained a *secret* passion for her. Upon uncovering her arm, he was much confused, and she observed it; however, with great affability, she desired him to go on in his work, and he cut an *artery* instead of *opening* a *vein*.

*D.* Good Heaven! what was the consequence?

*F.* He immediately found his mistake, and used all the means in his power for her recovery, but in vain: the lady soon became sensible that she must *die*; but far from reproaching the *unhappy* man, who was the *innocent* cause, she saw his anguish with pity, and submitted calmly. She went still farther; for thinking this event would injure his reputation as a *surgeon*, she made a handsome provision for him in her *will*; and died with that *greatness of mind*, which a good understanding, supported by the noble sentiments of *Christian* piety and generosity, inspires!—Was not this truly heroic? Do you think you should have acted thus under the like circumstances?

*D.* I admire her behaviour, and hope I should have imitated it. The *good* part of my sex, I believe, has generally a partiality for men, by whom they think themselves beloved.

*F.* But in this case, *compassion* and *charity* came in aid to love, and triumphed over the world: the lady saw the *hand of Heaven* point out the way to everlasting bliss, and she *followed* it!—You know that women are generally called the *devout* sex; and it seems as if they were more *resolute*, or at least more *patient*, than men. A strong inclination to piety, and the constant practice of religious duties, will produce this glorious effect!—I have told you there is nothing great, even in martyrdom, wherein women have not been in all ages distinguished: and why, my dear *Mary*, should not *you* be as ready to die for the *glory of God*, and the welfare of *your own soul*, as the greatest of the daughters of women?

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(a) Mentioned in the Spectator.

## CONVERSATION XV.

*Description of a fine lady. Anecdote of the death of a woman of fashion; with her penitential confession of the manner in which she had spent her life. Description of the death of a young woman of levity. Lamentations in the last hours of a kept mistress.*

F. VARIETY! Aye, *Mary*, there are as many characters with us almost, as there are faces! We may learn instruction from the conduct of *every one*. Some faults spring from the misfortune of our peculiar condition, but are not therefore *excusable*, though perhaps more pitiable under one circumstance than another. A lady, once a great favourite of my master, on whom he could make no impression in the days of her *health*, desired to see him when she fell dangerously ill. The interview affected him very much, and he committed the conversation to writing.

D. *Make no impression!* Was she what they call a *fine lady*?

F. Formerly a *fine lady* meant an accomplished woman; a person, who with the virtues of a *Christian*, enjoyed all the advantages of a superior education; *courteous, affable, polite, generous*, and fit to speak properly to a *prince*, or a *beggar*: *Custom* has changed our language, and now it is generally understood to signify a woman who decorates her person with rich attire; is proud, affected, and fantastical; neglects the simplicity of manners, which of all things in life has the most charms; shews little attention to *domestic* or *religious* duties; is awake when she should be asleep, and sleeps when she should be awake; devotes her heart to the love of the applause of people no wiser than herself; spends her time with them in a round of *trifling* amusements: till at length being fatiated, and out of humour, she grows indifferent to all things in the world, except one.

D. What is That?

F. She would still be thought *virtuous*.

D. According to your description, a fine lady is a *foolish woman*.

F. Such folks as us, my dear *Mary*, must take care what we say; but to tell you a secret, there are many called *fine ladies*, who are *foolish women*,

and some *very fine ladies* who are *very foolish women*: yet do not imagine but that a considerable part of such as pass under this general name, have good hearts and superior understandings; and some possess every virtue which can adorn human nature, except *resolution* to break the chains of *custom*. If they were to follow the true dictates of their own minds, they would guide their inferiors by the shining light of the *brightest example*.

D. What pity it is that any woman should make herself a slave to *custom*, against her better judgment, or live according to the foolish fancy of other people, instead of the light of her own mind, and the good advice of her parents.

F. That such as discern *good*, should follow *evil*; and knowing the superior advantages of the freedom of the mind, make themselves slaves to the humour of those who are enthralled by their own devices, has been the complaint of all ages.

D. How are we to distinguish the *fine ladies* who have understanding, to know wherein folly consists, from those who are really blind and ignorant?

F. By their *words* and *gestures*; and perchance by some of their *actions*; for in their dress, their fondness for trifles, their passionate love of *amusements*, and some other particulars, they seem to resemble each other very much: at least I thought so when I had an opportunity of making my observations, which happened almost every day of my life. The lady in question had many amiable qualities, nor was she ignorant of the advantages of virtue; but she followed the train of *fair triflers*, and was devoted to others much inferior to herself in understanding. She was *sensible, affable, and polite*; and, in good hands, might have made a most *valuable* woman. Her frame was too tender to bear an incessant change every night, from *cold* to *hot*, and from *sweet* to *tainted*

tainted air: like many others, she received her death's-wound in a large assembly, which my master used to call a *well-dressed mob*. When this poor lady found herself in danger, her eyes were suddenly opened. She was not ignorant of my master's *great partiality* for her: she considered him as her *friend*: she thought well of his opinion; but as a proof of her inconsistency, *she had not regarded it in practice*. In this extremity, she desired the favour of seeing him. Though much displeas'd with her conduct, he readily attended on the mournful occasion. After some compliments, she said, "You see me here in great danger of dying—You have been very good to me on many occasions: I am sensible of the sincerity with which you interest'd yourself in the most important concern of my life! Would to God I had taken *your* advice!—What a miserable state it is to *live and die in folly!*—Not that I am conscious of any thing the *world* condemns, but I *now* feel what is meant by the *world's* being *at enmity with God!*—How have I squandered my *precious time*, as if I meant to give up my hopes of *immortality* for the play-thing of a *child*; a *play-thing*, at which even the minds of children sicken with the dull repetition of enjoyment!—Alas, my much-honoured friend, what pleasure can be found fit for a rational, intelligent, immortal mind, when *reason* and *immortality* are not regarded? The shock I feel is the greater from the length of my *stupid dream!*—O *wisdom*, where was I, when I should have sought thee? The neglect of thy admonitions now aggravates my *offences!*—Why could I not I discern the *mean*, as well as *see*, or rather, why did I not *practice what I knew?*"—He answer'd, "Do not suffer your *self-remorse*, madam, to aggravate your present anguish, on account of my *unsuccessful* endeavours to save you. It is true, had you walk'd in the paths I pointed out, had I been master of the world, it would have been *yours*: and yet I believe in *theory* we did not differ much." To which, after some pause, she sigh'd and said: "I was sensible that you was in the right; I discern'd the truth, as applicable to mankind at large; but I was too silly to imagine, as far as I thought at all, that such as myself might challenge a kind of privilege of exemption from the rules which you so earnestly recommended to me. I now look up to the *heights* to which I ought to have aspir'd; and behold the *mean* and *groveling* situation of my

foul! I envy the condition of *That benevolent girl*, your *servant's daughter*, of whose good disposition you have sometimes spoken. What *infernal magic* enchanted my mind?—Whether we attempt to disguise *folly*, by covering her with *brocade*, or *alaspine*: whether we play the fool by the light of a *thousand tapers*, or a single *tallow* candle, the dignity, the conscience of a rational being must be the same. It is not *crowded assemblies*, *theatres*, or *cards*; these may be indifferent, if us'd innocently, and with safety. If it should please the Almighty to restore me again to health, I do not tell you I will retire from the commerce of all human beings; no: I see the duty of convivial joys, and such inter-comse as is *truly social* and *beneficent*. Nor can the *wisest* be totally free from *folly*; for in spite of philosophy, life will abound in *trifles*.—I *dance*, and speak the languages of *France* and *Italy*; I play on the *harpsichord* and *sing*: the errors of my life do not arise from these accomplishments; nor surely is there any harm in designs of *manual art*, or ingenious *needlework*. My guilt consists in devoting *so much time* to puerile pursuits, and vain amusements; and *so little* to the purpose of the *great business of eternity!* I am conscious of *negligence*, *folly*, *dissipation!*—I have declined those *rational* talks which I was otherwise qualified to perform, even to the guiding and directing other people. *I have seen a pernicious example of idleness and levity, and subvert all that is beautiful in my character.* O God, forgive me!—When I look back on the *many years* I have spent in a giddy round of *unprofitable passions*, with hardly any mixture of *substantial good*: When I reflect on the hours I have offer'd at the altars of *vanity* and *dissipation*, to say nothing of other chances, I am *astonish'd*; and my heart bleeds with *grief* and *contrition!*"—Here she paus'd,—and tears ran down her cheeks. Recovering herself, she proceed'd—"How little—how very little have I read, and how much I have *glaz'd*, on subjects which would now be my *great comfort!*"—I have contemplated the works of nature, in the *history* of my *mirror*; and *search'd* for happiness in places of *public resort*; but I cannot say I ever *found* it. What solid joy could I find in *such pursuits?* Had I *admir'd* my *Master*, as he displays himself in the grandeur of his works, and the order of his providence! Had I sought *his* glory, who is the first and greatest object; even him who . . . the tender,

merciful

merciful Father of mankind, I might have been *happy*! Alas, how little did I think of the blood of That Saviour, whose *example* was so unlike *my practice*! I can scarce persuade myself I seriously believed the terms on which he hath promised *immortal happiness to his followers*! Here I feel the sting: it pains me bitterly!—How shall I extract the *venom*!—Tell me what I shall do.—In what expression shall I now humble myself before God?—Where shall I seek a supply for my *expiring lamp*, or purchase the heavenly incense of a *pious heart*? O my friend!—My time has winged its flight beyond the reach of mortal call.—To unbosom to you the *sad secret of my soul*, I have not accustomed myself to think, that *constant, regular, and fervent prayer*, was a part of the business of my life!—O God, forgive my negligence and folly!—Here she breathed a mournful sigh, which seemed to pierce her heart! She paused for some time, and continued, “After I was ten years of age, my parents never regarded whether I prayed or not: they left me to myself; and I was too young and giddy to act *rationally*. Was I bred up as a *Christian*? How their account now stands, heaven knows!—For my part, I must plead *guilty*, for my share in this *dreadful negligence*.—Tell me, I beseech you, *what* I should think, and *how* I, with such sins on my head, shall implore the *mercy of Heaven*?”—To this he answered, “Madam, you speak the language of *repentance* with such sensibility, I hope your guilt does not rise so high as you represent it. In the eye of the world, nothing can atone for the want of chastity in women, though in the sight of heaven, *repentance* has no sex: Your *penitential sorrows* do not concern what is vulgarly called your *honour*: it is your want of *piety*; it is the *trifling manner* in which you have wasted your life, by gratifying your *eyes and ears*, instead of improving your *understanding*, and mending your *heart*. But do not therefore distrust the mercy of God. I hope the sense you entertain of your offences, creates such contrition in your heart, as will render it an offering fit for Heaven! If my prayers had wings, far swifter than the morning light, my zeal in your service would still add redoubled speed to their efforts!”—To this she replied, “Methinks you attempt to heal a wound which is *incurable*. Comfort bestowed on those who deserve it, may prove the goodness of the heart

and understanding; but how strange it is that women are to be flattered, even in death; as if *truth* were of too pure original to be the subject of *their thoughts*! And that *you*, Sir, who are my friend, should now *flatter me*!”—He answered, “My dear Madam, consider, I beseech you: is comforting the distressed, *flattery*? With regard to the cure of your disease, you urge me to administer *corrosive* medicines: I will prescribe every thing I think right, which can afford you relief. If the proper use of *reason* is to act reasonably, as often as you have failed in this, however justly you may have *thought*, it only proved that you was formed with abilities which you *misapplied*. This was the subject of my *sermon* in the days of your health and folly; and I should be duller than the weed which poets feign to grow upon the banks of *Lethe*, had I forgotten how often my heart has bled, when I foresaw what *you would think* upon the bed of *sickness or death*. You will forgive me when I say that your form once appeared to me angelic—and your *speech*! it tempted me sometimes to think your *negligence* no crime; but in more *reflecting hours*, in *spite of my partiality*, I saw how grievously you misapplied *your time*, and how much you *degraded* yourself by doing so. You disobeyed the laws of *your nature*; when creatures of mere *instinct* obeyed *theirs*.—Far be it from me to lull you, at this awful hour, into any fond presumption, as if you stood not in the greatest need of the *mercies of heaven*: but believe me, I think your tears are tears of true contrition; and I hope they will wash out your stains. My *heart* is still devoted to you; and the more useful my services can be, the more comfort I shall receive. I sympathize in your sorrows; and let me, in the name of the tender Father of mankind, entreat you to fix your thoughts on his *boundless mercies*, through the intercession of the great Prophet and Saviour of the world, who died for sinners that *repent*! You have been exposed to the contagious disease which preys on a *thoughtless generation*. Unmindful of the *nature of sin*, they do not consider the *omission of good*, as the *commission of evil*. The *gay world*, in their hours of laughter, will not easily allow of this doctrine: you now discern the *truth*, and *happy* it is for you! Be calm, and offer your heart to God; and *hope* he will accept it!”—She replied, “Forgive me, if I have trespassed!—My mind was agitated: I reproached you inconsiderately.—You *are* my friend



friend indeed! You offer me all the comfort my sad condition will admit of!—Then pausing for some time, she prayed, “*O God, send me thy aid! Look down from thy exalted throne on me a miserable being! Thou gavest me the reason of a human being, and I have acted with the foolishness of a child; happy should I now be, if I had been in all respects as innocent! O calm the troubles of my soul! Thou hast beheld my errors, and thou, omniscient Father, knowest my sufferings for them! I see the vanity and wickedness of my life, and lament the folly of it, in tears of bitterness and pain!—Let not That precious blood which was shed for the sins of the whole world, be spilt in vain for me!—O God! behold the anguish of my heart, and save me for thy mercies sake!*”

D. This poor lady must surely have had a good understanding, and a true consciousness how ill she had employed her time, and how unlike a *Christian* she had acted.

E. She now spent her hours in prayer, and hearing the Scriptures, often acknowledging of *some* parts, that they were *entirely new to her*; and of *others*, that she had never rightly comprehended them before. In this interval, she commemorated the death of *Christ* several times; and in less than fourteen days she died, *lamented* and *beloved* in her exit, though so much of her life had passed in *negligence* and *folly*.

D. The description you have given, distresses me exceedingly; it makes my heart bleed to think how a woman of the best education, and, I suppose, enjoying all the advantages of a liberal fortune, may hazard her soul in the pursuit of *trifles*.

E. If we consider also the superior understanding, and admirable temper of this lady, the wonder is so much the greater! But you should not imagine that such misfortunes are confined to the *noble* or the *gentle*; one often sees the same part acted by persons of an inferior condition.—My cousin *Lucy* was a fine lady in a *low station*: she was one among the many thousands, who have some virtues blended with many faults: she could not properly be called  *vicious*; but she was very far from being  *virtuous*. In this it, she did not act as if she remembered her *end*; and therefore could hardly avoid doing *amiss*. She seemed to delight only in mirth and festivity, music, dancing, and public shows. Thus, instead of *improving her understanding, correcting her will, and becoming the more attentive to abstinence,*

and learning to be *humble, devout, and useful*, she soon acquired the reputation of a *gay girl*. In the same degree that she neglected these virtues, they became tasteless and insipid, and she had no heart for them. Having forgotten wherein her highest excellency consisted, she could neither look backward with any *true satisfaction*, nor forward with any *just confidence*. She thought very little of any thing but the *amusement of the present moment*; and I cannot say she ever appeared to be much *disturbed*. Death at length *surprized her*; and *surprized we all must be*, if we do not live, as if the *present day* might be the last our eyes will ever visit. She went through the common ceremonies of *physicians, nurses, and friends*, with as much decency as generally attends a death-bed, where the chief concern is to administer medicines to the sick.—God forbid that I should sit in judgment on her soul; but neither could I ever find any solid foundation whereon to rest my *hopes*! The best that can be said is, that she *mediated no harm* to other people, that I know of.—The inconsistencies we every day behold in the lives of the greatest part of mankind; the consciousness of our own infirmities; and the charity which our divine religion requires at our hands, must ever hold the balance of our tender *hopes*. We learn, from *self-love*, to measure the wants of others by our own, and to compassionate what we cannot *relieve*. Few live as they *might*; none are *perfect*. We see our friends and acquaintance continually dropping into the grave; yet many go on carelessly, as if they had no regard to the condition of their souls, to fit them for *delight* in the company of angels. You see, my daughter, how necessary it is that one part of mankind should preach up *religion* and *godly joy* to the other, lest we should be *all undone*!

D. Happy it is for mankind, that some are always *left alive*, to remind the generality of the danger of *doing the will of the devil*; or of *not doing the will of God*!

E. You remember the story of poor *Caroline* and her lover, and the *melancholy end of both*. Another young woman, whose story I recollect: She appeared to have been less delicate in her sentiments; yet when death approached, she lamented her errors in bitterness of repentance. According to the account given me, she said, “*Good God! how shall I justify my conduct; or what excuse shall I plead for the manner of life*

my own heart, and the blood of my tears: I have been *fruitless* in my search for the law: I have sought, and my heart is broken; and my appointed manner of life, which I thought myself to have, has failed me in the day; but I find they were the *fruits of my folly*. I am not able to feel in the *remission* of sin. I heard *me*, more than I heard *thee*; and couldst thou my reason condemn, rather than trust the promise of God, or expose myself to *eternal poverty*. I suffered indeed the stings and arrows with which my conscience tormented me: I suffered also the contempt of the world, particularly of those of whose esteem I was most ambitious. — I condemn myself, and mourn in *jabalab and affix*! O God! thou knowest the nature of my offence, and the measure of my guilt: I have lived in an *habitual violation of thy laws*, and now I feel the sad effects! Be merciful unto me, and look down with pity on the sorrows of my heart, and purge away my stains! — Could I, the sinner, set my consciousness before the eyes of numbers, who live in the same way, they would seek the pleasures of *innocence* at any hazard; and teach *men* who profess to believe in *Christ*, that they act a part equally foolish, irrefutable, and unjust. Men give a double sharpness to *their* guilt, since they are the principal cause of the trespass in women. Hardly one in a thousand of my sex, in such circumstances, would not gladly marry the man with whom she cohabits, and deliver her mind from all the tortures of shame, and the guilt of such lawless contracts.”

D. This was penitential. But the crimes of

you cannot be pleaded in excuse for the sins of *women*; nor remove the disorders created in the *mind* of the *Christian* world.

F. Certainly not. This poor woman continued her confessional *prayer* in these terms: “*Then, O Christ! the judge and saviour of mankind, thy sentence was, “Go; and sin no more!” I have lived in sin, and now I stand created out at thy dread tribunal! O let my cries of sorrow reach thy merciful ears, and my tears wash out my stains. Accept my repentance, though it comes so late: accept it, O gracious Redeemer! as the only tribute I can pay. If it should please thy providence yet to preserve my life, I will not submit to sin.*”

D. This was a woman of sentiment, and her case pitiable; and so is That of many malefactors who suffer *temporal* death for offences not habitual; but yet the laws require they should suffer. And how far *divine justice* may be satisfied with such contrition, as you give an account of, is not for us to determine. We must hope the best; but I would not live in such a state, for any pomp or splendour which this poor world can furnish. For what is the wealth of *nations*, and all the pleasures it can provide, compared to *unspotted truth*, and a life of *innocence*, unconscious of living in any *habitual sin*!

F. So it is. *Custom* cannot make *evil*, good, more than it can make *good*, evil. Your decision is just and true; and all the *arts of vice*, and the reasonings of *worldly vanity*, cannot weaken its force. O be true to your self, *my dear child*; you cannot then be false to your *God*, nor to your neighbour!

## C O N V E R S A T I O N XVI.

*The character and death of a young lady of remarkable virtue and genius, with her monumental inscription.*

D. **N**O indeed! I shall never forget her. My generous friend and patroness the amiable *Eleanor*, will live in my memory as long as I have any: I cannot speak of her without sorrow! When I was yet a child, she shewed me such countenance; and though but two or three

years my elder, she even gave me such *instructions* as won my heart. I believe she hardly exceeded *eighteen years* when she died.

F. You do not know that half the human species go out of the world in the course of about *fifteen years* (a). In one sense it might be said, that

(a) Of 1000 born, 498 are dead by the age of 15.

that *Eleanor* lived not *half her days*; yet it is certain she filled up the time that Heaven had appointed for her. It was her happiness to have run her course of virtue at an early age; and the great Arbitrer of life and death was pleased to call her to rest!—It should give us but little concern how *short* our passage is through life, provided it be *safe*. Travellers seldom complain of coming too soon to their journey's end: she who *died well*, lived *long enough for herself*; and we must leave the *world* in the hands of *God*.

*D.* True, my father; but you will allow me

to mourn that she has left us so soon; and where we flatter ourselves with hopes of *happiness*, founded in judgment, and supported by *affection*, a disappointment is not so easily conquered by the *heart*, as by the *tongue*. I know not whether my *esteem* or *respect* for her, was greatest: she was high in the regard of all her acquaintance.

*F.* I know it well. The character given of her by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who had great love and esteem for her, was expressed on her monument in these words:

HERE LIETH ALL THAT WAS MORTAL  
OF ELEANOR FLOWER,

*Who in the blossom of her life diffused her virtues  
with the sweetest fragrance.*

*She was constantly employed in domestic offices,  
and all other duties which could grace the female character.*

*Few excelled her in the use of the needle or the pencil.*

*Her taste was delicate, and her judgment discerning.*

*The affection which she shewed towards her kindred and relations  
constituted an amiable part of her character.*

*She was affable to every one:*

*Ready to bear the tale of distress, and wipe away the tear of sorrow:*

*The law of kindness flowed from her lips,*

*and furnished a healing balm to the wounds of the afflicted.*

*As she felt for the miseries of others, she exerted all her power for their relief.*

*Those whom she could not praise, she spoke of with a tenderness  
expressive of universal benevolence.*

*Having a lively sense of the goodness of God,*

*She entertained a firm persuasion, that there is no affliction*

*For which religion has not provided a remedy;*

*Nor any duty to which Providence has not annexed a blessing.*

*She worshipped the Almighty in public with fervour, gratitude and joy;*

*Her private devotion affording her mind no less comfort and delight.*

*She read the sacred writings with attention, considering them as the oracles of Heaven,  
on which her temporal and eternal happiness depended.*

*The sermons of the most eminent divines were familiar to her;*

*And she talked with propriety of their respective merits.*

*All romantic stories and novels she avoided as dangerous to purity and true simplicity:*

*She delighted in history,*

*which served at once to amuse, improve, and enlarge her mind.*

*Guarded against the extremes of melancholy and carelessness,*

*She possessed her soul in that happy cheerfulness and composure,*

*which are the ordinary companions of innocence,*

*and the best instructors how to live and die.*

*She employed every hour in a manner most suitable to the indulgence of Providence,  
with regard to the rank in which she was placed.*

*In the gifts of nature she was not less happy ;  
 Her temper was sweet, her manners gentle ;  
 Her conversation was pleasing, and her voice melodious.  
 Native simplicity, and the love of truth, secured her from affectation ;  
 While the superiority of her understanding preserved her from vanity and pride.  
 With her gentleness of disposition, she had a large portion of courage,  
 Which she wisely thought necessary to her conduct ;  
 Well knowing that nothing can embitter life so much as fear ;  
 And that nothing is more fantastical than the false terrors,  
 So often taken for delicacy of manners in women.  
 She was truly sensible that religion, and the consideration  
 That we are born to die,  
 Are the only means of conquering the unmanly passion of fear.  
 The calmness with which she discoursed on her own death,  
 Gave proof of the strength of her mind,  
 Whilst her resignation was expressive of her confidence in the mercy of God,  
 Through the intercession of the Redeemer of the world.  
 The same sentiments and tranquility of spirit which rendered her so amiable,  
 Attended her expiring moments.  
 Her example was a pattern of imitation most worthy the attention  
 Of the humble in condition, and the most elevated in rank.  
 Thus glided her life in a sweet and gentle stream,  
 Calm and serene,  
 In peaceful purity, and unmixed hope,  
 Till death invoked the sorrow of her lamenting friends,  
 Who trust in God the end of her existence is accomplished,  
 And she numbered with the just.*

D. I am most sensible of the truth and candour of this account. And you must not think it wonderful, my father, if you should behold my remembrance of her virtues furrow my cheeks with tears.

F. Grievings which are soft and gentle, rather heal than wound the spirit ; and there can be no bitterness in yours : Many reasons now occur why you should dispel the clouds of your sorrow. She hath happily escaped the dangers with which this life abounds.—What a plentiful source of consolation ! Think of being out of the reach of affliction, as your friend *Margaret* told you ; and what is more, beyond the possibility of offending God ! You, my child, know not the dangerous smiles of a treacherous world. Comfort yourself : “ Tears will not water the lovely plant to make it grow again.—Sighs will not give her new breath, nor can you furnish her with life and spirits, by the waste of your own !”

D. I do not weep in any presumption that my tears will avail ; but tears are the natural effects

of sorrow, and the greatest relief to an overburthened heart ; therefore I weep.

F. Grief is oftentimes the effect of virtue ; but to mourn above measure, is folly or iniquity.

D. And not to grieve at all, you will equally allow, gives proof of gross insensibility.

F. We must not complain that our delights have been short, when we had no right to them for the time we enjoyed them. Let not the loss you have suffered, turn to your own disadvantage, but be thankful to your Maker for your portion of good ; and under all the dispensations of Providence, remember your constant prayer, *Thy will, O God, be done !*—To *Eleanor*, virtue was grey hairs, and an unspotted life, old age ! Let the remembrance of your obligations, and her good qualities, live in your heart : think of her happiness, and in that reflection be happy yourself ; and whilst you offer up your pious lamentation, let her well-spent life teach you what is the design of God, in giving breath to mortals. “ If the righteous, who are dead, reproach the ungodly, who

who are *living*; and youth soon perfected, the many years of the *unrighteous*;" rather mourn for some of your acquaintance who are *living*, than for your *departed friend*. Be assured of this interesting truth, contained in almost every page of the Holy Scriptures, that the *good are happy in death*. This is as certain as the authority of divine writ: and as true, as that God delights in *goodness*.

D. It is, upon your principle, a pleasure to think that she is removed beyond the reach of offending, or of being offended. I have also lately met with some lines upon the occasion of her death, which soothe my sorrow, and delight my fancy much. As one discovered his thoughts in *monumental prose*, another shewed his talent in numbers; each tribute being offered, as the pure stream flows from the native spring of Nature's choicest gifts. He says,

" *The setting sun withdraws his tender light,  
The fields in evening's solemn grey array'd,  
And parting herds foretel the approach of night,  
To call for solemn contemplation's aid.*

*Yet hush! attend! let every breeze be mute;  
The doleful bell in striking accents tolls,  
Its mournful tidings through the ether shoot,  
And claim attention from according souls.*

*Yon new-dug turf, where purple wilets bloom,  
And ope their smiling bosoms to the sky;  
Yon new-dug turf points out the fatal tomb,  
Where the remains of sweet Helena (a) lie.*

*No parent her accomplish'd wish shall own,  
A sister's friendship claims her love in vain;  
No husband's merit shall her virtues crown,  
No child to piety and honour train.*

*No more her mimic pencil shall present  
The various forms which ample Nature shows;  
No more her ductile colours represent  
The fainting lily, or the blooming rose.*

*Scarce had the gloomy mansions of the dead  
Receiv'd the lov'd Amelia's cold remains,  
When yet another victim, fate convey'd,  
Another victim from the weeping plains.*

*Still on her lip the parting accents hung,  
The strong convulsion seiz'd her trembling breath;  
No more responsive mov'd th' obedient tongue,  
But all is left in darkness, and in death!*

*Behold a mother's calm philosophy,  
By faith supported, on the scene can dwell;  
Exerting her religious constancy,  
She gain'd a triumph when her daughter fell.*

*Religion's hallow'd voice this truth declar'd,  
And fixt it deeply in her wounded breast:  
Whene'er the mind is thus for death prepar'd,  
Who early dies, is the more early blest."*

F. Very tender, elegant, and judicious, and perfectly true of the *living* and the *dead*.

## CONVERSATION XVII.

*The death and character of Amelia Flower, a young lady of singular piety and benignity of disposition, improved by education. Her praise in poetry. Reflections on the good effects of the care shewn by parents to their children; with heads of education.*

F. **W**AS not *Amelia* too the subject of the praise of the ingenious pious gentleman, whose numbers flow so sweet?

D. Yes: he sang her merits also, in terms no less expressive of the justice due to That admirable young woman, of whom we said so much the other day. His words are,

" *Amelia, fairer than Diana's train,  
Than Dian's self more lovely, chaste, and pure;  
Whose beauties charm'd each tender-hearted swain,  
Whose virtues did the love of all exure.*

*Say for what end were all these beauties giv'n?  
Why bloom'd the rose upon her lovely cheek?  
Why did her eye glance forth the smiles of Heav'n,  
And why in angel-accents did she speak?*

(a) Camden supposes *Eleanor* to be a corruption of *Helena*.

*Alas! sad reverse of fate! No more the lyre  
Shall tremble with seraphic notes; her tongue  
No more an angel chorus shall inspire,  
Tho' every heart dwell on the strains she sung:*

*If to exalted spirits it be given  
To look on those who dwell in mortal climes;  
Say, will ye sometimes quit your seats in heav'n,  
Nourish our virtues, and restrain our crimes?*

*And when frail Nature's chain our souls shall break,  
Obelant to our Master's call to rise,  
Shall we together of his wonders talk,  
And Mercy's God exalt us to the skies!*

F. In a religious view, we may venture to say all this was done to answer the wise and gracious ends of Providence, realizing *poetical* conceits, by securing That heaven, promised to those who behave like such excellent young women.

D. Her true *monumental* praise stands thus:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY  
OF AMELIA FLOWER,

*Whose modesty could be equalled by nothing  
But the gracefulness of her smiles,  
The benignity of her temper,  
And the tuneful melody of her voice.  
Amiably dutiful to her parents,  
She was diligent in every thing she undertook;  
constantly finding useful employment,  
And never out of humour for any cross accident.  
Her own passions being always calm,  
She became a guide and monitor to her sex.  
Ignorant of the arts of falsehood or cunning,  
She disclaimed flattery and insinuation.  
Gentle, affable, sensible, and polite,  
The tribute of affection and esteem  
became her universal due.  
Her winning softness  
Was attended with a turn of mind  
Most serious and uncommon at her age.  
The sentiments she had committed to writing  
Prove how justly she thought of her own dissolution;  
And that her heart was devoted to her Maker.  
Thus Heaven marked her for its own,  
Filling up the measure of her virtues,  
Before she had seen twenty-one years:  
Calling her to the society of her kindred angels,  
To sing Hallelujahs  
At the throne of God!*

F. You are enraptured, child! But I am glad to hear so much justice done to so amiable a character, and wish I could point out any one of my own sex, who, having died at so early an age, possessed so much virtue.

D. Was it not *unhappy* that she and *Eleanor* died so young?

F. God only knows; a small number of years is enough to take a view of the world: the most happy in it find but little variety of unmixed pleasure. Life affords but little more time than to prepare for death; for hardly do the eldest discover *the key of life*, before the portals of the grave are opened. I have heard that *Amelia* possessed all the virtues related of her. She had enjoyed the advantages of a *good education*: I mean such as most improves the heart, and enlarges the understanding.—From the earliest part of life, her parents taught her to consider human nature with reverence and respect; and consequently to be tender and charitable to all the world.—Whilst *they* cherished a spirit of benevolence, she learnt to be modest and gentle in manners.—They always indulged her in rational amusements, necessary to health and cheerfulness; but as soon as she was capable of instruction, she was accustomed to diligence and application; and carefully repressed in whatever appeared to be amiss. They were attentive, during her childhood, that their servants should not promise her, as a reward for good behaviour, any particular kinds of food, which is often done by foolish people, as if they meant to give children a turn to gluttony, and a wanton appetite. They recommended the advantages of indifference, as to the quality of what we eat or drink, provided it be good and wholesome: nor would they ever speak to her of *fine clothes*, that they might not raise in her breast the passions of pride and vanity!—Their first object was to inspire her tender mind with a just sense of *truth* and *uprightness*; acquainting her, as soon as she could form any glimmering notion of a God, that he loved *truth*, and would most highly reward it; that he hated *falsehood* and *evanescence*, and all the arts of fraud and cunning; and would certainly punish offenders with as great severity; telling her that the ingenuous confession of a fault entitled her to *honour* and *commendation*: and that as it is justly said, “a fault once known is half cured,” they assured her, that for the very reason of her *goodness* in *confessing*, she would

would naturally be so much the more on her guard, not to commit the same fault again.— Their next consideration was to inculcate a reverence for the *Sacred Writings*; giving her only such parts to read, as she could comprehend, and very little at a time, explaining to her the sense and meaning, in such terms as to make it pleasing to her.— They encouraged all rational enquiries, and checked every suggestion which could in any degree favour *enthusiasm* or *superstition*; at the same time endeavouring to imprint these great truths on her mind,

1. That the proper life of man is *eternity*; our present days being subject to end by every little accident.

2. That *God* is the *father of men*, and *heaven* their *home*.

3. That we are so little able to do any thing of ourselves, without the aid and assistance of the *great Lord of all*, we cannot make a hair of the head white or black!

4. After shewing her the vanity of the world, with regard to the uncertainty of every thing in it, as she grew up they carried her mind to the consideration of the vast importance of the *soul*, and what had been done for it: of the suffering of the Son of God by an *ignominious death upon the cross*, that men might be saved from *everlasting death*: and as a proof of his almighty power, and to convince us we should all rise from the grave, that he arose from the dead the third day after his crucifixion.

5. Far from thinking that children are incapable of *attention* to serious conversation, they early habituated her to heavenly subjects, introduced in a *cheerful* and judicious manner, rather exciting a curiosity and thirst of knowledge, than creating any degree of impatience or disgust.

6. After being taught to shew an implicit obedience to their commands, the *power* and *practice* of *attention* at length became easy and familiar to her. She had the advantage of seeing they were, in almost every instance, exactly of the same mind; for if they differed in any respect, they took care she should be kept ignorant of it.

7. As they *understood* every thing they wished *she* should learn, they *did* every thing which they desired she should *imitate*; removing from her sight, every object which could tant her tender mind.

8. They chose servants with great caution, giving them a strict charge with regard to what they said or did in her presence; endeavouring to inspire *them* with the same love of virtue as *they* cultivated in their *daughter's* mind.

9. They were sensible that *children* form their tempers, derive their virtue, and not unfrequently even acquire the strength of their understanding, from the precepts and example of parents.

*D.* It is no wonder, after such caution, that *Anelia* should have lived and died so much like an angel. How happy would it be for the world, if all parents took the same pains, and gave such genuine proof of rational affection towards their children! But how do you think, my father, this is possible to be done?

*F.* You are not to imagine but that occasionally the best and most careful parents have very untoward children; and sometimes the worst have good children; but example ever hath been, and ever will be more prevalent than precept. You may consider the miserable state of those who are neglected, by the story I related of the last hours of a fine lady, whose parents had been inattentive to her early instruction in the necessity of *prayer*; though in other respects she was a most accomplished woman.

*D.* To live with a constant view to death, seems to be the only way to live or die in a manner consistent with the hopes of a Christian.

*F.* True: and this is so much the object of the wife, they stand amazed at the bustle which is made about things of no duration, or such as by no means fill up the natural longings of the soul. That which perverts the mind, and turns it aside from the true path in which the Almighty requires us to walk, must be evil.

## CONVERSATION XVIII.

*Death and character of an excellent female servant. The maxims she observed. Her monumental inscription. Monumental description and character of Trueman's wife.*

D. YOU have told me many excellent anecdotes of people superior to me in condition; what think you of that excellent young woman who lately died in the 'squire's family?

E. You mean *Susan*. Indeed she deserves to be remembered; for she never forgot what she was about: she acted uniformly, as thoroughly sensible that she lived in the presence of her Maker, and that his eyes are open to all the works of men. I know not how to recommend to you a better pattern than the good and much-lamented *Susan*. We may allow the tribute of a tear to her virtues, which were highly deserving applause. The honours which relate to eternity, my daughter, are not to be measured by birth, title, or fortune: those who are most acceptable in the sight of God, will be rewarded with the brightest crown of immortal glory!

D. What particulars have you heard concerning her?

E. This young woman submitted to her superiors with respect, and discharged the duties of her station with fidelity.

She saw that obedience is the principal cause of the happiness of a family; and regularity and cheerfulness the grand preservatives of obedience.

As she was solicitous to promote the interest of her master and mistress, they shewed the most proper attention to her welfare.

Her duty to them was performed with a good will; for she considered this as the most acceptable offering she could make to our great Lord and Master, *whose service is perfect freedom*.

She was as careful not to defraud her master and mistress of her *time*, as of any other property belonging to them.

On her death-bed she confessed, she had been more than once tempted by the base arts,

which in these days of dissipation are often practised, particularly in *great families*, where neither master nor mistress are rightly acquainted with their own affairs.

She often took notice to her fellow-servants, that as they were supplied with *food and raiment*, and all the comforts and necessaries of life, they ought to think themselves bound in return, by every law, divine and human, not to commit the least violation of justice to master or mistress.

By length of service, she contracted a sincere respect for them, and their kindred; and no less affection for their children, partaking in all their joys and sorrows.

With such a good disposition, you may easily imagine she was a pattern to other servants, men as well as women. By her example they became decent in discourse, and pure in manners, constant at public worship, regular in receiving the sacrament, and in family prayer.

She was *charitable*, even to the giving of alms — at the same time *so prudent*, that by her wages, and the particular kindness of her mistress, she saved *four score* pounds, which she bequeathed to her brother, whose wife lately died, and has left him with seven children.

In a word, *Susan* gave the strongest proofs, in the days of her health, as well as in her sickness, of a steady confidence in the mercies of God, through the intercession of the great Redeemer of mankind.

During her illness, her mistress was assiduous in performing every good office which could contribute to her recovery; and when she died, the whole family was in tears. As a mark of their affectionate respect for her memory, they all attended her funeral, and sowed her dust with dust, declaring *their* steady hopes in her joyful

refur-



resurrection; and that they might meet her again, when their mortal bodies should, like hers, put on *immortality*.

Such a servant, *Mary*, deserved honour; and her mistress ordered a stone to be set at the head of her grave, inscribed with these words:

*Stay traveller !  
Stay and offer  
a silent tear to merit.*

*Here lie the Remains  
of SUSANNAH TRUSTY,  
Aged thirty-one :  
Who being wife,  
knew when she was well ; and served  
the same master and mistress  
during fifteen years,  
'till her death.*

*Convinced that it was her glory  
to be a true Christian,  
she became worthy of trust as a good servant.*

*Being honest and chaste,  
soon acquainted with whatever she undertook,  
and diligent in the execution of it,  
she passed her days with the satisfaction  
which constantly attends a faithful  
Discharge of duty.*

*Sensible that she depended on servitude for bread,  
She learn. how to value That condition :  
Whilst her gratitude and cheerfulness rendered  
her service acceptable.*

*Piety and contentment combined to befriend her cause :  
And as in life her conduct was truly worthy  
of applause,  
her death was justly lamented.*

GOOD FRIEND,  
*Whatever thy condition be on earth, let thy example,  
Like her's,  
prove a benefit to the world :  
And if thou aspires to be happy,  
Learn to be good !*

*D.* I have often heard, that *Susan* was much distinguished for her virtues: I will endeavour to *deserve* as fair a report; but I humbly think it had better not be proclaimed to the world.

*F.* Is there not something extremely grateful to the heart, when such affection reigns among friends, or between master or mistress and servant?

*D.* The happiness of dying in peace does not much concern the world. If any thing can be taught by recording virtue on stone, I have no objection. My dear mother has no such memorial; yet she does not deserve the lets to be well spoken of.

*F.* No indeed, *Mary*. Were I to inscribe her monument, it should be,

She seemed perfectly reconciled to death,  
As if she were happily arrived at her journey's end,  
After travelling through the rough way of  
penury,

And weathering the storms of affliction  
Happily for her, she had lived  
An honest and a religious life:  
Her mind was in peace:

She was full of the hopes of the rewards  
of her virtue,

And looked up to the *Finisher of her faith*,  
even Christ, her Redeemer!  
She had constantly and stedfastly fixed her eyes  
on a judgment to come;  
This furnished her with such principles of action,  
As can be learnt no other way.

Having always thought of death familiarly,  
She did not fear it.

She was so truly good, and full of hope,  
She appeared to ascend the clouds in triumph!

GOOD READER,

May your death be like her's,  
That you may die the death of the righteous!

—But—why, my daughter, do I wander back so many years, and set my wounds a bleeding? You, my child, are her image! May your *mind* resemble her's!—May you walk continually in her steps, and with her shine as the stars of heaven!

*D.* May Heaven grant your prayer!—Your words inspire me with the love of God!—How glorious is *virtue*, even in poverty and affliction! And how *trivial* the triumphs of wealth and grandeur, when unsupported by a conscious integrity!—I have been hitherto fortunate in my acquaintance, a few excepted; yet have I been taught, by *jeal* experience, that our happiness, in this mortal state, is very *precarious*.

## CONVERSATION XIX.

*Life of a female penitent, who was reformed from an abandoned manner of living. Fall, and vanity produce misery. The general view of human life.*

**D.** HAPPY were it for mankind, if all ranks and conditions were possess'd of the same virtuous disposition as *Susannah Trufty*, the record of whose death affords me much pleasure; though I have seen some pompous monumental praises which have been *lies*.

*E.* She ended her days with the applause of men and angels. I remember the reflections made by a young woman of a superior education, whose parents I was well acquainted with. *She* had played the libertine; and her constitution being much impaired, she began to meditate on her condition. Under these circumstances, I made her a visit, and she received me with great civility, and begged me to be her friend to reconcile her to her parents. My answer was, "That is a task I will gladly undertake, provided you can assure me of your sincerity;" adding, "Consider, if you do not *now* correct your evil ways, what can you expect for the future? You have gone through a journey of progressive years, every day loaded with offences; and God knows how short your time may be to clear the account." She replied, "This, alas, is very true! Believe me I am sincere:" and then bursting into prayer, she continued,—“O God, I see and adore thy goodness in the pleasures of virtue, and in the pains which every deviation from thy laws creates. Sinful as I am, I aspire at the charms of virtue, and the joys which attend them. I feel the *tortures* of every trespass against thee; and am sensible of the delusions which the foolish fallies of my thoughts, the corruption of my imagination, and all the suggestions of vanity, and vile pollutions, create. I mourn in sackcloth and ashes for all the evil I have done! How shall I seek rest for my soul? Without real amendment, my penitence will be vain in thy sight, and

blown away as chaff before the wind. O *Christ!* thou son of the living God, hear my prayer! Look down from thy glory, and give me thy aid.—Let the brightness of thy countenance shine upon me, and guide me in thy paths!—Save me from my evil propensities, that I may hereafter serve thee in the truest holiness, with the most willing mind. In thee only is peace: in thee alone are the exalted pleasures of *reason*, and the *faith* which reason supports: In thee are centered the joyful hopes of everlasting life!—O almighty God! Great Lord of nature, and Father of spirits; who controll'st the thoughts and the actions of men, leaving their wills in freedom, of thee I implore assistance!—O subdue my corrupt will, and regulate my affections, that they may be agreeable to thy pleasure; and deliver me from the snares of destruction. Thou knowest the anxious desires of my soul; and that I had rather descend in sorrow to my grave, than return again to the evil habits of my life. Hear me, O blessed Saviour! and let thy merits plead for the forgiveness of my soul misdeeds!”—She said more to the same purpose, acknowledging her transgressions, in the bitterness of her heart.

*D.* She had sentiment: did she amend?

*E.* I prevailed on her parents to take her under their care; and, as far as I understood, she continued in her good resolutions, and spent the remainder of her life in a chaste and humble manner.

*D.* Independant of any outrageous wickedness, which your penitent seems to have committed, what opinion have you of the sins and infirmities of *women*, compared with those of *men*?

*E.* I cannot say I have settled this point, or that I think it material. Whether women are betrayed into the vanities and follies they are usually

usually guilty of, most by following examples in fashionable pursuits, or by gratifying their own perverse inclinations, is of no great signification; since it is equally criminal in man or woman to follow a multitude to do evil. The distinction of the sexes will shew itself in manners, as well as in dress; and so long as gentleness and attractive smiles make up a part of the most amiable female characters, there will be some faults and infirmities peculiar to your sex. All extravagant fondness betrays a weakness of understanding, even when the husband of your bosom is the object of it; but when it degenerates into a passion for a head-dress, or a top-knot, the cut of an apron, or the colour of a silk, it must fully the lustre of your charms in the eyes of all men who are worthy of esteem. It is impossible to say how far a fantastical humour may carry a woman. How many young females have I seen, in my life, who have caressed a parrot, a monkey, or a cat, in the language of love, with a kind of rapture. As to lap-dogs, they are often caressed with a tenderness exceeding what I call the bounds of modesty. I was once present when a gentleman chastised a young lady in these terms: "You seem to bestow your caresses very liberally on that brute. Is it not a violation of the dignity of your tenderness? If you please you shall kiss me: though I cannot recommend to you the charms of my person; yet I think myself a sweeter and nobler animal than that dog: if this proposal does not suit your modesty, will you permit me to bring you a younger man than myself, who may not exceed six or eight years of age: you may then exercise a maternal tenderness; and you will not be the less qualified, when Providence shall join you in an honourable wedlock: but I cannot look on with indifference, and see you so fond of a brute. As a dog, treat him with mercy, and even with kindness, if you are assured he will not bite you; but leave off a custom, which is by no means wise, or decent."—These frolics, Mary, are not the greatest evils that attend on life: nor can I exactly draw the line, whether men or women err most in essential duties: Yours is justly called the devout sex. Every man of my time of life, must have observed how things founded in reason, supported by religion, and consented to by the common voice of the wisest of mankind, are notwithstanding slighted, as it were on account of their being old, and well known to our fore-

fathers. Whether this be most verified in the lives of women or men, is a question I do not undertake to determine. Perhaps women are governed more by fancy than men usually are; and most apt to grow fond of gay objects: these may contribute most to their pleasure, but are not therefore the best calculated for their happiness. The pleasures of the imagination, like the shades of objects, vary according to the light in which they are viewed: but if nothing can make us truly happy, which doth not last as long as we shall last, and time is to us only the beginning of eternity, we must be virtuous to be happy.—You know that the grand object of my endeavours is to improve your understanding; to correct your heart; and provide for your everlasting happiness!

D. I am sensible, my dear father, of your affection and uprightness; and wish your power was equal to your intentions of doing good; not to me only, but to mankind in general: and I agree with you entirely, as to the fantastical indecencies, not to say immodestly of those women, who bestow their caresses so lavishly on the brute part of the creation. I do not pretend to say more, than that it is fantastical folly. I dare say the young lady you mentioned was put to the blush, and would not easily forget the admonition. As to matters of greater importance, with respect to a life to come,—there you seem to stop short, as if the lives of men were as faulty as those of my sex.

E. I told you that this is a point more easy to talk of, than to adjust equitably. I consider the human species in one general view; for women cannot differ from men, more than some men from others.

D. Let us rejoice sincerely in their happiness, who are departed in the fear of God: but it is a subject of sorrow, that the apparent shortness and uncertainty of life have so little effect on the behaviour of the generality of the world, that they seem to shut their eyes against the clearest and the strongest light; neither the infinite goodness of God, which is every day apparent in his providence; nor the sacrifice made for sin by the death of Christ; nor the assurance of a righteous judgment to come, will engage them to consider their latter end!

E. There is too much reason for your observation: and it would be amazing if we did not discover, by daily proof, how much oftener we suffer our passions to rule over us, than submit

to the government of *reason*.—If we examine the various stages of the life of man, from *crijng infancy* to *decrepit dotage*, the exquisite mechanism of his frame, and the skill of the *great Artist*, we must be astonished, how a creature so composed, should, in any person whatsoever, subsist for *three or fourscore years*! Yet this is the smallest part of our wonder. Behold his *mind*, how it investigates so many objects, which lie hid to vulgar eyes; and searches out, as far as is permitted to the mortal ken, the laws of Providence, in the material and intellectual world! Behold how he encompasses the globe! How, by the force of skill and industry, and undaunted resolution, he ventures to explore new regions, and to seek for seas and lands unknown. But most of all, we must *admire* and *adore* the great Author of all, who promises such new scenes of wonders in an *immortal state*, that the change from *life* to *death* shall be the entrance to *eternal bliss*, or life immortal, which shall know no end!—As to the *unhappy disorders* of human nature which you complain of, let it be your part to consider things *as they are*, the *good* as well as the *evil*; and to recommend the correction of them to the divine mercy; that under the influence of the grace of God, we may all study how to improve the *good*, and alleviate the *evil*, according to our ability, and the opportunity afforded us. You have been told, “that the race is not to the *swift*, nor the battle to the *strong*, nor riches to the men of *understanding*; but that *time* and *chance* happen to them all.”—Experience proves, that notwithstanding such endowments, which afford a well-grounded confidence, accidents often intervene, which deprive us of success. This is the sense of the words; for what is *time* or *accident*, but the Providence of God, which often interposes beyond our conception how it happens, to shew us, that He is the only Lord and Sovereign of the world?—As to yourself, my daughter, let the prize of immortality be ever present to your thoughts!—The *hope of true and everlasting happiness* is an object which never *tires*. This consideration, duly attended to, will prevent your doing evil, and engage you to do good.—If your life and manners are formed upon this *hope* and *expectation*, it is next to impossible things should go wrong with you.—We shall *all* exist, through *all* eternity; and therefore the joys which relate to an eternal state, can alone be adequate to our happiness! You know that we call our present

state, our *life*; and *death* the *end* of life; but it is obvious that these expressions relate only to temporary things. In the just view of our *existence*, this part of it which we dignify by the name of *life*, is but as the glimmerings of light, the dawning of the day, compared to the sun in his meridian glory: it is as wheat just shooting from the earth; which is a representative of life, from the nourishment it furnishes; compared to the fulness of the golden harvest, the joyful rewards of the laborious husbandman, when his wide vallies ling with waving corn. This is indeed but a faint similitude: for what is our present life? The returning year may blast our blooming hopes, and plunge us into woe!

*D.* I have, with great concern, observed, that most people talk of the *end of this life*, as a dark and dismal scene, and consider reflections on it, as enemies to peace and joy.

*E.* This takes its rise from various causes; but most from *ignorance* and *want of faith*. They who distinguish the innocent pleasures, which religion allows, from the dark scenes of guilty joys, which make even horror tremble, soon learn the difference. The same sun which displays the beauty of objects, and gives them all the charms we most admire, often exhibits them as garlands of flowers, *withered* and *decayed* by scorching heat or sudden blaits from heaven. Such is the life of man! Yet folly often captives the heart, and leads it away in iron bondage.—The day is near at hand, when nothing will appear more foreign to our *happiness*, than the very objects by which we are so apt to be enthralled. I have told you stories of many persons in the *sad gloom of death*; while others have felt their hearts transported, and their souls filled with hopes of heaven's high joys. Daily experience proves, how very different our thoughts are of the same object, when *present* and when *absent*; and how we differ from ourselves from *day to day*; or from *hour to hour*. Hence you may learn the vast importance of praying, not to be *led*, that is, not to be *suffered to fall*, into *temptation*: and that true religion consists in *avoiding* the occasion of sin, as well as the not falling into the sin itself. *Time* is this moment giving you and me a lesson how to *live*, and how to *die*.

*D.* I hope we shall profit by his indulgence.

*F.* If we examine what hath been said upon the subject of the *immortality* of the soul, even by the *heathen philosophers*, who were bright stars

in their *days of darkness*: if we contemplate the glorious deeds of the Almighty, as described by *Moses*; or view the *brighter lights of immortality* displayed by *Solomon*: or lastly, if we will hear the *voice of the Son of the living God*, in every page of the *New Testament*, no one can give so high a proof of the superiority of his understanding, as by proper reflections on death, and a just estimate of it.—When, like rational Beings and believers in *Christ*, we think on the *millions* who are gone before us, and the *millions* who must follow, our minds expand themselves: we refer our cause to Heaven: we wait the *great teacher death*, to satisfy all our pleasing hopes, and fond desires, and every anxious longing after immortality! You perceive that the *general* consider-

ation of *death*, shews the folly of *immoderate grief*, as well as *excessive joy*, for *any thing* relating to *this world*; and it also proves the *madness* of the *daring sinner*, who mocks at the fear of God! —He must know that his *last day* draws near, when he will stand trembling with terror before his *tremendous Judge*! —The approaching day of the *good* is also coming on in the same pace: and O my daughter, *forget not* that this will be to the virtuous a day of *triumph*, beyond the power of language to describe! “The sorrows of the *poor* and the *despised* will then fly away like the shades of night, at the approach of the sun!”—That such triumphant joy may be thine, my child, shall be my *constant prayer*!

## P A R T VII.

## I M M O R T A L I T Y.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N I.

*Reasons for believing the immortality of the soul. How the consideration of immortality ought to affect us in considering the different conditions of mankind. The terror it creates in the breast of the evil-minded. The reconciliation and joy produced by the thoughts of immortality.*

**F.** THE silent tomb has lodged his poor remains. What the condition of his *soul* may be, is far beyond the utmost stretch of our *weak thoughts*.

**D.** But it is a very interesting reflection! If *death* were only to set bounds to our pains, our sins, and sorrows, a great part of mankind, in certain circumstances, would wish for it.

**F.** Let us consider it as an entrance into the vast regions of immortality! That field, the contemplation of whose extent swallows up all thought. When you think of it, doth it not terrify your youthful heart?

**D.** No: I feel myself in *health* and *strength*, and rejoice in the blessing: but while I rejoice, I do not drive away the remembrance that my *soul is immortal*; I rather triumph over sickness and death. My soul is cheered by the prospect of its *immortality*!

**F.** I am glad to hear you say so.—Many there are who do not form their lives on this plan. They are too *timorous* or *trifling* in this great concern; and with *difficulty* persuade themselves they are candidates for an *eternity* of bliss. They are so much embodied, their *spirits* seem to be asleep.

**D.** What is the *body* but dust? I pass through our *churchyard* every day, and walk over the graves of our late *friends* and *acquaintance*, as

familiarly as if they were but common earth. I receive no impression of *fear*; though indeed it occurs to my mind continually, that my *body* may be soon deposited in the same ground, and trodden upon by other people in the same manner.

**F.** Happy are those who think of the grave only as a *passage to a state of immortal happiness*. To see the aged tremble with *fear* is shocking: but being so young as you are, does your heart delight in the contemplation of *immortality*?

**D.** Indeed it doth; and glad I am to meditate upon it with *hope* and *joy*: the reflection seems to increase my love of *virtue*, and her charms; and *vice* appears the more dreadfully deformed.

**F.** Nothing is of so great consequence, as a habit of distinguishing between the *body* and the *soul*, and their respective *value* and *interests*. This can be shown only by daily observation and reflection how the body prompts us to animal gratifications; and how much it is our glory, and in the issue, our pleasure and safety, to keep it *under*. In every concern of life, make enquiry at the door of your own heart, whether you are acting a consistent part: You will soon find the benefit of it. Those who consult most the gratification of their senses, are consequently the least attentive to the welfare of their own souls;

and

and, I may venture to add, the good of other people's souls and bodies. It is not but that every one makes a *distinction*; but it doth not sink into their hearts; they do not dwell on it as a matter of great moment to them.

D. Every one has some consideration for his soul. I hear it said, almost every day, "I intend to have my body disposed of in such a manner."

F. This is a mode of speaking: but it is certainly meant to distinguish the *body*; which, in the inferior order of things, is the *carriage*, not the *object carried*. Your observation brings to my mind the words of a certain *poor cottager*, who being tormented with the *stone*, said in the honest simplicity of his heart, "I wish I could once get this breath of mine out of my body; I would take care it should never get in again."

D. Did not this shew a degree of *impatience* which misbecame him?

F. I do not comment on the *expression*; I mention the *words he said*, to shew you how strongly he distinguished, though perhaps without any reasoning, between his *soul* and his *body*, considering the former as the *moving* and *directing principle*.

D. Doth not the common distinction of *virtue* and *vice* suppose a persuasion of the *immortality* of the *soul*?

F. It implies a belief of it: yet you must not ask your neighbours *abruptly* if they believe the *soul to be immortal*. The truth is evident: they have no doubt about it; yet till they come to a relish of *christian* piety, they are not generally so *habitually thoughtful*, as to answer the question at once, clearly and *from the heart*; not, I say, from any doubt, but from a *disuse* of the term, *immortal*: They are not in a mode of talking of it. The belief of the *immortality of the soul reduced to practice*, by a virtuous life, sometimes called a *practical belief*, is the corner-stone on which all virtue is built. It is That, without which the whole fabric of life totters from its foundation. Were it not for this, life itself would be a dream, "so soon passeth it away, and we are gone." We may, as an ideot tells his tale, bluster and make a noise; but life, without *immortality*, signifies *nothing*!—You will probably see me soon a lump of inanimate clay, when all my thoughts, with respect to this world, shall perish: but do you imagine, *Mary*, I shall *perish totally*? You believe that I shall die, as all men do; but

shall I become nothing more than what we suppose of a *dog*? Is it *natural* or *reasonable* to think, that after having laboured to curb my passions, to *improve my heart*, to enlarge my understanding, and to worship the God of my *life*, I shall sink into death, and the *whole* of me become a clod, to be broken with a spade or a plowshare? Though all nature is at his disposal, God is emphatically said to be "the God of the *living*, not of the *dead*;" clearly implying, that those who are gone in *millions* before us, are yet *alive to him*; or in other words, in a state of *immortality*. Can you conceive, that all the anxious longings of my heart after virtue, and all my endeavours to inspire your breast with glorious thoughts of *religion*, will have no better end than if I had abandoned myself to all manner of wickedness; and paid no attention to your substantial welfare?

D. O my father, this can *never be*; reason and nature revolt against so monstrous a supposition!

F. You see that I have a *body*; and you are as well assured that I have a *mind*: you see my *mind* in my *actions*; as you see God in his works. God is a spirit; you cannot see *him*: my mind is spiritual; you cannot see it. You perceive the mind has a power which acts; but not to what end it has such faculties, unless it be to survive the body! I feel my *mind* something so *different*, and acts so distinct from my *body*, if I had no other reason for the opinion, I should think it could not be subject to undergo the same change as my *body*. The remembrance of things *past*, and the expectation of things to *come*; the love of *truth* and *virtue*; are not these very distinct from every thing like *body*? The desire of relieving the troubles of creatures like ourselves, in the various chances of their lives, wherein their *bodies* are not concerned; and above all, our natural longings after *happiness*, not attainable in this *earthly state*; are they not so many confirmations that the soul is *immortal*? It must have derived its existence from a *power* so great, so perfect, and boundless, that no other Being than *God* can be its author.

D. I who have seen so much misery of the world, feel all that you have said of the soul: and if any one is of opinion there will be an end of his soul when death comes, we may fairly ask him, what he can possibly gain by such a notion?

F. Ask him too if he has read the Scriptures, in which

which *immortality* is brought to light? Those who believe not in the *immortality* of the soul, if any such there are, I conceive to be extremely *weak*, or extremely *wicked*: they certainly do not believe in the *Scriptures*. Whatever *infidels* may pretend, they are the most *credulous fools* imaginable. They believe gross absurdities: their plan promises no kind of happiness; they live and die comfortless. We derive our faith in the *immortality of the soul*, and consequently in a state of rewards and punishments after death, from *revelation*. If it were a fable, what harm could ensue from believing it? Would it render *princes* more *tyrannical*, or *subjects* more *ungovernable*? the *rich* more *insolent*, or the *poor* more *disorderly*? Would it make worse *parents* or *children*, *husbands* or *wives*, *masters* or *servants*, *friends* or *neighbours*?

D. Christianity most undeniably makes men more virtuous, and consequently more happy, in every situation.

E. Does any one, from believing in the immortality of the soul, become criminal on That account?—Is this faith detrimental to society?—It could not be criminal; because it cannot be a crime to assent to such evidence as has been able to convince the *best* and *wisest* of mankind. If it were false, Providence must have permitted men to deceive each other for the most beneficial ends; and which therefore it would be more meritorious to believe, from a disposition to *faith* and *clarity*, which believeth all things, than to reject, with scorn, from *obstinacy* and *self-conceit*. It cannot be detrimental; because if *Christianity* is a fable, it is a fable the belief of which is the only principle which can maintain men in a steady and uniform course of virtue, piety, and devotion; and support them in the hour of *distresses*, of *sickness*, and of *death*. You may perceive the rank absurdity. Can I expect my neighbour will be faithful to me, when I know he is not faithful to his God. “*Primitive sincerity* will accompany *primitive piety*:—if she takes her flight from our earth, *interest* will succeed *conscience* in the regulation of human conduct, till one man can no longer trust another, than he thinks it his worldly interest to be faithful.” But we are sure this will not prove a *sufficient* tie. Suppose a man were to say, “*I am an infidel, but I chuse to have my family and dependents believers; for I find from experience, in the issue of things, that those only who believe in Christ,*

*are to be depended on for the exact discharge of social duties?*” should you not think him at least an *inconsistent creature*?

D. But all who *profess* to believe in *Christ* are not *true believers*.

F. We know men’s faith by their works, in the sense of the *Scriptures*: but infidels estrange their souls from their Maker, and with these should be no God. And in truth, if there is no *immortality*; no state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death, it seems to be the same, with respect to us, as if there were really *no God*. The opinion that there is none, might, perhaps, afford some small occasional relief to the *vicious*, by dispelling their terrors for the moment; but these will return with double force, and gnaw their vitals.

D. Miserable is the state of a sinner, whose *best hope* is, that his *soul* will perish with his *body*!

F. The very possibility of a judgment to come, to such persons, must occasion the anguish of a troubled doubting mind; whereas, in *believing* there is a state of rewards and punishments after death, and *acting well*, we are so far *safe*, that no harm can happen to us on account of such belief. The most abandoned person never pretended to any *certainty* that there is *no such state*, and consequently his mind must be in doubt; and his doubt in the day of *danger*, generally fixes in the *belief of such state*, or the assurance that there are *rewards* and *punishments* after death, notwithstanding he has lived in a contempt of the *doctrine*.

D. What a *glorious* thing it is to know what God hath declared in the *holy Scriptures* concerning the *immortality of the soul*!

F. *Glorious* indeed! *Immortality* and a *judgment to come*, stand on the same basis. Keep your eye with unremitting constancy on That judgment, that you may govern your life by the rules of *religion*.

D. Not to be able to look back without *shame* and *remorse*, nor forward without *terror*, is a *dreadful situation*.

F. Let such apprehensions always turn you from *evil ways*, and you will find comfort and peace in the *last extremity*; for be assured, *That extremity will certainly come*; and not to think of it, is no less certain folly, even in the superlative degree.

D. The more I think of these great truths, the more joyful my heart is! I appear to myself

surrounded



surrounded by a *heavenly guard*: I feel as if my soul, already loosed from the shackles of mortality, were *smiling over my grave*, in confidence of happiness in another state; taking leave *only for the present*, of its once-lov'd companion, my body.

*E.* My dear *Mary*, I know you are sincere: give me your hand, as a pledge of the truth of what you have said. It was such a thought as yours, which made the apostle cry out in a transport of joy, "*O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!*"—How much better is it to cherish such reflections, than to mourn over the sad remains of mortality, imprisoned in the dark mansions of the grave!

*D.* I am convinced beyond all doubt, that when my *soul* shall leave my *body*, it will be alive some-how, and some-where, in a state of happiness, or in a state of misery. My *conscience* tells me there is so vast a difference between *virtue* and *vice*, as these relate to me, who am a *rational creature*, accountable to God, that my *soul* cannot be destroyed by death.

*F.* You have read the *New Testament* to a good purpose: therein are the words of *eternal life*; and what is *eternal life* but an immortality of happiness; or what *eternal death*, but *everlasting misery*?—That there will be a resurrection of the body, of the *just* and the *unjust*, *no Christian can doubt* for a moment; and let us thank Heaven that *we* are *Christians*! What changes the *body* may pass through, we cannot tell: being returned into the bosom of the earth, we know it will moulder into dust, from which it was first formed; and in process of time, be dispersed. If it is accidentally consumed by *fire*, it will go off, and mix for the most part with the *air*: if it remains upon the *surface of the*

*earth*, it will be soon corrupted and dissolved, and both *earth* and *air* receive their proper portion of the matter of which it was composed. If it should have a *watery* grave, it will become the prey of fishes, or mix with That element; and under such changes, its parts can be no longer distinguished by *us mortals*. But *That Almighty Power*, which first created the *earth*, the *air*, the *fire*, and *water*, and breathed *life into man*, will recall the scattered atoms which belonged to each individual body, and re-unite the *body* and the *soul*. He who informs us that the soul is immortal, bids us not to be "sorrowful as men without hope." And the *Psalmist* tells us (*a*), "*He hath a mighty arm: strong is his hand, and high is his right hand.*" This is a prediction of the wonders which would be wrought by the Saviour of mankind. He obtained "a conquest over more formidable enemies than *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptians*; a redemption from more cruel bondage; *salvation from sin and death.*" In the *establishment of his throne*, *mercy* and *truth* go before his face (*b*). "Although the *power of God* be *infinite*, it is never exerted but under the direction of his other attributes." So we should conclude; for "mercy and truth are the substance of all his revelations, which either promise salvation, or relate to the performances of such promises. By these we are warned and prepared for *judgment*, which is to be the last and finishing scene. And when the great Judge of all the earth shall from his throne pronounce the irreversible sentence, not a creature then present shall be able to accuse That sentence of injustice!"—

*D.* How ought this to fire the soul with the love of *mercy* and *truth*!—And by *mercy* and *truth* prepare it for *That great day*!

(a) Psalm lxxxix. 13.

(b) Ver. 14.

## CONVERSATION II.

*The importance of the contemplation of immortality, and the internal evidence of its certainty. The enquiry of the Roman soldiers on occasion of the preaching of John the Baptist. The Sadducees disbelief of the resurrection. The soul will be united to the body at the resurrection. Cheerfulness and a due compassion to ourselves, essential to the comforts of life in our imperfect state. Virtue implies a pleasing quality. The imperfections of human nature counterpoised by the hopes of immortality. The disbelief of immortality dishonourable to the great Author of nature.*

F. LET them talk like fools. Whatever hath once existed, will continue to exist; there can be no annihilation or reduction of it to *nothing*. And when the last trumpet shall sound, then, by the restless command of the great Lord of all, the earth and sea, and every part of nature's vast domain, will *give up their thousands of millions of human kind!* The body, which now clogs the soul, and checks its aspiring powers, becoming *glorified and incorruptible*, will be again united to the soul, as a fit companion for it, in all its sublime and spiritual entertainments, in a state which shall have no end.

D. I know, that as the *good* will rise to *enjoy everlasting pleasure*; the *bad* will rise to *suffer everlasting pain!*

F. Let our condition on earth be as it may, what an *idea* does the word *everlasting* convey to the mind of us mortals! How *pleasing* is the thought to the *righteous!* How *dreadful the reflection to the wicked!*——My child!——

D. Be not surprized, *my father*, if my countenance changes at your words: they penetrate *my inmost thoughts*.

F. Heaven has framed us for such impressions: and miserable are those whose minds are *callous*. The translation out of this life into another, and the particular circumstances of the *future state*, are wonderful! That there is such a state, is clearly laid open by the *revelation* which is made known to us; and we must either impiously turn a deaf ear to the *oracles of God*, as contained in our *Bible*, or be sincere in our *obedience* to his word. These, I say, are subjects of wonder and astonishment! We are lost in the contemplation

of them!—All thy works, O God, are wonderful!—Are not you, my daughter, a mighty wonder to yourself? How came you into being? Where was you eighteen years ago? Could any mortal then see your frame, or form any notion of your existence? Where were your *thoughts*, which now ascend to heaven? You were produced as the rest of your species, in the amazing course and order of *nature*; but who is the mighty Lord and omnipotent *Governor of nature?* Who originally gave *nature* laws? Who still keeps her in her course, and continually supports her powers? Who but That God, at whose command she first started into being at the creation of the world we see; and at whose command it will as certainly one day drop in hoary age, and come to an end.

D. The contemplation of God, and the *immortality* of the soul of man, are most *wonderfully* great, and *gloriously* joyful!—Do all the nations of the earth believe in the *immortality* of the soul, and the *resurrection* of the body?

F. We were all in the dark till it was revealed to us: you remember what the Scriptures mention, upon the preaching of a *Saviour* by *John the Baptist*; how the Jews ran out to him in crowds, to enquire *what they should do to be saved*; and some of the *Roman soldiers* also went and asked him the same question. His answer was, *Do violence to no man; neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages*. These soldiers were *heathens*; but upon the appearance of so extraordinary a person as *John*, and soon after him of *Christ* himself, it is easy to imagine that they would be very inquisitive. They believed that such persons might inform them of something

something relating to *happiness after death*, and therefore asked a question so interesting to mankind. Those who received *Christ* in his true character as the *Messiah*, were convinced of the truth of the great doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and a state of rewards and punishments after death. The heathen world, at a very early period, believed that the soul is *immortal*, and lives in spite of the grave; and if it liveth, that it must enjoy *happiness*, or suffer *misery* in that state of life: but they had no notice in relation to a *resurrection* of the body; nor had been taught before the coming of *Christ*, with any degree of certainty, that the *soul* is immortal.—The *Jews* and *Mahometans* most resemble *Christians* in respect to their belief in the *immortality of the soul*: but the *Christians* only can give a consistent and authentic account of this matter.

*D.* If I remember right, some of the *Jews* did not then believe in the *resurrection of the body*, nor in the existence of angels or spirits.—

*F.* True: witness the *Sadducees*; but they were ridiculed even by the common people, for their incredulity. The belief of the *immortality of the soul*, and the *resurrection of the body*, are founded on the same authority: And it is well worthy the notice of mankind, that in the *ordinary operations of nature*, while we see the Almighty in his works, we may give credit to our own resurrection. The grain which is sown, corrupts and lies rotting in the earth; and yet in due time it revives, and brings forth fruit. It may be thus, in some measure, with the *body*. There are many of the works of God, which, though we see them with our eyes, we cannot sufficiently explain: and therefore it becomes us to rest entirely upon his *word* concerning them; and to *believe* what he has revealed in the Scriptures, in which we have the most undoubted evidence that *Christ* himself *arose from the dead*, and that he *raised the dead*. The miracles which he did, gave proof of the *will* of the Almighty, as well as of his *power*. We see that the *body*, for the present time, returns to dust, of which it was made: and have we not the utmost reason, and the most substantial proof, for believing that as the soul returns to *God* who gave it, so may the body be restored incorruptible to the soul?

*D.* The soul being the principle and mover of all our thoughts, words, and actions, it must stand a trial at the last tribunal: the Scriptures

inform us that it will be *united to the body*, which will be changed, and rendered incorruptible. Is not this sufficient to restrain mankind?

*F.* You may observe, *Mary*, that the *whole man*, soul and body, undergoes the state of trial or probation here, and the whole is concerned in the good or evil works committed in this state; therefore it is reasonable to believe the *whole man* will appear, and be rewarded or punished, according to the works done in the body, or present state of probation.

*D.* The consideration of such mighty wonders should humble us to the *dust*, and teach us to throw ourselves at the feet of the throne of *God*; and while we deplore our *own unworthiness*, rejoice in *his perfections*!

*F.* As to the differences which most distinguish knowledge and ignorance, what do the proudest of the children of *Adam* know, of any importance, compared to this doctrine? This is an object essential to the faith of a *Christian*; and therefore not more incomprehensible to the *lowest*, than the *highest*. The more *humble the heart*, the more inclined the *will* will be to receive this interesting truth. The best know not how the *body* and *soul* act on each other: they know not how they rise from their chair: we all know that we *can* rise, but *how*, the wisest, I say, cannot tell.—If *these* are secrets, what can we boast of in our *present state*?

*D.* Have we no authority, with regard to the exact time *when* our happiness or misery will *begin*?

*F.* None that I know of, except what relates to the *day of judgment*. For my own part, *Mary*, I believe it may be just the same in regard to *us*, whether it happens on the day of our *death*, or *ten thousand years* after: if we are not sensible of the difference of the time, it is the same. If, for instance, I fall into a profound sleep at eleven o'clock at night, and remain so till six the next morning, insensible of any thought, or dream; these *seven hours* are *as nothing* to me; they are not one minute.

*D.* Supposing your notion to be just, how should it affect us?

*F.* If we are in our senses, we shall behave ourselves as if the day of our death will be a *day of happiness* or *misery*; or in other words, the commencement of our eternal state.

*D.* Yet it is not the day of judgment!

*F.* Little do we know of this matter. Our  
D d d Saviour

Saviour told the penitent who died with him, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." What is exactly meant by *to-day*, or what peculiar mercy might be shewn, we know not; but *we are in the highest degree assured, that when we die, our lot is cast*; and that *there is no repentance in the grave*. Let the thought of *immortality* always give you pleasure: I do not mean that the mind can be always fixed upon so *great an object*; but that in general you must live with due attention to it; for this is our glory, and our common happiness: it is That which the world cannot give, nor take away.—When we arrive at such a degree of moral and religious improvement, and such a knowledge of *ourselves*, as to view both worlds with a peaceful and courageous mind, in a well-grounded confidence in the mercies of God; then with equal confidence we may *hope* to be happy after death. There cannot be a more pleasing, or *improving exercise* to the human mind, than to be frequently *reviewing* its own *privileges* and *endowments*: nor a more effectual means to awaken in us an ambition raised above *low objects* and *little pursuits*, than to value ourselves as *heirs* of eternity!

D. This comes to the same point, with regard to *immortality*.

F. Most certainly: those who have no generous and worthy thoughts of themselves, as *immortal beings*, cannot look forward with solid joy, or march through life with any real satisfaction. If we naturally shudder at the thought of falling into *nothing*, the dread of *punishment* is yet more terrible: but *worthy thoughts* produce *worthy actions*; and our *hopes* of *happiness* will increase with the practice of virtue.

D. Alas, my father! so many objects of sense play before my eyes, I fear they will often divert the thoughts of my *heart* from the interest of my *soul*.

F. As reasonable creatures, my daughter, we must act *reasonably*, or our hearts can never be at *rest*. The best are imperfect creatures; but still those who fix their minds on the *glorious paths* which lead to heaven, we may hope will *walk* in them.

D. If we acquire right habits, I presume our views of immortal bliss will grow *familiar*; and all of us must be convinced that we shall act a very *foolish*, as well as a *wicked* part, if we do not consult our own *eternal* interest.

F. Every *rational creature* is supposed to pursue the object of *rational pleasure*; and there cannot be a more *pleasing* consideration than this; that in the ordinary course of *virtue*, the soul goes on from one degree of strength to another, till the Almighty, in his good time, calls us to partake of the glory, which he intends shall be the reward of it.

D. But, alas, our strength is oftentimes but *weakness*!

F. We *rise* and *fall*; but *time*, which preys on the body, shattering this tenement of the soul, gives us *experience*, and advances us towards our *complete happiness*. The more you examine your *heart*, the less deceitful it will be: yet when you examine it, be not *discouraged* at its *imperfections*; but reflect, that every sore of the *mind*, like those of the *body*, may be cured by *time*, and made sound by *medicine*. The great Physician of souls is ready to lend his potent aid. *Compassion* is due to ourselves; and in all our contemplations which regard the soul, a severity of *self-chastisement*, beyond the bounds which *reason* warrants, and our *trust* in God demands, is rather the effect of a *superstitious mind*, or a *disordered brain*, than the genuine produce of *true religion*. I have told you, that God accepts our *gratitude* for his *bounties*, as the incense of our *praise*; and encourages us to be *joyful* in our expectations of *immortal happiness*. To be *sorrowful* as men without hope, is expressly forbidden. Hope banishes *melancholy* and *fear*; and as the sun darting from a cloud, dispels the gloomy darkness, hope makes the thoughts of *immortality* glad some as the radiant morn, when yon hills and *pleasant vallies* are renewed in their verdant livery, and smile in *plenty*! When the mind is thus elevated with *joy*, *death* seems to drop his dart; and rather leads us to *heaven* in smiles of friendship and benignity, than supports his character as the *king of terrors*.

D. Good humour then is as agreeable to *piety*, as attention to our immortal state to *true wisdom*; and both should go together: *Joy* is a fit companion for *hope*; and the kindness of our hearts towards our fellow-creatures, an imitation of the *mercy* and *benignity* of the Author of our being, who gave us such dispositions.

F. You are most certainly in the right; since nothing can be more injurious to the cause of religion, than a fond opinion, that because it is *serious* and *awful*, therefore it must be *sad* and *gloomy*.

*gloomy*. The heart may triumph in joy, without the noise of *festivity*. So far from *melancholy* being the characteristic of goodness, *virtue* itself implies an agreeable and pleasing quality. In all cases we ought to recollect our *faults*, and not to be at rest till we *correct* them: yet still viewing ourselves in That light, in which it is most probable we shall *benefit*; drawing this certain conclusion, that the next evil to our *despairing* of the mercies of God, is to *distrust his goodness*.

D. O my father! I remember the advice given by our great Lord and Master to his disciples; for when they were most terrified with apprehensions of evil from a wicked generation, he said, “*Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.*”

F. This is a very distinguished passage: I hope you will follow his example, and also try to conquer the world, that it may not conquer you.

D. But we cannot be always *faultless*.

F. No: but the more regular our lives are, the more the beauty of *virtue* will appear. It is the uniformity of our behaviour which displays her native charms, and gives her such attractive smiles. It is this which pours into the soul the precious balm of *hope*. It is this which relieves the natural longings of the heart, and gives every blessing a quick relish, whilst the pleasure of an upright mind affords the most convincing proof, that *virtue* rewards herself in *this world*, as well as promises *happiness* in the next. Observe this rule, my child; and if evil comes, you will readily find a *remedy* for it. True piety will lighten the load of your misfortunes: it will make you feel your submission to the will of God, in the most sensible manner: you will even smile at *grief* as a minister of *good* to you; and by turning every event of life to advantage, *practically* learn how to make a *virtue* of *necessity*. But remember, my dear daughter, this can be learnt only by the *trial*; and do not distrust your aged father, who is communicating to you the effects of his experience, that he tells you any thing he doth not believe.

D. I am convinced, from my heart, of your goodness; and I know this is not matter of *opinion* or *fancy*, but founded on the *everlasting rock of confidence in God!*

F. It is this which has constantly supported me under all the *difficulties and troubles of my life*; and now enables me to look forward with

the hopes of better things *after death*. It is this which proves, to what an exalted height the *Christian* virtue lifts immortal man!—Where shall we seek for such glorious motives as those which *Christianity* inspires? All doubt must cease; when we examine our own hearts, and the *pleasure* which arises from the practice of virtue, and the *pain* which follows vice. If we consider the mercy and goodness, the wisdom and justice of God, in giving us such longing desires after happiness, can we suppose that the whole is to terminate with a few uncertain years? Do you not perceive there is something so noble in the soul; such fountains of *virtue* and *knowledge*; such approaches to *perfection*, that if the Scriptures had not fully opened our eyes, we might wonder why such desires were given us. The best and wisest in all ages of the *heathen* world have, in many of the actions of their lives, as well as in their books, given the most convincing proofs of their opinion, that there might be a state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death. They had a secret sense, or kind of internal evidence, arising from the constitution of the moral world, or received intimations from the Jews, that there was a state of existence for the soul, when the body should be converted into dust. We *Christians* have seen the *light* which was then darkness. The *unknown God* whom they adored, the gospel has discovered to us. You will find, that as *time*, that is, your time, or the duration of your life, wears away, your desire for *something future* will increase; you will still grasp at *something* that is *to come*; and your heart and understanding naturally send you to the *doctrine of immortality*, as contained in the Scriptures. By these you are informed what boundless joys are reserved for the *just*; for what end an ambassador was sent from heaven to proclaim the will of God; and how being made free, you can chuse or refuse; be happy if you obey, or miserable if you disobey. We all court, in some degree, the *honours*, the *wealth*, and *power* of this world; and long for *reputation*: but what does it all amount to, compared with the generous, exalted, *glorious* expectations of the enjoyment of a Being without end, and a happiness equal to that Being! In this world we die as fast as we live: is it not obvious, that the greatest wisdom is to keep your eye perpetually on a future judgment, for the direction and government of your life, with a view to that

glorious scene? An *honest* and a *virtuous* life will lead you to state your accounts, my child, and examine your qualifications for a blissful eternity: and the stating accounts, in the examination of your own heart, will at length induce you the more to rejoice that you are *immortal*. What, in our mortal state, are *honour* and *riches*, which are so much the idol of the *great*? When *honour* means *honesty*, it is a glorious thing: and when riches are dispensed by the *stewards* of heaven, they are good also. But honour oftentimes signifies nothing more than a compound of *infidelity* and *disobedience* towards God; pride and vanity towards the world; and fear of the reproach of *men*. When it hath any *mixture* of virtue, it falls very short of that unreserved obedience, to which a substantial immortality of glory is promised. You will soon find that men take pains to cheat themselves into false notions of things: they seek for happiness by *exaltation*, and something *superior* to what they had before; particularly in *wealth*: but nothing can exalt them so much as the consideration of the *happiness of a life to come*! Nothing is so *noble*; nothing so *enlarged* and *delightful*: all the glories of this world fall down before it!

D. Such hopes have surely all the advantages

you ascribe to them, and still greater, beyond our comprehension. But if they were not so highly pleasing, yet the *mortality* we naturally dread, appearing so continually before our doors, in our chambers, and in our fields, one would imagine we should fly to the *thought of immortality*, as our only relief; as it seems to be the only *safeguard of a virtuous life*.

F. *Well have you spoken, Mary*; and I hope you will *act as well*; those who do not indulge such considerations whilst they are *young*, seldom attend much to them in more advanced years!

D. Not attend to them!—At some time or other they *must attend*, or retire very ill prepared to give up their accounts.

F. Well, my child, do you *attend* and be happy. You seem to be sensible, that if you *do attend*, you shall enjoy a glorious entertainment, such as common mortals, who live carelessly, are entire strangers to.

D. Many of my acquaintance, who talk in the most copious manner on the subject of bodily infirmities, seem to derive but little comfort from considerations of the *immortality of their souls*.

F. The reason is plain: they never learnt to *think* what sort of Beings they are; nor what kind of spirit they are of.

### CONVERSATION III.

*Hope in immortality the great balm of human life. The neglect of discoursing on the subject of immortality, one great cause of wickedness. True greatness built on hopes in a life to come. Examination of the heart necessary to hope. The difference between the wise and the foolish. Prayer for a happy resurrection. Prayer against carelessness and indifference with respect to the sins of others. Character of St. Paul. Description of his pleadings before King Agrippa, on the subject of immortality.*

D. **WE** are sure that life is very uncertain and precarious, and yet we are immoderately fond of it. However joyful it may be to some, it is beset with briars and thorns to others. Those seem to be the *most happy*, who have the *most hope*.

F. It is but a small part of mankind who talk of their *immortality*. One may almost venture to say, they discourse of every thing as an object of

hope, except this. It is the *fashion* to talk of *health*; as *long life* is supposed to depend on it: and it is *not the fashion* to talk of the soul; for this supposes that the idea of *death* is annexed to it.

D. Must every thing be reduced to the standard of *fashion*?

F. The *customs* of all countries seem to determine the ordinary course of the conversation of the people:

people : But this is not the greatest evil amongst us ; for many, I fear, whilst they are in *company*, faintly acknowledge their belief of the *immortality of the soul* ; and in *secret*, wish they did not believe it ; and from *acting* as if it were not *immortal*, they grow doubtful, whether it be so or not.

D. Good God ! Is it possible there should be any who do not *eagerly* embrace the belief of *immortality* ?

F. Your question strikes me to the heart ! Though I am willing to hope there is more religion in the world than we see, yet I observe, among those whom I esteem my *friends*, or familiar acquaintance, how little the *immortality* of the soul, which is the great object of religion, *appears* to be the subject of their meditations. This is the more unaccountable when one considers how small a part of this world's goods comes to the share of many of *them*.

D. What can be their meaning ?

F. Meaning, child !—The misfortune is, they have no meaning. *Example* tramples on *precept* ; and men suffer themselves to be guided by their senses. They abuse the indulgence of Providence, and become too high in their own conceit, to bend to the *humble duties of christian piety*. The *great*, who should take the lead in *good example*, are frequently so very deficient themselves, as to stand in need of *guides*. Many form their manners on a plan unfit to give impressions of their own *immortality* : yet this is the only foundation on which true greatness can be built. Where do we read of *leaders*, *patriots*, *philosophers*, or *martyrs*, distinguished in the age in which they lived, but as their minds were exalted above the vulgar, by standing on the firmer basis of confidence derived from their persuasion of the immortality of the soul ; not the lewd precepts of a *debauchee*, or the mock sagacity of a *mere* pretender to knowledge in the œconomy of the present life only. We are all supposed to acknowledge the belief of

an existence after death ; and that we hope it will be *happy* ; but few of us live sufficiently attentive to the *conditions* of the happiness expected.

D. Has this been the case at all times, and in all countries ?

F. At some periods the mind seems to have been more cultivated, and to have produced better fruit than at others : but whether things be now comparatively better or worse than they were, the wise will make it their first object to *look at home* : and since the *knowledge of ourselves* is so much more valuable than our *opinion of other people*, which may happen to be *right* or *wrong*, let us examine *our own hearts*, rather than scrutinize the conduct of others. The *wise* ponder in their thoughts what they believe to be *true* ; and the *foolish* what they would have to be *so*. The *wise* look for that which will afford them comfort : the *foolish* often adopt such notions as distract them with *fears* and *doubts*. The wise cast their eyes forward into futurity, and consider what will be their condition millions of ages hence, as well as what it *now* is : the *foolish* think of the *present moment* only.

D. These are very striking distinctions, and I fear as *true* as they are *wonderful*. I have no conception how the true spirit of *Christianity* can be revived, unless we meditate on the happy immortality which it promises.

F. Your observation is just : To take things as we find them, *wisdom* and *folly* are often blended in the same character. The best advice I can give you, for the prosperity of the *gospel*, as well as the welfare of your own soul, is to take all fit opportunities of conversing with your own heart ; making the *Scriptures* your *rule* ; and your *conscience* your *judge* ; and both will unite their force to applaud or condemn you, according to your *works*.

D. This is what I mean to do ; and for this I *pray*, that I may rise to glory everlasting (*a*), still charitably attentive to the immortal happiness of others (*b*).

F. A3

(a) *For a happy resurrection*.—Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, I implore thy grace and heavenly benediction, that I may cast away the works of darkness, and direct my paths through this mortal life, with such *humility* and *fear*, that when *Christ*, the great promulgator of *immortality*, who visited mankind, in the most *humble condition*, shall return in *tremendous glory*, I may be found acceptable in his sight, who liveth and reigneth, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever !

(b) *Against carelessness and indifference, with respect to the sins of others*.—Father of mercies, and Lord of my life, whose beloved Son, when manifested in human nature, took all occasions to relieve the spiritual wants  
and

C. As the great object of our spiritual nature is the *immortality* of the soul, let us, while we mind our *worldly* business, as we ought, hold this nearest to our hearts. There is nothing we more naturally love, or are more ready to die for, than *truth*: and you are sensible that no truths are of such importance as the *being of a God*, and the *immortality of the soul of man*. In the great view of these sublime and heavenly doctrines, it seems necessary to consider *Adam*, as the great patriarch of the *temporal* and *mortal* condition of man; and *Jesus Christ*, as the mighty *prophet*, *lawgiver*, and *judge* of our eternal and immortal state; for whose *second coming* we must *prepare ourselves*.

D. The misfortune is, that such coming appears to the *careless* to be at a great distance; so great, as to make it a *kind of doubt* whether he will come at all or not.

E. The *careless* are therefore as *foolish* as they are *wicked*. Whether they are *infidels* or not, their folly and iniquity consists in doing evil, and in *putting off* their *repentance* and *amendment*.—Of all the remarkable pleadings, which regard the *resurrection of the body*, or in other words, the *immortality of the soul*; we find That the most distinguished which was spoken by the great apostle St. *Paul*, when arraigned before a king. Abstracted from the power which was given him from heaven, this *apostle* was what we may call a *doctor of divinity*. He appears to have always been a man of great probity, enflamed with zeal for his religion, as a believer in the law of *Moses*; warm in his passions; strong in understanding; and distinguished for his learning. We may reasonably suppose he was well allied, and in high esteem. Under such advantageous circumstances, it is the more easy to conclude, that he was a great instrument in persecuting, what he thought a *false sect*, called the *Nazarenes*. The distinguished office which he bore in the *Jewish* state, occasioned his being selected by the *high priest*, to execute a commission at *Damascus*, thought to be of great importance to the state: he was ordered to bring all the people prisoners who should profess the name of

*Christ*, to be tried at *Jerusalem* as *malefactors*. It was upon this memorable expedition it pleased the Almighty, by a miraculous intervention, to inform him of those important truths, in defence of which he might *properly* employ his zeal. Then was he struck blind, by a sensible light from heaven, that his mental eyes might be opened by the influence of the power of God. Then, as it were in allusion to his *false zeal*, fell off the scales which had occasioned his former darkness. Convinced of the *truth of Christianity*, the *immortality of the soul*, and consequently of a state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death, as declared by the tremendous Judge, who will appear at the last day, he maintained his cause. The intrepidity he had ignorantly exercised *against Christ*, was now employed *for him*. Whatever struggles he might have had in his breast, we find him forsaking his *parents* and *friends*, his *honours* and *profits*, and the high reputation he bore among his countrymen, counting all as dross, and of no value, upon the comparison of the glories he had in view. The immortality, as promised by the Saviour of mankind, absorbed all other considerations. We now behold him brought before King *Agrippa*: he maintains the same constancy and firmness for which he had been so remarkably distinguished. In vindication of his conduct, he appeals to the king himself, as to the notoriety of the fact of that *marvellous* event, from which he dated his *change of conduct*, from being a *persecutor*, to his becoming a most *zealous advocate* for the religion of *Christ*. It was for the great doctrine of a *judgment to come*, the *resurrection of the body*, the *immortality of the soul*, and a *state of rewards and punishments after death*, for which he was now in chains. Well might he say, “that were it not for the hopes of happiness after death, by a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, himself should think the persecuted friends of the Saviour of the world, of all the men in it the most miserable.” Now, *Mary*, with regard to the *hope* which was in him, in what did it differ from the hope which is in *you* or *me*? And with respect to the great doctrine of *immortality*, whether you con-

and necessities of men, give me grace, I beseech thee, to yield such a zealous and cheerful obedience to the gracious terms of thy gospel, and the glorious hopes of *immortality*, that reforming *my own life*, I may both by *precept* and *example*, influence the conduct of others; and become a happy instrument of thy providence, to render them constant in their duty to thee. Grant this, O God of heaven, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the mighty Friend and Saviour of the world!



consider me as *St. Paul*, and yourself as *Agrippa*, while we talk on this subject, the difference is, the incomparable superiority of the piety, zeal, and understanding of the apostle; and that *you* are convinced of the truth, which the king pretended he was only *almost* persuaded of. At this time we are under no persecution for the name of *Christ*. Here are millions who profess to believe as *St. Paul* did: the general evidence of the truth stands, if possible, on a stronger foundation than it did then: for the world has long since seen the completion of the prediction concerning the sad *fate of Jerusalem*; the *Jewish* government; and the glorious propagation of the gospel, in spite of all the powers of hell, which opposed it. All the *speculations, subtilities, and disputes of the wise*, in those days, concerning what *could* be, were thrown down; they were totally destroyed by what had really happened. The argument, “*why should it be thought a thing impossible that God should raise the dead,*” was realized by the dead rising to life, even in the person of our great Redeemer, as well as several others. The circumstances so often ap-

pealed to, by all the inspired penmen of the sacred writings, who agree in one grand testimony, now lie before us. Do not all the pomp and pride of this world, hide their diminished heads, when the glorious light of the gospel shines forth? This appeared first in the persons of the *poor and unlettered*; *St. Paul* being, I believe, the only apostle much distinguished for learning. *Now* we have all the *true wisdom* of ages to confirm these mighty truths, shall we yet resist them? How great will our *condemnation* be!

*D.* He who reads the *New Testament*, with the lowest degree of *cautious* and *common-sense*, must be equally convinced of the *immortality of the soul*, and of a state of rewards and punishments after death.—And he who is negligent with regard to this important article, must be a trifling foolish person, though he were wise in all *worldly wisdom* (*a*).

*F.* Aye, *Mary*, so it is: let such look to themselves! He who will venture for the playthings of a child, or the sensuality of a goat, to barter away his soul, must be a fool indeed!

## CONVERSATION IV.

*Common sense necessary in religion as in other concerns. Reflections on immortality the comfort of the poor, and the glory of the rich. Importance of every individual to himself. The vanity of human life with respect to fame. Consideration of the mightiest people and states that ever existed, compared to the immortality of the soul. Description of a virtuous poor man.*

*D.* YOU gave me great pleasure in what you mentioned of *St. Paul*: but I have heard some people pretend, that this great apostle says we may be saved by *faith* without *good works* (*b*).

*F.* We have talked of That on more occasions than one. All I can add at present is, that some people are weak and absurd, and take pains to puzzle their own cause: they talk of what they do not understand. They are fond of won-

*derful things*, and will not make use of the *little common sense* which God hath given them. *Faith*, that is, the faith of a Christian, is opposed to justification by the law of *Moses*. In this sense, you are saved by *faith alone*. If *St. Paul* had entertained any such notion, as is vulgarly understood of salvation by *faith alone*, he could not have been an instrument, in the hands of God, to propagate *truth* by a *falsehood*. If they will believe *St. Paul* himself, he tells us, that “he kept

(*a*) “Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,  
“Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.”

(*b*) Vol. I. page 55.

kept his body under," his salvation depending on that being subject to the power of his reason. His *faith*, in point of *belief*, could certainly not fail him after what he had seen and felt: yet he did not expect a *continuation of miracles*; for he says, that he is forced to be very watchful of himself, "lest he should be a castaway:" But how could he express any fear, lest the lust of his body should prevent his salvation, if he thought himself *absolutely sure of salvation*; or predestined to it? He thought his election not so sure, but that he might *lose* it, through the prevalency of lust, or other evil passion, if not duly restrained by his *voluntary care*. All passages, which learning, or the difference of language render obscure, are best explained by the clearest declarations suited to the most common apprehensions of mankind. And let this remark sink into your heart, and divert you from entertaining any difficulties which *ignorance* or *vanity*, *melancholy* or *delusion*, may suggest to you.—And rejoice with exceeding great joy, that *Christ* has brought *life* and *immortality* to light through the gospel.—Let the *perfect example* which he has left us, be your model. Press forward for the prize of the high calling; and what you want, through the infirmities of human nature, hope it will be supplied by the prevailing merits of his blood. As you trust in *his mercy*, be merciful yourself to all the children of men, for this, he says, *is the law and the prophets*.

D. I clearly perceive that common sense must still be our guide in understanding the Scriptures. With regard to this mortal state, and the perishing condition of mankind, when they cease to think of their immortality, life seems to be a very small concern indeed!

F. Although every person, however inconsiderable, may leave some kind of character with regard to his *good* or *evil deeds*, his *humour*, *morals*, *poverty*, or *riches*, at least for the day, the *greatest* live in our remembrance but a *few days*. They depart this mortal life as *common men*: a new generation succeeds, and the old one is forgotten.

D. As to That part, we have all *characters*, differing from each other; and the pride of the heart inclines us to be fond of distinctions: but as you observe, no sooner is the breath of the peasant or the lord departed from him, than with it goes his memorial, like smoke before

the wind; or like the morning's dew on the approach of the sun. We say, "he is dead," as *familiarly* as that the day is cloudy, or clears up; thinking as little of *eternity*, as of any common event. Is not this enough to humble the pride of the most haughty?

F. Aye, *Mary*. You seem to be better acquainted with this matter, than some of the children of *greatness* allow themselves to be.—Well may we say, *Proud mortal, humble thyself; let not thy folly betray thee!—Thou art a worm; or, what is less, a dinner for a worm;—and of nothing but immortality canst thou boast. The proudest trophies of worldly glory, what are they but a heap of stones, or a block formed by an artist's hand, in which he alone has the merit? Cherish the bright hope of immortality, and rejoice! Art thou wise, my child? Set thy affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Thus shalt thou learn to look down on the world, and rise exalted in the prospect of immortality!*"

D. This is the true view of the life and death of man; *the praise belongs to God alone!* He made us for *his* glory; not that we might praise or flatter *each other*.

F. True, my dear child! much less that one man should put his feet on another's neck: for man, however supported by external accidents, is the same indigent, dependant creature; and must *tremble* or *rejoice*, as his Maker *frowns* or *smiles*. Cherish the glorious hopes of *immortality*; and let it be the constant object of your thoughts to walk in the paths of peace; so shall your ways be ways of pleasantness. To tell you to endeavour to be *happy*, by whatever means it comes, is in effect to tell you to *draw* your breath. But it is impossible for any one, who believes in the immortality of the soul, to enjoy any portion of life deserving the name of happiness, but as he contemplates his *own* immortality; since all this world can give, is not capable of filling up the *longings of the heart*, or banishing the *fears* that invade it. With respect to the present life, the more eager you are, the more you will be deceived and disappointed. It was a shrewd observation once made, that "no man hath so much care, as he who endeavours after the most happiness:" And indeed I have ever found, that an easy indifference, and a calm submission, properties less difficult to be *enjoyed*, than *described*, promise fairer, and perform better, than any thing I ever learnt from books. For what  
can

can one be *more than convinced*? I do not mean that you should not *feel*; for then your happiness would be the happiness of an *ox*; but that you should not think great sensibility is so much a *virtue*, as an *instinct*. Those who are perpetually *laughing*, or they who are given to *weeping*, seem to be equally *weak*, though perchance not equally *vicious*. To act benevolently on principle, with a just remembrance of the *immortality* of the soul, I apprehend to be the glory of a *social and intelligent being*. We shall ever seek our *temporal happiness*, chiefly in society: it is this which gives a relish to life; but as it is the *source* of our *joys*, it is often the *fountain* of our *sorrows*. If you do not make a good choice of your companion, but more particularly of your *companion for life*, you will suffer more misery, than you can enjoy happiness. In every circumstance, set your affections on things above, and *not* on things on the earth. Do not rest your feet on the sandy foundation of this world: it is but a passage to another. Thus shall you avoid being a dupe to *false hope*, real or *fantastic fears*. Whatever obstructs the *freedom* and *purity* of your mind, will in the same degree wound the *peace* and *satisfaction* of it, and darken the prospect you might otherwise enjoy of That glorious immortality which Heaven has offered to your view. Calamities are the lot of man: keep them at arms-length; strive that they shall not reach your soul: preserve this untainted by every power it enjoys, and every succour it can furnish, by the assistance of Heaven, for its own defence. Be wise, O my daughter! and make it the business of your life to secure a happy event on That day, in which *Christ* will judge the world. Do this, not only to avoid the terrible punishment which is threatened to the *evil doer*, but that you may receive the *vast reward* which is promised to the *good*. You have not forgotten the *learned bishop's* representation of *heaven* and *hell* (a).

D. No, my father: I believe I never shall forget it.

F. Such are the glorious contemplations of *immortality*, the most unlettered villager, whose heart is deeply affected, and his *hopes* exalted by the prospect of it, may look down on this world, and learn to rejoice *with exceeding great joy*, even in the sweat of his brows: this will make him *bumble* in heart, yet *noble* in sentiment; *provident* and *sober*, yet *generous*, even to the con-

tempt of life. This will render him lovely to others, who *discern* his goodness, and happy in himself who *feels* it. The world can give him nothing compared to his *hopes*, nor take from him any thing that will destroy his *peace*. Cheerful and courageous in his poverty, he will trust in the care of Heaven: contemplating the riches of the goodness of his *Father* and his *God*.—The greatest of the children of men, independent of *immortality*, are *nothing*; and the reason which the *Royal Psalmist* assigns for this, hath a peculiar beauty and simplicity. “Our time,” says he, “passeth away like a shadow.” Even the stars will fade away, and the bright luminary of the heavens be extinguished. On that day, shall we enter into the full enjoyment of our *immortal inheritance*, and *behold* those glories which we can now only *meditate* upon, and see as through a glass darkly. That day, with respect to us, is as near as the day of our death, *which may be to-day*.

D. What indeed is the *world* we must leave in so short a space as the ordinary length of *man's life*? What can the whole of it be worth, to an individual, compared to an *unspotted faith*, and the truth of a *godly mind*, fixed and unmoved in the cause of virtue?

F. How many *millions* of individuals furnish the earth with people! Every one considered properly, is of vast consequence to himself, how little soever he may appear to others. But look higher, see what hath been the fate of *whole nations*, with regard to *this world*. Where are that ancient people, the *Jews*, who made so great a figure in *their time*, as the sacred history informs us? What variety of national punishments did their sins occasion, till they were cut off from the earth as a people!—Where are the mighty empires of the *Assyrians*, the *Babylonians*, the *Egyptians*?—Where are the *Romans*, who were masters of the *Jews*, when, under their ruler *Pontius Pilate*, the Lord of immortality was put to death upon the cross!—Those mighty states are wiped off the face of the earth! And what will be the fate of the *earth* itself? You, my daughter, in this vast extensive view, are as a worm; but, as having an *immortal soul*, incapable of destruction from *time*, or *change*, or *chance*, you are *great* and *awful*; if you are *good*, you will be *for ever* happy in the presence of your *Father* and your *God*!

D. What

*D.* What comfort it is to think that *God* is my father, as well as the father of angels; and that he will be my *friend*, if I obey him!

*F.* Consider what a glorious creature you are, by being *immortal!* and the *more humble*, the *more glorious* you will be.

*D.* Long may I remember your *words*, and forget not the *value* of my immortal soul, for which the Son of God died upon the cross.

*F.* As we must all exist through *eternity*, little will it avail the children of *vice* and *folly*, on

that awful day, when all hearts will be laid open before their tremendous Judge, if they should then call on the mountains to cover them!—*They lived*, and they must *give account how they lived.*

*D.* I hope, my Father, your discourse for these several evenings past, on the great subject of *immortality*, will make a lasting impression on my heart, and understanding; that trusting in God, I may *live* and *die* in such a manner as to become an object of the mercy of the Almighty!

## P A R T VIII.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N I.

*Smuggling but another name for robbery. The pernicious effects of it on the morals of a people, and the infamy which attends it. Fidelity in the preservation of government exemplified in the instinct of bees.*

D. YOU have often recommended to me to lay out my money with caution. I have resisted a bargain to-day ! It is an article which you and I make but little use of ; and though cheap in itself might be *dear* to us.

F. Tea, I suppose. Touch it at your peril. If we do not want it, the price is too high to us, be it ever so low. But do you consider that this is probably *stolen goods*, and that the *receiver* is as criminal as the thief ?

D. Stolen goods ! I believe it is run-goods : but is *running* of goods *stealing* them ?

F. It is surely stealing that part of them which is due to the crown, or *national revenue* ; and so considered by the laws ; for the whole is condemned as *forfeited* ; and even the vessel on which it is found loaded ; and the horses which bring it to market, are all forfeited. In some cases, the *smuggler* is liable to be hanged : and would you be a partner in his iniquity ?

D. God forbid ! I did not think it would be criminal to buy it, for most of our neighbours do this without reserve ; and even the *gentry*, who are not under the same necessity of seeking for *cheap* commodities, do it.

F. The greater the shame ! My heart grows sick when I think what scandalous practices custom may countenance, even to the destruction of our country. Those who rob the *public* of a *little*, would rob it of a *great deal*, if they could do it with the same safety and conve-

nience. I have known a smuggler grow rich, and be promoted to public honours.

D. Not for *smuggling*.

F. No : but because he was rich, though it was well known how he obtained a great part of his wealth. This practice is of a singular nature, for some who revolt at the name of a *smuggler*, take every convenient opportunity to act the same part, provided it be for their own use, or the use of their friends. And why confine it to their *own use* ? They are not *traders* : no ; but I must insist that they are smugglers. This practice is of so much the more dangerous tendency from its being *so universal*. If it were not the *private* interest, as well as the *public duty* of the proper officers, to prevent the perpetration of such infamous frauds on the public ; I see not how we could have any *public*, or exist for a year as a nation. Nothing can give a sanction to *villainy* ; and I say, that *smuggling* is *thieving* ; and the purchase of smuggled goods, *knowing* or *believing* them to be such, is *thievory* : it is maintaining the *thief*, that he may rob again. The custom ought to be held infamous : It receives an aggravation, when practised by those whose support depends on the salaries or wages they receive from the public purse ; for what public purse can there be, if we look on and see it *robbed* ; nay, even aid and assist the robber !

D. There is no reasoning against your argument, except that people do not think so closely.

Some excuse themselves by saying, the duties levied are too high on certain articles.

*F.* That is, in other words, We sit in council on our rulers.—We condemn them unheard.—We require of them no reasons for their conduct in a lawful way, but usurp their power, and throw down their authority; and by our *good-will* would bring government itself into disgrace, and root up the foundations of civil society.

*D.* My dear father, I believe I shall never again propose to you to buy an ounce of smuggled tea, or any other smuggled goods, but content myself with That alone which I am entitled to by the laws of the land. Let the *great vulgar*, or the *little one*, smuggle on if they please, I will live with more honour than such a practice seems to countenance; and die in more peace, than *such injustice* can promise.

*F.* *Sub injustice!*—Injustice of every kind, is abominable. Taxes can be paid only from the produce of the earth, and the duties on foreign commodities. Whatever the land is deficient in, must be supplied by *agriculture* and *manufactory*; and consequently by the sweat of the brows of the laborious, who are always the most indigent part of mankind. Thus you see, that the *smuggler*, and the *buyer of smuggled goods*, are combined to rob the *poor*, to gratify their own wanton appetites. This is an evil under the sun, which I fear prevails in all countries: but so do  *falsehood* and *fraud*, *murder* and *adultery*. The corruption of the heart, and the perverseness of the will, are not less flagrant in *smuggling*, than in other crimes; and I can tell you also, it is often the *occasion of murder*. *Smugglers* resist; and the death of the *innocent* often ensues: so that, in its consequences, the buyer of smuggled goods is countenancing a practice pregnant with murder, as well as rapine; and wringing from the *hard hand of peasants*, so much of their slender support, as they are taxed to supply the deficiencies created by the *robberies of smugglers*, and the *supporters of the robberies of smugglers*.

*D.* Would to God your sentiments were well known, and a rule of *practice*; it would be one step towards happier days!

*F.* *Aye, Mary*; happier days can only be the reward of more virtuous days: and there are charms in *justice*, and *moral rectitude*, which attune the soul, and produce a harmony as much beyond the pleasures of these *little arts of wickedness*, as the *mind's sweet peace* exceeds the vanity of the *heart*, the blandishments of the *fancy*, or the vexatious and turbulent gratifications of the *senses*. So it ever was; and so it will be. The statutes of the Lord are firmer than this solid earth on which you stand. Nature will sink in years, and this goodly frame be dissolved: but *justice* will reign inherent in the Godhead, through the everlasting ages of *eternity*! How are we to be faithful to the great Lord of heaven, if we are not faithful to earthly authority? Behold the lesson we are taught by the wondrous instinct of the *industrious bee*. Such is his nature, with respect to government, and fidelity to a leader, that by distinguishing one which we call the *queen*, the whole hive will follow her, whatever condition she is in. By an artful management, taking her between the finger and the thumb, and baring the arm, by a certain sound or *call*, the whole hive will settle near her upon the naked arm: and though the sting of one is so hurtful, not one of the hive will do the least injury to the person who thus supports the *queen*. So I understand their *wonderful economy* and *fidelity*.

*D.* How is this to be reconciled? Is it *reason*?

*F.* We call it instinct: but it is to *appearance*, sentiment of love and affection: true regard to the preservation of a superior; obedience to authority; resolution to die, rather than abandon a principle. It is every thing that is *good*, and contrary to *smuggling*, which is pregnant with every thing that is *bad* and destructive to society.

*D.* What affinity is there between *reason* and *instinct*?

*F.* Now you go beyond my power to answer. This seems to be a secret to us mortals; for we know not what either is, but by their effects; more than we know what God is, but by his works, and the revelation of his will.

## CONVERSATION II.

*Ode on contentment, recommended to the study of his daughter. Condition of servitude requires patience and contentment in a degree superior to others. Opinion concerning the meeting in heaven of those who loved each other on earth.*

**E.** CONTENTMENT! O it is the *paradise* of the earth! He who enjoys it, let his fortune be what it may, enjoys the smiles of Heaven. His submission to Providence, is a grateful offering to the Lord of nature: and as, from the *act of contentment*, such a man is so far one of the most *happy* of mortals *here*, he ought to entertain the stronger hopes of reaching the joys of the life to come. I have a *hymn to contentment*, written by a *lady* (a) very eminent for her poetical talents.—I will make you a present of it.

*Hymn to Contentment.*

“ O *thou*, the nymph with placid eye!  
O seldom found, yet ever nigh!  
Receive my temperate vow!  
Not all the storms that shake the pole,  
Can e'er disturb thy halcyon soul,  
And smooth unalter'd brow.

O come! in simplest vest array'd,  
With all thy sober cheer display'd,  
To bless my longing sight!  
Thy mien compos'd, thy even pace,  
Thy meek regard, thy matron grace,  
And chaste subdu'd delight.

No more, by varying passions beat,  
O gently guide my pilgrim feet,  
To find thy hermit cell;  
Where in some pure and equal sky,  
Beneath thy soft indulgent eye,  
The modest virtues dwell.

Simplicity in *Atric* vest,  
And *Innocence* with candid breast,  
And clear undaunted eye;  
And *Hope*, who points to distant years,  
Fair opening thro' this vale of tears  
A vista to the sky.

There *Health*, thro' whose calm bosom glide  
The temperate joys in even tide,  
That rarely ebb or flow;  
And *Patience* there, thy sister meek,  
Presents her mild unvarying cheek  
To meet the offer'd blow.

Her influence taught the *Phrygian* sage,  
A tyrant master's wanton rage,  
With fettle'd smiles to meet;  
Innurd to toil, and bitter bread,  
He bow'd his meek submitted head,  
And kiss'd thy fainted feet.

But thou, O nymph, retir'd and coy,  
In what brown hamlet do'st thou joy,  
To tell thy tender tale?  
The lowliest children of the ground,  
*Moss-rose*, and violet *bloussom* round,  
And *lily* of the *vale*.

O say, what soft propitious hour,  
I best may chuse to hail thy pow'r,  
And court thy gentle sway  
When autumn, friendly to the muse,  
Shall thy own modest tints diffuse,  
And shed thy milder day?

When eve, her dewy star beneath,  
The balmy spirit loves to breath,  
And every storm is laid;  
If such an hour was e'er thy choice,  
Oft let me hear thy soothing voice,  
Low whisp'ring thro' the shade!”

*D.* This is delightfully pretty, and valuably instructive; but methinks it is better calculated for the *hamlet-scene*, where I am; than for the *great town*, to which I am going.—Who was the *Phrygian* sage alluded to?

*E.* *Aesop*, whose fables you have read: he is reputed one of the wisest men among the heathens, his principles corresponding best with our  
divine

divine religion. He had wit enough to seek for, and to find happiness, in contentment and resignation to Providence, though in a state of slavery. You will have need of *patience*, and her sweet companion, *contentment*.—Those, my dear *Mary*, who can chuse their condition, are not always *contented*; but they who cannot, and are notwithstanding *contented*, enjoy *happiness*: and what can the *greatest* have more?—I have a strong persuasion, *Mary*, that we shall meet again ere long, and *rejoice*:—But if it should not happen so, let us now be joyful in our hope. We are upon a level with other mortals who separate; as the *best friends* often do. Those who *dislike each other*, are frequently constrained to live together: which of the two is the greater evil?

*D.* Both are *unhappy* parts of life.

*F.* You and I shall surely *die*; but even then perhaps we shall not *part for ever*!

*D.* You once told me you had no faith in the meeting of friends in a *separate state*; and that to be completely happy, is the height of the *longings* of the soul, let the happiness consist in what it may.

*F.* So I told you; and yet methinks, *now* that I am about to part with you, and am *old*; I incline to the belief, that *part* of the happiness of the blessed, *may* perchance consist in meeting those whom they most loved on *earth*, on the principles of pure friendship, *parental*, *fraternal*, or *conjugal* love. The argument against this notion is strong: and these are subjects which must be reserved to That state, the situation of which the heart of man cannot conceive: and therefore to attempt to argue, implies a degree of presumption. If we are to be as the *angels* in *heaven*, we cannot be as *men* on *earth*. Have we any ground to believe there is any thing similar to human friendships amongst angels? There is no marriage; can there be any exercise of those affections which relate to our partial regards?—If *eye* hath not seen, nor *ear* heard, what the joys of heaven consist in, we must be cautious how we measure That happiness by any rule, which from the constitution of things, respects only our *present state*; and be guarded, in the highest degree, how we transfer to a fellow-creature, even in *hope*, any part of the love so infinitely due to the Creator, who has weighed us in a balance, and knows best how to make us *happy*.

*D.* Yet a great part of our religion consists in

the love of our neighbour. *Charity* is the bond of peace, and of all virtues.

*F.* And this is but a more diffused friendship: but we cannot have a friendship for a *thousand* persons, as we may for *one*.

*D.* What is *fraternal* love, but *friendship*? What is parental love, but *friendship*?

*F.* Except that there seems to be more of instinct, than between two persons commonly distinguished as friends.—Some do not allow *friendship* to be a *Christian* virtue; but *Christian* virtues, in my opinion, are not in the nature of things so abstracted, as that we can live *out* of the *flesh*, and *only* in the *spirit*. It is granted, that we must not *confine* our opinions, nor our *affections* to things which have affinity with the pleasures of this world. At the same time, it seems to be no offence to our *faith*, for persons in certain circumstances to *believe*, that in a future state, they may meet those whom they most loved and honoured; and in whose bosoms, when on earth, they most wished to live. *Friendship* immortalized in a beatified state, has something wonderfully pleasing to the minds of those who are capable of *friendship*. On the other side, any notion that the *scenes* of this life may then recur to our thoughts, implies a contradiction; for these being mixed with, and a part of this world, could not render us completely blessed. The foundation of the most elevated friendship, is generally made on acts of *generosity* under *distress*; and is completed by a series of painful trials. It is so far the *means* of *Christian* virtues, or preferring another to one's-self; but there can be *no pain*, where there is *perfect happiness*. The most noble and generous affections, growing into perfection, may constitute a part of our bliss. But how any kind of social intercourse, bearing any likeness to our present joys in friendship, may make out our *heaven*, I do not presume to decide.

*D.* It is said, “the *just* are to join the company of just men made perfect:” Whence we may presume they will dwell *together*, in the realms of everlasting light, enjoying uninterrupted happiness. And some of the *just*, whom *we* knew on earth, will make up a part of the *just* in *heaven*: but still it comes to the same point with regard to the wisdom of the divine conduct, what shall constitute our *happiness*.

*F.* If the just are to behold the glory of *Christ* in “the place which he hath prepared for them;”

the



the truest and most virtuous friends may meet ; or they will lose each other in “ *that multitude which cannot be numbered.*” St. Paul says, in his epistle to the *Thessalonians*, on occasion of some of them having lost their friends by death, “ *What is our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus, at his coming?*”

D. Even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus, may allude to an opinion the apostle had entertained, or from which he would have them draw comfort, that *they might meet* together. There are texts to this effect ; but they all warn us against too close a comparison of the nature of our present and future joys.

F. We may spiritualize away the plainest and clearest texts : if I *hope* to meet you in a beatified state, will it weaken my hopes of seeing God ?

D. Do you believe that the apostle expected, at *Christ's second coming*, to meet and renew acquaintance with his *Thessalonian converts* ?

F. He might have among them a *friend*, as the best Christians, being truly zealous, are best qualified for *friendship* : but he who by a miraculous interposition, had been favoured with a foresight of heaven, could scarce bend his mind to the considerations of *friendship*, as a part of those inexpressible joys, which in the spirit he had beheld. Though scarce any thing merely relating to this world, is so *high* as friendship, it may be *low* with respect to heaven.—One might be induced, from the words, to think St. Paul had such an expectation. Those who are so happy in their friendships and connections, as to find delight in the contemplation, that one of the rewards of their present virtue, will be to enjoy in *full perfection*, That which, as frail mortals, they found the highest pleasure upon earth, may be induced to become the more virtuous here under this impression. The *opinion* may so far operate *happily*. You remember the Royal Psalmist's declaration ; *I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.* Whether he conceived that he should see his child or not, doth not follow. *Lazarus* was in *Abraham's bosom*, as if *Abraham* were still to be the guardian of the *faithful*.

D. Not that *Lazarus* was personally acquainted with *Abraham* ; but as *Abraham* was the father of the *faithful*, and *Lazarus* a poor good man.

F. He is represented as the instrument of dispensing bliss to *Lazarus*, once poor, abject, and plunged into a depth of misery. Upon this text, we might be led to suppose, that virtuous companions, whether themselves are in misery, in this world, or united in the great cause of making their wealth administer to the relief of the pain and distress of others ; may all meet and rejoice in *Abraham's bosom*, in the same sense as *Lazarus* was supposed to be in it.

D. Alas, my dear father ! whether you and I shall meet, to recollect, or to contemplate what passed on earth, or reflect that we were ever acquainted, are *things past our finding out*.

F. We may as well search with a wanton curiosity, the exact measure of the delights of the blessed, or the torments of the damned.

D. Our *present state*, I presume, will then appear as a *scene of darkness*. And whether our happiness shall consist in *heavenly* charity, arising from conversation with friends whom we *now love*, or with *those* whom we *shall* love ; if we are happy, *happy* beyond all description, *perfectly happy* ; what can we be more ?

F. To think that we may meet, is grateful to the soul. To throw ourselves on the mercy and wisdom of God, giving up our strongest ties to this world, and all the objects of it, seems to be a duty of high importance to us. A Christian pleads no merit for any thing he has *thought* or *done* : all is *mixed* and *imperfect* : he rests on the merits of a crucified Saviour, who died as an atonement for the sins of the world (a).

D. You are certainly in the right : we must not presume to limit the power of the Almighty, with regard to his choice of objects for our happiness : he judges so much better than we can, as he is our God, and we the work of his hands.

F. Let us at least *hope*, that among the many wrecks of souls, those which are most dear to us will be *preserved* ; and amidst the adverse winds and storms of a tumultuous and perturbed world,

(a) “ No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Nor call his frailties from their dread abode ;  
There they alike, in peaceful hope repose,  
The bosom of his Father and his God ”

world, *they may land safe in those blissful regions, where sin and sorrow never enter; "where all tears will be wiped away from our eyes, and pain and death shall be known no more!"* There, if you and I *should* meet, all our present weaknesses and infirmities will be purged away: all capriciousness of temper, false judgment, or narrowness of opinion, which sometimes invade the best of men, will no longer exist. Infinite happiness, suited to our beatified nature, will be "That crown of glory which fadeth not away."

D. To take the other side of the question, Is there not more consistency in the opinion that friends may meet, than in That which regards the reign of the saints, *for a thousand years, un-*

der the *Saviour* of mankind here on earth, before the general consummation of all things?

F. If we can find any additional motives to virtue arising in our breast, from the hope of meeting, yet fixing our thoughts on the glories of the throne of God, we may still bend our souls to the most unmixed resignation. — However Providence shall dispose of us, our *dearest friends*, or most *beloved country*, let us rest in the *happy assurance*, that the *righteous God whom we have diligently sought to serve, will preserve us, for the sake of our great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the mighty Friend and Redeemer of the world!*

### CONVERSATION III.

*The folly of going to law, when it can be avoided. Advice from a father, a lawyer, to his son bred to the bar. Fable of the farmer and the lawyer. Heads of instruction for the better conduct of law practice, reduced to the standard of moral rectitude.*

F. NO: the world is not come to That pass yet; there are *honest men* of all professions.

D. I thought that all lawyers were for getting as much as they can in a good way, or a bad one, without any bowels of compassion.

F. As you grow older, I hope you will judge with more caution. What do you think of Mr. *Heartwell*? I hope you will allow him to be an *honest man*.

D. I beg his pardon; he is an exception to the general rule.

F. There are so many who will do dirty work, it reflects on the *whole body*: but there are likewise so many who will *not do dirty work*, we may hope for *good* from the fraternity.

D. Did you ever go to law?

F. No, *Mary*: I rather chose to leave the disputed points, which have fallen to my lot, to be arbitrated by *clergymen, gentlemen, farmers*, or any body, rather than lawyers, except such a man as Mr. *Heartwell*, as a private counsellor.

D. Do you distrust the *justice* of the laws?

F. No: I only distrust the *lawyers*, with regard to the *expence* of a suit, and the *delay* to which they are accustomed. You may as well move a *mountain*, as dispatch a suit. Not even the love of money will move a limb of the law to do any thing in the *time* you would wish, or have a right to expect it should be done in. I have heard many lament in bitter tears, that they were so ill advised as to go to law about *trifles*; or when they might have accommodated things *amicably*, they prosecuted a suit to their *undoing*. Some who have gained their point, and some who have *lost* it, found themselves equally distressed. A suit generally goes through a number of hands; and there are so many accidents which retard a decision; and so many *quirks* and *disguises* among some lawyers, that the most upright judge can seldom determine so *speedily* as he would.

D. Is this the case in all countries?

F. In none is there usually so much *delay* as in this; but in many, there is less *justice*. The King of *Prussia*, I am told, suffers no suit to remain

remain undecided beyond a certain time, of a year or two. In my affairs, Mr. *Heartwell* never kept me in suspense: He is an *honest*, and a *religious* man. Some time since, he sent his son to *London*, to serve those who will employ him in *his way*, as you go to serve a lady in *yours*, though in a very different situation. I was with him at the time he took his leave of him: the young man had been some years at *Cambridge*, under a *scholar*, a *sensible*, *agreeable* man, and a *Christian*; and he has done honour to his *tutor*.

D. I was once with you at Mr. *Heartwell's*, and much pleased to hear the old gentleman talk: every thing he said seemed to be so *true*; so *easy to understand*, and so *agreeable*. What did he say to his son on the occasion of their parting?

F. Both being seated, after dropping some tears, he recovered himself, and said,

“ My dear *Thomas*, you are going into the world, as an *advocate* or *pleader* at a tribunal of *justice*, and to learn how to keep mankind in *peace*, by the force of *truth*, *righteousness*, and the *laws*. Let me give you a few heads of *advice*.——

1. If you are the occasion of suits, quarrels, or injustice, my blessing will not secure you against the curse which attends those, who being bred *Christians*, become worse than *infidels*.

2. I charge you as you shall honour me, and regard *your own soul*, preserve your *integrity*. My experience assures me, you will thrive much better by it, than by villainy, in pleading for what you know to be a damned lie, and calculated to rob. My dear son, if you perish in rags, do not sacrifice yourself to *gain*!

3. Your fortune will depend on your *tongue*,——make it not the instrument of *falsehood* and *deception*.

4. In every concern of life, the greatest wisdom of speech is to know when, and what, and where to speak.

5. Discretion of speech will avail you more than *eloquence*.

6. Speaking agreeably to those with whom we converse, is the property which soonest wins the heart.

7. These rules, joined to good sense and candour, supported by memory, and competent reading, when you come to *hire out your speech*, will make your fortune.

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8. I have always considered justice and candour as inseparable.

Do you remember the fable of the *farmer* and the *lawyer*? A farmer came to a neighbouring lawyer, expressing great concern for an accident, which he said had just happened. “ One of *your oxen*,” continued he, “ has been gored by an *unlucky* bull of mine, and I should be glad to know how I am to make you reparation.” “ Thou art a very honest fellow,” replied the *lawyer*, “ and wilt not think it unreasonable, that I expect one of thy oxen in return.” “ It is no more than justice, quoth the farmer, to be sure.——But what did I say? I mistake: it is *your bull* that has killed one of *my oxen*.” “ Indeed!” says the lawyer, “ *that* alters the case; I must enquire into the affair; and if”——“ *And if!*” said the farmer——“ the business, I find, would have been concluded without an *if*, had you been as ready to *do justice to others*, as to *exact* it from *them*.”

D. This is a fine picture of self-love in a man who has the art of disguising facts; for I dare say *ifs*, in very clear cases, often *prevent* justice, or *retard* it.

F. The old gentleman went on thus:

9. “ No virtue, *Thomas*, is so truly worthy and great as *justice*: there is nothing more holy and venerable.

10. Be influenced by no motive but that of the *laws*, restrained by *equity* and right reason.

11. Refuse all suits which, in your opinion, clash with equity, and return the *fee* if you have taken one.

12. Let not the solicitation of any client overcome you. Be deaf, I say, to the importunities of *party* or *friend*, where you think justice is *against* the cause.

13. Advise people to avoid law-suits, especially for *trifles*, or in dubious cases of little consequence; and recommend to them to refer themselves to the amicable arbitration of their mutual friends.

14. These are principles which some lawyers idly imagine, are contrary to their *profession*; but they *wilfully* mistake.

15. Remember that *equity* judgeth with lenity; *laws* with *extremity*. In all moral cases, the *reason* of the law, is the *law*.

16. Some of your profession think they have nothing to do with *mercy*; and some, that *justice*

is not their *object*, but merely the *letter* and *construction* of the law: but these also are not the sort of lawyer I wish you to be.

17. Though it will not be your proper business, it is not improbable, you will be occasionally consulted on the subject of *wills*, as I am continually. Whenever I find any one inclined to do a hard-hearted or unjust thing, I beg to be excused drawing it up, or giving any appearance of assent, thinking that next to the testator, is the lawyer, who flatters the weakness, animosity, or prejudices of the testator.

18. The repugnance shewn by a judicious honest man, though at the hazard of offending a client, hath sometimes operated happily, in preventing those injustices which prevail in the world, through the passions or decayed understanding of the testator.

19. Men often see through a false medium, when they lean to the side of the *crafty* against the *sincere*; the *old* against the *young*; or the *youthful* against the *aged*.

20. The total forgetfulness of an illegitimate child, for too many such there are, whether bred up with high expectations or not, is abominable.

21. The partiality of a man for a *mistress*, to the prejudice of a *wife*; for *one* child, in opposition to another; and many evils of the same kind, which creep into society, are to be guarded against.

22. These are common cases; but whenever they come before *you*, make no scruple to declare your opinion, though unasked: do it from a principle of desiring to pay honour to your client and his *memory*, and to avoid the *curse* of those, in whose eyes you may appear as a *party*, combining to rob and plunder the innocent, merely for the sake of a *fee*.

23. In *pleading*, with regard to *fines*, for offences or trespasses in any *civil case*, you are sensible that "nothing is more against reason and nature, than for a man to exact of his neighbour beyond his ability; or oppress him by violence and force, under colour of the *laws*."

24. Above all, I repeat to you not to *delay justice*, for this is *injustice*.

25. You will be dissident whether my advice be practicable, till you reflect, that if all men were *honest*, there would be but little business for *lawyers*; but whilst *injustice* prevails so much in the world, there is no fear of an *honest* man's

wanting employment. So great a part of mankind find reasons to justify *any thing* they are inclined to do, you will have work enough upon your hands to *correct* them.

26. Assist the *poor* and *helpless*, that they may not suffer punishment for inconsiderable offences, whilst the *rich* and *powerful* commit crimes of a blacker dye with impunity.

27. I hope you will, in all cases, consider that you are a *man*, and a *Christian*: Providence will then defend *your cause*: you will be acceptable in the sight of God: you will become the darling of the *distressed*; and at sight of you, the *widow's* heart will spring forth in joy.

28. Yet, my son, affect not *popularity*; it will warp your mind, and incline you to court other men's good opinion, rather than your own.

29. In the progress of your life, you will find men of great talents, who pretend to shine in whatever cause they undertake; and accordingly, I have heard some of them in pleading give so many stabs to the *innocent*; pervert the cause of the *widow*; plunge the *orphan* into poverty; support the rankest iniquity; and all as if it were a *play-game*.

30. All the exploits, which men of talents so misapplied, can boast of, is That of adorning *truth*, which seldom needs decoration; or disguising *falsehood*, to give it the appearance of truth: and under this *plea*, how many thousands have been oppressed and plundered! They pretend that it is understood, themselves do not *believe* all they say: but do they not sometimes succeed by *known falsehood*? And should a man ever *say* any thing he doth not *believe*, to another's prejudice?

31. The *brightest* deceptions are not worth a grain of common-sense, and common honesty, with a clear discernment on what point hangs the *justice* of a cause.

32. No council at the bar ever avows upon principle, that he means to *pervert justice*. It is his talent to make an argument of any thing; but how many in their pleadings are conscious, that if they are *believed*, "they shall be the instruments in devouring widows houses!"

D. How do such advocates reconcile this to their *consciences*? Will they allow any one to take what they *think* is not his *due*?

E. *Custom*, and the opinion that it is their *duty*

*duty* to defend a cause, though in the course of the suit they discover it to be a *bad* one, reconciles all difficulties.—The old gentleman went on to advise his son upon his *general conduct* in life.

1. “In your conversation with the world, be a master of *yourself*; let not *vanity* be your master.”

2. Observe if your company attends to what you are saying; if they do not, you may be sure they are either careless, uncivil, and undeserving of your sentiments; or that you are talking *foolishly*, or *disagreeably*. Let them rather desire you to go on, than shew signs of their wishes that you would hold your tongue.

3. You are conscious that you begin without *experience*; therefore take the advice of those friends whom I shall recommend to you: hear *their* opinions, and follow *their* counsel, till time, and observation on the good and evil conduct of others, shall enable you to judge for yourself.

4. Till your judgment is in some measure matured, be *diffident*.

5. In all weighty concerns proceed with caution. Thus shall your knowledge cost you but little: otherwise you may happen to pay very *dear* for it.

6. I judge from your temper and turn of mind, you will be more subject to err by going *too fast*, than *too slow*. Lose no time to gather all the fairest flowers of *virtue* and *knowledge*, which can regale yourself, or be of use to your country, and mankind, through the whole compass of your life; never forgetting the *end of living*.

7. He is a fool who *lives* as if he was not to *die*, or whose *actions* fly in the teeth of his *belief*.

8. Run the race that is set before you, in the best manner you are able, exercising your *virtue* as you would your *limbs*, or as if a rich prize depended equally on your *swiftness* in both cases.

9. If you neglect the commandments of God in lesser duties, you will soon grow negligent in greater.

10. Nothing is more deceitful than the heart of man. Therefore, my son, think of *religion* as the only means of preventing your *destruc-*

*tion*. So the Almighty hath appointed you to do; and no mortal can *disappoint*.

11. Be constant, regular, and fervent in your worship of the Supreme Being. Learn to do it with cheerfulness and delight, *morning* and *night*, if not in the *middle* of the day also, as the *Jews* and *Mahometans* are wont to do.

12. Make the *Christian worship* in the *supper of our Lord*, your *delight*; and rest not till your *servants* follow your *example*. So shall your house be the habitation of a *Christian*; and you will help to reform *your country and mankind*.

13. Nor think it a matter unworthy your notice to *pray at your meals*; I mean, *saying grace*; not with a fanatical ostentation, for *five minutes* or more; nor yet as it is usually said, with a shameless carelessness; but as a *believer in Christ*, whose sacred name you invoke for a blessing. Be the prayer ever so short, repeat it solemnly, and aloud, when it is proper to do so: otherwise repeat it in silence.

14. You are a young man: when you go to the temple of God to worship, use a *prayer-book*, and confine your eyes to it.

15. Give yourself up to no singularity in *opinion*, nor delight in going *new ways*, lest you find yourself *bewildered*; or from *external* circumstances and *fallacious* reasonings, you become doubtful where truth is to be found.

16. You will meet with *youngsters*, and some more *stern* pretenders, who mistake a knowledge of the classics, or a cursory reading of *law books*, for a *superiority of genius*, which entitles them to decry the *established religion of their country*. —In the name of God, your and my common father, let me entreat you to consider, there are three things to which your compliance and politeness are never to yield: namely, your *religion*, in which I include morality: your *health*; and your *fortune*. Take care of these; do not be talked out of them: above all, let the *first* be guarded with an awful respect, as your grand engine of defence.—Do this, and may the great Father of mankind protect you in all your ways!

## CONVERSATION IV.

*Infidelity in a young Templar, on the ground of disbelieving the Old and New Testament, corrected by Mr. Heartwell. Infidelity seated in pride, indolence, and vicious inclinations. Humility indispensably necessary to reading the Scriptures with candour. The suicides, and other enormities committed through infidelity. The dreadful prospect which eternity presents to unbelievers. The exalted pleasures which true believers enjoy, while they act consistently with their faith. The vanity of human life in worldly glory.*

D. **I** With Mr. Heartwell's good advice to his son were given to all young men who are sent into the great world!—Would it not restrain the enormities so many are guilty of?

F. They have *advice* enough, if they would attend to it. I have not yet told you half the old gentleman said on occasion of his parting with his son. Among other things, he gave an account of a remarkable event of his life, which happened in *London*. "I was once," said he, "engaged in a coffee-house with a *young templar*, a person of middling parts; I suppose he might be about my own level. He was however lively; and had acquired the faculty of attracting a ring of coffee-house companions; and the infernal art of making them laugh at the most serious and important concerns of the *Christian religion*. If enjoyment there can be in such gratifications, he had enjoyed many of these execrable triumphs; insomuch that I resolved to answer him. "Pray Sir," said I, "do you attempt to prove that there is *no revelation*?" He answered, "No: I demand of you to prove that there is one." Upon this I called for a *New Testament*. He laughed at this, declaring that he knew what was contained in it; but that he esteemed it only as a curious fabulous narrative.

D. Unhappy infidel! Was it for this he studied the law to keep mankind in peace? This can never be done so well as by the *gospel of Christ*.

F. You are not to imagine that all students in law are infidels, though one sprightly youth being wise in wickedness, and infected with the disease of infidelity, was anxious for abettors to give him countenance. There are many who

adopt the principles of *infidelity*, in order to countenance themselves in practices diametrically opposite to the purity of our religion. Whilst they exult in imaginary *victories*, they suffer the most grievous *dejects*. They have not wit sufficient to find out, that they are *not seeking after truth*. Being placed in the seat of the scorner, they seek how they shall scorn. You and I have lately had much conversation with relation to the *immortality of the soul*, as drawn from the evidence of the *New Testament*; but let me tell you what Mr. Heartwell related to his son, of his harangue to the young templar. He proceeded thus: "You tell me, Sir, that you know the contents of the *New Testament*: I cannot conceive that you are *ingenuous*. You have certainly not examined it with the candour and humility which ought to attend the mind in search of *truth*. You were rather predetermined to condemn it. Have you really read it since you was a boy at school? And was you there taught to treat it with veneration? Have you compared it with the *Old Testament*, and read That also with attention?—I discover by your looks you cannot say you have. Do not then profess yourself an advocate for *law and justice*, and at the same time move the judge to give sentence against the *defendant, unheard*. How will you stand in the sight of That just Judge, whose *sacred words* you now despise? You despise them, even without examining what they are. You will allow that the enemies to *Christianity* maintain, that a *Messiah* was foretold, and is yet to come: Where do they pretend to learn this, but from the *Old Testament*, in conjunction with their *oral tradition*? You, I presume, are not a *Jew*: your mind

mind is not poisoned by any inveterate prejudice peculiar to the present disciples of *Moses*. If you will be so just to yourself, as to compare the *Old* and *New Testament*, or receive the testimony of the *Jews*, and behold their present state, as corresponding with the *predictions* concerning them; I apprehend you will find your mind overcome with conviction, that the *Messiah*, foretold by the prophets, is *really come*. Consider well, whether he be come or not; whether you can stand out against the evidence which the Christian world produces: and whether this deserves the less notice from not being communicated as a recent event, related in a regular historical order by a modern historian. I say that *Christ* came upon the earth above *seventeen hundred years ago*. *Truth* and *Love*, in their abstract, came down from heaven to visit the earth, in the person of the *Messiah*, for he “spoke as never man had spoken:” and he shewed his love for mankind, even unto death; and in death interceded for his murderers, meditating infinite mercy, of which we can form no adequate idea. He, by whom the worlds were made, came to visit his own; but as a wonderful proof of the perverseness of men, and of the necessity of his coming to visit them, in general the people of the *Jews* would not receive him. In the language of the Scriptures, “He came to his own, and his own received him not; yet to those who would receive him, to them he gave eternal life.” He who was *perfect God*, though he took on himself the form of *man*, not only spoke as man never spoke, but did also That which nothing but omnipotence could perform. His life on earth was replete with tenderness as a father and a friend, the compassion of a brother, and the justice of a *perfect legislator*, with respect to every moral, social, and relative duty towards *God* and man, while he exercised the power and the mercy of a Saviour and a God. To him you are to give an account, whether you chuse it or not. *To-day* you are laughing, surrounded by gay companions, who I fear are not so zealous for the *Christian faith*, as they ought to be, or they would not hear you harangue without reproaching you: They would be too much your friends to be silent. *To-morrow* perchance you will find yourself *sick*, it may be sick even to *death*; and when you are on the verge of *eternity*, and may think, in spite of yourself, that you are going to judgment, what *out-retched*

*arm* do you expect to find to prevent your sinking to perdition? The opinion of others like yourself? Alas, Sir! they have no ground to stand upon: what they urge is but *mere opinion*, or the declaration of an opinion, which pride forbids them to revoke. Examine them, and you will find their vices involve them in darkness, and that *they have lost their way*. Beware of them whilst it is yet time! For Heaven’s sake consider how many *great* and *good men* teach a doctrine as different from yours, as light from darkness! I do not mean to check your enquiries, or demand an implicit trust. The happiness of the gospel of *Christ* arises from our *knowledge*; and *our knowledge* increases in proportion as we discover the internal evidence; the moral harmony; the *beauties of Christianity*. Were you possessed of a desire of *knowing* the real excellency and sublimity of the religion contained in the *New Testament*, it would spread light and joy around you. The gospel dispensation teems with such mercy, it throws a glory over the face of *nature*; and the earth smiles with joy! Consider it well, and you will fall prostrate before the *Messiah*, and confess, “Thou art indeed the *Christ*! Thou art the Son of the living God!” The most generous feelings planted in the human breast, harmonize with the great truths of the gospel: they sympathize with the eternal laws of God, as delivered to us in the most clear and explicit manner, by the great *Sovereign*, the *Priest*, and *Prophet* of the Christian world, who confirmed them by his life and death! Contemplate what an excellent creature you are, so long as you act agreeably to your reason; and that when this is strengthened by *faith in Christ*, and *obedience to his laws*, you approach in dignity to the rank of *angels*. If you will allow that there is any such thing as religion in the world, and compare the *Christian* faith with every other, you will find how grossly defective they are. And do you not behold the propensity of mankind to religion, as it were implanted in their nature by the hand of God, as the distinguished mark of his rational, intelligent, accountable creatures? You will then judge better of the *Christian revelation*. The mind fieth to a *first cause*, however incomprehensible That cause may be: It naturally takes hold on That which can succour and preserve it. Do you never find it distressed with *doubts*? And do not those doubts sometimes change

change into *fears*? Be candid and confess."— He remained silent, and I went on. "I presume you allow of an original mover, infinitely perfect, and *pass finding out*; and that the soul of man is an object of his concern: how is it to be guided without *Revelation*? Man is free: his will is the instrument of his freedom: is he to follow *his own will*? See what pretty sort of wills the bulk of mankind have! What a wretched piece of work do those make, who attempt to refer all to the *light of their own minds*, to which they give the respectable name of *nature*! What was the light of the heathen world, till *in the fulness of time*, the light shone forth? Leave men now to the guidance of their passions, unrestrained by any fear of what may happen in a *life to come*, and whither will these passions carry them? Does *nature* uninformed teach you the purity of the *Christian religion*? Is not some such law necessary? Why then hesitate to adopt the doctrines of it, and try if it carries with it its own internal evidence? Is the soul *immortal*, or is it not?"— He answered, "certainly *immortal*." I proceeded. "If you acknowledge it is *immortal*, where do you learn it? If it is *immortal*, there must be *rewards and punishments*. It cannot exist without a *possibility of existence*: and I cannot conceive what such *possibility* can be, but as it is attended by *pleasure or pain*. If it is capable of reward, it must be for *obedience*: obedience to what law or rule of human conduct? For God's sake take refuge in *Christianity*: it is the only retreat you, *as a man of understanding*, can find. If your soul is not *immortal*, in this sense, it is no better than the soul of a beast, which *perishes*. Have you comfort in thinking you shall be *nothing*? Again, if your soul is *immortal*, I apprehend that he who made it so, must delight in its advancement to *perfection*. Where is there any thing like perfection, or even *reasonable*, to be found, but in *Christianity*? This improves *reason*, by *faith, diligence, and candour*, in discovering the laws of God, and *obeying* them. Is not obedience essential to the idea of a dependant, intelligent, accountable creature? We must have some light to guide us, or wander in darkness. The man who has no uniform principle of action, is in *moral darkness*. Some *lights* there have always been: mankind in all ages have entertained a persuasion of a *life to come*, and that *something* was to be done to attain the happiness of it.

Now I say, where have you found a *religion* that discovers what this *something* shall be? Where is there a religion which teaches such purity, or hath the property of inspiring such *sublime and joyful hopes*? I will venture to pronounce that you perceive within yourself *some forebodings* that you may be responsible for your own actions; and that it is more than possible you may fall into a state of *misery*. If this be not in your opinion *impossible*, be to *modest*, and so beneficent to the souls of others, as to *keep your conceits to yourself*; seeing that they *cannot* do any good to society, and *may* increase your own *condemnation*. They cannot promote *peace, industry, or labour*: They are not calculated to cherish *charitableness, kindness, or hospitality*; much less that *sublime philanthropy* so continually recommended in the *religion of Christ*, and which is comprehended in that celestial word *charity*. What is *your hope* in death? The contemplation of those heavenly delights, which the great Author of nature has promised to his votaries in *Jesus Christ*, seem to fill up the measure of our natural desires, with respect to the longings of the soul: but is there any thing else in nature which can do it? Methinks you chuse a most unsociable system: if your opinions can be reduced to a system, for they seem chiefly to consist in *negatives*. I can with great confidence tell you, that so far as you will allow me to be a *good subject, a good husband, father, or friend*, I am confident that I owe it to my religion as a *Christian*. I owe it to my *faith* in that very book which you reject. If I had no faith in it, though my disposition seems to lead me to the discharge of many duties of humanity, I do not apprehend they spring from any instinctive principle; but I am sure that I feel so little good in me, as to be convinced I should not have been otherwise restrained from many *evil actions*. However imperfect my life has been, my propensities would have hurried me into more and greater *crimes* than I have committed; I say *crimes*, as actions of guilt; hurtful to the health of my mind, or my body, or the peace and good order of the world. Were it not, I say, for my *faith in Christ*, I believe I should long since have become a victim to my passions and appetites, as I see *thousands and tens of thousands* daily are. Are you made of such harmonized materials, as to find within yourself no *evil inclinations* which require aid? Why do you restrain any desire of your heart? Is it the fear  
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of temporal punishments only, which gives you a *check*? Is there no *still voice of conscience* which intimates to you, that there is such a thing as a *revealed religion*; and that perchance *Christianity* may be the *light*, which now lightens the world? Try it by the standard of *purity*: give up your *vices*, and I believe you will renounce your infidelity. My persuasion that *Jesus Christ* came into the world to save sinners, agreeably to the *Old and New Testament*, without any abstruse investigation, brightens my prospect beyond the grave! It gives cheerfulness to my *present hours*! I feel myself *resigned*: my *hopes* are strong: I live in sure and certain hope I shall be *happy in a life to come*. By this belief I am induced to look down on the world, and all that is in it, as *frivolous*, compared to the *glory* which will be revealed: Life and death appear indifferent to me, at least when my heart is full of faith, and my mind free from that perturbation, which the passions are so apt to create. How fares it with you in these respects?—Do not disguise the matter, to cheat your own soul: consider, I beseech you!—You acknowledge that *justice, temperance, prudence, and fortitude*, are commendable virtues: commendable! by whom? and for what? Are they to answer no purpose with respect to a *life to come*? Upon your principles, they must stand in your way.”——“No:” he replied, “I value them for their own excellence.” To this I answered, “I suppose you mean for their *present use*. But as these virtues must be so much the less in esteem with your disciples, as they produce the *less good, in the final issue*, they will be proportionally the less practised: so that you unbelievers must be the worst *subjects*, the worst *men*, and the least friends to society. But if to the virtues I have mentioned, the *Christian adds charity, the love of God and man; his faith and hope* will then comfort and elevate his spirit, and in a great measure render his mind invulnerable. If he believes that when he *dies* he shall *live*, and be happy in a state of immortal bliss; I appeal to the company, whose faith puts him in the best condition?” Here I paused.—Several of the young gentlemen present shrugged their shoulders, in acknowledgment, as I thought, of my superiority. Encouraged by their *attention*, and warmed by the subject, though far from being an able defender of the cause, I proceeded thus: “If you allow these properties to be *virtues*, there must be such things as *guilt and innocence*,

The common voice of mankind, in all ages, has proclaimed a distinction: but the *Christian* says, a messenger from heaven promulgated the *will of God*. It is not our natural sense or reason, nor the analogy of things, which can fully teach us what *guilt* and *innocence* are in the sight of God: but enlightened by *revelation*, we see their *true nature*, as they respect us. We see that innocence cannot be condemned by a just judge, but may be *rewarded*; though guilt must be punished, unless by repentance and amendment, on our part, and the merits of an intercessor, divine justice is satisfied. The book which you do not believe in, throws full light upon the subject: it gives firm ground to *rest* upon. I have no doubt as to the meaning of *virtue and innocence, guilt, and iniquity*. I believe, as there is a God who governs the world, and that there is an eternal difference between good and evil, he will reward the one, and punish the other; though I know not the measure of the reward or punishment. Both will be very great. I believe this on his word, and my own *reason* concurring, as the Author of nature most evidently intended it should.” To which he replied, “It may be so: you may believe what you please; I cannot believe what I do not comprehend. You say I am deluded; I say the same of you.” To which I answered, “Deluded!—I trust in hopes of eternal happiness, founded on what I believe to be the promises of God, through *Jesus Christ*, whose history this book contains. What *delusion* can there be? I may enjoy great advantage from my opinion: what *benefit* can you derive from yours? Are you free from apprehensions of another state, let your actions be what they will in this? Your principle must be a very bad one, from the evil it threatens to society; and the little or no good it promises. But if it also leads to *fear and distrust*, and whilst it does not restrain you from doing evil to society, it may plunge you into *misery*; what a *miserable creed* it is!—Creed, did I say? I know not what it is you *believe*; I only understand what you do *not believe*. You do not believe that God has made his will known to men; and if it is any *thing affirmative*, it is that the *Old and New Testament* are *fabulous*. So you must say. But truth only is permanent: all falsehood is transitory. Will you allow that mankind, in all ages, believed in some things they were to do, and in others they were *not* to do, as it might please or displease an *invisible power*?

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and it is remarkable, that almost every one pretended, as they yet pretend, to a *revelation*, as if they were conscious, that the *will* of *That power* could not be known by any intuitive faculty, or till it should be discovered to them.—Some, more cunning and wicked, or less in their senses, than the vulgar, have in the course of time, made the ignorant believe they had communications with heaven: and why?—They had a temporal end to serve. Our Saviour said his kingdom was not of this world: and whoever reads the *New Testament*, and finds argument for the contrary, must be one of the most ingenious, and most dangerous persons that ever lived. *Mahomet* and others, by artifices, found means to deceive. They gratified their own pride or ambition: but *truth* stands on its proper basis. Some of the believers in *Christ* differ from others, in the construction of certain passages in the Scriptures, as men differ in the intended sense of an author, or the construction of laws. Some have attempted to accommodate their sense to a particular worldly system; but still the *book* remains; and so guarded, even by this very difference in opinion, that it cannot be altered without detection. It is but a book; but in it the true light which enlightens the world, is displayed. The clouds of darkness, in which the wickedness of men had involved them, are dispelled.—“But why,” says he, “were they permitted, on your principle, to wander so long in darkness?” I answered, “Why are you permitted to live to ask that question? You still indulge your pride, and demand a participation of the counsels and secrets of Heaven. A great part of the world was permitted to walk in their own ways: the *Jews* saw miracles wrought for their conversion, yet frequently committed gross offences. It was not till the *fulness of time*, the period agreeable to divine wisdom, that the brightness of *knowledge* appeared in the person and character of the *Messiah*. The conditions of eternal happiness were then proposed to man, in the clearest manner. A prospect of a perfect happiness was presented, suited to the nature of mankind, and the promises of *truth* itself, in the person of the *Messiah*, that they should arrive at the fruition of everlasting joys. *Christ* came not as an earthly potentate, yet as a sovereign, a prophet sent from God, a *lawgiver*, a judge, a mediator and redeemer. And what

are you who preach a doctrine contrary to his? What does it tend to? You seem to labour for a licence to do *That* which in substance is nothing but a high offence against *reason*, and your own dignity as a man. You would make *reason* militate against itself. Reason alone cannot heal the wounds the soul is subject to receive, or free you from the punishments you may suffer in an unembodied state? Does not the *moral light* which shines, perplex you when you take shelter under the shadow of the *darkness* which you covet? Tell me fairly, doth it create no suspicion that your prejudices misrepresent objects? Are you not convinced that a man may be as *weak* and *foolish* by his *incredulity*, as in believing any *absurdity* that can be imagined?” To this he replied, “I grant it: but what could the *Almighty* intend by making a world so constituted as this is, with respect to the *weakness*, *folly*, and *imperfections* of mankind, if he meant that the *Christian* doctrines you believe in, being so pure and *disinterested*, should be the *invariable rule and law* of their lives?” To this I answered, “*Pure* and *disinterested* they are, and for this very reason fit for intelligent creatures, born to such mighty hopes with respect to a life to come. What sort of a religion would you have? The weakest may ask a question which the wisest cannot answer. Your question might lead us into an *endless maze*. It is enough for us to know that men stood in need of such lights as are given; and that the *Christian* religion is intended for every condition: it exalts the *humble* and depresses the *proud*; but it doth not make men as gods, to participate in the counsels of heaven. It is their supreme felicity on earth to enjoy understanding to discover the excellency of the religion revealed, and virtue to observe its holy precepts. If you ask me why God made *any world*, or why such an order of beings as *man*; I answer, *O man! humble thyself*; presume not to scrutinize the conduct of Omniscience: thy proper business is to examine thine own life, according to the word of *That* God; and not add to thy sinfulness and folly, by asking why he made *man*, or put him in a state of peccability. If he is *free*, he *may sin*. Taking men as you find them, so compounded of *good* and *evil*; *angel* and *brute*; can you conceive a plan so admirably calculated for the *moral* happy government of the world, as the *Christian* precepts? If you do

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not perceive that asking what God intended, is utterly out of character for such Beings as we are ; and that it adds folly to wickedness ; I may as well be silent, for you can comprehend no argument. Do you know how your soul and body are united ? To attempt forming an *idea* of the *divine wisdom* in its several operations, I consider as a species of insanity : it is madness of *heart*, if not of *head*. God is infinitely wise, and man is the short-sighted imperfect being you represent him ; and therefore from your own principle you should be *humble* and *submit*. To judge as a human creature, conscious of his imperfections, man stood in need of a *revelation*, an *intercessor*, and a *redeemer*. This we also know, that he is a *free agent* ; that he may obey, if he will ; and that, upon the common principles of all government, he ought to be punished if he *will not*. His denial of the law laid before him, and which he ought to know, will not screen him from the penalties of it. Shall we mend our condition by *thinking* or *talking* of things we shall *never understand*, and which most evidently do not concern us ? For *flesh* and *blood* to dispute why this or that act of government was adopted by *Omniscience*, is fit only for those raving fanatics whom you hold in sovereign contempt. Has God given us a *law*, and is it contained in the *New Testament* ? Though the *Christian* religion is utterly undiscoversable by *reason* ; yet discovered, *reason* assents to it. There is nothing in it which shocks *my reason*.—The whole creation is a *wonder* ! *God is past finding out* ! And what perverse creatures are those who are not contented to be happy here and hereafter, unless they are acquainted with such things as their *Maker* does not permit them to know, whilst they are in their present state. They are, and will probably *remain ignorant* of many things relating to the *material world* : What a *vanity* it is to attempt the investigation of the spiritual and intellectual world, and the secret things of God ! You allow the Almighty to be *omniscient* ! Would you be omniscient also ? Omniscience must be consistent with his over-ruling grace, and the *freedom* of human agency ; but how I cannot tell you. Move in your own sphere, I say, and be contented with your *own freedom*. *Trust* to *infinite wisdom*, though you certainly can form no adequate idea of it. *Humility* and acquiescence in what we do not comprehend, are imputed to us as virtues. For these are essential to *faith*, as

faith to *obedience*, for which everlasting peace and glory, in the happiness of another state, are *promised*. But this will not serve you : you would *know more*.—Your desire is *criminal* ! You will be *punished* for it. If you thirst after knowledge, let it be the *knowledge proper to your state*, and do not attempt to storm heaven with impatience, lest your *pride* should be chastised as was That of the fallen angels. I say, *pride* ; for this is at the bottom of your heart : you do not understand your *own heart* : you do not study this poor fluctuating unsteady object : and yet you would be a master of the secrets of Heaven. For shame ! As a *man of understanding*, think of your *dependent condition* ; learn the proper *things which belong to your peace*, before they are *hid from your eyes for ever*. That you may arrive at a higher sense of God and divine things by study, is obvious ; provided you are solicitous to obtain his favour, by rendering to Him That *homage, love, gratitude*, and *obedience*, due to his eternal goodness and truth, his power, his wisdom, and all those glorious attributes which the mind of man falls so infinitely short of comprehending. *Study*, and you will know more of what is proper to your state : but you cannot know, as you are known. You are a *finite* being : your thoughts are *vain* ; your temper and affections are *earthly* and *irregular*. You torment yourself with vague surmises, and fantastical doubts, when the *truth* is set before your eyes, bright as the meridian sun ; and the path of life made smooth and safe. Why should you not believe the *history of the New Testament*, as well as the *Roman history* ? The *Roman* historians speak of such a country as *Judea* ; of such an emperor as *Augustus Cæsar*, in whose reign *Christ* was born ; and of *Tiberius*, under whose government he was put to death. *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* you grant existed ; will you withhold your assent to the existence of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, and *St. James* ? And are not their accounts to be credited, as well as *Pliny's* or *Cicero's* ? Both the *Roman* and *Jewish* historians acknowledge there was such a man as *Christ* ; and mention many particulars concerning him. That the pride and worldly splendour, with their passion for military glory, should make the *Romans* look down on the meek and humble character of the *Messiah*, is not so great a wonder, as that you should reject him as such. Had the *Romans* received him, they might have been a great nation to this day : it was opposition to such doctrines as his, which at length

dissolved their state. The *Jewish* history is a series of wonders, the history of Divine Providence, the hierarchy of God himself: and it is no less a wonder, considering their temper and disposition, that they were in the final issue so *obstinate*. Behold them *now!* They are at this day *living monuments* of the truth of That religion, which your pride and obstinacy reject! With regard to the *Mahometans*, they acknowledge *Christ* as a *great prophet*; though they also are diabolically *proud*. They consider *Jesus* in a much inferior light to the *Christians*, notwithstanding they esteem *Christians* as idolaters, not considering the *unity of the trinity*; and deny the *divinity* of our prophet in the person of the *Messiah*. The most sagacious of them entertain a suspicion of the fallacy of their own religion, from observing the gross enormities practised by the followers of *Mahomet*. I was once in conversation with a *Mahometan priest*, who lamented that I was not, as he thought, a *true believer*. He was not like you, who have *no creed*. Perhaps you will be surprized when I tell you, that he must have seen something super-excellent in the *Christian* faith, upon the principles of its *purity*, and the *rights of human nature*, with respect of one rational Being, to another of the same species, though different in sex. So it appeared to me from his acknowledgment that among *Mahometans*, That man was esteemed the most virtuous, who contented himself with one woman, supposed to be by a lawful contract. How stands the matter with you *sceptics*, who lest you should believe in an erroneous faith, or be tied by *any law* you do not approve, boldly determine to *believe nothing*, and to be tied by *no law*? Let me ask you another question, which you may think reasonable: Did your master at school require you to read with *attention* nothing but the accounts given of *Hector* and *Achilles*, or *Cæsar* and *Brutus*? Had *Christ* and his followers no material part in your studies? Did the characters in prophane story, strike your infant mind, and engage your understanding so very much more than the most celebrated actions of our *Saviour*, his *apostles*, and *evangelists*, that you did not regard *your religion*?—I fear a large portion of the *infidelity* of the age, must be imputed to *school-masters*. If they were properly examined as to their own religious tenets, and the line of their duty as *Christians*, professing to teach Christianity, were more *clearly marked out*, you might not at this day have been so little acquainted as you are, with

the *sacred writings*. Do they really generally *profess* to teach it? I see *Latin schools* and *French schools* held forth in characters of gold; but I *see* and *hear* but little of Christianity. The fact is, masters do not teach it with half the zeal, or desire of reputation for piety, as they teach the *classics*? The *Latin* and *Greek Testament*, it is true, are introduced; but it is to teach the *languages*, and not the facts and sentiments, the everlasting doctrines contained in them.”—The students present, nodded their heads in acknowledgment of the truth I had advanced. I forbore to enlarge on so melancholy a theme, which is extended to the *poor*, and I proceeded in my expostulation.—“Examine the writings of *St. Peter*, *St. Paul*, and *St. James*. Consider the difference of *time* and *place*, and the variety of circumstances of those celebrated authors; and if *their works* do not carry with them the most striking marks of a genuine narrative of *real facts*, supported by suitable *sentiments*, and strengthened by a *conduct* superior to any ever given by other historians! Examine the *evangelists* with the same candour. Dwell on what is *clearly revealed as a law of life*; and not on the adventitious matter, which naturally might fall from the pens of men zealous for their cause, or giving a detail of events. Can you imagine mankind so *feclish*, as to take no care in transmitting such important truths down to posterity? I maintain, that more and greater care hath been taken to hand down the *sacred writings*, than any *other writings*: and the reason is clear: the subject matter is of so much *greater consequence* to mankind. You challenge *me* for being *credulous*: to support your opinion, you maintain the rank *absurdity* of denying your assent to the *best attested facts*. Doth it never occur to you, that *perhaps* you may be only *prouder*, not *wiser* than the *good* and *great*, who now live distinguished for the excellency of their mental powers, and piety; or the *thousands* gone before you, in *hopes to find That happiness which is promised in the gospel*; and which you do not hope to find? If your religion doth not extend to an existence after death, upon a *certain principle*, more solid than *mere conjecture*: if you have no hopes in a *future state*, you may wash your hands in innocence, and endeavour to support the *peace* and *good order* of the world *to no end*, with respect to the *immortality of your soul*. I trust that by *obedience to the laws of Christ*, I shall be happy *for ever!* I am sensible that my religion is a religion

ligion of *self-denial*; and to tell you my mind freely, I believe it is *for this very reason* you do not chuse to *submit* to it. You have been imperceptibly led to reject a *faith*, which first rejected the indulgences you were inclined to. What is it but *self-denial* which restrains our *corrupted* nature, and prevents our injuring others and ourselves? What is it but *self-denial* which keeps mankind from degenerating into *beasts*, and prevents *anarchy* and *confusion* in the world, the disturbance of government, and the dissolution of moral obligations?"—To this he replied, "No: I beg your pardon. It is the *providence of God*."—To which I answered, "True: it was agreeable to Divine Providence to send a messenger from heaven *to teach mankind his ways*: In this manner his Providence operated. The promise of such a messenger, was as old as the creation; and wise men, through every age, discovered, that he was *necessary*. They were sensible of their own inability to form any rule of conduct, which would not be subject to numerous calamities. We can best appeal to *our own hearts*: The more I exercise myself in *self-denial*, the calmer my mind becomes. It is this which gives me *knowledge of myself*, and all the *self-command* that I enjoy. Rightly observed, it gives me a superiority over the world. I feel the force of that wise saying, "*He that resisteth pleasure, crowneth his life*."—To this he replied, "*You have made, I confess, a pretty sort of a visionary system; and you hire a body of men to propagate the doctrines of it!*"—I answered, "Consider, Sir, the puerility of your argument. The *Christian religion* does not depend on *human authority*, though the doctrines of it are made known by *human means*. To reason from your own principle, with regard to the conduct of those who are encouraged to seek after *truth*, and promote it; have we not had *laymen* of great parts and sublime erudition, a *Boyle*, a *Newton*, a *Locke*, a *Nelson*, and a whole host of others, who have resembled them in the profound knowledge, as well as the true practice of the religion of *Christ*? Do not these deserve as much attention as your *infidel writers*; or your declamations in this *coffee-house*?"—He replied, "*I have heard you patiently; and though I do not mean to enter into so large a field as you have done; nor give direct answers to your numerous questions at this time; yet I must beg leave to tell you, that neither Boyle, Newton, Locke, nor Nelson, do I allow to be legal evidence in the cause*." "Not legal evi-

dence," said I; "Pray, my *learned Sir*, do not *judges* and *juries*, in the common course of law judgments, shew a singular deference to persons renowned for *wisdom* and *probity*, when they produce the best documents, which in the nature of things can be produced, in support of their testimony? I mention *these persons* as *believers* and *followers* of *Jesus Christ*. Have you read the production of another *ingenious layman*, who has lately surprized the world? He lays no stress on many excellent qualities of the human heart, which are generally understood to be the concomitants of true *Christianity*; but applies to the internal evidence of the essential part of it. I think *his book* will drive you out of the entrenchments behind which you oppose *revelation*. He bravely and judiciously defends, not the great outworks only, but the spirit of pure Christianity, against the army of *infidels*, who profess themselves enemies to the cross of *Christ*. He pleads for no *bigotry*, *enthusiasm*, nor *superstition*. I beg you will read him attentively."—To this he replied, "*I suppose you mean Philomath: he is one of us. Are you so weak as not to find out that he treats his subject ironically; and does not mean a word he says?*" To which I answered calmly, though I felt my indignation excited, "You are totally mistaken: his life gives the lie to this opinion, and has done so for many years; whatever wrong notions he may have entertained in times past, from whence you draw conclusions to your own confusion, I must beg leave to recommend to you to imitate him, and not persist in your infidelity, from any presumption that *Philomath*, who is confessedly a man of parts, will support you in unbelief. I should be weak indeed, if I imagined he did not mean what he says." To which he replied, "*Does he not treat the account of Christ's temptation in the wilderness as fabulous?*" I replied, "No: whether he understands that part of the *New Testament* or not, I cannot say. He only says, that supposing such a relation were conjectural, or accommodated to the ignorance and superstition of the time and country in which it was written, it could not impeach the excellency of the religion of *Christ*, or the authority of its founder: and how can it be affected? The truth is built on the rock of ages. Christianity is not answerable for the conjectures of individuals, of which it may have been the innocent occasion; and the want of this very obvious distinction has injured its cause. The records, in

which the revelation of the will of God is contained, is evidently not *all revelation*. To this effect *he* writes:—You know what different constructions have been put on several passages: but in the mean time, all who are properly *Christians*, believe the *Messiah* is come; that he was divine in person, and gave proof of his divinity by his works; and that he has left us a complete and perfect rule of life, beyond any the world ever saw before, or had any notion of. *Philomath* has not entered so deeply into every part of his subject, as if he had made the Scriptures his study from his youth up; he confesses his negligence, and consequently his conscious guilt: nor am I so well read as I ought to be. In regard to the *temptations of Christ* in the wilderness, they are not of the nature of the actual discourse with the *lawyer*; the paying of tribute money; and the ensnaring questions which *malice* suggested: nor yet of the kind of the innocent zeal of *St. Peter*, when he would have flattered our Saviour, or rather *himself*, that *Christ* should not die an ignominious death at *Jerusalem*, as he had predicted. Perhaps *Philomath* may construe the account given of the temptations of *Christ*, as a *Divine vision*, corresponding entirely with the genuine spirit of the gospel, as representing the *jeal of man*, in its most perfect state, subject to the assaults of the prince of darkness; and the power given by God, when asked for in sincerity of heart, sufficient to resist any such assault, even when all the *kingdoms of the world* should be offered. To reject them as light and trivial in the balance, when the glories of heaven are presented to our view, is an obvious duty. Considered in any view, if the only *perfect man* that ever was on the earth, was, in his human nature, *subject* to such *spiritual assaults*, how should *we frail mortals* humble ourselves in sackcloth and ashes, when we feel the power which so often invades our souls? Do not imagine that *Philomath* is in the lowest degree an advocate for *infidelity*, while he is pleading *for* the *faith* you reject. Your remarks convince me how *infidelity* and *scepticism* will catch at a *reed* to keep up their heads. What honour could your principles derive from its being imagined *Philomath* is so wicked as to write in ridicule of the religion of his country, under the government of which he lives secure and happy, and is receiving an ample emolument for public service? He knows how much religion tends to the peace, good order, and welfare of

society: and unless he had a *better religion* to recommend, and that he could produce authority for it; to disturb a man in his faith on any other principle, would be diabolical. I cannot persuade myself that you, being a man of understanding, can imagine him to be such a fool and a madman, as wantonly to make war by stratagem, against the kingdom of *Christ*, and his righteousness, when he is to gain *nothing* by the *victory*. *Philomath* is a gentleman of a lively genius; his book is short, and pithy: It hath been much read in the polite world. Be assured there is no reason for you to exult: and it would be injustice, to a high degree, to entertain the most distant thought that he is *not sincere*. Whether what I have said of the *temptations*, be *Philomath's* meaning, I know not. The sublimity of the subject, with regard to the Godhead united with the manhood in the person of the *Messiah*; and the agency of the *evil spirit*, are objects far surpassing the utmost stretch of *his* understanding. If you implore the Almighty for the *humility*, which the whole tenor and scope of *Christianity* so strongly recommend, you will easily make all the essential doctrines of it consistent with themselves: *It is to mistake them, costs the pains*. The pride of the human heart is the predominant cause of *infidelity*. This *Philomath* pleads against; and *humbly* and *wisely* confesses what he does not *comprehend*. You are sensible that we live in an age of unbounded curiosity, great learning, devoted to pleasure more than to God; and as *arrogant* as we are *ingenious*. Under such circumstances, a man of genius, made a convert to the religion of his country, and declaring a faith not expected from him, will be subject to the imputation of *pride*, even for his defence of *humility*. And because his reformation may not be spotless, and it would be wonderful if it were, his best sentiments will be scrutinized, and his worst condemned. Even his science and discernment may be imputed to him by some as *hypocrisy*. There may be some particulars in which I apprehend he may stand corrected: and which of us has no fault? But if the world bursts into atoms, let us grasp at *truth*, though we catch hold only of the borders of her celestial robe! The *Christian revelation* assures us, that *God is truth!*—*that God is love!*—In our mortal and finite state we can comprehend neither in their attributes of *infinity*. *O man! humble thy soul; fall prostrate before the throne of grace, and implore the intercession of That*  
*divine*

*divine mediator, against whom, in his human nature, no power of hell could prevail.*—Supposing the infernal agent to have had power to tempt *Christ* with the absolute sovereignty of all the kingdoms of the earth: he triumphed over *sin*, as he did afterwards over *death*: and by his humility in resigning himself, secured his victory. Our Saviour declares “his kingdom is not of this world.” Man is a creature of a day: the world itself is passing away while we are talking: but the *day spring from on high*, which hath visited the earth, brought immortality to light, and has given you the prospect of everlasting glory. Why will you shut your eyes? Why will you, who are as a worm in the comparison, seek for a puny spear, to fight with against heaven? Why will you wantonly hurl yourself into the regions of everlasting *darkness, misery, and pain*? It is not possible for you to prove it cannot be so. Think whilst the day lasteth. Let not the night come on. Act on the side *most safe and wise.*—Here I paused: and I was glad to see his countenance changed, as if he had been overcome with *conviction*; though unwilling in the presence of his companions to confess that he was so. I then proceeded, returning to that part of my subject which regarded the tenets of *eminent laymen*, and said, “I still recur to the *Scriptures*, however *Philomath*, who seems to be a *real Christian*, or any other person, may construe a particular passage in the sacred writings. You appeal to *statute laws* in legal concerns: what law do you appeal to with regard to the *religious* conduct of your life? Your testimony, with respect to religion, is only matter of *opinion*, not admissible as any kind of *proof*. If you mean to recover from the delusions of *infidelity*, be *humble*; and you will see things in a very different point of view. Humility, in the character of a guilty and dependent creature, has a wonder-working power: it has qualities essential to the understanding of Christianity, and the enjoyment of moral light, to behold the transcendent brightness of it. Your presumption is a proof of your blindness: and the higher opinion you entertain of your discernment, the further you are removed from a capacity of learning. The great truths of Christianity require *goodness of heart*, and *profound humility*. The knowledge of the excellency of the religion of *Christ*, comprehends *goodness* as well as *wisdom*. Are you not conscious, that the starts of goodness with which you may have flattered yourself, for

*goodness* must ever appear charming to the moral sense, have been like the morning cloud, or the dew, that passeth away? I am now rather confessing what I am sensible of in myself, than turning inquisitor to torture you. I have thought much of these things: I have lived many more years than you have: I find reasons without end to humble myself to the dust of the earth. And one humble thought, “*Lord be merciful to me a sinner!*” however mournful it may appear to the careless part of mankind, promises more solid joy, than all the triumphs of successful vice; or the highest gratification *riches* or *honours, health* or *beauty* can afford. That which you take for *your superior knowledge*, I apprehend to be a fond desire of pre-eminence among men; an impatience of controul; and haughtiness of spirit. Tell me, if you can, what it has of the *meek, the humble, and submissive*? It certainly has not taught you the *doctrines of christianity*, these being built on the mortification of your pride, and crucifying the affections and lusts of the heart; and submitting even to death, rather than be repugnant to the will of the great Lord of nature. He who governs all as with a bridle, and conducts every creature to its proper end, will not *force you* against your will: He has left you *free* to chuse the *good*, or the *evil*: Your lot will depend on your own choice. But if the soul is *immortal*, you must be happy or miserable for ever!—The *best* have so multiplied their *sins*, as to have reason to *doubt* of their *final acceptance with God*. Though some enthusiasts tell us they are *sure* of being saved, we are commanded by the Christian law, to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; to *hope* with a sense of obedience; to *pray* with fervency; to be *obedient*, as dependent; and *humble*, as *guilty creatures*, seeking for happiness by their liberty of access to God through a mediator. This is the order which the great Author of nature has appointed. He has not appointed *you* to *dispute* with him. Read the *New Testament*, I say, with candour; there you will see these great things explained. And if you subdue your *pride*, you will find the finger of God in that composition, in the parts easy to understand, and what is properly *revelation*. On the other hand, (and I appeal to your own heart) if you do not subdue your *pride*, you will wander on in darkness, and the *night of death* will overwhelm you!—Can you fairly say, you have now any *light* to guide you?

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The hour may come, when you will think of your *old friend in the coffee-house*: May That hour never bring with it any reason to curse your birth! Examine your heart: you will find so much wickedness in it, that nothing but the impression of the *infernal* spirit of pride, can prevent your *humiliation*. Grow humble, and trust that all will be well with you. Nothing can be more certain, than that cheerfulness of heart is the companion of faith and genuine religion. The *atheist*, who denies a God, it hath been justly observed, does not dishonour him so grossly, as he who represents him as *cruel*, and an object of terror to human nature. The very idea of the *father of mankind*, has peculiar properties delightful to the human heart.—If you will examine the *New Testament*, you will find the Almighty represented in the most amiable and attractive light. You will find the *matter* of it most worthy of the Deity; the *doctrines* most productive of happiness; and the *precepts* the most reasonable. You will find a disinterestedness which captivates the heart more delightfully than all the soothing blandishments of the world. You will also discover, that as it is abstracted from all sordid self-love, it tends to promote the welfare of individuals, beyond all the riches which the acutest talents in civil life, or the most successful sword in war, ever could, or ever can obtain: all this world can give, is comparatively as a grain in the balance!—This indeed is best known to those who have made the vanity of human life so far their study, as to observe in what it consists; and in the great view of life, consider its duration of very little moment. What a strange infatuation reigns in the heart, by which men take their *wish for long life*, for an assurance they shall enjoy it! And when it happens to be accomplished, it often throws them out of the *chace of true happiness*. Neither *old age*, nor *infirmities*, make a deep impression on the *generality*, to shew them the scanty boundaries of the longest life. Is not pride one of the chief causes why *religion* is in such little esteem; and *self-preservation*, the *first law of nature*, so grossly neglected?—To this he replied, “I grant that want of *consideration* is the cause of many evils; and that our departure from the *law of nature*, has brought much misery into the world; but I do not therefore acknowledge your system of religion to be true. You challenge me for *incredulity*, and impute it

to haughtiness of heart, as if I were as proud as you represent *Lucifer* to be. What reason have you to believe so injuriously of me?”—I answered, “Far be it from me to judge with feverity; I mean to do you service; I wish to be instrumental in saving your soul. You ask me what *reason* I have for my opinion: I have good and weighty reasons. I appeal to your *actions*: I appeal to the daily occurrences of your life; and to your words uttered in this coffee-room. Last year you was so wicked, and upon Christian principles I will be bold to say, so *cowardly*, you fought a duel, and was dangerously wounded. You had none of that passive courage, which enables the *Christian* to defy the world. You had done no injury for which you ought to die: there was as little reason for hazarding your killing another man, who was run mad with infidelity, and knew not what he did. Two poor proud *infidels* happening to meet, their fear of That part of the world, which is as foolish and proud as themselves, triumphed over all *fear of God*. Their false ideas of religion, or *no religion*, prompted them to this act of violence against all law *divine* and *human*; the *fantastical law of honour* excepted. Every day shews how infidelity operates. Your cousin *John* squandered his fortune, and, in a fit of anguish for his folly, *shot himself*. Had he been a *Christian*, though in his temporal affairs he might have acted *foolishly*, he would not have acted *madly*; he would not have rushed into eternity in defiance of heaven, as if he had been angry with Providence for a fault entirely his own. Your footman *Tom*, poor wretch! was also one of your disciples. You taught him *your principles*; and he imagining no man could be so wise as his master, came to a desperate end. Being enamoured of a young woman, who had been bred up in the belief of the religion of her country, he made her honourable proposals; but she finding him an *infidel*, refused him. Intoxicated by his desire for the girl, and his pride stung with resentment of her refusal of him, he finished his days by a *halter*.”—He interrupted me, by saying, “You may entertain what sentiments you please of duelling, which I can vindicate on no rational or legal principle; or of suicide, which I do not vindicate, for it seems to be the effect of cowardice; but I hope you will allow, it might be the tenderness of my poor servant’s affection which drove him to the fatal extremity.”—I replied, “I am glad you are so candid as



to acknowledge so much ; but as to *tenderness* or *hardness* of affection, they are equally forbidden by the Christian law ; and it is utterly inconsistent with its precepts to suffer any passion to seize the mind with violence. The best you can say is, the man was mad : but if he had been a *Christian*, he would not have been mad.—What shall we say of the host of those who forfeit their lives by following the trade of *murder* or *rapine* ? How shall we deplore the misery of a great part of the three thousand recorded to die annually of consumptions, in the cities of *London* and *Westminster* only (a) ? Some are undoubtedly very innocent ; but the greater part fall by following the impulse of their appetites, in direct violation of the *Christian law*. What crowds are grossly negligent of their duty as *Christians*, being totally regardless of the worship of God, and never present at the supper of our Lord ! Do you imagine you have no share in the diabolical merit of preparing your fellow-subjects for *perdition* ? What *good* can you tell me comes of *disbelieving* ? But “ you cannot believe beyond what your reason suggests to you.” Reason never could suggest the truths which *revelation* has discovered : all that you know, you impute to *reason* or *nature* : but you do no great honour to *reason*, while you know so little of That, which of all other things is the most important. *Incredulity* is, I think, a strong mark of *unreasonableness* ; and you will pardon me if I add, *infidelity* is another name for *gross ignorance*. If you will examine the grounds of our religion, I flatter myself you will be a *Christian*. You will find, that what you know, more than was known in the days of ignorance, though you impute it to the *light of nature*, you may discover it to be the light of *revelation* ; and from thence be led to venerate *revelation* as such, seeing that you had shewn it honour, though under another name. If you walk by the light of nature only, you will remain in darkness. If “ the world that good men can fear, is the best that evil men can wish for ;” and one of the greatest evils, as well as follies, is *infidelity* ; he that is given over to it, invites his own punishment. If the divine promises can be known only by *revelation* : and if the promises of God are the anchor of men’s hopes ; to disregard *revelation*, is to disclaim all pretensions to the happiness of a life to come, on any intelligible principle that I comprehend. *Pride* begets *infidelity* :

and we see how this operates, by creating so strong a repugnance to government in the breast of some, and in others *actual rebellion* : it is foreign to the spirit of *Christianity*. This says, “ whence come wars ? Come they not of your lusts ?” *Christianity* would preserve us against ourselves, and the evil spirit which walks abroad in the earth, who never takes a more destructive form, than that which pride and infidelity afford him. What *comfort* can you derive from the consideration, that the *Lord God Omnipotent* reigneth in the earth ; that his power is regulated by consummate wisdom ; and that all is under his controul ; if you *deny*, or *reject*, the *revelation of his will to mankind*, and follow the blind impulse of your own wilfulness ? If there is no *revelation*, by what guide are you led ? You still answer, *The light of nature*. What is That, but every man’s opinion ? Does nature teach us to fight duels ? to shoot or hang ourselves ? or live without God in the world ? If she does, she is a bad guide ; and if she does not, your disbelief of *revelation* prompts you to sin *against her also*. Is there any word in our language, or any idea in our minds, of so ambiguous a sense ? Till *nature*, as displayed in *man*, is corrected and improved by *grace*, or the interposition of her great Lord and Father, the author of *our* being, we must wander in darkness. If we impute every thing that is *good* to nature, we must impute every thing that is *evil* also : we destroy our free-agency : we impute nothing to this principle ; and make ourselves to be accountable to no power.—I reverence *nature*, in the comprehensive sense of the word, for it takes in the human nature, in which the Son of God himself appeared. But in the sense of an operating unintelligent agency, freeing men from the obligations of *divine precepts*, or denying that there *are any such precepts* ; how can you look on yourself bound by any *human laws* ? Who can trust you ? “ *Weak credulity in religious matters, admits of falsehoods ; but incredulity is more dangerous, for it rejects all truths.*” It undermines the foundations, not of happiness only, but of all *safety* and *regard* to society. You are *afraid of believing too much* : you must believe many things which you do not see nor comprehend, or you could not live. “ *Superstition renders a man a fool ; but scepticism makes him mad.*” You plume yourself on your *reason* :

Dec,

(a) See the Bills of Mortality for *London* and *Westminster*,

Does not this teach you its own insufficiency? *Reason* is the glorious attribute of man: but what is it without *religion*? “It is ingenious in giving flings to our miseries,” as you find in the case of your *consul* and your *footman*; and might easily have been your own: but is it able to administer *comfort* with respect to the immortality of your soul? If it is employed in *denying* every thing, and *proving* nothing, you might, with regard to the greatest and best purposes of human life, if I may be allowed the supposition, be full as well without it. But if *reason* leads us to think there is a *life after this*, in which mankind seem to be generally agreed, there must be a *God*, and he will reward or punish, according to our works done in the flesh, agreeably to his laws. A good heathen, the Emperor *Aurelius*, speaking of the value he set on his *soul*, from observing its powers, would have had a much higher regard to it, had he lived to know the *Christian revelation*. Yet, from a constant experience of the *power* of a *first cause*, he derived at once a proof of the being of a *God*, and a reason for his veneration. To make *nature* and *reason* harmonize in a law fit for the conduct of reasonable Beings in all their wants and necessities: to cherish all the beauty and harmony of social intercourse: to render the *animal* part subordinate to the *rational*: to bring all the passions under control, and fit the spirit of man for the society of angels; we must appeal to *Christianity*! O Sir, if you would contemplate its charms, with that meek and humble spirit, essential to its nature, its end, and glorious promises, I am sure your soul would be enraptured, and you would be a *Christian*.”—You say, “You do not find, that since the time I *imagine* the *Messiah* came into the world, that men have been more moral in their lives than they were before; or that, at the present period, those who call themselves *Christians*, are better than those who do not profess to believe in revelation.” As a man of letters, do you know so little of *profane history* and *ancient mythology*? What were even the *gods of the heathens*, those imaginary beings? Instead of the purity and infinite perfection of the one true and eternal *God*, their attributes were *revenge*, *cruelty*, *lewdness*, and *obscenity*. What was *Jupiter* or *Mars*, *Venus* or *Bacchus*? Were not the *Greeks* and *Romans* in the lowest state of barbarism with regard to religion, though otherwise polite and ingenious, to a degree that still

renders them models in arts? Look back to the ages of ancient idolatry, when *birds* and *beasts*, and creeping things, and statues, were esteemed as gods; and when men hoped to appease the wrath of these avenging deities, by sacrificing the fruit of their bodies for the sins of their souls; for it seems there were such ideas then prevailing, that men *might* be punished in this world, or in some other state, for *certain actions*. If you will examine, you will also find, what very horrible crimes, as we esteem them, were held in no detestation. Read the *Old Testament*, as a record of the *Hebrews*: see, notwithstanding the wonderful lights they received from heaven, how prone they were to *idolatry*, and the vilest practices. When the light of *Christianity* shone on the earth, though the inhabitants of many parts of it, for reasons best known to the Almighty, yet wander in darkness: many, particularly in *Europe*, have banished such abominations as removed them to a great distance from the purity of *Christianity*. *Mahomet* made up his religion of *Judaism* and *Christianity*, blending with it such conceits, as would most easily impose on his followers. What is your *faith* made up of? Have you any *religious faith*? I have mentioned, that the more enlightened part of the *Mahometans* seem to discover the superior excellency of the religion of *Christ*, with respect to the purity which it requires. Abolish their abominable indulgences, evidently so derogatory to the *common rights of human nature*, with respect to the *sexes*; subdue their prejudices with regard to the doctrine of the *trinity in unity*; and throw down the images in the popish countries, which border their territories, and their good sense would soon render them *Christians*. How can you, who are born under the light of the gospel, resist the glorious brightness of it, and all the evidence which the lives of real Christians produce in support of their belief? That many who *profess Christianity* live unlike *Christians*, I grant; but not that this proves any thing against *Christianity*; since those who live most agreeably to its precepts are undeniably the *best men*, and the *best subjects*. The religion of *Christ* is so remarkably productive of the *peace* and *happiness of mankind*, that every thing which disturbs either, is found to be contrary to That religion. And if you will candidly examine the *history of living men*, you will see the most striking difference imaginable between the *real Christian*, and the

unbeliever.

unbeliever: the *patience, resignation, and submission* of the one; the *impatience and repugnance* to the dispensations of Providence, in the other: the *temperance, purity, meekness, and humility* of the one; the *intemperance, impurity, and pride* of the other. You who lately fought a *duel*, and by the kindness of Providence escaped so narrowly, that a quarter of an inch nearer had reached a vital part, and laid your fantastic *honour* in the dust, yet you glory in the principle which induced you to *fight*, and not in the good Providence which preserved you. A *Christian* would sooner suffer *torture*, than pretend to any right of disposing of his own life, or lift up his hand to destroy another man's. Your acquaintance, who applaud your conduct, are *not Christians*; some of them, I fear, are profligate and debauched persons. You are yet a young man; but how many of those who are gone before you, suffered their evil passions to transport them so far, as to be guilty of *suicide*: others have died in consequence of their vices.—*You would gladly know what pre-eminence Christians enjoy.* If you have no faith in the sacred writings; read the *heathen* accounts of the *first Christians*: Behold their testimony to the purity and simplicity of the lives of the followers of the great teacher *Jesus Christ*. Their charitable and universal love for mankind, was very remarkable; and their conduct most inoffensive. With respect to your pride, of which I complain so much; what is the lesson taught by the Christian law? “Suffer the little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” The purity, the humility, the simplicity of a child, is here recommended as a qualification of admittance into That kingdom. A very little reflection, drawn from the constitution of the moral world, and the state of human life, as a scene of *trial*, must convince you, that to labour for such a qualification, is the glory of a *frail offending being*. Pride was certainly not made for man; nor a disposition to *envy, revenge, cruelty, or insensibility to misery*, for the human race. This is obvious from every event you can possibly imagine, from the womb to the grave. “*Vengeance is mine,*” saith the voice of the great Lord of nature, who alone is able to judge. That, in the corrupt state of our nature, human societies cannot now subsist without laws, and a coercive power maintained by punishments, is obvious; but is any society supported on the

principle of gratifying *private passions, or private vindictive justice*? On the contrary, nothing is so abhorrent to the nature of government, and the native freedom of mankind, which must appeal to public justice, as to descend to *private arts of cruelty*. Examine your heart; and you will assuredly find, that *pride* is at the bottom of your *infidelity*: It sprang from *pride* and *ignorance*; and *pride* and *ignorance* water and nourish it. Your pride will be offended at my using the word *ignorance*; but I am perfectly convinced you do not know what the Scriptures contain, and have not considered the analogy of the *Christian faith*, with the moral excellence of the human soul, and the *hopes* to which it is made an heir, in the regions of immortality. Possess yourself with an opinion that you are formed no better than the meanest of mankind. By what over-ruling power has your life been supported? By what providential kindness have you been cherished, as it were, in the bosom of affluence? Is it not by That very Being whose revelation you reject? You cannot be insensible, that you are as subject to have your breath taken from you, and all your thoughts to perish, while your bodily frame moulders in the earth, as the most depressed of the children of men. Try what pride is; analyze it; see its essence and qualities, and what dangerous poison it contains. On the contrary, if you will be so just to yourself, as to exercise the *meekness* and *humility*, the *patience* and *benevolence*, which Christianity inculcates, you will find in it a true religion, and a very ample supply of hope. *Here* then that *death* will be the instrument of conveying you to the society of angels and just men, living for ever in the completion of all the desires the heart can entertain, in the most perfect state of happiness!—You can gain nothing by *pride*, but a few occasional triumphs, attended by endless vexations, mortifications, and distress: your days will pass in *vanity*, and your years in *trouble*: for if men were such idiots as to *adore* you, being a monster of your own making, you would be the more grievously tormented for being the cause of the misery of others. If they follow your doctrines, or example, they will be led far out of the true path of life. Be assured, that pride, and the desire of distinction, are at the bottom. For this you leave the straight path of obedience to the will of God, and become

become the subject of the pounce of pride, who is at enmity with God. The education you have had, has been in several respects a bad one. You have parts and learning, and may shine: do not shine by the light of infernal flames; but seeing the error of your own ways, be a guide to others."—Here I paused, and then proceeded: "If the company judges that I have been guilty of ill manners, I shall think it an honour to beg your pardon; I mean, with respect to the decent regard due to a *gentleman*, however unfortunate he may be in irreligion. If I can be in any degree instrumental to your happiness, by making you a convert to Christianity, I shall think myself exceedingly happy."—Mr. *Heartwell* then addressing himself to me said, "You know, Mr. *Trueman*, we are fond of talking; it is a part of our trade; and upon this occasion I felt myself warmed with a zeal superior to that of any worldly concerns."

*D.* The old gentleman must have an excellent memory as well as yourself.

*F.* The speech was his own, and the principles deep in his heart: and with respect to myself, what he said engaged my whole heart also. I never was more attentive to any thing; and I hope I shall never forget what I have been relating to you.

*D.* I suppose the company did not condemn the old gentleman for any incivility, though he spoke with warmth and strength of argument.

*F.* True Christians keep their temper without any unbecoming warmth. You remember when the disciples of our Saviour were in a flame of resentment against the *Samaritans*, he rebuked them by saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye be of."

*D.* What a foolish thing is *infidelity*! All the reason in the world appears on the *Christian* side. The multitude and variety of arguments suited to the understandings of men, outweigh all that these *infidel* *preachers* can possibly urge. But it is to little purpose to talk, if they *will not believe*.

*F.* Never had any relation so many degrees of credibility, as this of *the life and death of Jesus Christ*. What would infidels *have*, that God could do, *after the manner of men*, which he hath not done? We must take it upon record, "or how are we to know his will? Would they have him tell us, not once, but always; and not only *always to some men*, but *always to all men*; and *render all teachers, apostles, and messengers need-*

less; for *they* could not shew to our eyes, what they tell to our ears?" It is indeed a *melancholy story* that there should be so strange a creature as an infidel!

*D.* I fear we have *infidels* among the lower classes of the people.

*F.* Ay, my child; or you would not see such monstrous outrages committed every day. Look round, and see how irreligion walks with gigantic strides amongst us; insomuch that our wonder is, when we find a true and genuine *Christian*: and we are too apt to denominate *Methodists*, not meaning it as a phrase of respect, all those who are attentive to their ways; and think of a judgment to come.

*D.* The old gentleman's labour was not lost, I hope, with respect to his son.

*F.* No: as far as I could judge from his countenance, his whole soul was attention. He acknowledged his high obligation to his father; and promised that he would commit to writing what he had heard, with the best care, and the utmost his memory would assist him.

*D.* This was a glorious harangue for the *young gentlemen* who were present in the coffee-house; as it would be, if it were repeated, to several of the clowns in our parish, of whom some are stupid enough to talk, in their way, in imitation of *infidels*; like ideots laughing at sacred things, or like fools neglecting them: for I observe the *vicious* always try to find reasons, be they ever so bad, to defend themselves.

*F.* I hope the *young templar* had wit enough to find, that there is hardly a man, who has not *weakness* sufficient to level him with the vulgar, as much as any *merit* he can boast of, may raise him above them: and that whoever is ambitious of excelling, if he does not make a good choice of objects, the greater efforts he makes, the further he wanders from the standard of his hopes: and he may be assured, that he whose hope is not in God, but rejects his word, commits a violence on his own soul. The desire of distinction leads many into destruction! But what praise can an infidel hope for, who proposes no good of any kind to others?

*D.* Are not the worst people, the *wicked gentry*, as they do the most mischief by their precepts, as well as example?

*F.* The desire of *distinction* operates strongly on a great part of mankind; but fame will attend those most, whose desires are controuled by a consciousness of not deserving applause. Let

us seek for substantial glory and immortality. Those who will not read the Scriptures with an humble and contrite spirit, will not find the things which belong to their peace, notwithstanding they live among *believers*. They cannot be *Christians*, if they do not know what belongs to Christianity. If their hearts grow hardened by habit, they will estrange themselves from the contemplation of the attributes of the Almighty. If they do not believe the promises made by the Saviour of the world, their pride

will close their eyes against the light: they will quarrel with revelation, and consequently with the *promises* and *providence* of God; for these are only parts of each other. Thus expressing no more reverence for what God hath commanded them to do, than for the operations of his almighty hand, they live and die in a sad impenetrable darkness of their own seeking.

D. It is terrible to think of. I hope the young templar is at this day in a better mind.

## CONVERSATION V.

*Contemplation of the beauties of nature, in a rural scene. The evidence of Christianity in the Second Epistle General of St. Peter. Observations on the scriptural language of being born again. The genuine signification of it: The weakness of those who treat it with disdain, from its being sometimes used improperly by enthusiastic persons. Mr. Heartwell's continuation of his advice to his son with respect to his religion, and the duties of a Christian. Comparison of the exterior ornamental parts of life, with the spiritual habits of it.*

F. **WHAT** a glorious day this is!

D. Still more glorious to think of Him who gives it, and what greater things he will give, if we obey his laws.

F. How quiet is every thing around us!—*Silence* is the true friend to contemplation. Long it will not be before you will hear a continual din of rattling wheels; not but you may find hours enough in which to *look into yourself*, if you please. *London* is *heaven* or *hell*, just as it is made by the inhabitant.—The bees now fill the plain with solemn murmurs. These too are busy, as in the bustle of a great city.—They drain every flower of its choicest sweets.—This is a work of *nature*, and of *nature's God*.—What shall we say of those pursuits, in which *nature* has no share, except we use the common term with regard to the corruption of men's manners. I hope you will never receive so much pleasure in seeing the parade of a gilded chariot, or the trappings of fine horses, as in such shady sleeps as yonder hills afford, where the herds are scattered, and sleep on a flowery couch. Much do I doubt if you will ever see an object more beautiful to the eye, than that *goldfinch*, whose yel-

low streaked wings moved in the air, please my fancy more, than all the works that I have seen of polished gold. Blest are these hours, *Mary*, which banish from our breast all pining cares, and gloomy discontent! We are pleased with the shepherd's song, or the soft notes of nightingales, when nature is first clad in her new livery! Happy is he who has learnt to relish the wild sweetness of rural joys, and can dwell with sober pleasure on such rustic scenes! How might *they* envy us, whose souls are tortured with the pangs of *jealousy*, or burn with *fierce ambition*!—Survey the vale beneath us—the verdant meads and cultivated fields—the various clumps of rising woods—the little cottages intermixed, and half concealed by trees—the castle on the eminence commanding the plains below—the spire which glitters in yon market town!—All this display of nature's fairest face, thus beautified by art and labour, charm the innocent mind. Alas, my daughter! how few there are, habituated to live amidst a throng of people, who have a true relish for such joys! Yet what are these, compared to the sweet peace which virtue ever gives her votaries? Long hath my

heart been *free*; nor would I yield up my peace and tranquil days, these rising forests, and these limpid streams, for all that wealth can give. It is true my fortune, by the mercy of kind Heaven, is made, if no unsuspected stroke falls on me: and as my sand is so nearly run out, I ought not to be anxious, with regard to this world.

*D.* But for the same reason that you have now such a sincere enjoyment of it, and all men wish to end their days in peace, you would gladly remove every object which may disturb them; and not expose yourself to temptation from a wanton indifference to the things of this life.

*F.* True, my dear child; I wait the hour, but not with impatience, when, I truit in the mercies of Heaven, I shall be removed to a more happy scene, not subject to any possibility of change. Such will be the joys of heaven! It may be your lot to suffer a variety of wretchedness in this transient abode: if so it should happen, you can have no counterpoise, nothing to ballast your vessel on the voyage of life, but the prospect of that haven, where you would wish to be. Of this be assured; you may be a Christian: and if you live like one, in That name you will draw comfort, and a generous manly joy, which none but Christians know. You may exercise your faith, your reason, and all your virtues, when those who are often the fond objects of the world's envy, and admired by the multitude, are tortured with secret anguish, and droop in spite of all the smiles of affluence. Could you but know how much is wasted in unbounded riot; how much the feverish debauch, and unrestrained desire, draw a dark curtain over their impious joys, you would be contented with your *hope*, and grasp the promises of that future bliss, in which, even the awful word of God is passed. The precarious, mixed pleasures of the great world, are generally but for the day: *your prospects* are immortal as your soul; and as this out-values the *body* in excellence and worth, cherish and protect it, even unto death. However appearances may strike your *youthful fancy*, Heaven can bestow no greater favour on the human race, than to reflect on the victories they have obtained over vice. The pleasures virtue affords, in the true lights and shades religion sheweth her, will never cloy. Be religious: be a *Christian*: Trust to Providence, and wait your appointed hour, assured, as you well may be, that

every minute brings you nearer to your end; and that murmurs and impatience are but other words for *black rebellion* against Heaven.

*D.* I have thought upon my pillow of all these things, particularly what Mr. *Heartwell* said to the *young templar*, who I am persuaded really never read the Scriptures with any degree of sincerity of heart.

*F.* I am of this opinion also. Had he considered "the energy and clear brevity; the rapid flow of language; the commanding majesty; the significant epithets; the strong compound-words; the beautiful and sprightly figures; and above all these, the sublime doctrines, supported by heavenly morals;" he would have been a *Christian*! He might then have understood how the virtues of the soul depend on each other; and how from the root of *belief*, man grows to maturity, and fit for heaven. "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you," says St. *Peter*, "through the knowledge of God, and of *Jesus* our Lord: according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to *life* and *godliness*, through the *knowledge* of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

*D.* Does the *apostle* mean by *glory*, the honour of being a *Christian*; and by *virtue*, living like one?

*F.* So I understand; for he goes on: "whereby are given unto us exceeding great and *precious promises*, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.—And besides, giving all diligence, add to your faith *virtue*, and to your virtue *knowledge*:"—as if he had said, "the more you practise the duties of a *Christian*, the better you will understand them."—He goes on, as you may remember, "To knowledge *temperance*." By temperance you must understand, caution in all your actions, and in all your words, bearing and forbearing, as patience naturally requires; That patience which leads to godliness, or a holy life. You see the scale of the gradation, and the completion of the effects of the grace of God; for the apostle adds, "To godliness *brotherly kindness*, and to brotherly kindness *charity*:" and charity, you know, is the bond of peace, which unites all Christian virtues. The same apostle, in his general epistle, informs us, that he had not followed "*cunningly devised fables*," as the young templar attempted to persuade himself; for he assures

assures us, that *Christ* was truly, and in very deed, the *promised Messiah*; for that he himself, with *James* and *John*, were with *Christ* upon the mount, and eye-witnesses of his *transfiguration*. Upon this occasion he received, in his human nature, a communicated splendor: and God the Father from heaven, the seat of his glory, pronounced him, in an audible voice, to be *his well-beloved son, in whom he is well pleased*. Such is the information we receive, with a crowd of other evidences to the *truth of Christianity*, and the comfort and joy of *believers in Christ*.

*D.* Pray God the young templar may be long since convinced of his errors, and the vanity of his incredulity! As for myself, I am sensible of the advantages of my present condition; but I must change it: I hope I shall never change my principles or belief. Mr. *Heartwell* has taught us to guard against *infidels*. For my own part, while I read the Scriptures attentively, with a good intention, I shall trust in the mercies of God for *my faith*.

*E.* This is the only safe ground you can stand upon.

*D.* Yet in speaking of a change, I feel my *wants*. What is *your* opinion of the expression of changing to a *new creature*, or a *new birth*?

*F.* It is an obvious *Christian doctrine*. With respect to man in a *state of nature*, which the young templar built upon, and a *state of grace*, as under the gospel covenant; if we adhere to the express words and sense of the *Scriptures*, we shall consider the being *born again*, as a change from *blindness to sight*; or from *corruption to purity* of manners. Such a *renewal of spirit*, to which the *Scriptures* give the name of a *new birth*, is surely very obvious: our common catechism uses the same expression; “A *new birth* unto righteousness;” and although this *new birth*, like knowledge in science, depends on a gradual improvement in piety and virtue; it is not of the less importance to the progress of the *Christian life*: it would be happy if it were attended to by us. Some of our *sectaries* often misuse the words, by pretending to a sudden and instantaneous *conversion*, at a certain moment, similar to that of *St. Paul’s*, though his was evidently miraculous: but this does not alter the scripture language, nor the state of human nature, with respect to the soul.—This is the pith and marrow of the matter. Correct what you find amiss in yourself: and if you change

from your evil ways, call yourself by what name you please, in the familiar language of the world, you are a *new creature*.

*D.* Did Mr. *Heartwell* say any thing to his son on this subject?

*F.* He made particular mention of it. You have,” said he, “often heard it said, that man is by nature a *rational creature*; and it is the property of *reason* to direct him, according to the light which is afforded him: yet it is no less evident, that he is prone to darken his reason, and to render That darkness familiar to him: so that the common term *nature* is as fitly used in one sense as in the other. We say, with equal propriety of speech, how prone we are *by nature, to evil*! It is therefore declared in Scripture, that in order to be fit inhabitants of the mansions of the blessed, we are to be *born again*. This mode of expression was the more necessary when men were first converted to *Christianity*: but it is still *very proper*. You will find some *sprightly* people, even in this *enlightened age*, almost as dull in religious matters, as him who asked, *Are we to return again to our mother’s womb?* Those who treat *spiritual regeneration* as a visionary or fanatical doctrine, fit only for absurd sectaries, know but little of *Christianity*. It is true, some of the *ignorant and enthusiastic* part of our fellow-subjects, reason in an absurd manner; but the *difference* between the *man corrupted by evil communication*, or the customs of the world, and recovering to a *right sense of duty, by an actual reformation*, upon the solid principles of the religion of *Christ*, is not the less obvious. This is clearly meant by the words, *ye must be born again*: and it corresponds with my notions of the real state of mankind. If we think of the reformation, the best of us stand in need of; how difficult it is to mix with the world, and not be tainted by it; to *wash off* impurity; to *pray* with due attention; to keep the mind *unspotted*; to *forgive* enemies, and do them good; to *check* the passions of *anger, pride, lust*, and all untoward passions, and devote our lives to the good of others: surely it requires a *change*, which may, without the least impropriety, be stiled a *regeneration, or new birth*: but it is not *words*; *actions* constitute the difference. “By their *fruits* ye shall know them:” a *briar* does not produce *figs*; nor a *crab-tree* delicious *peaches*. It is not impossible but that some of your companions may, pretend to be very *wise*, when their

ables only prove their ignorance of the sense and meaning of those sacred oracles, from whence we derive our religion. Tell them the matter is reduced to two or three simple questions: *Is eternity at stake?—Where are the words of eternal life? Are you prepared to stand at the bar of eternal justice and mercy?* Let them answer. Then shall I think they have accomplished their studies, and learnt how to plead successfully: and whether their lives be long, or short, they may be lives of glory! Every foreign region is the country of a Christian, as well as That in which he was born; and every country is foreign to him, in respect to his hopes in a life to come. A Christian, like other men, is in the flesh; but he does not live after the flesh, but after the spirit. He dwells on earth; but his conversation is in heaven. The soul lives in the body; but it is not of the body. In the truest, best, and most intelligible sense, a Christian, though he lives in the world, he is not of the world. An immortal spirit dwells in a mortal tabernacle: and if you cherish the spirit of a Christian, you will not only be contented to live, but rejoice in devoting your days to Him, who died to redeem you; looking forward for an incorruptible state in heaven. This, my son, is the plain common-sense of a Christian. The truest beauty is That of the soul: it cannot consist in external and adventitious

ornaments, but in the goodness and purity of the mind. To believe the soul is immortal, is to acknowledge that justice, fortitude, temperance, goodness, chastity, and the love of truth, are the brightest ornaments the eye of man can behold! Imagine a temple dedicated to religion, adorned with the utmost art and magnificence, if the tutelary deity of it were a crocodile or a cat; would not your heart revolt? Should you not think it profane, to admire such a habitation, intended for so vile a purpose, instead of making the true God the object of the worship? So it is, my son, with those who spend their time, their fortunes, their very souls, in dress, equipage, houses, and the ornamental parts of life, and neglect the inward purity of their souls."

D. Excellent advice! it were far better for us all, to be mindful of the glorious distinguishing marks of a Christian life, than to indulge our vanity in fine clothes, and the decorations of our persons. The women, in these days, are extravagantly fond of dress, and exalt the ornaments of their heads so foolishly and extravagantly high, one would imagine they did not think of their hearts, nor how to render their understandings acceptable to Almighty Wisdom. It is wonderful that an immortal being, born to continue here so short a time, should act so absurd a part!

## CONVERSATION VI.

*The conduct of a rustic pretender to liberty, a proof of ill-nature. Good-nature exemplified in a decision by a justice of the peace. Charity displayed towards offenders in the person of children. Compassion due to parents in distress. Impartiality in doing justice, one of the most shining parts of a character.*

D. MR. Heartwell is a sensible old gentleman. I suppose he is a good-natured man; for I have generally observed, that good-nature is attended with a sensibility of the perverseness of other people, as well as of their misfortunes; and both seem to be comprehended in the pains he took to convert the young templar.

E. There was something more than good-nature in his discourse: It was his zeal for religion.

The more good-nature is attended with good-sense, the greater sensibility there will be. True good-nature finds within itself a fund of kindness and compassion, not to be exhausted by provocation. I have lately had occasion to observe, how this, as well as the contrary disposition, acts upon men. Our tempers are frequently more easily discovered in little circumstances, than in great ones.

D. I have



D. I have often heard people spoken of as *good-humoured persons*. Is there any difference between *good-humour* and *good-nature*?

F. These qualities are frequently confounded together, but they are distinct things. A man may be good-humoured, or in a *good* humour to-day, and in a *bad* one to-morrow.

D. I perceive that good-nature, and good-humour, have an affinity; but the difference in this respect is obvious: a person may do an ill-natured action, or act *contrary* to that disposition which we call good-nature, and yet be in a *good-humour*.

F. True: so long as he is in a good humour, he may be agreeable to himself, and to others who are not *hurt by him*: but this does not prevent the *evil part* of his conduct; nor can it rise to the height of a *moral* virtue. Good-humour may depend, as it often does, on the state of the health, and the mere animal œconomy. *Good-nature* is more permanent; it is more deeply founded: it hath its seat in the heart, and grows from a sense of humanity.

D. *Uncharitable* actions, whatever *humour* they are done in, have no tendency to make people happy.

F. It may be further observed, that numberless accidents put us out of humour, and render us so far *wretched*: but those who ever deserved the name of *good-natured persons*, rarely lose this temper of mind, and always recover it immediately, if through any unhappy warmth they forget themselves. There needs very little reason or experience to prove, that in order to be agreeable to ourselves, or to please others, we must forget or conceal our dissatisfactions, and by no means bring them into company, lest we lose, not the reputation only, but the *substance*, both of *good-nature* and *good-humour*.—Did I ever tell you the story of *Sam Sturdy's* behaviour at the market-town, when he found farmer *Field's* horse tied across the foot-way? *Sam* thought the farmer had *no right to stop the way*, as he was pleased to call it; and without ceremony, let the horse loose; which, being young and mettlesome, ran directly home. The *farmer* complained to the *justice of the peace*. The accusation and defence being heard, his *worship* admonished *Sam* in these terms: “If the *farmer* erred in tying his horse across the footway, you had no right to judge of the laws, and at the same time to execute them at *your* pleasure. If the *horse*

is lost, you will be subject to pay for him: but if you had been possessed of a right of clearing the way, I should *blush* for you, or any man who might commit such an act of *tyranny* and *ill-nature*. If I had now a *right* to have you *hanged*, do you think I should condemn you to death for such an offence? Indeed, my friend, you should have considered, that it was a great convenience to the farmer, who had *no servant*, nor any other means of securing his horse. Any man may be in the same situation. You might conclude, that the *horse* would not remain there long as a nuisance; and where had been the *evil*, if you had lifted up the bridle-rein, and gone under it, or passed behind the horse at a safe distance? As the case stands, I think, the least I can recommend to you, is to pay for the use of a horse, to convey the farmer home.”—*Sam* seeing that, under a notion of *right*, he had done *wrong*, out of respect to his worship, acquiesced, but he insisted at the same time, that the farmer had no right to stop the way.

D. This was a *good-natured* decision on the part of his worship.

F. We often find, that these violent assertors of *right*, are violent *oppressors*, and promoters of *wrong*.—Another incident has lately happened. A trespass and theft were committed a few days since, in one of the 'squire's *turnip fields*. He apprehended *two boys* in the fact. Thinking it improper to release them at once, lest it should afford a bad example; and not chusing to be a judge in his own cause, he took them before Sir *George Friendly*. Sir *George* asked *who sent them into the field*: they said *their father sent them*, and confessed the fact, of which they were accused; but begged with tears that *they* might be punished, and *not their father*, for they were sure he meant *no harm*: that he was very poor, and had many children to feed. The father being sent for, with big drops gushing from his eyes, said it was true; pleading, that *he thought* the coming-in for a small share with the *beasts of the field*, would not be deemed an *offence*; since it was for the use of his *children*, whom he had endeavoured by all possible means to keep from *starving*. He appealed to his neighbours if he had not laboured hard at his trade as a *journeyman wheelwright*, and occasionally a hedger and ditcher. When this poor man talked of *coming-in for a share with the beasts of the field*, and appeared to his neighbour for his industry and poverty,

poverty, the 'squire, I observed, let fall a tear. Sir George was also visibly affected, and asked the 'squire if he required any *commitment*. He answered, None; provided the man would beg pardon of Sir George, as a magistrate on the seat of justice, for offending against the laws of the land; and ask forgiveness of God, for this act of *thievery*; and promise never to send his children again on errands of this kind; lest from such a beginning, they should come to the gallows.—All which being done with due formality, the 'squire added, "And now, friend, as I perceive your poverty is great, and your family large, you must make me another promise; that you will come to *me*, whenever you are in *distress*; and acquaint me with your situation; and how you *employ* your children, that if necessary I may provide suitable labour for them. In the mean time, if you will apply to my *gardener* every *morning*, I will order him to supply you with a proper quantity of turnips for the use of yourself and children, as long as I think proper."

D. It makes one weep to think how the distresses of one part of mankind tempt them to wickedness, whilst others are led into pride and cruelty, and the evils which follow them by means of their abundance. But what you have mentioned, to the honour of *good-nature*, seems to partake more of *Christian charity*.

F. It is sometimes difficult to draw the line between *good-nature* and *benevolence*: both may be considered, in some measure, as happy effects of constitution, yet seldom prevailing in any distinguished degree, without a sense of *moral virtue*; which, in a *Christian's* mind, grows into *charity*. As I know the men, I carry *Sam's* behaviour to the want of *good-nature*; and the 'squire's to the exercise of it.

D. *Good-nature* then is the best friend that virtue has, except *religion*.

F. Whatever is carried to the account of temper or constitution, *good-nature* should, I think, be considered as a *moral virtue*; which if it were universally cultivated, would relieve us from more than half the miseries human life is subject to. If the 'squire had acted like *Sam*, the consequence must have been, that the poor wheelwright and his children being plunged into a prison, the *public* would have lost, for a time, the fruits of the poor man's industry: the *parish* had been heavily taxed for the support of his children: the 'squire, instead of being held in

the highest veneration for this little act of humanity, would have been regarded as a *monster of cruelty*; and probably his fields been pillaged, by way of reprisal, of *ten times* the quantity of turnips which he gave to this poor man. This might have occasioned some persons being apprehended, if not *transported*, and more misery have ensued. Thus do events, whether in *good* or *evil*, hang on each other, like the links of a chain; giving proof of the *Providence* that governs all things; and how *moral good* produces *good*; and *immorality* generates *evil*.—In this case, the man went away so thoroughly contented with the *tenderness* of his sentence, though surrounded by *misery*, he could not then have received a comfort more complete, nor a greater spur to industry, seeing that his circumstances were not desperate.

D. What a pleasure to relieve him "whose name was written in *four misfortune's* book;" and who for so small a boon could rejoice so greatly.

F. It is the property of *mercy* to create *joy*. The most *merciful man* is, in one sense, the most voluptuous. The occasion warranted the screening an offender from *rigid justice*: and this rational condemnation at the same time afforded such aid, as preserved him from the like offence. *O my daughter!* little do many know, how *easily* they might save a fellow-creature from the *bitterest pangs of sore distress*, by the mere "parings of their fortunes;" or half the value of what a *pampered horse* consumeth in a day.—From this story you may learn another lesson. You see what lengths a *parent* will go to preserve his *children*; and how nature teaches us lessons of love for a *father* and a *mother*. Without instruction, or *foreign aid*, nature secretly dictates to the hearts of children the tenderness and veneration they ought to have for parents. It is only vanity or wickedness which makes them forgetful or negligent.

D. Though we owe them every thing, we are not always sensible of our *obligation*, or have not virtue enough to comply with it.

F. It would be happy indeed, if all children knew their duty, and practised it. Even a heathen could say, "Those who honour their father and their mother through their whole lives, are cherished by the gods, before and after their death: On the contrary, the contempt of parents is one of those sins the most detestable among mortals, and which the gods condemn and chastise, both in life and death."

D. Was

*F.* Was this opinion received among heathens! We know that with *Jews* and *Christians* it is the condition of living in *peace*, and dying in *hopes of heaven*, as the reward of obedience. Our love for earthly parents is the best proof of our obedience and love towards *the only true God*, the father of mankind. Every thing that is honest and praise-worthy, we are bound to perform; and every thing that is dishonest and disgraceful, to avoid, as it respects *their* pleasure and preservation.

*D.* But if it should happen that we are commanded to do a wrong thing?—

*F.* We are to avoid it; still shewing a *respect*, and without rejecting it in the manner of *contempt*. The father of a certain judge, in a cause which concerned him, *ordered* his son to give judgment *contrary to the laws*. “*My dear father,*” says he, “you taught me from my infancy to submit to the laws; and I will even now obey *you*, in resolving *not to violate them*.”

*D.* It would be a hard case indeed, to be commanded by a parent to do *injustice*.

*F.* You see, in the case of the two poor boys, pilferers of turnips, who were not arrived at an

age to judge for themselves, or had received no instruction, the *crime* was the less atrocious: and children, under such circumstances, might be easily betrayed into guilt: but you see they had the manly, generous resolution to desire to suffer in their own persons, rather than their father should be punished. The *'squire* and his *worship* were very sensible of this: and the tears of the children in behalf of the parent, rendered the *scene* very affecting to them who were seated on the bench of justice.

*D.* I perceive how *virtue* and *happiness* are linked together. A magistrate, in such cases, has a difficult part to act.

*F.* He is to do, not only what the *laws*, but also what his *reason* dictates. He can soften the rigour of law by his *advice*, remembering that an extreme in doing justice, borders on the *extreme of injustice*; and we can hardly do an action which clashes with *humanity*, but others of the same kind will follow it. Our *good* actions are attended with no less *happy* effects; and never pass without their reward, at least in the satisfaction we feel in our own breast.

## CONVERSATION VII.

*Mr. Heartwell presents his son with verses descriptive of man in his corrupted state, yet believing in revelation. His advice to his son for his conduct in matrimony; with rules which he recommends in the choice of a wife. The importance of chastity to a religious life. The happy effects of good advice on the young man.*

*F.* I Should have told you, that before *Mr. Heartwell* parted with his son, he gave him some lines in poetry, part of a piece he had picked up, which he thought very much to the purpose of his conversation with the *young tempter*; it being justly, though poetically descriptive of the condition of man in his corrupted state, yet wise enough to believe in revelation.

*D.* I should be glad to see it.

*F.* Here it is.

VOL. II.

“Around me rush the thinking, thoughtless crew,  
And each bewild'rd, diff'rent paths pursue.  
Of them I ask the way: the first replies,  
*Thou art a god*; and sends me to the skies.  
The next, *Down on this turf, thou two-legg'd  
beast*;  
*There fix thy let, thy bliss, and endless rest.*  
Between these wide extremes, the length is  
such,

I find I know too little, or too much.

I i i

“*Al-*

" Almighty Power, take not thyself away,  
 " But break into my soul with perfect day!"  
 This said, expanded lay the sacred text,  
 The balm, the light, the guide of souls confess.  
 Thus the benighted traveller, that strays  
 Thro' doubtful paths, enjoys the morning rays;  
 The nightly mist and thick-descending dew  
 Parting, unfold the fields and vaulted blue.  
 O Truth divine! enlighten'd by thy ray,  
 I darkly guess no more, but see my way.  
 Thou clear'dst the secret of my high descent,  
 And shew'dst me what those mystic tokens meant.  
 Marks of my birth which I had worn in vain,  
 Too hard for worldly fages to explain.  
 Zeno's were vain; vain Epicurus' schemes;  
 Their systems false; delusive were their dreams.  
 Unskill'd my two-fold nature to divide,  
 One nurs'd by pleasure, and one nurs'd by pride.  
 Those jarring truths which human art beguile,  
 Thy sacred page thus bids me reconcile:  
 Offspring of God! no less thy pedigree,  
 What thou once wert, art now, and still may be, }  
 Thy God alone can tell, alone decree!  
 Faultless thou dropt, from his unerring skill,  
 With the bare pow'r to sin, since free of will;  
 Yet charge not with thy guilt, his bounteous love;  
 For who has power to walk, has power to rove:  
 Who acts by force impell'd, can nought deserve:  
 And wisdom short of infinite, may swerve.  
 Tho' by foul guilt thy heavenly form defac'd,  
 In nature chang'd, from happy mansions chas'd,  
 Thou still retain'st some sparks of heavenly fire,  
 Too faint to mount, yet restless to aspire.  
 Angel enough to seek thy bliss again;  
 And brute enough to make thy search in vain.  
 The creatures now withdraw their kindly use,  
 Some fly thee, some torment, and some seduce.  
 Repast ill-suited to such different guests;  
 For what thy sense desires, thy soul distastes.  
 Thy lust, thy curiosity, thy pride,  
 Curb'd or deferr'd, or balk'd, or gratify'd,  
 Rage on, and make thee equally unblest'd  
 In what thou want'st, and what thou hast  
 possess'd.  
 In vain thou hop'st for bliss, on this poor clod;  
 Return and seek thy Father and thy God:  
 Think not thou can'st regain thy native sky  
 Borne on the wings of vain philosophy.  
 Mysterious passage! hid from human eyes:  
 Soaring you'll sink, and sinking you will rise.  
 Let humble thoughts your wary footsteps guide,  
 Regain by neckness, what you lost by pride."

D. An admirable picture of man; and of man unhappy on any but the *Christian* plan. The author of these lines was surely a *Christian* himself.

F. He seems to have understood more of human nature than the greater part of our poets. I have often lamented that poets do not employ their pens more on the subject of their own religion and manners, and less on the manners of the *heathens* and *profane writers*. It is remarkable, whilst so many pens of *Christians* are employed in making comments, in prose and verse, on the writings of *heathens*, and the absurdities of *heathenism*; a *heathen* who had more sense than his neighbours, condemns the credulity of his time, by observing, that it were better not to believe in any God, than to ascribe to their *deities*, as they generally did, vices shameful to human nature. Whatever the *young templar* might imagine, it is obvious that after the appearance of *Christ* in the world, the sentiments of many *heathens* seem'd to be cast in a different mould: their understandings were more enlarged; though they were arriv'd at the happy possession of *Christianity*, only by a distant influence.

D. If religion depends upon what men do, as well as what they say, we may venture to judge what they are from their practice.

F. Much misery there will be; but we generally find it to be the effect of disregard to the precepts of *Christianity*.

D. The conduct of the poor wheelwright and his sons, has turned my thoughts on the miseries which sometimes attend on wedlock.

F. You mean with regard to a provision for children. In this you may easily mistake; for wives and children are the best security to the state, of the good conduct of a subject: and you will not often find married men such reprobates as those that are not married. Nor will you discover that the misery generally cleaves to those who, following the dictates of affection, and the preservation of the piety towards God, marry. If evil sometimes grows out of wedlock; is it not also the root of all good? Whence come the blessing of children, and childrens children? Were it not for marriage, whether in high life or low, the religion of *Christ* would soon be laid waste. The wheelwright's case was distressful: but it seems to be more the effect of his ignorance, or his pride, than his wants; for if he had made them known, in

a proper manner, the event seems to prove he would have been relieved. Rarely shall we find the righteous begging their bread!

*D.* All this I believe to be true, in a degree: but it supposes more *virtue*, or more mercy in the world, than is always found. Among the many excellent admonitions which Mr. *Heartwell* gave his son, did he say any thing to *him* on the subject of *matrimony*? If I mistake not, the young man is now above twenty-three years of age.

*F.* He did not forget this part: he spoke to this effect: "You will naturally court the society of women, with a greater or less inclination towards them; and you may find it difficult to guard your *weakness*, with respect to them. If they are not agreeable, they become *insipid*; and if they are pleasing, *dangerous*. To teach the affections to know their boundaries, is not an easy task. While you continue *single*, I shall distrust your *strength*. "Keep your heart with all diligence, my son; for out of it are the issues of life." If you would live so as to resign your breath cheerfully when your hour comes, keep your eyes chastised, and avoid all incitements to irregular desires. Instead of giving your heart a bias to the side of *appetite*, as the common practice is, consider *chastity* as your glory. You have too much sense to regard the ridicule of *fools*, but as a proof of their folly. What they think so lightly of, is equally essential to the dignity of man, as a rational creature; and the sublime hopes he is born to, as a *Christian*: Judge of this from the propensity you see in men, to *animal gratifications*. The *poet* has beautifully expressed this thought, in the lines I have given you. *Chastity* will secure your peace in the day of *trouble*. The consciousness that you endeavour to war against your corruption, and obey the will of God, will cheer your heart, when the children of incontinence, lowering themselves to the rank of *brutes*, become callous to religious impressions; and have nothing but repentance or misery before their eyes. Be as pure, in the sight of Heaven, as *so corrupt a creature as man can be*. Trust me, my son, it will render your life more pleasant, and your days more joyful, than any criminal indulgence, the desire of which increases with the gratification of it, can possibly afford you. Forget not that the absence of *pain* is *pleasure*; and be contented. Where there is the least danger from

active pursuits, avoid them. Halt not between *virtue* and *vice*, but *determine boldly*, by the aid of Heaven, to act a *consistent part*. In virtue alone is the true pleasure which you seek: the pleasure that will give a foretaste of heaven's joys. This only is the feast which never cloy. Mark well my words: if you try the effects of a *contrary conduct*, you will find my prediction verified at a sad cost: Your vessel will be set in shoals, and every wave of passion will threaten the total loss of it. Consider what a shame it is for a man to make *no good resolutions*; or not to keep them when he has made them! If your *life* gives a lie to your *principles*, you will doubt concerning your *future condition*, and this will be a perpetual thorn in your side. After the education I have given you, I think it is not probable any *infidel* thoughts will invade you, to create a doubt, whether there be any *future state* or not. This belongs to those who live so as to make them hope there may be none. Vice can do *this*: and it is the only wages which *sin* can pay. You must be sensible of the miserable state it puts a man in: It sets him afloat in a *troubled sea*, and oftentimes involves him in the horrors of wrecks and despair. —Now, *my son*, let me beg that one poor half-hour of your time, in every day, may be devoted to the remembrance of your dear *father* and your *friend*! —In every conflict of your mind, suppose that I am *present*, urging you to take the *virtuous* side. Whatever *fiery voice* may invite you to sin, do no *injustice to your soul*; and your heart will make a truer report what justice to it, is, than seven watchmen on high towers. You will find my advice the more necessary, when you converse with those whose words are unguarded; as if they meant to throw down the barriers of chastity." —Thus did the old gentleman harangue, and plead the cause of virtue with his beloved son.

*D.* His advice was a proof of the sincerity of his love. I observe, however, that whilst he counsels his son to *marry*, he entertains no very advantageous sentiments of the conversation of *women*.

*F.* You mistake: it is the weakness of *men* which he seems to entertain so strong a suspicion of.

*D.* But if his son was not to converse with *women*, how was he to *choose a wife*?

*F.* We are not to understand his advice in so rigid a sense. You may be assured he will see women, and *hear* them too; for in this age they are rather fond of being *seen* and *heard* too much. Mr. *Heartwell* urged very strongly to his son, that it would be one of his greatest securities to marry *early*, provided he could do it with propriety. “I think,” said he, “it will keep you the more to your *study*; and your *health*, as well as your *morals*, will be the less in danger. For my own part, I have endeavoured to observe these rules.

1. That the love of society is as essential to our obedience of divine laws, as to our temporal happiness.

2. That marriage is not the less sacred an institution, from the mode being of *human contrivance*: but calculated for the true end of human happiness, with respect to the *animal*, as well as the *intellectual* part of man.

3. That it is not the love of beauty in a woman, which a father can recommend to his son as the first object.

4. That before a man engages in such a contract, he should be *careful*, that the intended partner in his joys be well informed, that *taking any thing for better or worse, is taking it for worse*, in point of age: yet in this engagement we may *refine* and consider *too much*, as well as *too little*.

5. That a man should inform himself well of the parentage, connections, and temper of a woman he means to marry; and particularly if she be of a *proud* or *humble* cast of thought.

6. That she should understand he will defend her, even *against herself*, by refusing all such requests as he knows to be productive of evil to his fortune, his reputation, his quiet: and in the greatest height of his tenderness, he should give this exalted proof of a *reasonable love*.

7. That false expectations produce real misery.

8. That this business being well conducted, it may fill the sails of life with a happy gale, and make the voyage prosperous; otherwise it may be expected the vessel will run on shallows, if it be not *wrecked*.

9. That courtships with us are on a liberal social plan. We take partners in our joys and sorrows, and the more exalted gratifications of our rational nature: though *Mahometans* seem to think of little more than to please their *senses*.

10. That the wife learn how to fill up the cha-

acter of a husband, a father, a good subject, and a friend to human kind, every step in life being graceful; every thought comfortable; and every hope of the *future* giving a pleasing zest to *present enjoyments*.—“These are my rules; and I advise you to follow them. In the mean while, indulge a mean opinion of no one. Allow for the imperfections of human nature; and strive to inspire those sentiments in which the excellency of your nature consists. This seems to be the *readiest way* to teach others; and the *happiest mode* of learning how to *think*, and how to cultivate that love for the human race, which is the characteristic of *Christian charity*, the bond of peace and of all virtues. This will fortify your mind for trials of every kind; and, whatever the events of your life may be, lead you into the stronger trust in the great Ruler of the world: for be assured there is an over-ruling Providence that governs the affairs of men; and that nothing in our religion is hostile to man, to incline any one, in his right senses, to believe it is not of a divine original. It is *divinely friendly*, though *conditional*.”—Thus he spoke. The old gentleman, *Mary*, loves his son, as much as I do my daughter; and is as anxious that he should acquit himself as a *man of sense* and a *Christian*.

*D.* If he follows such good advice, no woman will be too good for him: but I am afraid there are so many of us deeply dyed in folly, he will not easily find one of a proper complexion for him.

*F.* I hope you will not *refine* too much, for That is not the way to be happy. Mr. *Heartwell* added, “Whatever your fortune shall be, I trust you will act the part of a *wise*, and therefore a *good man*: and let the *king of terrors* come when he will, be in a right disposition to receive him as a *friend*, rather than as an *enemy*: he certainly *will come*, and as certainly appear as a *friend* or a *foe*, as your life shall be virtuous, or vicious!”—

*D.* He reasons well: he is a *good father*: and I hope the young man will be as *good a son*.

*F.* He has a very high reputation, and as far as I can learn, worships God with the utmost sincerity of heart. He hath a deep sense of the existence of a *supreme Being*, and a constant remembrance of his obligations to probity and candour, with all the justice and mercy which is most graceful in the character of a *man*;

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and it receives the brighter lustre in one, whose profession is to plead for *justice* and *mercy*. This gives a peculiar energy and persuasion to all his arguments. He is heard with more attention at the bar, than any young man of his age, particularly in the court of *chancery*, where he is called, *the upright young counsellor*. This is the effect of a sober education, and the advice of a *good father*, without which he could not have been able to judge of things so fairly and impartially. You recollect that he advises his son, till he should acquire *EXPERIENCE*, to consult those who have lived longer than himself.

And I can tell you, *Mary*, that if *you* do not observe the same rule, you will find yourself involved in *horrible difficulties*.—You will be but little in the world, compared to this young gentleman; and you will be subject to a mistress; otherwise your danger, with regard to your sex, would be so much greater than his.

*D.* I will endeavour to plead my own cause, and guard my own person against the evils to which I may be subject; and to this purpose consult the *wife* on all fit occasions, not despising my own strength, nor yet trusting to it wantonly, still appealing to Heaven for protection.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N VIII.

*The advantages of experience. Fable of the swallow and other birds. The time to come differs in nothing from the time past. The ruling passion of men constitutes their chief folly. Humility essential to virtue. Excessive laughter a token of weakness. The characters of folly. Precautions to avoid it.*

*F.* EVILS will come! When they happen to you, examine candidly and fairly from what cause they most probably arise. You do not expect to find good fruit on the tree which is generally known to produce That which is *very bad*. Corrupt hearts will bring forth corrupt *words*, and corrupt *deeds*. If you learn the *cause* of the evil, you may the more easily avoid the *effects* of it.

*D.* The common proverb is, “he that is *warned*, is half *armed*.” But will *experience* always avail us to ward off danger?

*F.* Not always: for the events of life do not always correspond with each other: but you should remember, how much better it is to learn from the misfortunes of other people, to which you are not accessory, than from your own: and if *experience* may teach a fool, the *wife* will certainly learn how to take advantage of it, and profit by *all events*. Things are wonderful to those who are unacquainted with them; but there is nothing so wonderful, as that men who have lived long, should wonder at any thing. We come into the world as ignorant of the affairs of men, as the *brute beasts* can be; but in our social nature, and commerce with beings like ourselves, we pick up knowledge by won-

derful degrees. The *infant*, before he can well articulate sounds, enquires, “*What is that?*” or in other words, *what is the use of the thing which presents itself to his sight?* and he rejoices greatly to be informed. It is extremely curious to observe, how impatient some children become, when they are told what they already know, or imagine themselves to be acquainted with. This may be considered as one of the earliest discoveries of the *pride of human nature*. As they grow up, of course they learn every day; some having very quick parts, discover, at a very early age, that they are better acquainted with certain objects than others, with whom they associate, though these may be much farther advanced in life. Thus they fondly imagine themselves to be *above instruction*. Imperfect knowledge generates pride; and the *humility* which *ignorant* and *dependent* creatures ought always to cherish, being neglected or laid waste, from hence arises That impatience of control; That arrogance and self-sufficiency which betrays so many into ruin. As a punishment of their pride, they often take the reins of self-government into their own hands, when by every law of *reason* and *religion*, they should be *ruled* and *guided* by others. *Experience* is of such vast

moment

ment, that a *fool* may give a *wife* man counsel in things he is acquainted with. Experience is the parent of knowledge: And the *wife* man says, "Much experience is the crown of *old men*, and the fear of God, their glory."

*D.* This seems to teach that the greater our experience is, the more we shall fear God. As to pride, if we are not on our guard, it will show itself in every part of life.

*E.* We live to little purpose if we do not oppose our pride. *Observation, good sense, and virtue*, often lead the young who conduct themselves with propriety; when some aged persons behave worse than *children*. It is no uncommon fault with some to receive no *correction*, but what they derive from their own *experience*, which is frequently very fatal to them.

*D.* The young seem to be *bolder* than the aged.

*E.* Therefore they *imagine* they know better what ground they tread upon. But it is because they know less, that they are often bold and *boldly*; their curiosity or their vanity excites them to undertake enterprizes to which they are not equal: either of these qualities often prove destructive to those who are governed by them. The fable of the *swallow and other birds*, is a caution to the unexperienced. The *swallow* observed the fowling of *hemp*, and knowing that nets to catch birds were made of this material, recommended to them to pick up the seeds before they had taken root; but they either did not believe the *swallow*, or carelessly disregarded his counsel and advice; upon which the *swallow* determined to leave their society in the fields, and go to live in great towns and cities. One day as he was swimming along the streets, he saw a number of those birds imprisoned in a *cage*. "Unhappy wretches!" said he, "you now feel the punishment of your neglect of *my advice*."

*D.* Those who having little or no experience of their own, yet despise the warnings of their aged friends, I believe generally suffer for their *negligence* and *obstinacy*.

*E.* This fable is a picture of life: it is but a small part of mankind who will use such precautions as the wisdom of their instructors suggests to them, till they have *felt the misery* which attends the neglect. Yet we must not conclude rashly; for all of us deserve *evil*; and evil there will be to the end of time: happy are those who have *experienced friends*, and will be guided by

them. *Experience* is best shewn, by correcting the *errors of the past*: and whether we discover these from our *own sufferings*, or by *instruction*; to rectify them truly and fully, is the summit of all earthly happiness. *Errors* creep in upon us; sometimes we call them *infirmities*; sometimes *crimes*; but whatever name we give them, we ought to esteem those as the most happy, who are the *least guilty*; and such are generally the least guilty, who discovering their faults, apply themselves diligently to *prevent* them. Let us husband *time*: if we look back on what hath happened to us for *ten years past*, and consider that *ten years to come*, differ in nothing as to duration or number of hours: if we consider also how *soon all our days* pass away, *and we are gone*; and how uncertain it is, if we shall live *ten years*, or *one year* longer; it seems as if those only who have lost their wits, could indulge themselves in *sin*, on the presumption of *long life*; which is the unhappy case of great numbers of sinners.

*D.* *Ten years*, even in my *short life*, have soon passed away. Observation on the death of others, teaches me how very uncertain my own life is: and therefore I have long since concluded, that those only are wise, who *watch the moments* as they fly.

*E.* Aye, my child; and by *repentance* pay off as much as possible of their debt of guilt; and not *accumulate* it, when their ability to pay is every day *decreasing*. We are agreed, that of all distinctions, the greatest is between the *wife man* and the *fool*: and of all kinds of folly, surely that of *delaying* to make our peace with God, is the most dangerous.

*D.* But people of understanding only are able to mark out the difference with exactness.

*E.* Some fools are easily discovered. A fool generally mistakes *FOLLY* for *wisdom*; and the less wisdom he hath, the less sensible he is of his *want*. Do you not observe, among the *weak*, he is generally the greatest fool, who thinks he *knows most*?

*D.* And is he the *wisest*, who thinks he knows the *least*?

*E.* Those who deserve the name of *wise*, have certainly the most knowledge of themselves; and therefore they are the most diffident of their own strength: they are always *learning something*: even from *fools* they receive instruction. They see the *weakness* of the foolish, and avoid it; but  
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the *foolish* cannot discern the *virtues* of the *wife* to imitate them. For the same reason, the most knowing are always the least exalted in their own conceit, from this consideration, that they are *conscious* of acting *foolishly* on many occasions. The patron of wisdom advises the *wife*, “not to speak in the ears of a *fool*,” for this reason, that he will “despise the wisdom of their words.”

D. One mark of folly I have learnt: “The *fool* listeth up his voice with laughter; but the *wise* man scarce *smileth* a little.” And I have observed, that the weakest of my acquaintance, are the *loudest* and the *longest* laughers.

F. You may remark, that *painters* describe a *fool* laughing; yet laughter is peculiar to *man*, as distinguished from other animals; and it constitutes a characteristical mark, as stamped on individuals. The wisest of mortals, being of a merry heart, I believe, *occasionally laugh*: but it is said, by some historians, that our *Saviour* was never seen to *laugh*.

D. It doth not seem probable that *he* should have ever laughed, for reasons which naturally strike the mind of every one who considers his dignity.

F. Among common mortals a man’s *ruling passion*, and his *weak side*, generally mean the same thing: *excessive mirth* is but another name for *folly*. One may venture to say there is, in the composition of human nature, more of the *foolish*, than of the *wise*; and those circumstances by which the foolish part is taken, generally act the most forcibly. In the *scripture sense*, all wickedness is *folly*; and in *common-sense*, most foolish things partake of *wickedness*; as all actions, very foreign to reason, favour of *insanity*.

D. Yet you will allow, that there are many *weak* people who cannot with propriety be distinguished as *wicked* people.

F. It is sometimes difficult to draw the line between *weakness* and *perversefulness*: but the perverse, who are bent on evil, are the greatest disgrace to human nature.

D. The *wife* seem to discover the *foolish* more

easily, than they *guard* themselves against the dangers and inconveniences which folly creates.

F. Aye, *Mary*: we often *see* the *folly*, and *suffer* by it, when we might, and sometimes when we cannot avoid it; and yet pass for wise persons.

D. What notions have you of *idots*?

F. Not such as I once told you the *Turks* entertain. It is said, they imagine *idots* are *inspired*: a conceit, which by no means proves them to penetrate very deep into the soul. I consider *idots* as untimely births; not *perfect* as men, though bearing the *figure*. *Idiotism* may also be occasioned by the carelessness of a nurse; an unfortunate blow; or other accident; against which we should guard and pray on the behalf of our children.

D. It is an accident also, when men are born *fools*. The wise man says, “He that begetteth a fool, doth it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.”

F. This is true both of those who are born *idots*, and of fools of their own making.

D. The patron of wisdom also adds, “If thou wilt walk with the wise, thou shalt be wise; but if thou art a *companion of fools*, thou shalt be *destroyed*.”

F. You perceive from your own experience, almost every day, as well as from books, how dangerous it is to keep *bad company*. Do you, my daughter, shun the children of folly, that you may not share in their guilt, or cause me to wash my hoary face with tears. If by accident you should at any time fall into *bad company*, retreat with speed; and throw not your pearls before swine. Hazard an affront, rather than join in a prophane jest, or in any indecent behaviour; both which are in themselves affronts. At the same time forget not, that for the very reason a man is a *fool*, it is dangerous to provoke him. You may likewise observe, that in many parts of life, folly has marks of *madness*. While it is necessary to shun the folly, it may excite our compassion; from the same motives that wisdom naturally claims our love and veneration.

## CONVERSATION IX.

*Observations on sleep. The father's moral and religious admonition to his daughter, preparing to leave him. The distinctions of pleasure and pain. Rules for a moral and religious conduct through life. The advantages of faith. Parsimony of parting with friends. The advantages of good habits. Vice destroys the beauty of life and manners. The importance of considering death as a relief from all pains and sorrows.*

F. **I**T takes up a great portion of the time allotted to us poor mortals: Yet while we breathe this vital air, nothing contributes so much to the preservation of our happiness, with respect to health: the want of it, is misery and decay. Sleep is the grand restorative of life. Your good mistress is *regular* in all her steps; but you will find the habits of the people in *London* are exceedingly *irregular*. The manner of living is more dissipated: the *frivolous* business of life is seldom conducted so as to persuade one the people delight in it. They live too much in a hurry to be *at rest*. Their chief diversions in the winter, are at night; and many of these, as I once told you, are carried to the *next morning*, even to day-light; breaking rest; disturbing the tranquillity of the mind; and, if I may venture to judge, creating such an interruption of devotion, that many seem to have *no time* to pray. Nature requires sleep in the same manner, and strength of importunity, as she craves *food*; as both are good only in the degree: the excess destroys. I am persuaded that many die of *much sleeping*, as well as of *much eating*: both tend to weaken the vigour of the mind. *Six, seven, or eight* hours, as experience may teach you to be most proper, or as *age* or *infirmities* may render necessary, are sufficient for rest; and even this takes up at least from a quarter to a third part of life. To provoke to sleep by *intemperance*, or indulging of drowsiness *in bed, or out of it*, for more hours than the proper time, is grossly offensive to *nature*. All provocatives to animal gratifications, tend to weaken and destroy the body: And among these, sleep is as hurtful as most others.

D. Let the people *sleep* or *disquiet* themselves as they please in *town*, I hope the maxims I have learnt in the *country*, will become so much a part of my very soul, I shall not be able to neglect them, without forsaking myself.

F. Well spoken, *Mary*: but, my dear child! consider a little what you have said. Habits generally grow out of *examples*; and from the same root they are *nourished*. Men often become *slaves*, without reflecting on the *tyranny of custom*.

D. After so much instruction as you have given me, I should feel my heart doubly heavy with the thought of parting, were I, not only to lose you, but also the effects of your admonition.

F. Continue the same sense of duty. Store up my instructions in your heart; and read the books I have given you. Parting is one of the most common trials which mortals undergo. The time will come, and is near at hand, when we must part with *all* our eyes delight to see; and go to render an account to our tremendous Judge! Tremendous, yet infinite in mercy! In That day, where shall we look for *comfort*; and whom shall we call to our assistance? Your parting friends can have nothing but tears and sighs to give you. Happy is the man whose trust hath constantly been in his God; who with patience, full of *hope*, waits the coming of his Lord; and observes, with *comfort*, the degrees by which he hastens to his end. It is your *interest* and your *glory*, *Mary*, to lay the foundation of this peace *betimes*, that you may be able to look That day in the face, at which even at a distance, the stoutest heart may tremble. It is not *courage*, but *folly*, to decline the thoughts

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of death, since our future state of happiness or misery depends on our dying the death of the righteous. And were we sure of nothing else in consequence of our *faith* and *obedience*, but to slip quietly out of the world, without suffering the agonies which guilty sinners feel, and no mortal can fully describe, our labour would not be in vain. But since this peace is the forerunner of *eternal joy*; the earnest of future glory and immortality; is it not worth all your pains to deny yourself, in this world, and take up your cross, and follow *Christ*, labouring to do the *whole will of God*; to inherit the peace which belongs to those, and those only, who see the excellency of the law of the *Most High*, and truly delight in it?

D. I am perfectly satisfied, if the trial of life is *pain*, and this is sometimes impossible to be avoided, yet if it quickens my pace to my *proper home*, the *land of promise*, where there is no pain nor sorrow; in this sense pain itself ceases to be *evil* to me.

F. Our danger is not from *pain*, but *pleasure*; the pleasure which flows from the corruption of the heart, when the spring is tainted: Resist this, and you will obtain a victory over the world. Behold the kindness of the *great Author of our nature*! The pain of resistance, even to *death*, becomes the greatest pleasure, and should be considered as the highest gratification to our *better part*.

D. Even to death!—*Death* is terrible to most of the children of men.

F. Aye; but it is made so by *sin*. To the *virtuous* it is but a small interruption of life; a period of time shorter than our usual sleep. It is appointed by infinite *mercy* and *wisdom*: therefore, however it may appear to *cowards*, *infidels*, or *careless liver*s, in the issue it is no *evil*; it is a *good*.

D. But death we can suffer but once: the pain of resisting pleasure we may suffer every day.

F. Death is therefore eligible, when it comes, on this very account. But if the indulgence of *pleasure* causes everlasting pain, is not this the greatest of all evils? Are you not sensible, that pain in the body or the imagination, which vexes and troubles the soul, ceases to be *evil*, when we convert it to *good*. Experience will teach you also, that for every *false* pleasure you banish from your heart, a *true* one will take its place. Ac-

cording to this habit, and a judicious turn of thought, *health* is a greater pleasure to *him*, than the highest feast of the *lusts* can be to others; and *solings* is less afflictive to *him*, than *trifling disappointments* to others. Pray for *resolution* to maintain your integrity against *want*: and fly from it as from an enemy. *Vicious thoughts* are a perpetual *lively fever*; and *vicious ones*, at best a *delicious prison*. You know the Christian doctrine requires of us to suffer with a graceful resignation to the will of *Him* who governs all things: and I desire you to consider what his will is.

*Some slope or other*, is the unavoidable lot of one who comes into the world. Suffering, which arises from *self-doubt*, is a *selfish necessity*, and if I may be allowed to say it, is *the highest pleasure*: The reflection, that it may procure a more exceeding weight of glory, may even lighten the heart. Seek for the *glory*, my child, which is not to last *for the day*, and like the pleasures of this world, vanish before you can grasp them, but *for ever*; through *time*, and through *eternity*!

—You are made to last *for ever*; you are an *immortal being*, deriving your existence from the great Creator of all things. You have already begun That existence, which is never to have an end: but it will be *miserable*, if in pursuit of *pleasure* you make it so. It is your duty to rest in sure and certain hope, that if you are agreeably to your true sense of what is *good*, *you will be happy*. The lessons given you by the great prophet who came from God, point out the way to That paradise, to which you are an *heir*. These are not words of *empty speculation*, but *solid truths*; realize them, my child, in your own person, and your work is done.

D. Every one who is a *real Christian*, must be sensible, this is the true state of the case; and the impression *that it is so*, and cannot be otherwise, I trust will remain on my mind, till *hope* is lost in the enjoyment of heaven!

F. Before you have seen half so much of this world as I have done, you will wonder at yourself, and the rest of mankind, how they can *forsake*, or even *neglect*, That *heavenly law*, obedience to which is their *chief good*.

D. The vain expectation of pleasure, to satisfy the *fancy*, or feed the *passion* and corruption of the heart, is ever tempting with a bait to allure.

F. Most certainly: but why do we suffer

ourselves to be *allured* and *softened* by prospects of *uncertain transient delight*, when the experience of the wise points out the fallacy of it; and when we should fortify our minds with such virtues as will support us under every conflict? Why is it, I say, but that we act *foolishly* or *madly*? In the examination of my own heart, I have often thought, that it has not been so much from the *corruption* of it, properly distinguished, as from its *foolishness*, in not considering how the imagination betrays by *lust* or *vanity*, or *pride*: how *anger* dwells in the bosom of *fiends*: how every vice discovers a man's *folly*; and that *irresolution* in not trampling down the evil spirit within us, and by the grace of God subduing it, is of all evils the greatest. It is an equal and consistent conduct which constitutes *wisdom*; the wisdom that *comes from above*, without which man is but a *beast* that perishes.

D. There are *many* degrees in wisdom with respect to the life to come, as there are with regard to this life.

E. As many as there are talents committed to our care, to *use* and *improve*, or *hide* and *neglect*. The omniscient God only can judge of the measure of the guilt of different men.—Live *collected*!—Stand in *awe* and *firm*. Be assured, that “loud *mirth*, or immoderate *ferrow*, inequality of behaviour, either in *prosperity* or *adversity*, are alike ungraceful in man that is born to die.” This was the sentiment of a *heathen* philosopher and poet. And what is it but instruction to be *firm* and *steady*? Reason and common sense are the same in *heathen* and *Christian*; but the *Christian* enjoys a superior lesson, by the *faith* he is bred in, which inspires him with hopes of immortal glory. *Hope* founded in the word of God, will fortify your mind: The precepts contained in your *New Testament*, and the remembrance of the lessons I have given you with such anxious solicitude, I trust will preserve you: yet I say, *beware*! A *healthy* and *prosperous* state of life will render you less abstemious and cautious of your steps, than you ought to be; and in a *sickly*, *unfortunate*, or *adverse* condition, you will be apt to sink and despond.

D. Both these are trials always to be feared, and therefore always to be watched. Under every circumstance, as a *Christian*, I solicit Heaven.

E. Well answered: indulge yourself in nothing that will upbraid you. Be your condition

*good* or *evil*, act as if you knew the value of life, and the great end for which it was given you. Thus you will acquire the higher relish for health, and the greater superiority over *pain* and *pleasure*: you will have the *truest* gratification in every thing *good*. You will learn to *fear nothing but vice*; and *no being but God*. You will be ready to part with every joy, even with *life*: and *death*, as I have been saying, will appear to you only as the more *eligible* kind of life; a cessation from anxiety and care; a retreat from danger; and a consummation of blifs. Remember, *my dear daughter*, that the excellency of our nature consists chiefly in *suffering* after a *right manner*; not to *seek* pain, but not to *avoid* it, when heaven is in our view.—Let me guard you against an enthusiastic spirit: let not your mind be warped with the *vanity* of *unnecessary trials*, nor the *errantry* of *piety*, which some *enthusiasts* have sought; but calmly arm your heart for every encounter; and shrink not when *virtue* shall sternly call you to *trial*. We find the *greatest* and *best* of mankind, in all ages, suffering *heroically*; some few even in *martyrdom*: and the *great Author and Finisher of our faith*, who sits at the right hand of God, was of all others, that ever appeared on the theatre of the world, the most striking instance of *unmerited sufferings*! As his disciple, *follow him*! Follow him *faithfully* in every step: and when I die, give me, my dear child, the *joy* of thinking you will be as an *angel in heaven*; and that I administered, in my humble station on earth, to That virtue which produced so glorious an event. Think of this, I beseech you, every day of your life.

D. My dear father! how shall I express my thoughts on this occasion? My heart was *already*, full of *gratitude* and *filial affection*. Your goodness overwhelms me. May I continue to deserve *your blessing* so long as I shall live; and render my conduct such as will give you a *heavenly* hope and *comfort*, that in my turn I may be instrumental to your everlasting joys in the regions of heavenly glory!

E. Well spoken, my child!—You are going into a scene eligible only from *necessity*: your condition requires it: and turn your face to every part of the compass, you will behold great numbers engaged in *frivolous* or *vicious* pursuits; though I believe there is no character without *some mixture of virtue*. *Eating* and *drinking*, and *talking of eating and drinking*, betrays,

betrays their sensuality and voluptuousness. *Apparel*, and *discoursing on the subject of dress*, discovers the *vanity* of the heart: putting trust in the *great*, and those who are *near the great*, in hopes of being in some degree *great* themselves, adds to the delusion. We may endeavour to mend our worldly condition; but all *gratifications* or *pursuits*, to a degree of anxiety, estranging the heart from God, are of the nature of *madness*.—The greatest part of mankind pass their days in *vanity* or *vexation of spirit*, when they should be preparing themselves, by *temperance* and *fortitude*, and a *mind superior to such indulgences*: they should be learning *justice*, and *judgment*, and *charity* to men's souls, and practising such duties as might render the *earth* an image, though a faint one, of *heaven*! We are indispensably bound by justice to ourselves, to be *prepared* to stand before the judgment-seat of *Christ*! This is the great object. A little observation will convince you, that man is "*like a thing of nought*:" The duration of his present life is so short, as to be of *no signification*, but as a trial for the *life to come*. Do you remember the lines you saw the other day in Sir George's library, on the chamber monument of his favourite poets, *Milton*, *Shakespeare*, and *Pope*? *Milton* says,

"Nor love thy life, nor hate, but what thou livest  
"Live well; how long or short permit to Heaven."

Shakespeare then speaks,

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor play'r  
"That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
"And then is heard no more."——

Sir George then adds, as a contrast to this poetical view of man,

But in thy hands, Almighty Lord of life!  
We see the glories of the mid-day sun,  
In joyful hopes of heav'nly bliss to come.

Then comes the admonition from *Pope*:

"Hope humbly then, with trembling pinions fear;  
"Wait the great teacher death, and God adore."

In his serious way, Sir George then addresses his visitor:

Reader, be this thy strict momentous charge!  
Thy Maker love!—With thine own heart converse;  
And let thy deeds of mercy grace thy heartse.

*D.* This comprehends the history of life, what it is, and what it ought to be. And I trust in the mercies of the God whom I adore, it will please him, that to whatever part of these kingdoms I shall go, as I have the happiness of living in a country where persecution is a stranger, and considered by all sects and parties as an enemy, I shall have no trials above my strength.—

*F.* This is indeed a  *blessing*; and serve you God with so much the greater gratitude and zeal. As a *Christian*, you must in every case *explore*, how you can alleviate the miseries under which one part of mankind is ever languishing; not how you can share in the *prosperity* of so many, whose condition is apt to make them forget the hand from whence the blessing came. Thus will Heaven smile on your *love* and *charity* for your *fellow-creatures*, and in the end *great will be your reward* in That crown, reserved for the true disciples of our Lord.

*D.* I am sensible that so long as my mind is well governed, I shall neither *despise* nor *court* the wealthy above measure; much less be *deaf* to the cries of *miser*; or *blind*, where I have any power to lead the wretched out of danger. I behold some grow *glibly* with a little *good fortune*: These I consider with *compassion*, fearing it may be a suspension of those sorrows, which their *negligence* is collecting for them.

*F.* Such should be the sentiments of every *Christian*: for the *good*, because they are good: for the *evil*, because they may *repent*.—Observe how naturally we admire those most, who amidst the *acute pains* the body is subject to, and the *calamities* incident to human life, maintain their *fortitude*, their *integrity*, their *resignation*, and even their *good humour*, lively, pure, and unstained. Is not this a sight more glorious, more truly comforting to the heart which answers to another's feelings, than the tinsel parade and glitter of *dress*, *equipage*, and all the appendages of *greatness*, *commonly so called*?

*D.* We are all apt to be dazzled by *show*, and to wish to partake of it. But you have taught my heart to chastise its foolishness, and to curb all such longings.

*F.* If your heart does this, you, *Mary*, are not a *fool*. Do you think that he who is blind to *modest sorrow*, or shuns the afflicted, as if they had the plague, is to be imitated in preference to him who rightly understands in what sense "the

house of *mourning* is better than the house of *feasting*?"

D. I understand this as a Christian precept, or moral duty; and I find a more solid delight in affording *comfort*, than in *partaking of festivity*. The latter is but a trifling momentary gratification; a pleasure that leaves no genuine relish of joy: It centers in a *narrow selfishness*, which at best mounts with the warmth of the day, but remains at no degree of *solid happiness*; administering no *good* to the wretched. Nor is it only to those who are *miserable*; but I delight to see all people

happy: and whether they *shew me* any regard, or look down on my low estate, as they may have more or less virtue, or chance may render me their object, still I rejoice to *see* or *bear* that they are *happy*!

F. So far you promote your own happiness, and act agreeably to the true spirit of a *Christian*. Such is the nature of christian *benevolence* or *charity*, that we partake of the prosperous condition of our fellow-creatures; and by compassion worship at the fountain of That mercy from which all glory issues.

## CONVERSATION X.

*Contemplations in a church-yard, recommending attention to religious duties. Reflections on monuments and tomb-stones. The poverty of the unlettered mason, and the shining verses of persons of genius of both sexes, in several monumental inscriptions. The vanity of human life, and the importance of submitting gracefully to the conditions of it.*

F. MANY a time in my boyhood have I climbed up this yew-tree. One would imagine from the largeness of its trunk, now grown so *bulky*, it hath stood many a tempestuous night! Often have I eaten the *berries* which some imagine to be poisonous, and so perhaps they are; but a little poison does not kill. I made myself a seat at the top of it, where I used to read *serious* books. My taste bent me that way.—Well, *Mary*, you and I have ever lived as *friends*: as such we are about to part! I have received the strongest proof of your affection, by your attention to the words of my mouth. To give your mind just and noble impressions of the *religion of Christ*, hath been the study of my life: and a glorious Study I think it. I cannot be the wiser in my own person: it may be hoped I am so much less a sinner than I might have been, had I turned my thoughts to other subjects. To *shew you* how incomparably the example of our great Lord and Master excels all the glory, the eyes of man ever beheld, or his heart conceived, hath been my *ambition*. You know he lived in *poverty* and died in *pain*! Many of his immediate followers suffered after the same manner: *in* this they gloried; and *for* this they are now happy for ever!

They surely find the reward of all their labours here on earth! Let the remembrance teach you to bear *pain* and *misfortunes* with a manly courage. You are now setting out on the journey of life; I hope you will find the road smoother than I have represented it. Think yourself happy when your conscience applauds you: for believe me, the most fortunate among the sons of men, cannot enjoy a more exalted satisfaction.

D. Convinced as I am, that my peace and comfort must arise from my endeavours after *virtue*: and that the greatest evil which can happen to me, is to *forget God*; you may be assured I will beg his assistance, in all fortunes: I will be mindful of him, as the *first*, and *last*, and *greatest* object of my life and happiness.

F. We have had many a serious talk on the *good dispositions* of one part of mankind, and the *bad habits* of another; endeavouring to teach ourselves what belongs to our own condition; how to imitate the best, and avoid the worst. You are not insensible there is a propensity to sin, in all the children of *Adam*: There needs no further messenger from heaven to tell us this. But do we all *really* think, that except we repent we shall perish?

D. When we repent, we find this cut; and then

then we learn that our Father most good and powerful, will hear our prayer.

*F.* You talk like a *Christian*, my child. Go on in the path of virtue: exert your constancy and courage; and you will entertain a well-grounded expectation of assistance from heaven! Rejoice when you are penitent, that your *sorrow* may be turned into *joy*: and be *penitent*, that you may rejoice. Learn of St. Paul to reason: "If God spared not *his own son*, but delivered him up for us *all*, how will he not, with *him* also, freely give us *all things*?" Is not this an argument, that the *weakest* may understand; and which the *wisest* must acknowledge to carry irresistible force?

*D.* It would be too strong to be resisted; and, if our minds were less enslaved, too pleasing not to be cherished in our bosoms.

*F.* I must warn you against two sorts of people who equally puzzle the cause of religion. That *virtue* has a *natural* right to reward, is one of the clearest dictates of common sense; and upon this principle, you will hear the *gay* part of the *delegant world* declaim, and even laugh all those to scorn, who depreciate their own *works*, and refer themselves entirely to the merits of *Christ* and his blood, in which only, they say, is any efficacy. The *first* lay *too great*, the *last* *too little stress* upon their *good deeds*, and *good intentions*.

*D.* What would you infer from thence?

*F.* That we should form a true notion of our state; and consider the *fallen condition* of man! "Virtue and morality may, in their own nature, and in themselves considered, deserve reward from a just and righteous Being; and yet the *virtue* and *morality* of *man*, or in other words, *man*, though virtuous and moral, may not *deserve* it."

*D.* Surely he cannot *claim* a title to it.

*F.* If by the favour and mercy of God, it is *given* him, let his gratitude and joy swell the higher. This doth not check our *hopes*, but it restrains our *presumption*; and whilst it nourishes That *humility* which is so grateful to heaven, it starves the *pride* which was the crime of the fallen angels.

*D.* If man hath offended his Maker, even to the degree that almighty justice demanded a sacrifice of That blood, the merits of which is the object in question, we cannot *claim* a reward at his hands: it must be his *free gift*.

*F.* You perfectly conceive the thing, and

therefore will guard against the *presumption* of *infinite*, who understand the matter *imperfectly*; and the *terrors of the other*, who are apt to represent the Almighty, arrayed only in the majesty of justice and severity. Those who wantonly depreciate themselves, and their own deeds, talk as if *natural* obligations, or even *charity*, were not the essence of *true religion*. Such is the extravagancy to which they sometime carry *their system*! At the same time, we are to recollect That passage, wherein it is said by the Son of God, suppling the heart pure, and intention upright; that he will accept of our mercy towards our fellow-creatures, as shewn to himself. "I was an *hungered* and ye gave me meat; I was *thirsty* and ye gave me drink; I was a *stranger* and ye took me in; *naked* and ye clothed me; I was *sick* and ye visited me; I was in *prison* and ye came unto me." And what is the conclusion? When he shall come again, clothed in tremendous glory, to judge both the living and the dead, *he* will say, "Come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

*D.* For that day will I look!

*F.* My request to you is, that as often as the day *begins* and *ends*, you will not barely *say your prayers*, but *pray*. Strive to preserve your mind undisturbed by passion; unruffled by any proud, vain, angry, or vicious thought; that your heart may be ready at all times, to be offered at the altar of pure devotion; remembering, that it is not the number of days, which are allotted us for travelling through life, which we must attend to, for these are *uncertain*; but that our great object is to live prepared for *eternity*!—Whilst you remember *God*, I think you will not forget *me*. Yet I know not how it happens, people of *our* condition have seldom the same sentiments and affections, as those of superior education: if once separated, we are apt to forget our nearest relations by blood, or former endearments.

*D.* Have you found it so in many instances? Never shall I forget the vast debt I owe to you, and which I am in justice and gratitude strictly bound to pay, by all the means in my power! You taught me to write: how can I employ this talent so properly, as in writing to you? You will be glad to hear of my welfare; and I shall rejoice in communicating whatever I may think will give you pleasure or satisfaction.

*F.* Although Heaven seems pleas'd that we should part; I trust we shall never be separated in our love of virtue, while life and thought remain: in this let us be united, beyond the power of time or chance!

*D.* I hope our remembrance of each other, will be as lasting as our lives!

*F.* You are going into a splendid habitation; but you will not forget the heart-felt triumphs you have enjoyed under my humble roof. Home, comfort, and a tender parent's eye, will sometimes be the subjects of your thoughts: cherish them as they rise; they will serve you as a monitor.

*D.* Reflection on the freedom and repose which you enjoy, will remind me of the vanity of greatness and wealth: for however valuable it may be, to such as know how to make a proper use of it, such as do well without it, seem to be in the happiest situation.

*F.* It cannot be enjoyed without vexation! *Excess* and *surfeit*, and every abuse of the kindness of Heaven, create inquietness and anguish of soul, to those who have not totally worn out all sense of *religion*. I trust your mind is now right with God. O my daughter, endeavour to keep yourself in *his* ways! With regard to those who have not had the same advantages as yourself, do not quarrel with them, on this account; nor rashly condemn even the *thoughtless* and *vicious* as irreclaimable: shew them how gentle and persuasive *virtue* is: how much she *mourns* to see them run into destruction! People in higher life, when they presume on a superior fortune, shewing a haughty contempt of others, act a part offensive in the eyes of *men*, as well as in the sight of God: and whilst they injure their own cause, with respect to their good name, they displease their Maker.

*D.* What can recommend us to him but *humility* and *awful fear*?

*F.* If you are *strong*, shew it by your tenderness for the *weak*, and *infirm*; and whether the mind or body be the object, regard your neighbour with an eye of compassion.

*D.* The experience of every one must tell him, that few persons in common life will bear *reproach*, much less *contempt*, without resentment; but tenderness and civility are always pleasant.

*F.* Some will bear reproach; none *submit* to *contempt*: nor strictly speaking is any thing *con-*

*temptible*, but rather the worst things are the subjects for the greatest sorrow.

*D.* I remember the account which *St. Paul* gives of himself, how much he was *all things to all men, that he might win some*: and yet he did not depart from the rules of his great Master; but observed them the more strictly.

*F.* If the passions and affections of mankind have a share in all their decisions, we must recommend virtue, by shewing *compassion* for poor human nature.—Well, *Mary*, when I am dead, you will perchance visit this little hamlet, and meet some of your old friends when they are going to worship God; and you will say, “In this village I first drew my breath:—This is my father's grave!—He was indeed my father, and my friend!—How often have I heard his lessons of religious counsel, and many a pleasing tale of things which he had seen and heard! How eagerly did I listen to them! I trust his soul is in peace; for when he erred, he always seemed to *repent*. He was so careful of me; so *tender* in his love, my heart yet bleeds for my loss. He and his toils; his cares for me; and his sorrows for the *poor*, now are no more! It was but a little farm which he held; but his industry produced a comfortable subsistence for himself and me; and he helped his neighbours also, when they drooped in age, in poverty, or pain. With what pleasure have I seen his harrows break the stubborn glebe, and his bright sickle reap the yellow corn. It was my part to prepare his food, and to welcome his return. Oft have I looked with longing eyes, to see the heavy-topped load come nodding into the barn!”—Thus will your gratitude and filial love, teach you to talk of me.

*D.* Surely it will; and much more shall I say: but alas, my father, your prophecies make me sad!

*F.* *Sad, Mary!*—to think that I shall *die*? Or that you will talk in *praise* of *me*, your father and departed friend? If I die in hope of Heaven's joys, *rejoice*.

*D.* Yet this view of the time to come, swells my heart, and fills my eyes with tears.

*F.* Such tears are limpid streams, which purify the soul. Remember that it is an essential part of virtue, to acquiesce cheerfully in the decrees of Heaven.—And as to *life*, what can be more *uncertain*; or more difficult to manage?

Should



Should you visit this *church-yard*, after my course is run, is it not probable you will say, “ In this narrow cell he sleeps, waiting the *second coming of our Lord*, in whose merits he trusted ? ” Amidst these turfs, which lie scattered in so many mouldering heaps, under the shadow of this ancient yew, rest the remains of parents and children : some who lived *well*, others with *less care*. Those who spent their days, as men ought to live, submitted *gracefully* when the tiresome journey of their lives was ended. As to the bustle men make about their little span, shall we *weep*, or *laugh* ? — Observe That *ploughman*, now plodding on his way, with healthy countenance, and manly step, breathing the morning’s balmy air ! Behold that *twittering swallow*, cherishing her young, under the straw roof of That barn ; both glad some as the *day* ; and yet to-morrow’s fun, may chance to see both man, and bird, lifeless as this dust ! No event is more familiar ! If all the boast of health, and pride of life, cannot arrest the uplifted dart of death, the simple annals of our homely lives, are very *little objects*. Often have I seen the lusty hind, with brawny arm extended, felling an ash ; the carpenter and wheelwright converting it to the uses of husbandry. I have seen the blooming lass, singing her honest carol, not without secret hopes to charm her master’s son, or some more favoured hind. Where are they *now* ? We see their rude memorials, cut in mouldering stones, and boards besmeared with moss : yet are *these* grand and noble, when they bespeak well-founded hopes of a *blissful immortality* ! Some, whose dust we now walk over, I knew full well : their hearts were *great*, although their fortunes *humble*. They gently trod the silent path of life, viewing the hill or dale, the corn-field or the lawn, with conscious uprightnes, and generous thoughts, waiting their end *in peace*. So it should be ! — Among the greatest of mankind, whether their dust be inclosed in a coffin of lead, or mixed with common soil, what doth it signify ?

D. Or whether they have *pompous monuments*, such as Lord *Mortman’s* in our market-town !

F. Even so, *Mary* !

D. I suppose any one who has money, may erect a monument, and inscribe what he pleases, whether it be *true* or *false*.

F. I have read many *epitaphs*, which ascribe *too little* to Providence, and *too much* to human

merit. They display the *bright* parts of characters, but conceal the *dark ones*. Flattery pleases the *living*, who are in the same line of life, and hope also for a memorial after death : while private or partial affection, or reasons of state, often bestow *eulogiums* on the *dead* ; of some of whom few spoke *well* when they were *living*. You, *Mary*, may furnish something true, to tell the honest peasant, if you should happen to die in this village.

D. Alas, my father ! what can it be !

F. Near *this beard* lies a *virgin*, (or perchance a wife, or widow) who lived a *virtuous life*, striving in all her actions to please her God. She was dutiful to her parents ; affectionate to her relations ; kind to her friends ; charitable to every one ; careful to avoid evil, and to do good : And at length expired, in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection, through the merits of *Christ*. — Would you wish for any thing beyond this ?

D. Happy should I be to deserve so much !

F. Fancy, friendship, or love, may erect a monument for you ; but epitaphs should be free from *partiality* ! Revolving years, which prey on all the productions of art, let them be ever so curious, deface the monuments of the *great*, though made of massy marble, or long-lasting brass : yet, as I have often told you, a truly good name will be registered in the records of *heaven*, when *time* shall be no more ! Think of this, and rejoice !

D. It is truly a subject of joy !

F. *Mary*, you seemed to smile the other day, when I mentioned, how probable it was that my dear *Opbelia Chance* might have been preserved, though she appeared to be *dead*. Here lies *John Deep*, who was a *diver* : he went down upon a wreck, in a *bell-machine*, in which the water comes up only to a certain height, affording air for a few minutes breathing. Being suddenly seized with fear, or fainting, he did not pull the string to give notice of his being in distress ; and when they pulled him up, he was found apparently dead. A merchant, who was one of the company in the vessel, having heard of experiments upon the *recipe* I told you of, ordered a strong young man present, to blow his breath into his bowels, with all his force, and in a short time he blew him to life ; and he lived many years after (a). I have lately heard of a child, which appeared to be drowned, black in

the

(a) This happened at *Marseilles* some years since.

the face, and the tongue hanging out; by the help of a pair of bellows, recovered to life (a). There are numerous accounts of the same kind, where warmth and air, friction, salt, and spirits, used with judgment, have done wonders.

D. We must give credit to such stories, when we see every day of what vast consequence *air* is, to people who have fainted away.

E. *Here!* Behold an instance of the grief shewn by parents, on occasion of the death of an *only daughter*. I remember the parable: they were *good people*. The lines were made for the child's tomb-stone (b) by the 'quire, who had a mind to try his talents.

“ If babes, all innocence and truth,  
Possess bright virtue's charms;  
Why do we mourn departed youth,  
Or shrink at death's alarms?

Then, parents, stop the gushing tear,  
Nor pine at Heaven's decree;  
Your darling's safe beyond a fear,  
From guilt and sorrow free!”

D. Did they draw comfort from these considerations?

E. I hope so: *they were Christians*. When it pleases Heaven to take off children, so young as this little girl, it would be absurd to say, that because she had not the trial, which mortals who live to an advanced period generally go through, but died in a state of innocency, therefore the parents were comfortless.

D. The greatest and best of the children of men, cannot but submit when it pleases the Almighty to remove, from this scene of guilt and sorrow, those who were most the objects of their love: but still we mourn for the loss we sustain.

E. To learn to die well, is the best, and most important lesson, that life affords: to make an end of this poor play of life gracefully, is the utmost height of their wishes, who best understand the distinctions of good and evil. A *happy life is desirable*; but *innocence in death*, is our supreme felicity! We are sure that life will be tainted, though perhaps not in the extreme: and as we *believe* our virtue will be impaired; to wish for life with *anxiety*, seems to be inconsistent with *reason* and *religion*.

D. Yet *life* is the choicest gift of God!

E. To those who make a proper use of it,

Our Saviour, speaking of a wicked man, says, “ It were far better he had never been born!” If I were condemned to death, and you could give me my life by the forfeit of your virgin purity; do you think that you ought to redeem me upon such terms?

D. God forbid you should be in such circumstances!

E. Amen! But I trust my *fear* of God, and *love* in his mercy, would give me resolution to say, “ Better the *father* should suffer a *temporal* death, which sooner or later he must suffer, than that the *daughter* should suffer *death eternal*.” To suppose the tortures of the damned, to follow the death of the *wrighteous*, and to sue for life upon terms of iniquity, which can amount only to a *reproach*, is a question of no difficulty. Why not adventure boldly into the *father's field*, armed completely in a righteous cause? But to hope for heaven's joys, as the reward of virtue; and particularly of That virtue, which even yields up *life*, for *life eternal*; is not the act of dying more *glorious*, I will say, more *joyful*, than any pleasure this *life* can afford?

D. Much depends on the degree of our *faith* and *resolution*! You arm my heart with such weapons, as pluck the arrows out of the hands of death, and make me think of the great apostle, when he says, “ *O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory! The sting of death is sin.*”

E. The stings of death, are only in the degree that we are sinful! And since we *must die*, That death is best, in which virtue has the greatest share: and when *life* is yielded up for the preservation of virtue, then it is we offer the highest voluntary tribute man can pay his Maker.

D. This seems to be *good reasoning*: how far the *actions* of men correspond with it, you can best tell.

E. We are talking of what *ought* to be done; and how we may reach the regions of the blessed; not how to go with the stream of life, and fall into *destruction*.

D. Here is another, *of a child*.

“ Beneath a sleeping infant lies;  
’Twas so the first of us:  
He shall more glorious rise,  
But not more innocent.”

E. This

(a) A recent event in *England*.

(b) Churchyard, *London*.

F. The conceits on tombstones are oftentimes as forced as the poetry is lame. . . . .

D. How do you like this?

“ *When the archangel’s trumpet sounds,  
And souls to bodies join,  
Many would wish their lives below  
Had been as short as thine.*”

F. That may be; and a sad reflection it is!

D. Look, my father, here is one of a woman eighty-five years old. She, it is to be presumed, died in hopes of happiness, though you may object to the poetry.

“ *While in the world I did remain,  
My latter days were full of pain;  
But when the Lord did see it best,  
He took me to a place of rest.*”

F. Indeed I wish to find fewer attempts at poetry, and more at sense.

D. Here is one, more admonitory, of a young woman of twenty-two:

“ *God took me hence when I was in my bloom:  
Think you of death, for that will be your doom.  
Repent in time; make no delay;  
I in my prime was snatch’d away.*”

F. Well, Mary;—but there is more of dignity and useful instruction in this plain prose, extracted from the Scriptures,

“ *Be not slothful; but followers of him, who through faith and patience inherits the promises.*”

Nor is this, less admonitory and pithy, though not very poetically express’d:

“ *Death is a debt we all to nature owe,  
And not an evil, but when counted so.*” (a)

D. I hope this will please you: it seems to abound in sense and poetry, and great tenderness for the deceased.

“ *How in the thoughtless days of wealth and joy,  
Which oft the care of others good destroy,  
Her kindly melting heart,  
To every want, and every woe,  
To guilt itself, when in distress,  
The balm of pity would impart,  
And all relief that bounty could bestow!*”

*Ev’n for the kid or lamb, that pour’d its life  
Beneath the bloody knife,  
Her gentle tears would fall,  
As she the common mother were of all.*

*Nor only good, and kind,  
But strong and elevated was her mind:  
A spirit that with noble pride  
Could look superior down  
On fortune’s smile or frown;  
That could, without regret or pain,  
To virtue’s lowest duty sacrifice  
Or interest’s, or ambition’s highest prize:  
That injur’d, or offended, never try’d  
Its dignity by vengeance to maintain,  
But by magnanimous disdain.*

*A wit, that temperately bright,  
With inoffensive light,  
All-pleasing shone; nor ever past  
The decent bounds that wisdom’s sober hand,  
And sweet benevolence’s mild command,  
And bashful modesty before it cast.  
A prudence undeceiving, undeceiv’d,  
That nor too little, nor too much believ’d:  
That scorn’d unjust suspicion’s coward fear,  
And without weakness, knew to be sincere.”*

O charming character!

F. Aye, Mary; we must not be surprized at what honest love can do in grief, when love not honest, or ill-timed, produces such strange effects as we often see. Too many give a false course to their affections; but they cannot destroy them. A river may be turned out of its bed; but the water must still remain in some form or manner; and well if it does not spread desolation. If women are intended by nature to refine the joys, and soften the cares of humanity; as such nature demands their being employed. If they neglect their duty, or are themselves neglected, nature resents the injury; and it comes home to their own breast. If we are not crowned with chaplets, and laugh and sing through life, we may do much better: we may mourn for the evils that befall us; and by such mourning give the heart relief. This gentleman was at once the husband, the lover, the friend, and poet (b): and I presume the lady deserved all that he could say.—But what think you of the humour of this tablet of brass; the letters are small, yet legible?

They

(a) This, and the five foregoing, are in *Mitkam* church-yard. (b) Lord Lyttelton’s Monody on his Lady.

They were supplied by my master, to a gentleman who desired to have an inscription, of use to the *living*: though he did not think himself *worthy of praise*, he wished to *instruct*.

Behold, my son, *this nameless monument*,  
 Instructive satire on our fond conceits!  
 'Tis not a name, but *wisdom's* character  
 Alone can fire th' immortal part of man! —  
 Within yon stately temple thou may'st see  
 The sculptur'd marble in its highest pomp;  
 The curious workman's elevated art! —  
 'Tis *pride* deludes us with her foolish hopes  
 Of *fame*, from tottering busts or empty urns.  
 When thou hast run thy course, do'st thou expect  
*Esteem* and *love* will croud about thy hearse?  
 So great is man's forgetfulness of man,  
 And *gratitude*, like thought, so quickly dies,  
 The *peasant* or the *prince* have equal lots.  
 No record will avail, but That in heaven:  
 Thy faithful homage, at *religion's* shrine,  
 Will heal all wounds thy bosom can receive.  
 What greater bliss can'st thou desire, or God  
 Bestow on beings so impure and frail?  
 The daughter's tears shed o'er her father's grave,  
 Claim the sweet homage of humanity. —  
 Thy sorrows shewn, for such unfeign'd distress,  
 Are tributes which thou pay'st at *mercy's* seat.  
 But mark me well, my son! —  
*True wisdom's* children learn her pleasant ways,  
 And still rejoice amidst their sufferings:  
 Their calling is to practise what they preach.  
 Secur'd in pious conquest o'er the world,  
 They seek and find the golden key of life,  
 Which opens the portals to celestial bliss!  
 O may'st thou learn to think and reason right,  
 And justly count upon *eternity*! —  
 That whether thy short life shall end to-day,  
 Or last a number of progressive years;  
 Whether rich trophies shall adorn thy tomb,  
 Or like this monument, thy *name* shall cease;  
 Let this day pass in happy glad preluge,  
 Of those rewards that wait on virtuous deeds!

D. An *old conceit*; and yet methinks complete with good-sense and humility.

E. I wish we could see many such; for it seems to be more *instructive*, than telling us that a man was born in such a year, and died in such a year: or the giving us an account what battles a man fought, when there might be ten thousand better men than himself in the field.

What is worse, *lies* are often stamped upon marble. There is no *selfeבוד* nor *flattery* in this little brass plate. — Here is another which lets us know, that the party died of the *small-pox*. It is not very interesting to us of what people die, except it be to prevent the deaths of others. If all infants were inoculated, scarce three in a thousand would die of the distemper; and certainly no grown person could ever die of this disease.

D. If so many are carried off by the *small-pox*, what madness it is they do not *inoculate* universally!

E. The neglect is the effect of *ignorance* and *folly*. Many take a slight purge in the spring: if *one in five hundred* of these died soon after, should you think purging dangerous?

.....  
 Here lieth an *old gentlewoman*: her epitaph was made by her *grand-daughter*, in soft and flowing numbers (a).

“Thy past: dear venerable shade farewell!  
 Thy blameless life, thy peaceful death shall tell,  
 Clear to the last, thy setting orb has run  
 Pure, bright, and healthy, like a frosty sun.  
 And late old age, with hand indulgent, shed  
 Its mildest winter on thy favourite head:  
 For Heav'n prolong'd her life, to spread its praise,  
 And bless'd her with a *patriarch's* length of days.  
 The truest praise was her's, a cheerful heart,  
 Prone to enjoy, and ready to impart.  
 An *Israelite* indeed, and free from guile,  
 She show'd that piety and age, could smile.  
*Religion* had her heart, her cares, her voice;  
 'Twas her last refuge, as her earliest choice.  
 To holy *Anna's* spirit not more dear  
 The church of *Isra'el*, and the house of prayer.  
 Her spreading offspring, of the *fourth* degree,  
 Fill'd her fond arms, and clasp'd her trembling  
 knee.

Matur'd at length for some more perfect scene,  
 Her hopes all bright, her prospects all serene.  
 Each part of life sustain'd with equal worth;  
 And not a wish left unfulfill'd on earth;  
 Like a tired traveller, with sleep oppress'd,  
 Within her children's arms she dropt to rest.  
 Farewell! Thy cherish'd image, ever dear,  
 Shall many a pious heart with love revere!  
 Long, long shall mine her honour'd memory bless,  
 Who gave the dearest blessing I possess!”

D. What

*D.* What an excellent character! How few deserve such generous praise. Happy must she have been who had so good a parent, herself being so *ingenious, pious, and grateful*.

*F.* Few live to see the fourth generation; much fewer still to have no wish ungratified when they come to die.—You hardly remember my kinsman, and friend, old *Thomas Trueman*. Here *he* lies! He also took his leave of life, in a very becoming manner. Many a time have I seen him, stretched along yon mossy bank, poring upon the babbling brook below, muttering his fancies, and the lines of poetry he learnt in boy-hood, when his memory was strong. Sometimes he seem'd forlorn: Again his spirits were as brisk as birds. He used to say, he wish'd for life, only as he could make a progress in virtue:—and he was not disappointed in the *length* of his days, nor in his *use* of them. He often took his walk on *Pastor's* hill, where he and I have held many a serious chat. A few weeks before his death, he spoke these words: “ My friend, I feel my life ebb out apace. I am not sorry for it, for I have seen much more than gives me pleasure. I fear I shall never acquire a degree of fortitude fully satisfactory to my own mind. Upon several occasions, in the latter years of my life, I have not maintained That *firmness* which I aspired at. Something of the same kind may perchance happen again; therefore I think it best to die.”

*D.* If he had so much virtue, as this intimates, he might have been contented to live; if so Heaven had permitted.

*F.* I tell you what he said. I followed him to his grave. He was attended by many a watery eye, which saw him quietly lodged in the bosom of the earth. The minister, who attended him in his last hours, spoke highly of his *faith*, his *resignation*, and his *hope* in heavenly joys!

*D.* What *was* he?

*F.* He had formerly been a quarter-master; and behaved like a true soldier, on all occasions. He fought bravely in the wars of King *William* and Queen *Anne*. He kept good discipline in quarters; endeavouring always to promote the fear of God, and to relieve his conquered enemy in distress. He lamented the sad necessity of war; constantly giving proof that he was a friend to his country and mankind.

*D.* Happy were it for us all, to view our actions *closely*, and consider the end of living! A *soldier*, and so good a man! Was not this extraordinary?

*F.* Have you forgotten the *major* and the *captain*? Many soldiers are very good, and doubly respectable, when they are so, for being *soldiers*. We must not judge from what we have heard of a few profligate fellows.—Much do I prefer the condition of these my former partners in toil, to that of some whose characters I was no stranger to, now lying entombed in marble, adorned with busts and costly sculpture. Their names stand on the records of life-destroying war, or cunning snares of state. The happiness of *immortal man*, ought to be measured by some other rule! The mouldering monument, where once stood a human figure, now defaced; or the letters of a flattering inscription, worn out by *time*; what do they shew but vanity? (*a*)

*D.* Still it pleases: and what gives innocent pleasure, though in one sense it may be *vain*; yet if it administers to *happiness*, is it not good?

*F.* The great and opulent stand in need of such helps, to keep *wealth* in countenance: but these expensive baubles are supposed  *sacred to truth*: I wish they were *always really so*. Time, in its progress, ravages alike, whether the praise be well or ill bestowed. *Love* is emphatically said to be as strong as *death*: and these tributes of praise, are generally paid by friends and companions, on occasion of the loss of those, who once lived in their hearts. Nor is the forgetfulness of kindness, in those who leave the world, less cruel than the grave, into which they descend! These are evils, *Mary*, with which life is often taxed: and the more *graciously* we pay the tribute, without torturing ourselves with the remembrance; the sooner it will pass away; and let it pass as the morning dew melts before the sun.

*D.* We may comfort ourselves that there are some calamities, to which persons in our station are strangers.

*F.* Contests for *fame*, or the fond desire of applause: these sometimes burn like fire, or consume like jealousy. You and I may laugh at this *folly*! The world will treat us as it pleases: it is *our* concern to *deserve esteem*, and be devoid of *anxiety*, whether it be bestowed or not.

*D.* We

(*a*) “ Here in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,  
“ See the false scale of happiness complete.”

*D.* We are free from such desires: but in speaking of unkindness, do you think the comparison, of the cruelty of the *grave*, to be just? May we not *there* hope for peace?

*F.* To those who languish for an *addition of days*, to enjoy the ample portion of the sweets of life, which they possess, we may naturally suppose the *grave* frowns *cruelly*. Most men indulge their hope of years of happiness in *this life*! Life dazzles the eyes, and pleases the fancy, of poor mortals! Like the splendid gilding of the clouds, attending a setting sun; for a short space of time, we view them with great delight, but the scene closes in *darkness*! So are our prospects near the close of life! Variety constitutes our chief joy: yet, “there is nothing new under the sun: the thing that is done, is That which *shall* be done. In much wisdom, is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.”

*D.* If this be a true view of the *present life*, surely it ought to turn our thoughts more to the lasting joys of the *life to come*!

*F.* This is one view which is given us: and the *wise man* adds, “that all the days of man are *sorrow*, and his travel *grief*: yea, his heart taketh not rest in the *night*.” And he continues his remark, by saying, “*This also is vanity!*”

*D.* I am afraid, my father, he hath not given a false representation: yet surely *it is also vanity*, not to give the heart rest, when it is in our power to do it: he certainly cannot mean that *virtue* itself is vain.

*F.* He rather gives us a picture of the *folly of tormenting ourselves*; and how things are, not how they should be.

*D.* You have often told me, that of all vanities,  *vexation of spirit* is the greatest.

*F.* So it is, *Alas*, when it answers no end. We *Christians* have an advantage, which *Solomon* himself did not enjoy. While we are in the hands of God, trusting in the merits of our great Intercessor, we behold the glories of the mid-day sun, triumphing in exceeding great joy, in hopes of That happiness after death, which *Christ* hath promised, and of which *Solomon* had a less perfect apprehension. Thus we see things in the double view, with all their *lights*, as well as *shades*: and let us turn our eyes to the *pleasurable* side, and *rejoice*! Let us determine to rejoice in the God of our salvation; so that when evils happen, we may, without labour of thought, recur to the resolution we had wisely taken.

*D.* This would be an admirable rule, if it could be followed.

*F.* Could be followed! Who ever tried it with all his spirit, and was disappointed?—

.....  
Observe this *epitaph* on a *faithful servant*, *Moses Trueman*, to whom I ever thought it a *happiness* to be allied. He was one of the *meekest*, yet most determined persons I ever knew.

*D.* *Meekest*, yet most determined!

*F.* Yes: most quiet in *temper*: most steady and resolute in what he thought his duty. His master was a man of sentiment; and loved him for his virtues. He treated him as his *friend*, as well as his *servant*; and *Moses* treated his master as his friend, not forgetting that he was his master. You will judge what sentiments his master entertained of him, by the inscription on this stone.

“Should full-blown pride in taunting accents say,  
What mighty deeds have dignified this clay?

Or was he rich in fortune, or in blood?

Al! he was more, much more, for he was good!

His life in service and obedience spent,

He gain'd not riches, but he gain'd content;

Whilst o'er himself he kept a strict controul,

And heap'd up treasures, that enrich'd the soul.

Of temperance try'd, an ever ready hand,

A yielding nature, pliant to command;

Yet firm in morals, resolutely just,

Of softest manners, but a rock in trust:

His sense was plain, nor yet his converse rude,

A feeling heart that teem'd with gratitude.

For this thy kindred mourn thy early doom;

Thy master lov'd thee, and inscribes thy tomb.

Go take thy wages now, by Heaven's decree,

Where service is eternal liberty.”

*D.* What a pleasure it affords the mind, to hear of virtue in every station; but particularly in That which comes nearest to our own.—Was *Moses* married?

*F.* He had engaged himself to a young woman whom his master approved of very much: but he was so prudent as to desire the match might be delayed till he had gained something more: the girl was not impatient; they loved each other tenderly. When he died he considered her in his will as his *wife*; and she mourned for him with the sorrow of a widow, who has lost a most valuable husband.

## CONVERSATION XI.

*Exhorting his daughter to be constant in her attention to her religion, upon the principles of the certainty of the truth and importance of it. The evidence derived from reason and facts. Calamitous state of mankind neglecting obedience to it. A pathetic discourse to his daughter on occasion of her parting from him.*

D. OUR yesterday's conversation in the churchyard has filled my mind with many serious, yet not unpleasing reflections. It afforded me *amusement*, as well as *instruction*. Methinks it has prepared me for the death of parting with you, which must be an hour hence.—

F. Happy were it for mankind, if they would weigh every circumstance in its proper balance; and considering the various motives of human actions; the miseries which attend on some; and the felicity which accompanies others; draw a true and just rule of conduct! They might then wipe away all obstructions to their seeing clearly, and search for the things they are commanded by God to search for. Thus would they find their interest and happiness *in their duty*: *Reason* would not then mislead; but prove a guide to *faith*; as *faith* would point out the road to heaven: and “if their hearts condemned them not, they would have peace towards God.” All that is probable, as deducible from the nature of the human soul, and the belief of its *immortality*, would operate with sufficient force of demonstration, on the *willingness* of the *understanding*, to assent to That which pleads for the *interest* of the *soul*. We should, from a natural partiality to ourselves, *believe*; and endeavour to make our actions suitable to our *principles*. A combination of a thousand circumstances which render *Christianity* so pleasing to the mind, would operate like a charm: our native love of *truth* would compel us to be *Christians*; and we should glory in the name! Look round you and survey the extreme foolishness of those who do not examine the *merits* of their religion; neither reading the *Old Testament* with attention and understanding; nor yet the *New*, as if they were intersted in the events related, or the divine pre-

cepts given. What is said in the *Old Testament* of the *Saviour* which should come into the world, could possibly be applicable to no other person which ever has been in it.

D. But “having eyes, they see not.”

F. When the sacred babe was born, the heavens proclaimed his mission. A *star* appeared: —not regular in its place or motion, like the heavenly bodies; for the great Lord of nature guided it to the place where the *infant* slept. The heathen world saw it, and *wondered!* Princes and sages from the east followed it. We are told by some historians, it was considered by a disciple of the celebrated heathen philosopher *Plato*, as proclaiming the descent of a God. It occasioned so much jealousy in the breast of *Herod*, a worldly-minded prince, that he even caused a number of innocent babes to be slaughtered. The whole history of the *Messiah* hangs in a chain even from the creation of man, shining with splendor in every circumstance that surrounded him. He lived for near thirty years in obscurity, devoid of every desire of fame or grandeur, till the *time came*, when, as if the clefts of the rocks were opened, and at once discovered all their stores of diamonds, polished with the most exquisite art, he was ushered into the world by a *voice from heaven*: God declared him to be his son, in whom he was delighted.—You are sensible, that the mode in which this history is transmitted down to us, is such as pleased the Almighty Wisdom; and that there could be no such thing as *faith*, were the truth asserted to men, by a continuation of miracles: the Providence of God would then change its course, and nothing be *credited* but the demonstration of our senses; and even this would become doubtful. They who believed not *Moses* and the *prophets*, concerning the *Messiah*,  
and

and would not examine with caution and candour, were not convinced even when he had verified the prediction, and arose from the dead.—You remember Mr. *Heartwell's* discourse with the *young templear*. Be assured *for this last time*, perhaps, I may ever talk with you, that *habits of virtue or vice*, make *saints or unbelievers*. The history of *Christ*, contained in the *New Testament*, gives us the highest ideas of human nature: God gave his Son to suffer for it, and to save mankind from destruction. You see a fellow-creature in distress, and believing *Christ* died for him, afford him the succour his situation properly requires, as far as your power extends.—Why do you this? Because you are a Christian? You hunger and thirst after righteousness, because you believe. Why do so many make *negligence and indifference* their bosom friends? Because they do *not* believe.—In all ages, the wisest of mankind have lived according to the best lights they had, agreeable to the religion of their respective countries, so long as they saw nothing contrary to moral duties. This made them esteemed wise and good, and rendered them the delight of human kind. But when Christianity made its appearance, the divine truths of it eclipsed all other lights; and the poorest and most illiterate men, taught by the Son of God, to preach his doctrines, made the most flourishing regions of the earth appear as ignorant and savage.—And mighty advantages should *we* enjoy, were we strictly to observe the precepts of our religion! To do well: to speak well: and to have no end in view but that of a *religious* life: to promote the wisdom of men's hearts, and the reformation of their manners; carries with it such an *unquestionable title* to the regard of men, that, humanly speaking, we cannot resist the belief, that the great Father of mankind will look down on us with the kindness and compassion of a father, if we obey him.

D. This is a glorious thought, were it properly cherished.—

E. Remember, my daughter, that if you aspire at the imitation of the great *exemplar of your faith*, you must love all your fellow-creatures, not hate any. You must be zealous, and full of pity: give counsel to the *doubtful*, and instruct the *ignorant*; bind up the broken heart; strengthen the *feeble knee*; and relieve the *poor* to the utmost of your ability. More than

this, the greatest of the children of men cannot do. Remember that our Saviour was so exact an observer of the *sabbath*, agreeable to the law of *Moses*, he only healed the sick on that day. *Christ* came not to destroy the moral law and *commandments*, but to explain, refine, exalt, and purify them. *Christianity* is morality refined, and brought to a standard agreeable to the divine perfections, so far as man is capable of imitating them. *Christ*, in his whole life and conversation, was innocent; I will not say, as angels, the messengers of God, for these acted in subserviency to him; but perfectly innocent: yet, as a proof how far the perverseness of the children of men may carry them, notwithstanding all the miracles he had shewn for the preservation even of the meanest of the people, of which the leaders of the *Jews* were well acquainted; they made his *truth* his fault, and his high office his crime; and condemned him as not worthy to live.

D. His innocence was so apparent, no one could reproach him with the least evil.

E. As his *birth* was *miraculous*, his life demonstrated the almighty power by which he acted. As little necessity was there for argument to prove it, as the sun requires evidence that he is the brightest luminary in the heavens: yet such was the inscrutable decree of the Almighty, he was nailed to the cross, and died in an agony of pain! He arose from the dead; and his resurrection proved that God *can*, and we are equally assured *will* raise the dead. You see the Saviour of mankind went to *death*, as to a work the Almighty had appointed for him. Then it was the great Lord of nature gave a fresh testimony that this divine person was in truth the *Christ* that *should* come into the world. The rocks were rent; the veil of the temple was divided of itself, opening the *sanctuary*. Many of the dead arose, and appeared in *Jerusalem*. The *centurion* who guarded the body of *Christ*, and others of the people, finite their breaths, being, by these wonderful tokens, *convinced* that he was *indeed the Son of the living God*.—Shall you *forget* these things, my daughter?—Will the hurry of a great city rob you of them?—Or will you garner them up in your heart as jewels of inestimable value? Let the *thoughtless* return like the dog to the vomit: their example should be no rule to you. You are in an humble condition in this world: it may



may be so much the happier for you. Consider who were the instruments by which such wonders have been transmitted down to us ! They were, for the most part, persons in an humble station : their Master and yours was the King of glory ; yet they suffered *persecution, poverty, banishment, scourges*, and many of them *cruel deaths*. They submitted in hopes of That day of recompence, when they should again behold their Lord, and receive the great reward which he had promised them. You are sensible that the doctrines contained in the *New Testament*, which, with such unwearied diligence I have recommended to you, tend to perfect our nature, teaching the children of men to *love their God*, and each other. That book affords the highest satisfaction, and the truest delight we can arrive at in this world : it furnishes the joys of *charity* ; the *rest of innocence* ; the peace of *quiet spirits* ; the *hopes of heaven*, and the fairest prospect of it ! And what does it forbid ? That we should not be *beasts* nor *devils* ? It allows all that the wisdom of Omniscience could intend for a creature *so excellent* in his nature, that even the Son of God took it on himself : a creature born to such exalted hopes, and the heir of such heavenly promises ! With regard to this world, it teaches men *chastity*, and a strict observance of their word, by which every individual is guarded from all violence ; and amidst the *changes* and *events* of life, reap the comforts of being treated by others, on a principle themselves think *reasonable, humane*, and *compassionate*. Every one feels for another, as children of one common parent, on whom they depend, not for their animal bread alone, but for the bread of life ; the bread that cometh from heaven. And whilst it enjoins *obedience to superiors*, it prevents the confusion of government ; the destruction of laws ; and the banishment of peace and harmony from the world. Our divine religion is *life*, and *spirit*, and *joy* unspeakable ! Strictly observed, it is the harbinger which gives notice, that the gates of heaven are opened ; and that a clear passage is made to those immortal pleasures which the Almighty hath seated on his right hand, ready to dispense as the rewards of the righteous ! This, my child, is the bright shield of reason ; the rays of which give light to our paths, and the genial warata which invigorates our souls. Its beauty is so transcendent, before it all the most shining objects of this world, so apt to captivate

the heart of man, are but the faint glimmerings of the *distant day*. It makes war with *vice*, and “ teaches us, with ease, to mortify those affections which *reason* hardly dares reprove, because it hath not strength enough to conquer them ; whilst it creates in us those *virtues*, which *reason*, unaided, never knew, and after knowing, could not sufficiently approve to reduce to action,” till the *grace* which it requires us to implore, is given us *from above*. Study the doctrines of the *blessed Jesus* : read his words with close attention ; learn to be *meek, contented, merciful, just, pure*, and *holy* ; and let your *meekness* and *contentment* prove to the world, and those who shall behold your *life* and *conversation*, that you cherish in your breast, the image of your divine Original. “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify our common Father, who is in heaven.” Pretend not to be a servant to so great a master, and wantonly presume to make a law of your own, by neglecting those holy ordinances, the observance of which is the glory of human nature. Let the *foolish* world fondly imagine they have discovered something *more intrinsically valuable* ; and, like children, hoard their *pebbles* as *diamonds* ; but do *you* obey the laws of *Christ*, and steadfastly abide in his commandments ; glorying in the name of *Christian*. Remember, my daughter, there is nothing in your religion against *flesh* and *blood*, but when flesh and blood revolt against reason : it forbids us to drink at the well of life, making us languish with *thirst*, till we expire in *misery*. Death will open to the wicked the dreadful portals, where inexpressible pain and anguish have taken up their everlasting abode ! — What you have to *do*, or *suffer*, with regard to the *present* life, you will think lightly of, if you keep your thoughts intent on the glories which shall be revealed. The *pagan* world, in the height of its splendor, could form no idea of the *humble, meek*, and *peaceable* religion of our blessed Lord. And what are those *better than pagans*, who never think of this matter ? Better, did I say ! Will not their condemnation be so much the greater ? Such discourse may seem to them as *folly* ; and foolish it had been, if it were *false* ; but being *true*, as it eclipsed all the glory and renown of those *ancient nations*, it confounds the present generation of infidels. *Christianity* opened the *nakedness* of their *hearts* ; and shewed the *vileness* of them. And what are

we now about? The light of the gospel shines upon us: the Sun of righteousness in his meridian splendor darts forth his rays; and we seek the obscurest hovel to hide our shame. Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth! Though my sins are in number past all account, yet witness to my *sincerity*, how earnestly I wish to see the laws of *Christ* established in the hearts of my fellow-subjects and mankind; that obedience to those laws may fix its standard on a rock, against which the prince of darkness shall *never* prevail. While I behold so many transported with *baubles*; eager in pursuit of mean gratifications; wasting their days in *trouble*, and their years in *vanity*; instead of *doing the work for which they were sent into the world*; I mourn! I must lament in tears, that *purity, justice, and mercy* are so little the *law, the rule, the guide* of men; to refresh the weary, and guide the ignorant; to relieve the distressed orphan, and make the widow's heart rejoice. Let Christianity be *known*, and truly observed, universal benevolence will reign on the *earth*, and prepare our souls for *heaven*. Happy, thrice happy were it for *mankind*, if their zeal and attachment to the fooleries of the world, were only *suspended* for a short time, that they might see the vanity of their own pursuits; and discover wherein true wisdom consisteth! If the days of man are but a span in length, and there dwells in their earthly tabernacle, a *spirit* derived from the eternal God; a soul which is immortal:—if they would consider this; and *daily* contemplate their latter end, they would be induced to *reverence* That spirit! They might, in mercy to their souls, see and behold “the things which belong to their peace, before they are hid from their eyes for ever!” Contemplate, my child, the marvellous works of Heaven in the *conversion* of the great apostle; not like some modern *enthusiasts*, expect a miracle to be wrought for you; but lament that *learning and government, wisdom and law, in public and in private life*, are not applied like his *zeal*, which was employed to establish the empire of *Christ*, in the hearts of those, on whom the glorious light had shone. Why do we not war with our *corrupt affections*, and harness ourselves with that brilliant arm our, which becomes the follower of the *great Captain of our salvation*? Would they look back and see what passed in early days! The greater part of the *best Christians* could not be better con-

vinced than we might be now, with regard to the *reality* of facts, respecting a *crucified Saviour*. We have the same testimony, with the addition of a *succession of ages*, in which millions of the followers of *Christ* have acted like *Christians*. In those early days, “if *Christians* had peace, their religion was prosperous: if they were *persecuted*, it was still *prosperous*: if *princes* favoured them, the world came in, because the *Christians* lived a *holy life*: if *princes* were incensed, the world came in, because the *Christians* died so bravely.” They despised death itself, when *worldly interest* interfered with their faith in their great Master and Redeemer, life no longer appearing as an object of any moment. Horrible as it truly is to think of, in the view of humanity; most glorious in the effect of faith; even infants were sometimes in the hands of *hangmen*, for the testimony of *Jesus Christ*; and the *executioner* was often *converted* by the blood of those *martyrs* which sprang upon their faces! Such is not our lot at this time, my daughter! In this respect the lamb may sleep by the side of the lion! And shall *we*, with ungrateful tongues, relate any idle tale, rather than proclaim the *wonders* which have been done for us by the Redeemer of the world? Shall we with impious hearts indulge our *passions* and *appetites*, when we ought to reserve them in the fittest state, to entertain our Saviour and our God? We are as much condemned to death as they were: the sentence of nature is issued; the day of execution we know not of, but it cannot be far off. Nor is it less certain the day will come, in which the Saviour of the world, will appear in the meridian brightness of his glory, and we shall stand before his judgment-seat; the *just*, in humble hopes that he will applaud their conduct, as he has promised his faithful servants.—But the wicked and impenitent!—Here let us draw a curtain, and hide the dismal scene, when shrieks and cries will only serve to increase the horror!—You turn pale! I forbear. Think of the *glorious* scene, and retreat from the habitations of iniquity. The three apostles St. *Paul*, St. *Peter*, and St. *Jude*, foresaw that the *Jerusalem* nation, who opposed the religion of *Christ*, had but a short time to shew their malice in. The dreadful overthrow of their city and nation by a *Roman* army was foretold: and the Christians in *Jerusalem* were informed, if they would retire to the city of *Pella*, a hair of their heads should not perish. So it happened; whilst a million

million one hundred thousand of the *Jewish* nation were swept away, and the whole body dismembered; their state being overturned by intolerable calamities. The *Christians* then beheld the tremendous proof of the truth of the religion they had adopted; and all the predictions in the *Old Testament*, with regard to *Christ*, undeniably accomplished. The *Jews*, as I told you on another occasion, are still hoping without *reason*; confident without *revelation*; pursuing a shadow, and neglecting a substance. Let us not flatter ourselves: it cannot be, that any *nation*, *community*, or *individual* on earth, can exist in peace, and freedom from the galling yoke of *slavery*, but as they receive the great Sovereign of the *Christian* world, as their *lawgiver*, their *friend*, their *Redeemer*, and their *God*. Were you acquainted with the history of mankind, you would find it so in every quarter of the globe. Carry this ever in your thoughts. Offer up your prayers to Heaven, that it may please the Almighty Giver of all good to grant your *country*, and *nation*, and *mankind*, such a measure of his grace, and such an abundance of his *mercy*, that we may all turn from the evil of our ways, and *live*!

D. My dear father, you seem transported with a *piety* and *tendernefs* I have no words to describe: but I feel their force. I have listened to your discourse, as if I were to register it in my memory as your last expiring words. I truly believe in

the world which is to come, as certainly as the world I now behold. My attention to you had absorbed my sorrows. I had forgotten that we are about to part!—But I trust in the mercies of God, your words will still sound in my *ears*, and your lessons of instruction cling to my *heart*!

E. My dear child, Heaven grant it may be so! —The *waggon* waits for you.

D. How shall I speak my *last farewell*!

E. Let us not call it the *last*: I hope, ere long, we shall meet again. All we can now gain by one minute's delay, is to wish for another.

D. In hopes that we *shall* meet again, my dear, dear father, *farewell*! A thousand thoughts of gratitude crowd tumultuously on my heart: I can now only express them with my tears!—*Farewell*!

E. I know them all, exceedingly well. Weep not, my child, lest you *wrman* me also. Remember the lesson I have been giving you, even to *part with life*, gracefully, if Providence requires. *This parting* is but a shade, to throw more light upon your *virtues*. I trust in *Providence* you will do well without *me*. I am sure you have not so often lent a patient ear *in vain*! Reserve your tears for some *great occasion*. *Old as I am*, I think it highly probable we shall meet, at least once more, in this world!—*O God of mercy*, preserve my child! my much-lov'd daughter; and my friend!

## P A R T IX.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N I.

Mary Trueman's return from London into the country. Her commendation of the conduct of her mistress. Her Lady's letter to her father. Her account of London entertainments, and conversation concerning them. Her relation of the courtship, and offer made her; and of the manner of spending time among people of fashion in London.

F. BLESS me, good Heaven! Who do my eyes behold! My daughter!

D. My heart overflows with joy to see you! Health still smiles in your countenance.

F. You look well—considering that you came from London. But what brings you? I rejoice from my heart to see you once more: I could almost say with the patriarch, when he held his son Joseph in his arms, “Now let thy servant, O God, descend in peace to the grave!” Yet am I anxious, my dear child, to know what brings you hither so unexpectedly. Has your mistress been unkind, or imposed too hard labour on your tender years?

D. No: some sports be painful; yet afford delight, because we deem them sports.—But all the commands of my mistress are easy and pleasant: every thing is considerate, and directed to a good end. Whatever she requires to be done, seems to be the best and most necessary thing; never heavy nor odious: we know it is required by one who judges with pious prudence, and sweet humanity. She quickens, what from another's tongue might be lifeless; and makes easy what might seem hard and irksome. Sometimes she bids me leave off my work, lest my health should suffer: and such sweet thoughts do to refresh my labour, I am truly in more danger of doing too much, than if she were as hard as an

Egyptian task-master. Though I was going home to you, yet believing I might not return to her, my true love and affection drew many a bitter tear from my eyes. Were she my own mother, I could not love her with a more unfeigned affection; nor think of her with a more dutiful respect.

F. You rejoice me much. It flatters my heart and understanding, that I judged so well of her; and that you are so much the better for it.—I had rather behold you rich in your gratitude, than in all the gold she could have given you.

D. Gold, my father! She said, “My dear Mary, fare you well!—Be virtuous in every condition, and count upon me as your friend. We shall not be far distant from each other. Be a friend to virtue; and while I abound, you shall never want.—I know you will judge well what you may ask.”

F. If it be so, my child, why are you come home?

D. My mistress hath sent me, under the care of her old trusty servant Thomas, with this letter, saying I was the most proper person to explain the contents of it; and that you have a better title than any other to be a judge in the cause which it relates to.

F. A letter from your mistress, constituting me a judge in a cause! what is this matter, Mary? Let me see the letter.

“ Mr.

“ Mr. Trueman,

“ Your daughter will deliver this to you, and inform you of an event, which I apprehend may be for her advantage.” It is probable I shall be disappointed in the pleasure I proposed, of being served by a young woman, who has been brought up well; and promises fair to make one of the most deserving of servants. But as a friend to *you*, and to this virtuous girl, it will be still more *satisfactory* to me, if she can be at once put into the best way of life, that might happen to her, after some years of servitude. If the *marriage proposed* should take place, and she proves as good a wife and a mother, as she has been a daughter and a servant, I shall be glad to contribute to her happiness; for I can assure you she is high in my favour. I have heard of the young man, who came to town to visit her, his father living in my neighbourhood in the country; and having conversed with him here, I hope he will prove as *good* as report makes him. You are the proper person to enquire; and I dare say will proceed with all the caution which your affection for your daughter, and the nature of so serious an affair require. It is a great happiness to reflect, on this occasion, that you have not been sparing in your lessons of piety, as the young persons may come together with a true sense of duty to God, as well as to each other. It is thus they may mix the piety of *saints*, with the transports of *lovers*; and give *reason* such a share in their happiness, as may render it *lasting*. I desire you will let me hear what resolutions are taken.

I am, with great regard,

your very true friend,

*Maria Blifs.*”

What shall I say?—This is a very honourable testimonial of your conduct: it gives me the highest satisfaction: nothing is so pleasing to me as finding that my attention to your welfare has not been in vain.—But the subject of *this letter* requires further information. A *match proposed*, is a serious business! Who is this young man? Mrs. *Blifs* hath not even mentioned his name.

*D.* Forgive me, my father, if unwittingly I have trespassed! The young man who came with virtuous offers to me, is a nephew to your

good friend *Simon Worthby*, and second son to *Simon's* brother. His name is *George Worthby*.

*F.* So nearly related to the *Worthbys*, looks well. *Mary*, you have been ever dutiful and true to me, as a daughter and a friend: you are assured that I am your friend as well as father: you have been bred with a reverence for *truth*: now tell me how this matter stands.

*D.* I should be a monster of ingratitude, if I deceived you in the smallest point. I will tell you our *whole conversation*, and *all* that has passed; and you will judge of the rest.—It is now five days since our *William* (the butler) came to me, and told me, that a young man from my father desired to see me. I felt my heart spring forth with joy, when I heard the name of *father*,—and that I should have an opportunity of hearing from *you*. I asked *William* if my mistress had seen the young man; for she had charged me to receive no visits from strangers, without her consent. *William* answered, that he had been with his lady, and *she* had ordered him to tell *me* so. The young man accordingly came into the hall, and approached me with no little confusion. I desired him to sit down; and, eager to hear news from you, I asked him if you was in good health; to which he answered, with a seeming difficulty, *very well*. After some pause, he sighed, and said, “Mrs. *Mary*,—I hope *London* hath done no injury to your health.” I answered, “None that I am sensible of; though smoke and dust do not please me.”—A longer silence followed; he then said, “How do you like this great town?” I answered, “All the people seem to be in a prodigious hurry, as if every day were *fair-day*; and every night, as if some house were on fire, the noise and clatter made in the streets being so great. I imagine in such a multitude, many must be employed in doing mischief, and not a few in doing *nothing*. In short, according to my opinion, and from what I hear from my fellow-servants, all the fine folks seem to be so uneasy when they are in a crowd, and so *unhappy* when they are *out* of it; I cannot understand what *London* manners mean.” He replied, “I have heard that the people live in a kind of *tumult*; but I did not therefore conclude they were entirely omisive in performing the serious duties of life. Have you seen nothing that gives you as much pleasure as you used to enjoy in the *country*?” I answered, “I have seen the *uax work*

in *Fleet-street*, which some of my fellow-servants admire; but I find more pleasure in playing with a little boy or girl, *that can speak*, than in viewing what only resembles fish and blood. The lions at the *Tower* to be sure, said I, are very *ferocious* animals, but they do not afford me so much satisfaction as a *tame cow*, when I behold her milk streaming from her udder."—He then asked me, if I had seen *St. Paul's church*: I told him, I had: "and indeed," said I, "when I first entered that cathedral, I was struck with such awe at the grandeur of the dome, I could hardly forbear falling down and worshipping, though it was not the time of divine service." I then asked him, if he came to town by *Westminster bridge*; and told him when I passed over it, and first saw *St. Paul's*, and on the other side, took a view up the *Thames*; I thought these three objects the grandest in the world!—adding, that you had told me, *London* was more agreeable to *see*, than to *live* in; especially for people who know what to do with their time, and love *silence* and *pure air*.

F. I am sorry to find things are not much mended since I left the great world: but what is all this to the purpose of a young man's making an offer of marriage?

D. I am telling *every thing* that passed; and I am sure you would have me be civil to strangers: I wondered at his being so *bashful*:—but such kind of discourse seemed to recover him, and he said, "Pray, *Mrs. Mary*, do you remember ever to have seen *me* before?" To which I answered, "Yes: if I am not mistaken, you are the young man who once opened a gate to my father and me, as we were walking out." At these words, I could not help observing that he reddened, yet seemed pleased. He then said, "Have you never *thought* of me since that time?" To which I answered, "Yes: I thought you was a civil young man, and bowed like a gentleman: and I have observed that *gentlemen* are always more civil to me, than my equals usually are." He replied, "I find it natural to be *civil*, especially to a *woman*: I have sometimes been so civil, that girls, not used to be treated with civility, thought me in love with them."—Then, looking tenderly at me and sighing, he said, "But do you remember *nothing more*, *Mrs. Mary*, that passed upon that occasion?"—You know, my father, I love truth: I did not think

there was any harm in making an honest and fair answer.

F. And what did you say?

D. I said, "Yes: I recollect, that after my father and I had passed through the gate, near the distance of a gun shot, I looked back. I had a sort of curiosity to take another view of the person to whom I thought myself *obliged*; and to my surprize I observed you was yet standing with the gate in your hand, looking steadfastly towards my father and me: I had once a mind to ask him, if he *knew* you; but according to our manner, we were in deep discourse; and at that time I thought no more about you."

F. What said the young man to this?

D. He held down his head: and after pausing a little, he said,—“Ah! *Mrs. Mary*, such was not *my case* in regard to you! Perhaps you never heard that I followed you for above *five miles*: I was determined, if I had gone *five hundred*, to know where you lived!”—I told him I wondered at his curiosity; or what he could see, in such poor folks as my father and me, which should induce him to take so much pains.”—At this he sighed again, and said, “But pray, was there nothing particular in my looks?” To which I answered, “I recollect only that you looked very attentively at *me*.” To this he replied, “Then I am sure my face discovered my heart; for from that moment, *be not angry when I tell you my story*; from that moment my *happiness* or *misery* depended on *you*!”

F. What did you answer?

D. I was at first confounded, till I recollected myself and said, “Was it not a foolish thought, to suppose any such thing, of a person who had no design, nor inclination, to do you any *good*, or *evil*?” “Ay,” says he, “but tell me *fairly*, did you not think I was struck with *desperate love*?” I said, “How can you ask me such a foolish question? Should I not have been the vainest girl upon earth?”—Indeed, my father, in this I *divinised* my thoughts: it would not have been *modest* to shew him my heart quite naked; for I then imagined I *might* be the cause of the disorder he seemed to be in; though otherwise I did not much regard him. I could not but suppose he was affected at the sight of *you*, or *me*; and it was natural to believe a *young man* might be more struck at the sight of a *young woman*, than of an *old man*.

F. Most

F. Most probably!—Besides a quickness of apprehension in you women, there is a variety of heart prevailing, which leads you to quick discoveries in such cases. And so, *Mary*, you thought this young man might possibly be a *little smitten*; but it doth not appear, that *he* had smote *your* heart; or that you indulged any thoughts about him.

D. If I had indulged a thought of any man, as a lover, my heart would have smote me, if I had not opened it to you. He went on: “Indeed, Mrs. *Mary*, I thought you the most charming girl my eyes ever beheld: and although you was more than commonly well clad, that possibly you might be daughter to the person you was with, who appeared like a farmer.—Forgive me, my dear Mrs. *Mary*; I thought too—(here he sighed) if you should fall to my lot, I should be the happiest of all mortals.”

F. This was coming close to the point.

D. So I thought, and again felt myself confused: I did not know what to say: but I recollected that I had been told he came from you; and therefore I changed the discourse, by saying, “Pray, Sir, I understood you came from *my father*; what message has *he* sent by you?”—To which he replied, “I believe the

butler mistook in telling you I came from *your father*; I brought your mistress a letter from *my own father*, of whom she has some knowledge. I have however the pleasure to tell you, that I have never ceased to enquire after your father’s health; I would have walked a mile or twain to see him, because he is *your father*. I consider his man *John* as my friend; and I would not have struck his *dog*, for the world, knowing him to be *your father’s*.”

F. This was very flattering.—

D. So it was; and I must confess it pleased me; it seemed to be so much from his heart. I told him, “I was much obliged to him, for that my father was my friend, and I loved him beyond all other men in the world.” To this he answered, “I am glad we agree so well in our sentiments, with regard to love and honour for parents.” To which I replied, “I make no doubt of your regard for *your father*: but I do not understand what reason you had to tell my mistress any thing in relation to *your own father*, which should induce her to send you to me.” He then said, “Hear my tale, my dear Mrs. *Mary*.—I would indeed rather die than disoblige my father; and it was for that reason I did not for some time discover my inclinations.”

## CONVERSATION II.

*Continuation of the relation of young Worthy’s courtship of Mary Trueman. False ambition of farmer’s sending their daughters to learn French. Description of a worthless debauched fellow in common life.*

F. YOU was interrupted when we met last. I am anxious to hear the sequel of young *Worthy’s* courtship.

D. Mr. *Worthy* proceeded in this manner: “My father observing that I drooped, said to me, *George*, what is the matter? you seem to pine in thought, as if you concealed something which preys on your health—what is it, my son? tell me, I conjure you.—I told him the whole story of *my love for you*;—and throwing myself at his feet, begged his forgiveness, if in the issue it should appear, I had indulged thoughts unworthy of *him*, or of *myself*. He raised me from the earth, and embraced me ten-

derly; a tear running down his hoary cheek. After recovering himself, he said, “I cannot tell thee, my son, whether thou hast been *wise* or *not*; but I remember the force of love, in youth: I will enquire concerning this young woman, and you shall soon know more of my mind.” He informed himself, and in a few days addressed me in these words. “How it may please Providence to dispose of thee, my son, I know not; I thought thou hadst fixt thy affections on *Jenny Smart*; her father will give her an *hundred pounds*.”—I told him, “In obedience to your pleasure, I have *tried* to like *Jenny*, but I find it impossible.” He replied, “Why?” I frankly

frankly confessed, that I thought myself *too good* for *her*, as I had reason to believe she thought herself *too good* for *me*.—I asked him, “who is *Jenny Smart*?” He said, “*Jenny* is the daughter of a farmer in my father’s neighbourhood, who will give her an *hundred* pounds, or more, if she marries according to his pleasure; but he has educated her, as if he meant to give her a *thousand*. She has been at a boarding-school, and can *gabber* a little *French*, and dance a minuet. This has given her such a turn, that when I went to see her, she received me very *coldly*. She is a handsome girl; but she seems to know it so well, and to be so much puffed up with her *boarding-school learning*, nothing but my father’s absolute command, could have induced me to think of her a second time, if she had countenanced me. What hath an *English* farmer to do with a *French* tongue? If the *French* come here, as an enemy; I’ll do my best to teach them to speak *English*: and as to going to them to throw away guineas in cookery or hair dressing; we must leave it to those who have more *money* than *wit*.”

F. You see how foolish some people are in going out of their sphere, by their ambition of learning That which not one in a thousand acquires; and could not be suited to the rank in life they are to fill.—But what said the young man?

D. Mr. *Worthy* proceeded: “No, my dear Mrs. *Mary*; you are the girl of my affections; and on your kindness hangs my life. Early and late will I labour, in the summer’s sultry sun, or winter’s frost, and hazard my life with joy, provided it can contribute to *your happiness*.”—He then paused and shed a tear, and said: “O tell me your mind!”—I confess to you, my father, his discourse was so tender, and yet so modest and artless, I felt the drops stand in my eyes also. Gratitude for the preference which he gave me, and the sincerity with which he spoke, affected me more than perhaps it ought to have done.

F. Not more than nature dictates in such cases; nor less than you might think due to *bring a lover*. But what did you say?

D. I collected my strength, and said, “Mr. *Worthy*, my father has often told me, that hearts are not so easily broken in *deed*, as in *word*; and if there is a girl with money and beauty recommended to you, why should you think of *me*, of whom you have seen so little, and who have no

wealth nor charms to boast of?” To which he replied with some eagerness, “No charms to boast of!—O Mrs. *Mary*, never shall I forget the minute when first I saw you at the gate. You courted so civilly, and said, *I thank you, sir*, with such a voice, I was struck as if you had been something above mortal. I felt so new and strange a pleasure, it is no wonder I should stand motionless with the gate in my hand, as you saw, for indeed there was no creature else to pass. As to my knowing so *little* of you, I know a *great deal*, and my father also knows it. My heart fluttered with joy, when I heard that you was not *rich*.” To this I answered; “Why do you think that *poor* people are more easily purchased than *rich* ones? If I should think more honourably of you, than of a richer man, do you imagine I should sacrifice myself for *wealth*; or gratify my *vanity*, at the expence of my *affections*? My father has often told me, not to plague my heart to please my fancy: but neither could I ever think happiness depends so much on money, as to wed a lump of gold, which perhaps might weigh heavy on my heart, and deprive me of every hope of happiness, merely that my back might be covered with a glittering garment, which after a few days, the novelty ceasing, would be only cumbersome.”

F. Bravely said, *Mary*! What did he reply?

D. He looked with great tenderness and signs of joy, and said, “No, my dear Mrs. *Mary*, your duty to your father, and your piety to God, the father of us all; your industry and ingenuity; your knowledge of the dairy, and your good temper, make you rich, far beyond my merits; these qualities might render you worthy of a man of much higher expectancies than mine. Yet still I hope you will give me the preference:” again repeating, “O tell me your mind!” I answered, “Indeed, Mr. *Worthy*, I have *no mind* without seeing my father, or knowing his pleasure. If you are my friend, do not tempt me to trespass, by saying more than I should say, lest I should forfeit that good opinion which you have of *my duty to my father*.” Upon this, he took my hand, and touched it gently with his lips.—“Well then,” says he, with a more determined voice,—“I will learn of you, my fair faint, to be virtuous:—but give me leave at least to tell you, what further passed between me and my father.—He said to me, “Thou, my son, wert first enamoured with the person of a  
young



young woman in a transient view, as many a *wifer* man than thyself hath been : thou couldst not see her virtues in her face, whatever thou mightst *fancy* ; but it so happens, that she is deserving of thee, or a better man. I have therefore determined, if she should like *thee*, as well as *thou* dost her, and her father will consent ; though I believe he is not able to give her much dowry, I will settle upon thee the *rye-land* farm, and all the stock, which brings me in full *fifty-five pounds a year*, all charges paid. But that thou mayst prepare for all events, it is necessary thou shouldst know, this young woman's father is a man of a very particular disposition ; he understands so much for his condition in life, and is withal so honest, he would not give his daughter to a man he esteemed a *fool* or a *knave*, not if he could keep a *coach and six*. As a man of virtue, he thinks himself under great obligations to Mrs. *Bliss*, who has taken his daughter under her care, as a *servant* ; and I am told he considers this lady as a parent to his girl, and will do nothing without her consent. We ought, according to the common rules in these cases, first to consult Mr. *Trueman* ; but, considering that he has so great a dependance on this lady's judgment, as I happen to have the honour to be known to her, I will write to her, and send thee with my letter."—Then, pausing a little, he proceeded : " My dear Mrs. *Mary*, when I heard this ; and that I was to go where I might see *you*, I am sure my looks discovered that my heart leaped with joy.—My father continued his speech, and said, " Let us see, my son, how this lady approves, and what steps she recommends to be taken, before thou makest any interest with farmer *Trueman* or his daughter. I advise thee to tell thy story to the lady ; she is a woman of uncommon understanding, and her heart is as good as her head, of which she gives continual proofs to her *servants*, as well as her *friends* ; and for the same reason I apprehend she will consider thy pretensions with *candour*. Women, *George*, generally compassionate men, in matters of love, more than they openly avow. Thou shalt take my *letter* to her : do thy best to make her thy friend ; tell her thy story, but not with passion, and what thy *resolutions* are, towards God and men, and the care thou wilt take of this young woman.

F. Well, *Mary* : all this was proper and judicious. This young man's father seems to be

well acquainted with my principles : I shall be glad to be acquainted with him ; though I fear from what you have said, that he will *flatter* me. What answer did you make ?

D. I did not speak for some time ; but I felt a tear fall from my eyes : at length recollecting what I should have done before, I asked him, " Are you *sure* that my mistress gave you *leave* to found my inclinations ? " He answered, " Yes indeed, or I would not have said so much ; " and then added with a sigh, " And I hope, my dear Mrs. *Mary*, you will think seriously of me. What signify fears and doubts, to torture a heart like mine. I love *you* too much to disguise a single thought, though I were to perish for my *sincerity*. You may get a richer man than myself ; but I think you will not find one who will consult your happiness so much ; and what are *riches*, but as they contribute to *happiness* ? I am sure, whilst *you* are *good*, I shall be *happy* ; and so will *you* ! And I think you always *will be good*, and keep sight of the everlasting happiness of the *blest* in heaven, where none of the sorrows or calamities we are now subject to, can reach us ! "—Indeed, my father, I began to consider him as a *good young man*, and my *friend* : I thought I could do any thing that was right to make him happy ; but, as I knew not what *you* might think, who are so much a better judge, I told him, in as *positive* a manner as I could utter, I *would* know your pleasure, before I heard a single word more on this subject." He answered with a sigh, " I believe you are in the *right*, though in saying so, I condemn myself. I will not advise you to do any thing that is wrong."

F. So tender and importunate, and yet so reasonable a lover, seldom meet in one man !—I have the greatest confidence in Mrs. *Bliss's* prudence, as well as her humanity and consideration for young persons—and I shall certainly enquire into this young man's character.—I can find no room hitherto, to complain of *his* conduct, nor of *yours* ; though it was rather a surprize upon *you*, as it is now upon *me*. I will not ask you what your inclination is ; you have discovered it ; but let me advise you, by all means, not to be *credulous* ; and exert yourself ; preparing for the *worst*, as well as hoping for the *best*. Shew that you are *my* daughter ; and give proof of prudence and resolution, concerning which we have so often talked.—Pray,

what

what kind of person has this young man? I must have seen him, when he was civil to us; but I do not remember him.

*D.* He is of a *middling* stature, very upright for a man used to labour; he is well made, not in the least corpulent; his complexion rather fair, his hair light, his voice soft, and his discourse, such as I have related. All my fellow-servants speak well of him. I observed his nose rather sharp than flat; his eyes quick and lively; his mouth small; his teeth, white and regular; and upon the whole he is *comely*. He had on a light ash-coloured cloth, as clean as any gentleman's, and I do assure you the buttons were silver.

*F.* Well, *Mary*, we must enquire about him. *Aspiring* is a serious affair: you are engaged in a business which requires much caution. As to *Love*, it is common to mortals; and having nothing to do with pomp, our humble condition seems less subject to wretchedness, on this account, than that of the rich.

*D.* I believe when people are poor, they naturally follow affection.

*F.* Those who have no wealth, nor ever had any prospect of living in affluence, hope they may support love without any such aid; and it seems to be more in favour of love, to have no want but of *money*, than to want every thing except money. Where *true love* subsists, in the marriage state, *adversity* cannot divide it from the heart: but for the same reason, that this depends so much on *virtue*, if you, my daughter, should meet with a disappointment, fly to religion as your guardian spirit; and do not dishonour the reverence due to the *purity* of your love, by any act of *despair*; for despair in the sight of God is a criminal distrust of his mercy: let the heart be otherwise ever so sincere, this is wickedness to be sorrowfully repented of.

*D.* Suppose a husband treats his wife so ill she dies of grief.—

*F.* The laws provide punishments for desperate assaults: and as we should never abandon ourselves to despair, even for our own sins, whilst the throne of mercy is accessible; certainly not for the sins of other people. Notwithstanding all the sweets of love, and the joys of friendship are comprehended in the *marriage* state; yet it may occasion the deepest sorrow, and most complicated misery.

*D.* But this must generally be the fault of the *man*, or his *wife*, not of the state itself.

*F.* In every instance, the best things are subject to abuse. Even *religion* is sometimes carried to the excess of *melancholy*, *enthusiastic rage*, or *devout phrenzy*.—Fools, are still fools in every condition.—

*D.* Your remark reminds me of a circumstance, which Mr. *Worthy* told me, of a curious conversation he had with *Jenny Smart's* uncle, just before he set out for town. He said, “You know, my dear Mrs. *Mary*, that in the country, it is not as in town, where every one is ignorant of what is passing in the house of his next neighbour; with us the secrets of a whole parish are easily blown; and perhaps it is best so, as every one in it may be kept the more in awe. My father had no sooner resolved on sending me to town, than I had a visit from *Will Smart*, uncle to the young woman I just mentioned; but not a man after my heart. He accosted me in these words: “Well, *George!* I hear thou art going to *London*, in search of a *wife*: hadst thou not better take my *niece*; she is a fine handsome girl, has an hundred pounds, and perhaps may have more hereafter. It is true she did receive thee coldly; but now that she hears thou hast *another love*, the saucy jade repents, and says thou art a *good young man*. This is the way with them; they are all a parcel of —.” I interrupted him, and said, “My good, Sir, forbear; do not condemn the whole sex; for there is *one*, for whom I would hazard my life: nay, I would rather die than any harm should happen to her!” “Well said, my boy,” says *Will*: “why thou art in love in good earnest.” I then asked him, “Have you never been in love? I think you are a widower.” To this he replied, “Come, *George*, thou art an honest fellow, but thou hast not yet had any experience. I have been married, it is true. My brother and friends told me it was *proper* I should marry; and I thought it best to take a poor humble creature, whom I could rule, rather than one who would rule *me*. We lived together a few years, as men and their wives generally do: I used to curse her when she told me she was very sorry to find, I took no pains to break myself of *hard-drinking*; and that I had, what she was pleased to call, *criminal* connections with another woman.

To

To make short of the story, this silly woman died, of what my neighbours called, a *broken heart*. I would not give twelve-pence for a dozen women, whose hearts are no tougher than this comes to! She knew what I was when she married me. Give me my *freedom* and good *London porter*; this is bitter, but it is *bitter good*; whereas women, I can tell thee, are often *bitter bad*! A plague take them all!" I let him go on till he chose to stop; then I said, "I never liked lumping accusations. The complaints of men against women, or women against men, in general, are equally absurd; since there requires no messenger from heaven, to tell us, some are very bad of both sexes; and women generally good or bad, *wife* or *foolish*, as they are educated. With regard to your *humble wife*; I do not find you accuse her of any thing, but that she was your *faithful friend*, and a *tender-hearted good woman*. If your unkindness killed her, you ought to repent in sackcloth and ashes; and if you have any fear of misery after death, it is high time you should leave off *drunkenness* and *ubriety*, as unfit for a man, and most abominable in one that professes Christianity." To this he answered, "George, thou art a sober lad; and, notwithstanding thou mayst not be exactly of my opinion, I wish thou wouldst marry my niece: it is true I love drinking and whoring, but I believe a man may live without either: and to be sure, thou wilt not bid so fair to get rid of my niece."—Here he paused. I told him, "We differed much in opinion, with

regard to the true pursuits of happiness; for I have been always taught, that however prone we may be to evil, our happiness consists in *virtue*, not in *vice*. That with respect to his *niece*, I acknowledged her to be a charming young woman; and that her money would be of use to me, in stocking a farm; but I did not think myself a proper husband for her; and my heart was now otherwise engaged; that she had my *good wishes*, and I hoped she would be very happy whenever she married."

F. Very well, *Mary*! This you say was Mr. *Worthy's* story. He gave you an excellent picture of a worthless fellow, in *low life*: I wish there was no such character in *higher stations*: yet this man is not lost to all sense of virtue; for you may perceive he wished to have *your lover* for a *nephew*. The great fault of people when they marry, is coming together *against their better knowledge*, or as a matter of convenience; or with such fondness, they overlook That *virtue*, *reason*, and *religion*, which are necessary to render the state happy. *Will Smart* made his engagement miserable, even to the *murder* of his wife: though it was done in such a manner as not to come under the cognizance of the laws. *She* had not strength to stand under the weight of cruel and unworthy treatment. The contrary of the rule which this man observed, namely *sobriety*; *mutual tenderness*; *obedience* to the laws of our religion and country, can alone produce the happiness which is sought in the marriage state.

### CONVERSATION III.

Trueman's late master's further observations on the customs and manners of London. The importance of *brimny* in the married state. Under what circumstances disparity of years is warrantable in marriage, particularly when the man is the elder, exemplified in three instances.

F. YOU mentioned young *Worthy's* enquiries concerning my matter; What did you say?

D. In discoursing on the manners of *London*, he gave me an opportunity of commending my mistress. He told me, he had heard his father talk of the gentleman you served, and to whose

memory you pay so much honour: He questioned me concerning *his* opinion of the manner of living in *London*; to which I answered, "The gentleman whom my father served, did not confine his humanity to him; the *foot-boy*, who was under him, partook of it; for he would never permit the lad to go from home,

to wait in any place where he could be exposed to danger; but recommended *reading, writing,* and *knitting*, when his duty in the house permitted. His opinion of *London*, and the contagion of evil communication, induced him to act as a *father* as well as a *Christian*. Like my good mistress, he chose to suffer inconveniences himself, rather than be the cause of an injury to another. He considered every hour, not usefully employed, as lost; observing, that *amusement* being innocent, and sought with moderation, is in all places useful; but a fondness for recreation, reversing the order of nature, by nightly entertainments; preferring a torch or a wax taper, to the light of the sun, in his opinion is criminal. Jestling on serious subjects; indecent conversation; foolish familiarity, which often breeds contempt; and such behaviour, he called *stabbing of time*. He beheld with secret sorrow, mixed with indignation, crowds of fine folks in *London*, employed many hours every day, more particularly women, in adorning their persons: in sitting in a theatre: in lolling over a table, at cards; or in reading *foolish* or *unprofitable books*. All this he called squandering away *their substance*; wasting the rich treasure, *time*: forgetting the duties of a *Christian*, and the account which is to be given of the talents committed to their care. He allowed that there is more *folly* in the world than *wisdom*; and therefore he compassionated the foolish; adding, at the same time, that it would be presumption in him to pretend he had no share in the folly. But he thought himself unhappy, when he was not in pursuit of some object which gratified his piety or humanity; and made his amusement tributary to his health, and the benefit of other people. He thought every man should improve his talents, particularly in learning how to possess his own soul, not in pride of heart, and the lust of the eye; but in the humble, calm transports of *self-applause*; his blood making its circuit through his veins, in a regular motion. If the contrary happened, and his spirits were agitated, he found his blood tainted; his health impaired; the purity of his mind injured, and too often sorely wounded. "How," said he, "can unhappy mortals, who are under a consciousness of the unworthiness of a turbulent, trifling kind of life, enjoy any solid satisfaction? How often do I hear people wish *to-day*, for *to-morrow*, flattering themselves that the *next day*

they shall reap some golden harvest of *delight*; but when *to-morrow* comes, as they do not alter their *thoughts* or *manners*, and it passes as the day before, I perceive no change to their *advantage*; nor conceive how they can arrive at any: their habits being the same, they will produce the same effects. Either their pleasures grow *irksome*, or being violently delightful, die as it were in an explosion of joy: like fire and powder, when they meet, they consume themselves, and injure all around them. Those who make a pother about *political harangues* and writings, stuffed with the gall of *private animosity*, it is a bitter pain to hear them." Thus he talked, as my good father has often said, for he delighted to speak of so kind a matter."—Mr. *Worthy* observed, that he acted like a man of sense on a noble *Christian* principle.

F. Truly, *Mary*, you have a good memory; and gave a faithful account of what you heard. I hope you retain as well the substance of my lessons, before we parted, with respect to your own conduct.

D. You may rest satisfied that I remember them perfectly. On this occasion I had myself seen much of the detail you had given me, and your words occurred the stronger to my mind: perhaps I had also a little vanity in the display of my memory and attention.

F. It was all true: and to the purpose of instruction: a little vanity sometimes does good. I presume what you said did not make *Worthy* the less impatient to return to his father.

D. He is but few miles distant from us at this time.

F. You must now consider how to avoid falling into any of the errors you have been describing; constantly remembering your duty, and that the *marriage state* can be *happy*, only as it is *well conducted*.

D. What would you have *done* to this *prosperous* end?

F. The parties should be well acquainted with each others temper. If this be not maturely weighed and considered, the very object which captivates most to-day, may be loathsome to-morrow. Both sides should bring their due portion of *sense* and *good temper*, as well as *tenderness* and *compassion*, into the common stock. If one will *laugh*, because the other *weeps*, fire and water may as well be coupled. The wise ever expect to see a change in temper or disposition, from

from *health* or *fortune*; and the variety of circumstances, under which we can know how we shall act, only when the trial comes; for married persons often make a discovery of infirmities, to which, as lovers, they were blind.—With regard to my sex, we are said to have all the gaiety of *April*, when we *woo*; but when wedded we resemble *December*. So *maids* put on the smiles of *May*, when they would *win a heart*; but, as soon as they become wives, how many alas, do weep like an *autumnal flower*; or *storm*, as if they rivalled the winter's winds.

D. Alas! Your comparisons are very strong!

F. You have heard of the dreadful distresses, which the lawless *commerce* of the sexes creates; and you may suppose, that sacred as wedlock is, the discordance of humours is deadly to the peace and harmony, which should reign under this contract.

D. Much of the evil I believe arises from requiring women to marry men they *dislike*.

F. This is a crime which, when it happens, kicks at Heaven. It is the sin of *ambitious* or *covetous* parents. Those who come together with sweet cordiality, and rational hopes, their state is a sample of *heavenly bliss*: but the contrary is an emblem of the regions, where there is *weeping and gnashing of teeth*!—

D. Do you think it right that *all people* should marry?

F. It is *wrong* that *any* should, without considering the nature of the engagement. It is a business of much moment to the welfare of mankind; and should be thought of, by every one, at a proper age, unless there is good reason to the contrary. It is not only the most safe condition, and that in which so great a part of *private happiness* consists, but the best calculated to promote the welfare of *our country*. The Almighty, in the great order of his providence, made the sexes for the mutual aid and support of each other; and both for his own glory: and it is highly reasonable to presume, when people come to an age of judgment, and possess the *means* of breeding up a family; or among the lower classes, are *fit* to get their bread by their *skill* or *labour*, *marriage* is the *proper* state; and nothing can be a stronger incentive to it, than the affections implanted in the human breast. But life is beset with snares, and abounds in folly; and we are all subject to calamity when we least think of it, inasmuch

that no enjoyment, however sweet, is without its mixture.

D. If *marriage* is necessary to the support of society, then those are the *worst subjects* who neglect this duty.

F. Certainly: except those that *abuse* it. The indispensable obligation of people of all conditions, leads them to consider what is their duty to *God*, their *neighbour*, and their *country*; though some are ingenious in finding excuses; or, converting their *speculative reasonings*, into *false conclusions in practice*, mortify themselves. Many of the higher classes neglect marriage; or, by not promoting it as a general practice, take off part of its sanctions and merits, and create temptations which might be easily avoided. There are many powerful reasons why the *youthful* should marry—some find reasons *for* it, at all ages, particularly of my sex.

D. So it seems; I hear *Abraham Lively*, at the age of threescore, has married a name-sake of mine, *Mary Prudence*, who is not quite twenty.

F. He was always a spirited man. But what reason can *she* give for a marriage under so great a disparity?

D. She says, “The *first* thing requisite to a happy marriage, is the *good temper* of the man; the *second*, his *understanding*; the *third*, his *health*; and the *last*, his *fortune*. *Abraham* possesses all these: though he looks old, he is strong; he hath never debauched himself with *barlets*, nor applied rebellious liquors to his blood, to exhaust his vital warmth. If the *winter* of his days is come, it is as a bright and glad some frost, not gloomy nor misty. I am convinced of the sincerity of his affection for me, with as little mixture of *dotage*, as I suppose there generally is in the breasts of young men, when they talk of *flames* and *bleeding hearts*. Were all other circumstances equal, I should have preferred a young or middle-aged man; but I did not know where to find one that I liked, who would *love* me; and I chose to be wedded, believing I should be the happier woman. I know that in the course of nature, my husband may die before I am old; but it is also as true, that *I may die first*. This is in the hand of God! For the rest, I should deserve to perish, as the most wicked woman that ever was born, if I did not endeavour to make his days as long, and as happy as I can. With this view I gave him my hand at the altar, where I called on God to witness

witness my promise to be *faithful*; and it is my *interest* to be so. I hope to take care of my own soul, as a *Christian woman*, the same when married as single? I will do my duty, and consequently avoid, not the *reality* only, but the most distant *appearance*, of every thing that can furnish occasion for *jealousy* or *disscontent*. I am sensible, if I mix with the world, and meet a daring reprobate, who may happen to like my person, he may be the more inclined to make his advances; but you may be sure, if it so happens, I shall repel his insolence, with so much the more *indignation*. A woman whose conduct is proper, and worthy of a *Christian*, need not entertain any painful apprehensions with an *old* husband more than with a *young* one; except that his life may be the shorter." Thus she talks.

*F.* A brave girl truly! She comes of a good stock, has a good understanding, and I believe she will be as good as her word.

*D.* If I were to marry an elderly man, I should be of *Mary's* opinion; and I had rather have a good-tempered, understanding *old man*, than a savage, ill-natured fool, though a *young one*.

*F.* I remember my master used to quote a certain great modern philosopher (*a*), who hath given his opinion, that no person should think of courtship after the *age of forty*. But he might as well have said, that a man of *four-score* should not *eat*, as that one turned of *forty* should not *marry*, at least in *England*: granting that every year, after this time of life, makes the event less *promising*.—I recollect an instance, of a good-natured, jocular man, of my acquaintance, who had buried *two wives*: Being used to domestic life, at the age of sixty he took a third, who was but just turned of twenty. We were upon such good terms, I told him the remarks that were made upon the occasion; to which he answered, "Be not troubled: I take for granted my friends judge that I have acted foolishly, in taking so *young* a woman; but I marry for myself, and not for them. I never married without *affection*; and I have not yet seen an old woman, whose personal charms made any great impression on me. This is the *third foolish thing* of the kind, I have done in my life: and I think I have as good a title to play the fool as any

other person. But if the event should justify my conduct, and I beg leave to judge of my own happiness, who will be the *fool* then? You will please to observe, the young woman, who is now my wife, I have reason to think will prove very faithful, because she has good understanding; is well educated; comes of sober parents; is not beautiful: and could not possibly be influenced much by the hopes of making a figure in life, by giving her hand to me. If she behaves well in such circumstances, will you reproach either *her* or *me*? I hope by the force of kindness to retain her affection. Such an alliance, you may imagine, partakes as much of friendship, as of love. I have known many cases wherein all circumstances seemed to combine to render the parties happy; the flame of love strong, bright, and equal; and yet one, or both of them, soon forgot their duty. If my wife were unfaithful, there would be one harlot in the world, more than there was before. I should be sorry for it, *very sorry*, my friend; and so I should if any other young woman were to forsake the guide of her youth: but when I had paid my debt of grief, I should consider her as the *spitting of indigestion*, and leave her to repent at her leisure! I am not afraid—I found her the guardian of her own honour; I leave her in the same office. If I think she does any thing wrong, she begs I will tell her my mind freely: I make proper allowance for *her youth*, and she does the same for my *age*. Thus we fulfil our contract made in the sight of God, I humbly hope, with the applause of God and good men."

*D.* This was sensible: but he seems to have talked rather like a *philosopher*, than a *husband*. What answer did you make to him.

*F.* I said, "If you can think and act so calmly; and have built your happiness on such a foundation; I cannot condemn your following your own inclinations: but may it not be a means of shortening your life?" He smiled at this, and said, "Trust to my prudence. Whether you consider my partner, as wife, or other relation, I dare say, when you converse with her, you will soften the rigour of your sentence." They lived happily together, for many years, and had *eight* children, who are all living.—

(a) Sir William Temple.

## CONVERSATION IV.

*The disasters of ill-timed love. How far wedlock is necessary to the happiness of some men. The insolence and vice which often accompanies youth, equally an enemy to happiness and marriage. A sense of duty is God essential to matrimonial contracts. The severity of the custom which requires the celibacy of domestics.*

D. **WHAT** a wretched thing is ill-timed love, when the passion plagues itself, and feeds on its own miseries !

F. This is a *vice*, my child, which is sometimes taken for a *misfortune*, as if nature were in fault, and not ourselves : where the heart is susceptible of such tricks and fancies, it is foolish, if not wicked ; and whether it be foolish or wicked, it suffers chastisement. Whether this happens ofteneft to the male or female, is more than I can well judge of ; but he that loves beyond the circle of his sphere to compass, may as well grow enamoured of the moon and her bright silver crescent. The arched eye-brow, or the sparkling eye, or any little circumstance which fancy doth magnify or extol, and thus invade the heart, as it were with swords and flames, must surely prove the poor mortal to be ill-deserving of the name of a *wise* man : For if such circumstances do so strangely metamorphose him, and drive all pleasure from his heart, to give place to vain fantastic whims, or unchaite images, expelling religion from his breast, may he not be deemed insane ?

D. I cannot well answer such a question ; but I believe there are crowds of such madmen in the world ; and I do not perceive that women are in the least sorry for it ; for I have heard it said, there is so strange a power in love, men neither see, nor hear, nor understand, under its enchantments, as if they were in their senses.

F. To some it proves most sweet and musical, lulling the soul to the most pleasing rest. Where is the man who is not valiant in the defence of her he loves ? And what creature is so dull and stupid, who does not delight to hear her speak, whose outward form hath much enchanted him ? Yet surely love is most proper for youth ; and if the age of *forty* should restrain men from courtship, how much more ought it to influence wo-

men : but as they are often in greater need of protection than men, it is the more pardonable when they marry as they can.

D. Do the labouring part of the people, generally marry at an earlier age than the rich ?

F. I believe much earlier : but in our climate it is seldom fit a girl should marry earlier than seventeen to twenty. As to limiting the age of love to forty, however it may sometimes change its name to *dotage*, the question is, if any marriage should be made without its portion of love ; I mean, a sensibility of a woman's charms, as necessary to hold the affections bound. This is the opinion of a friend of mine : “ If this young woman,” says he, “ devotes a part of her life to make the remainder of mine the happier, she does me a kindness which I shall gladly repay. There is but one rule without an exception, and That is, that no rule is without one.” He was *near fifty*. At every period of life, some men, without domestic enjoyments or social intercourse, are but half themselves : he who has the lawful object of his best affection under his roof, must bid fairest for solid and substantial satisfaction. As to misfortunes, they are common in every state : wife men count so far upon them, as to be prepared ; but, for the same reason that they are wise, they will not decline engagements in which they *hope* to become so much the happier. Thus you find in many cases, where the objections are general, the answers must be applicable to the particular circumstance ; proving that the greatest objection, is to the folly of making any objection which can be of no use.

D. There are, I presume, young men of three-score, and old ones of thirty, according to their health and good-humour. I remember our cousin *Robert Goodman* : though an old man, he conversed with such sprightliness, good sense, and good

good manners, it so far won my heart, I could not help reflecting, at That time, how happy a woman might be with such a person.

*F.* He is a singular instance: youth sometimes inclines men to insolence and vice; as age leads to disease and peevishness. All these are highly offensive to women: but youth may be cured of their infirmities.

*D.* I have heard it said of marriage in general, "If you marry, you will repent; and if you marry not, you will repent."

*F.* This is a picture of the inconstancy of the mind, and the imperfection of human happiness. Let us take this proverb as an instructive admonition, to examine which is the least evil; repentance in consequence of doing a thing, in itself *praise-worthy*, and productive of *good*; or repentance for an omission, by which we are left in a lonely condition, and the community injured. A woman may find herself in a state, whether better or worse than she would have been in if married, she cannot tell; but, being sure that she is not happy, she may as well try the experiment, provided she acts with common prudence.

*D.* I believe the *very* considerate sort of people oftentimes do nothing but *consider*.

*F.* Where judgment is wanting, there is sometimes danger in caution: in other words, to be passive, when we should act, is folly as well as indolence.

*D.* It is said, that "when marriages are made *without love*, love often follows *without marriage*."

*F.* This concerns lawless love, or mercenary matches, whether the fault be in the parent or not: awed by a principle of religion, *true social affection* will never disturb the *peace of society*. But marriages made, where both parties utterly dislike, notwithstanding they are valid in the eye of *human laws*; *God*, who sees the heart, often afflicts such offenders with great punishment.

*D.* A sense of duty, joined to gratitude for kindnesses shewn, in the married state, may form the inclination of a virtuous woman; and some virtuous women I suppose marry contentedly, though the man be not the most pleasing of his sex.

*F.* A true sense of duty, is frequently a substitute for the *pleasure of affection*: and we ought

to suffer any *evil*, rather than renounce our *duty*. In every concern of life, this is the great object, to which we should religiously adhere, even to death.

*D.* Most people think it unbecoming in a young woman, to talk as if she never intended to marry; at the very moment it is supposed she would be exceeding glad to find a good and proper husband.

*F.* There is indeed a very ridiculous farce carried on upon this subject: it is prudent in young women, to decline the discovery of their thoughts, when it is of no use to make them known; but their reserve hath often prevented the union of thousands, who would have gladly met; and after a little knowledge of each other's humour, been happy together. There are two customs at war with marriage; one relates to the gentry, of whom many of the men, declining this state, live *profligately*. The other, to DOMESTIC SERVANTS, who dare not marry lest they should *lose* their *places*, or not *get* any. I have heard it seriously maintained, that the *misery* of this class of our fellow-subjects, may be dated from their *wedding-day*.

*D.* I hope it is not so, my father; for what an uncomfortable doctrine is this! Are they to be condemned to live a single life? By what commandment doth *God* require it? Is any law of the land so partial and unjust?

*F.* Not so fast, *Mary*: This opinion supposes, that their wages are not equal to their expences, when they have children to provide for. The reason why some masters and mistresses object to married servants, is; that they are exposed to the temptation of being absent from home; and of pilfering provisions, with a view to convey them to a wife or children. For my own part, I rather believe, that to one theft committed for the sake of a lawful wife, vicious women have been the occasion of an hundred. Single men also remove so easily from place to place, there is no tie upon them. I have heard it said, that a certain illustrious duke (*a*) has hardly any servant who is not married; and that no person is better served, or has a completer confidence in his domestics. The argument with respect to the wants of a wife or children, proves too much; for it may be extended to all the lower classes of the people. And whether it be for husband, wife, or children, parent, friend, or neighbour

(a) Duke of Portland.



neighbour; whether it regards *provision* belonging to a master; or the *time* which the servant engages to devote to his service; if it is supposed he will deprive his master of his *right*; such a servant is unworthy of trust, and may be treated as a dishonest person. As to the temptations which are only *dreaded*, in this case; the objection so far falls to the ground, that it is in effect establishing a certain calamity, in place of a casual evil. Opposition to the marriage of domestics, seems to bear some affinity with duelling.

D. How can that be?

F. Both customs are connived at for a *supposed temporary convenience*; and both are destructive of humanity. The reasoning upon both, is equally unfair, and contrary to the golden rules of doing *justice*, and shewing *mercy*. The natural consequences of forced celibacy, are adultery, fornication, perturbation of mind, quarrels, contentions, loss of time, disease, and early death. If we trace the causes whence many fall victims to the laws, we shall find it owing, in a great measure, to the obstruction of marriage; not only as this contract gives a security for a man's good behaviour; but as the single state inclines the thoughts more to wickedness. I suppose, that of *ten* malefactors annually executed, *eight* of them have been bachelors: and of the same number of women, who have become prostitutes, a much larger proportion has been unmarried.

D. This seems to be highly probable: but still I do not see how you can compare this custom to *duelling*?

F. Because celibacy, forced on the servant, has a great mixture of selfishness, pride, cruelty, and *manslaughter*, on the part of a master or mistress; granting, that if a woman *married servant* is in a state of child-bearing, it may sometimes prove inconvenient.

D. One part I understand: but how can you make out manslaughter?

F. So far as it *prevents the birth of men*, it operates the same as *killing them*, when they are born. All duellists call themselves *honourable men*; and who dares arraign a master or mistress for rejecting a servant for being married? With the character of the most polished humane nation, in both these instances we fall into an anti-christian *barbarity* of manners. Our holy, pure, and divine religion, so admirably calculated for

our happiness, is in these capital articles grossly violated; and we feel the sad effects: when, and in what degrees, God will punish us, *he* only knows.

D. The pious and wealthy part of our fellow-subjects, are not aware of the force of this argument, though it is a good one.

F. If they were, we might hope they would make their prejudices, bend to their religion.

D. Are not the most faithful servants generally rewarded, by masters and mistresses, by *their* approval of the matrimonial contracts of their *domestics*?

F. This frequently happens among the most humane and sober part, as is now your case: and sometimes it is countenanced from motives of common decency; opposition favouring much of gross inhumanity.

D. Are *husband* and *wife* often admitted together, into a family as servants?

F. Some people of large fortunes, and persons of distinguished compassion, admit them; but they are oftener separated. According to the best of my observation, when the man and his wife are both received into the same service, it is necessary they should consider themselves as bound by a double tie of fidelity and prudence, towards a master and his family; for if either offends, they are both subject to be discharged. The separation of man and wife, in such cases, is supposed to create such discontent that neither will remain; and the master generally chuses to discharge one with the other.

D. Some husbands and wives may be glad of such an occasion to separate.

F. Aye; but we are not to suppose that conjugal love is ever extinguished among good people: if by the dispensations of Providence they are constrained to part, it is often their misfortune, not their fault.

D. I am glad to find there are some masters, who soften the rigour of their sentence against the marriage of domestic servants.

F. *Nature* is sometimes *permitted* to prevail. Whatever situation mankind are in; those who are extravagant or indolent, are hardly to be trusted in a married state: At the best, the child born to such parents, comes into the world under a great disadvantage. On the other hand, marriage often awakens the attention of the *thoughtless*; and every one may observe, that the industrious and provident generally succeed in wedlock.

wedlock. If they suffer some kinds of misery, still they have *liberty*, and the gratification of their *affections*: and they learn to bear the yoke of adversity, till it becomes easy to them. God is ever merciful to those who seek for *mercy*, and obey his laws.

*D.* How are domestics, in other countries, enabled to breed up their children?

*F.* I once heard my master say, he had discoursed with a woman servant in *France*, who with the value of six-pence a-day, took care of two children, and gave them a decent education. This, at first view, seems impracticable with us: but I know many married pairs, not domestic servants, who have supported at least half a score children, upon two shillings a-day. The situation of married domestics, renders this more difficult; therefore it calls the louder for the piety and humanity of masters and mistresses; and claims the greater assistance and kindness of relations and friends.

*D.* Are these to be depended on?

*F.* Not without caution: we must accommodate our expectations to the measure of experience; yet if all confidence of this kind were to cease, we should degenerate into *savages*. I never knew a virtuous parent without a *friend*, nor a good child without a protector: Providence should be *trusted*, though not *tempted*. Where domestics are the most restrained from marriage, there the greatest number of both sexes die at an early age, and few children are born (*a*).

*D.* What did you find with regard to the morals of domestics in livery?

*F.* In great cities, they are almost as debauched as their masters; but they are more just in their amours; for they are sometimes persuaded to marry the woman they have seduced. If marriage were more countenanced among this class, there can be no doubt, but it would improve their morals, and produce many happy effects.

*D.* Would it not be beneficial, if marriage were more general among all ranks of people?

*F.* Most assuredly: if servants and masters were generally to live in a *married state*, it would appear with the greater dignity in the eyes of both; and become more instrumental to the support of the liberty and prosperity of the country. Domestics would give the greater pledge of their faith to the public; and being the proper guardians of the innocent in the persons of their own offspring, they would act more agree-

ably to the wisdom and humanity of our laws, which suppose, that if sickness, or loss of limb, or old age, disables any one; and no friend or relation appears, they have a title to succour. The most *worthy*, and such as once were wealthy, may become objects of parochial charity. In this happy land, no one can perish for want of bread. Notwithstanding this *liberal provision* by law, I am told, that in countries where there are no *poor's laws*, marriage among domestics is more general.

*D.* What do you imagine to be the reason of this *inequality*?

*F.* We may impute it to a greater degree of humility, and resignation to Providence; and that they are in no fear of *losing their places*, because they are married.

*D.* If there were no other motive for *marriage* amongst us, than the consideration of the *poor's laws*, it would be but a slender encouragement.

*F.* Whatever you may think, it was the effect of great wisdom in our forefathers, to form this plan of relief, particularly in favour of *infants*, who are left *orphans*.

*D.* Poverty must often create a conflict in the breast, whether a person shall marry or not.

*F.* Among the higher ranks, what *they* call *poverty*, may produce this effect: but as happiness is not the lot of the *poor*, because they are indigent; nor of the wealthy, because they are rich; it must be fought for, in obedience to the dictates of nature, and the law of nature's God: our natural affections, regulated by religion, can alone accomplish the work. Love often triumphs equally over poverty and riches; giving a *promise of happiness*, and seldom failing of *making it good*; provided *religion* has a share in binding the contract. The poorer people are, or the more generous, the less are the goods of fortune attended to. Where there are no riches, we may conclude, the affections of persons who marry, are under no such bias. In the absence of other enjoyments, the poorest of mankind have recourse to marriage, some esteeming it the most comfortable, whilst others find it the least wretched condition. Thus it happens, that one way or other, the great order of nature, respecting the sexes, is obeyed; one man to one woman, and not like beasts, left in a state of promiscuous commerce. In this our dear country, where *art* seems to vie with *nature*, in beating out such a variety of *amusements*, for the

*poor*

(a) See pages vi. vii. &c. of Introduction.

*poor mortals* who are *rich*, marriage is not so general among them, as with us labouring people; whence it is obvious that their *vanity* creates a *distrust* of Providence, or a *neglect* of their own and the common welfare.

*D.* The proverb tells us, that “when *poverty* comes in at the *door*, *love* flies out at the *window*.”

*F.* *Extreme* misery may drive out *affection*, as starving destroys life: but *this saying* is calculated for the *higher classes*, whose *vanity* triumphs over their *affections*; not for *us* who consult nature, and depend cheerfully on Providence, and our own industry. Mankind wander strangely from the intentions of the wife and merciful Author of their Being, when they *neglect*

*marriage*, or *abuse* it. Those who are insensible of the laws of kindness, gentleness, and the mutual good offices which flow from a true and genuine conjugal love, are strangers to their own interest. The silent tear that falls from the female eye, under the various afflictions, or the infirmities of life, affords more solid comfort to a man, when he can wipe it away, than all the pomp of pride, or the highest gratifications which riches can furnish.

*D.* Happy is the marriage made upon such principles, and such a mutual love of virtue; that in spite of sickness or adversity, neither party will forsake the other. Heaven grant this may be *my case*!

## CONVERSATION V.

*Wickedness and folly, whether in a married or single state, at enmity with happiness. False expectations the cause of the infelicity of marriages. Fable of the two hounds. Conduct of a humourous officer married to a turbulent woman. Universal acknowledgment of the power of women. Speech of a tender husband to a light-minded wife.*

*D.* **T**HERE seems to be something in this custom very untoward, and contrary to those *tender precepts of humanity*, which you have so repeatedly recommended to my practice.

*F.* In this view, I complain: but however ungrateful it may be, it will not probably affect you; and the rest we must leave to the direction of *Providence*. Nor are you to understand, but that there are more *domestics* married than openly avow it; and if *all* of them were wedded at a proper age, those who *want servants* must have them. I think nothing would tend more to establish the throne of humanity amongst us, than giving the preference to married persons as *domestics*; provided they shall have reached the age of twenty-one. Nothing would tend more to promote the fidelity of the servant, and the benevolence of the master: nor would any thing render them better subjects, better citizens, and more sincere friends to their country. The dependance arising from the sacred ties of wedlock, being of all others the strongest, it would give a more charming face to benevolence, and assist us all in the cultivation of it.

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*D.* But why would you exclude those who are under the age of *twenty-one*?

*F.* There is a proper time for all things. Many go into service, as early as twelve or fourteen; and such young servants are *necessary*.—As to the unprosperous consequences of marriage; honesty and affection, supported by industry, will give charms to the dreary waste: the rain that falls from heaven, like the manna which once supported the chosen people of God, will furnish them with succour and support. Though the heart be rude and plain, if it be honest, it will not be the less acceptable to that almighty Being, who is no respecter of persons.

*D.* But do not both sexes often deceive themselves, and bring disgrace upon this honourable state of life, by expectations of happiness, which themselves are not capable of?

*F.* This is the effect of their deficiency in virtue, or in sense; not of the state itself. Whoever seeks for happiness under this alliance, must consider his engagement to make *another happy*, by all reasonable means: and what greater good can mortals seek, than a constant and agreeable

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companion, a prudent and devout friend? If both parties do not learn to *forgive* a thousand infirmities, which they will find in each other, how can they expect to be *happy*? None of us live with honour, but as we discharge our *duty*. He who expects much of another, and thinks but little of his own failings, every imperfection will put him out of humour; and instead of preserving a disposition to be *always pleased*, he may be *always displeas'd*; and not discovering the cause to be in *himself*, or not seeking to remove it, live and die in misery.

D. If all people in the married state would think thus, it might be happy! But if in every condition, those who are foolish or wicked are in the same degree miserable, it seems to be a less evil to live *single*, than to multiply such calamities in the world.

F. But they would still be fools, whether they were married or not, though less *conspicuous* in folly. If amidst so many unavoidable distresses to which life is subject, married persons, forgetting how short a time is allotted them to tread the stage of life, will act a *tragic scene*, and plant *daggers* in each others breast, by *discord*, *corroding cares*, and *discontent*; what can be said, but that they wantonly *seek their own misery*!

D. If I marry, I hope I shall adapt my mind to my circumstances; and try to acquire affections suited to every incident in life: and as it is natural to a woman to pity the *cries of her child*; she may, with the same piety and tenderness of disposition, compassionate the *wrath* of her husband, whenever he happens to *talk* or *act* as if he had *lost his wits*.

F. You suppose then that all men act *childishly* or *wickedly* at one time or other: I believe it is true; for "no one is *wise* at all times:" I hope you will *act* as well as you *talk*, whenever the trial comes. And let me tell you, there are causes for a husband's wrath, which only the sorrow and repentance of a wife can remove. It is a subject for *ferret*, as well as *compassion*, for a woman to see a man, so nearly related to her, transported by *anger*; but can he with patience hear his wife talk like a *fool*; or see her, agitated by her passions, behave like one devoid of *prudence*; or abandoned to vice.

D. Nobody imagines but that some wives are as great fools as some husbands.—What is meant

by the proverb, that *marriages are made in heaven*?

F. This seems to allude to the providential meeting of the man and woman, who are best formed for each other. But those marriages, in which affection hath no share; where neither party studies the temper of the other, or even desires to please; where *contests* daily arise upon *trifles*, and neither man nor woman will *give way*; and in instances where some even violate their bed; or when both husband and wife neglect the education of their children, or shew them a *bad example*; where do you imagine the matrimonial knot is tied?

D. Not in *heaven*, or it is strangely abused on earth.

F. When this contract is made in the fear of God, and kept sacred, the knot is fastened by the double tie of *affection* and *duty*; and in this sense also, marriage is *properly* under the *immediate* care of *Heaven*.

D. One would imagine there was a time when marriage was in great esteem; for the wife man says, "he who getteth a wife, *beginneth* a possession; he hath a help like unto himself, and a pillar of rest."

F. This is bold and significant. Can marriage be recommended in stronger terms?

D. He says also, that "he who hath no *wife*, goeth about *mourning*." What does he mean? Some have reason to mourn for having *bad wives*.

F. Of all plagues, an *unquiet* or *vicious* companion for *life*, is the greatest. I have read of two great philosophers (a); one of whom commends the *patience* of the other, by observing how well he behaved under the *greatest of all calamities*, "even That of a *turbulent* woman for his wife." Being asked by a great general (b), how he could bear the perpetual *scolding* of his wife? "I endure it," says he, "as those who are accustomed to the ordinary noise of wheels to draw water." *Solomon* was not the less in the right, when he speaks of a *man having no wife*, *going about mourning*: for I have often observed single persons, particularly among the *rich*, who generally desert nature most, lounge about like *helpless*, *useless animals*, dissatisfied in themselves, and doing no good to any body else. The secret cause appeared to me, that they were *unallied* to

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(a) *Sonca*, speaking of *Socrates*.(a) *Alcibiades*.

any one, for whose happiness they interested themselves: they were under no restraints from evil, by any worldly connection; and therefore had the less propensity to good. The prospect of happiness here, and of heaven hereafter, being thus removed the farther from their eyes, there seemed to be so much the more reason for them to mourn.

D. Reason and experience may teach them this lesson. But he who is linked to a creature so perverse, as she seems to have been, who fell to the lot of the philosopher, must be a *mourner indeed!*

F. Most of the evils in marriage, arise from expecting too much; and not considering life as a *trial*; and liberty as good, only where it is restrained by reason. The fable of the *two hounds* is excellent: they are represented as very fond of each other; but being *young dogs*, the huntsman coupled them, to prevent their following every scent, and hunting disorderly: they expressed great uneasiness at their situation: if one chose to go this way, the other was as eager to go the contrary, till at length they came to a downright quarrel. An *old hound*, who had observed what was passing, reproved them in these terms: "What a couple of *silly puppies* you are to be perpetually worrying yourselves at this rate! What hinders your going on *peaceably and quietly together*? Cannot you compromise the matter between you; by each consulting the other's inclination a little? At least try to make a *virtue of necessity*; and submit to what you cannot remedy. You cannot get rid of the chain; but you may make it sit easy upon you: each thwarting his companion, is only tormenting himself: be easy and quiet, and you will find by *experience*, that mutual compliances not only compensate for liberty, but are even attended with a *satisfaction and delight*, beyond what liberty itself can give."

D. Excellent! The best admonition which can be given to *husbands and wives!*

F. You may perceive, *Mary*, how admirably it suits the condition of *marriage*, preventing both parties from straying after *false game*; exposing the contests which so often arise between married persons; and *ridiculing* those who are bound to live in peace, yet seek occasion to quarrel. — The philosopher overcame the *bitterness* of his condition, by his patience.

D. And probably not without making some

impressions on his wife, unless she was a *devil incarnate*.

F. I remember an officer in the army, a man of humour, who was so weak as to marry a woman of a turbulent temper, for the sake of her money. Being a patient man himself; when *madam* raved, he beat a *drum*. He that despises such a woman, so as to disdain to *wield it with her*, whilst he does himself justice, he chastises her in the severest manner: she died screaming with *chagrine*, that she *could not get him out of humour*. You will judge of what turn he was; for before marriage, she once ordered her servants to turn him out of doors: He addressed himself to them in as humorous a manner, by saying, "You had best be civil to me, for I shall be your master in a very few days." The intention of Providence is very apparent in all circumstances which relate to the sexes. Every one who has lived as long in the world as myself, must have observed, that as nature has cast the *female* in the softer mould, she hath given a peculiar gentle turn to *women's* thoughts and manners; and from hence a great part of love and harmony arises. A *termagant woman* is a monster: She who departs from her proper character, generates *hatred and discord*. This appointment of nature is invariable: it never changes. The *woman* naturally claims protection of the *man*: for the same reason, she must be *obedient*, and *fear to offend him*. The harder and more dangerous task falls to his share. In return, domestic offices, and the care of children, become her duty. If he excels in *valour, strength, and judgment*; she shews her excellence in *gentleness*, and the pleasures of *kindness and fancy*.

D. Providence is wonderfully indulgent: but we are not all sensible of it. Doth it not sometimes happen, that the *female* has the most *understanding*?

F. Aye: but, as there can be *no government* where there is *no ruler*, she, who hath more sense than her husband, will shew it by her prudence, and fear of God; still *yielding the superiority* to him, whom God hath set over her: She may *secretly* govern him; but *openly* to assume the command, except in very extraordinary cases, is a proof that her *understanding* falls very short of the true mark.

D. Are not some men so indolent in temper, as to find it more easy to be *governed*, than to govern?

F. Every man who is guided chafes *filken strings*. The greatest danger is, when a woman gives herself up to the guidance of *fancy*; for although this hath many uses in life, and contributes much to enliven the graver turn of *men*; yet, when it exceeds due bounds, it runs away with her, and degenerates into *levity* and *folly*; vice and madness often attending them. *Fancy* delights in *variety*, and creates such a propensity to *amusements*, it oftentimes turns the *heads*, and perverts the *hearts* of women.

D. If their minds wander, they will lay the foundation of *jealousy*.

F. Such conduct cannot fail of disturbing the harmony of marriage. Sometimes it plunges the happiest pairs into the depths of misery.

D. It is obvious in this instance, how much the happiness of women depends on their being controlled by reason and religion.

F. The happiness of rational creatures must be founded in *reason*. You know, that "wives are said to be *mistresses* to the young; *friends* and *companions* to the middle-aged; and *nurses* to the old." Even the last of these stages may be rendered delightful, where there is a true sense of duty, or likeness of disposition. Equality of age alone, will not avail: but if the wife be much the youngest, she will require so much the more *prudence*.

D. But you say *prudence* is not much in *fashion*.

F. This is rather the age of *pleasure* and *dissipation*. In *youth*, love often proves to be as a bath of tre: the *middle stage* of life, wherein friendship makes the chief composition, is so far the *safest*. If young *Herity* is a *virtuous*, *good-humoured* man, possessing worldly goods towards taking care of you, being above the age of *twenty-two*, he may be *trusted*. Young men, well *taught*, are more easily ruled, and disciplined to *peace* and *harmony*, than those who have walked longer in a track, of a more *giddy humour*. In all cases, *Ma y*, it seems to be allowed, that "he who gets a *good husband* for his daughter, *gains a son*; though he who meets with a *bad one*, *loses a daughter*."—

D. I hope you will not lose *me*, my father!

F. Marriage, like other connexion in human life, is under the care of the same common Lord. We must still refer to this, that the mind nurtured in religious principles, will find a support in all *extremities*. *Thomas Rort*, a very honest man of my acquaintance, married a young wo-

man of a lively disposition, who had not sense enough to discover that *liveliness* is never so well employed, as in *religion*. A proper occasion offered for telling her his opinion of this matter. "You and I," said he, "are wedded; I hope very faithfully; and I love you with the *utmost tenderness*: but the more solicitous I am for your happiness, the clearer I discern a cloud gathering over us, from which we must seek for shelter in time. Believe me, my dear *Marta*, we shall find this shelter only in the precepts of *religion*: you do not appear to consider it in so high and important a view!—You have not, I fear, been educated with such impressions as sufficiently influence your life and manners. You have now put yourself under *my guidance*: will you *trust* me? I will lead you, by the mercies of Heaven, in the right way."—She listened attentively, and bid him go on. He then proceeded thus: "You know, my dear wife, that you profess yourself a *Christian*. Look back with your mind's eye, and take a comprehensive, *manly* view of your religion from the beginning. Read the Old and New Testament, and endeavour to acquire a relish for them. I do not mean, that religion is a *new* thing to you, or that you should devote your life to study; but that these books contain *great and divine things*. Have you considered with what incredible swiftness the fame of the *religion of Christ* was spread over the face of the habitable world, from one end of the earth unto the other? It filled all *Asia*, and passed into *Europe*, and to the furthest *Africans*.—Wherever it went, it told nothing but an *holy* and *humble story*; that *Christ* came to bring his religion into the world, died an ignominious death; yet his death did not abate the courage of those who proclaimed it; but added much to it: for *they* could not *fear death* for *God's Master*, whom they knew, for *their sakes suffered death*, and returned to life again.—He that in the time of *Tiberius* was crucified, soon after, in the reign of *Nero*, even in *Rome* itself, and in *Nero's* family, was by many persons esteemed a *god*; and it was on public record that he was so acknowledged. *Justin Martyr* urged it to the *senate*, and to the *emperors* their selves, who if it had been otherwise, could easily have confuted the bold allegation of the *Christians*." Succeeding ages have confirmed the important truth, *Christians* have been divided, and fought many bloody battles for an *opinion*, or particular *mode of faith*: but still their animosity could never

bring either, to deny the reality of the history of the *miraculous birth and death of Christ*; his *resurrection* and *ascension*; and the doctrines which he taught. Do not believe it was for *him* they entered into bloody contests: it was for *worldly ends*: his religion is full of peace and good-will to mankind: and if you and I are *Christians*, let us shew it by our lives, our mutual affection, our charity, and our piety. We agree in our *belief*; let us agree in our *practice*: Permit me to tell you when you go *too fast*, or *too slow*; and let not this prince of this world deceive you. There are many practices which are *idle*; many dangerous, and some *wicked*; distinguish them with *judgment*, and avoid them with *care*. Make me your *guardian spirit*: I am in one sense, sent from heaven to conduct you; and I will do it with so gentle a hand, you shall confess that no man could have fallen to your lot who could be more *attentive*. Let me make my love for you strengthen your *hopes of heaven*. I cannot shew it so effectually, as by declaring my *readiness* to die for *That cause*, on which *your everlasting happiness depends*. — Affliction often changes the complexion of love, where religion has no share: but when warmed by one common *love of God*, and belief in *Christianity*, it cherishes, elevates, and inspires: and though the rosy cheek, which once caused my heart to flutter, should fade; the mind's charms will flourish in their full force and beauty. Our common love and expectation of joys, beyond the reach of time and chance, will have this effect. This makes love *manly* and *judicious*; not like the *testy babe*, that knows not why it loves; or grows froward and unruly with as little reason. Be watchful of yourself; you will have more *trials* than you are aware of: the *wife*, the *mother*, the *mistress*, are all duties new to you. You are now at school to learn them. Shun *danger*: if any approaches you, fly to my bosom for protection. *Violence* from without, and the *passions* from within, often attack the breast, and destroy our peace of mind. This is common in all conditions. The religion of our great Teacher and Redeemer instructs us in the duties of *obedience*, *benevolence* and *love*: *Tenderness*, *seriousness*, *patience*, *humility*, and *compassion*, are its characteristics! These join with the object which gratifies the affections of my soul. If these do not produce *harmony*, what can follow? If we shut out the *light*, we must wander in darkness: if we are ignorant of what belongs to our *peace*, and

our hearts become rotten and corrupted, breeding foul thoughts and vile actions, let discord come hot from hell, it is at our *own invitation*."

D. Very tender, manly, and judiciously spoken: I dare say she proves a *good wife* to such a man; though she might have been a *bad woman* in bad hands. Doth not marriage generally alter the mind?

E. In most men it gives the thoughts a *new turn*, to render them the more careful of their steps. He who honours love, as *true love* deserves; and he who has been foolishly inclined to contemn it, are taught to bend to nature's claims, and own the power of *Heaven*, in this part of life. Let the *married man*, as well as the *lover* not yet married, be *careful* how he manages his *passions*, or he will find security in no state or condition. All will be anxiety and confusion! The single and the married man, sometimes become as two different persons. Yet it is to be presumed, that he who shed tears in the tenderness of his love, or smiled when his mistress wore a smoothed brow, will droop with anguish, if his *wife* is *untoward*. It cannot always be in the power of the *best* man that ever breathed, to subdue the perverseness of a foolish *over-indulged* woman. This is not the fault of *nature*, but the corruption of *manners*. Let the marriage be made with common-sense, and religious hopes, and managed by the same rules, it will generally bring forth *comfort* and *ease*, sweet rest, and social joys, and terminate in *heavenly bliss*!

D. The state of marriage is said to be *heaven or hell*.

E. This is a *poetical* description. The gradations from absolute uninterrupted happiness, as far as mortals are capable of it, to *complete misery*, are numerous: no one ever attempted to count them exactly.

D. But the *married state* in general promises the most true happiness.

E. Aye; still recurring to *religion*, *good-nature*, and *good sense*, supported by the comforts of life: in proportion to these will the degree of the happiness be found: and where *religion* is wanting, it is as foolish to expect *happiness*, as to search for *diamonds* on a dunghill.

D. I am convinced of it: at the same time I observe that many go on, as *sauntering Jack*, or *idle Jean*, happy in not having *sense* enough to be very *nijereble*.

E. This is one kind of satisfaction. But to view

view things *as they are*, and not as *fancy* represents them, we must learn both from precept and example: *experience* must guide us by the clue of *reason* and *religion*. Attend to this, and whether you marry or not, you will mend your condition.

D. Upon the whole, you have no objection to marriage.

F. You perceive that I am an advocate for the state, upon every account.—The *learned philosopher*, and the *self-denying Christian*; the *sceptered monarch*, and the *labouring kind*; all came out of the same mould; and so did the *female* of every class of *intelligent* and *accountable* beings,

however formed by *climate*, *custom*, and *education*. By *marriage*, man maintains his dignity as a *rational* creature, and learns to *honour* himself, as distinguished from *other animals*, who pair as *their* nature directs, without any such law as respects *man*. Marriage lights the heavenly lamp, which points the way to those pure joys, which God designed should smile upon the sons of men! From this clear spring, those dear relations flow of *father*, *mother*, *son* and *daughter*. Hence the strong tie of *fraternal love*, feeding the fountain which brings us the *unmixed* relish of *domestic sweets*.

## CONVERSATION VI.

*The danger those who decline marriage are exposed to. The reasons against marriage fallacious. Declaration of a passionate lover. His father's admission, and enquiry concerning the object of his love. The perishing nature of beauty.*

F. COULD I describe to you the treacherous smiles of *mercenary prostitutes*, who are sought by such men as are unawed by any threatenings from above; you would see, for what *transitory*, *embittered* pleasures, such children of iniquity expose themselves to everlasting vengeance!

D. Those who *marry* from ambition only; are they not generally mistaken in their pursuit of *happiness*? If marriage appeared to mankind universally, in the amiable view you set it, there would be but few single persons above the age of twenty.

F. But men, in whose breast the choice seems most to lie, are fearful they shall not find mates whose minds are suited well to their own spirit. Others, conscious that themselves are *reprobates*, keep aloof, as if their own infirmities were too burthensome for any other to bear.—*God* is infinitely wise and merciful; though man is wicked and corrupt. Every one, not tainted with the infectious breath of *libertinism*, may hope for happiness, by walking in the path which the laws of nature have pointed out.

D. And no line is so strong, as That of the love which the sexes bear to each other.

F. For this reason, it is not wonderful that

*happiness* or *misery* should constantly follow this contract, as the conditions of it are *observed*, or *neglected*.

D. It is the duty of all of us to look well to ourselves; some are *satisfied*, yet not *happy*.—Is *Harry Lovely* to be married soon? He is said to be very deeply *smitten*.

F. He is a young man of warm affections: I wish he may be as constant. A relation of his told me the other day what had passed between him and his father: he opened the matter in these words: “I am now at an age of discretion: I think that every *good subject*, and *good Christian*, ought to marry, unless he has particular reasons to the contrary. I have fixed my affections on *Susannah Godschild*, and, my dear father, I beseech you give me your consent. I *cannot live without her*: your refusal would consign me to the grave!” The old man replied, “*Gently*, my son! Have *patience*: it is not treating upon fair ground, when one party *exacts* a compliance from another. You might as well marry without my consent, as put it to such an issue. I do not condemn your love, because I hope it is bestowed on a worthy object; but I cannot approve of *so passionate a declaration of it*. I know, my son, how to pity your weakness: but try if you can



can meet me half way; and let us talk over this matter, with as much *reason*, and as little *passion*, as possible; left, in search of the happiness which your *fancy* represents, you should find yourself burnt in your own flame; and become the miserable victim of *anguish* and *disappointment*!" *Harry* replied, "I beg your pardon, my father, but indeed she is!—O my father, she is—That which no *description* can reach. I have no words to convey to you the expression of her eyes, or the power of her smiles! She is so exquisitely formed, it seems as if her *body* thought; and she were *more than mortal*!"——To which the old man answered smiling; "Then you must stay till you die, and meet her in heaven.—If she is an angel, and not a woman, you cannot marry her."——*Harry* replied: "She is indeed *angelic*—and all the *graces* wait on her smiles! Not *spring*, in her most captivating charms; nor *autumn*, loaded with her richest fruits: not the bright *sun* that shines from yonder hill, and spreads his warmth around, to cheer the heart with plenty, furnish me half so much joy as my sweet *Susan*, when I behold her, so heavenly is her gesture and her mien!"——The old man interrupted his rhapsody, and said with a grave though pleasant countenance: "My dear *Harry*! I fear you must abandon this girl.—Whether she be an *angel*, or a *woman*, she hath *fascinated* you; and it is very unfit for a man out of his wits to marry: his progeny may be *lunatics*, or *idiots*."——*Harry* replied: "Forgive me, my dear father!—Be assured, if beauty can interest your heart, you will approve my choice. Indeed she is fair as *monumental alabaster*, with all the lively charms of *May*; and her eyes might kindle a fire, even in an old man's breast! She hath health, which promises a continuance of her charms; and her speech is sweet, beyond the softest music. Her countenance betrays the calmness of her thoughts: and the purity and integrity of her soul, stand confessed by all!" Here he paused.——The old man again *smiled*, and said: "Well! go on; let's hear *all* you have to say of this *wonderful young woman*!" *Harry* replied: "You may think that I talk too much like a young man and a lover: it is not the charms of her person alone which transport me; she hath more *knowledge* than any young woman I ever conversed with; and the most pleasing manner of communicating her sentiments; never

showing the least inclination to insult ignorance, or any other imperfection in her neighbour. She is lively in fancy, yet is her judgment sound; and she never speaks injuriously of another woman's person or merit. When she hath much reason to be displeased, she is *silent*, or expresses her dislike in such gentle words, her frowns are as instructive, as her smiles are graceful, and full of comfort and delight. She acts as if she had no other aim than to render virtue and religion irresistible, and to make him the happiest of mortals, to whose lot she shall fall. In her company only am I *happy*! My mind finds no quiet where she is not: *She* only calms my soul! O my father, *be indulgent* to me, or *I must die*!" The old man replied, "Prythee, *Harry*, be moderate.—What is all this *lavish lamentation*, or this *lavish praise*? I suppose she is amiable; but no *woman* upon earth deserves above *half* so much praise; and no *man* in his senses, talks this language: it is not the way to come at *truth*: Would you have me also to be in love with this wonder of a woman? For the reason that you are now *extravagant*, I fear you will hereafter change your mind. Will you be patient, and in my turn, give me leave to ask a few sober questions? I will not jest, where you are serious.

1. Is she, with all her charms, a good housewife?
2. Does she work well with her needle?
3. Does she know how to manage a dairy?
4. Has she ever bred poultry?
5. Is she *good-tempered* and *modest*?
6. Is she contented with common attire, and does she dress her head *modestly*?
7. Is she frugal, and inclined to piety, bending her knees before her Maker, with constancy and fervor, twice every day?

Answer me these questions *in writing*, at your leisure, when you are not so much *intoxicated with love*.

*D.* In writing! Surely *Harry's* father must be a formal *old man*, to think of such a strange proposal.

*F.* Not so *formal* as you may esteem him; he is an honest sensible man, very tender of his son; and I suppose had *reasons* for what he said. He knew it would make his son consider what he was doing, and perhaps discover if there should be any considerable flaw. He went on thus—"Consider well, my dear *Harry*, what you are about!

Personal.

Personal charms and fortune are good ingredients, towards making marriages happy; but they are not the principal articles: I fancy her fortune chiefly consists in her *beauty*, which I hope, for your sake, *is not so great as you represent*, that she may not turn other men's brains as well as yours. If she is of a quick temper, as you have discovered yourself to be, in your description of her, you will both require the exercise of a greater share of virtue and understanding, than you are aware of. Those who suppose that *beauty* will never decay, make provision for nothing else: the consequence of which is, that vows made at the altar, under the solemn tie of mutual fidelity, are sometimes disregarded. *Violence* of passion for one object, may lead to violence of passion for another: and instead of cultivating social virtues; and teaching children obedience to parental authority; and a strict observance of the commandments of God; justice is often trampled down:—and the poor child, who sees the deadly example, will probably have the same fate as the parent; and nothing but misery can ensue." Harry answered: "Your caution, my father, is a proof of your affection for me: I am sensible of the truth of what you say; I am sure it is founded in your knowledge of the world, and I will give you satisfaction in every point: I know you will allow for human infirmities. In speaking the language of a lover, I talk from my heart. If I were not in love, I should not desire to marry. I grant that beauty of person often disguises, or conceals the defects of the mind, and makes us believe contradictions." His father replied: "Be the more cautious: the arched eye-brow, and the damask cheek, the sparkling eye, and coral lip, are pretty things; and wiser men than you are, have left it on record, for above two thousand years, "that man loveth nothing better;" but they are not always safe: consider seriously the danger of such prodigal *passion for admiration*, which you yourself are teaching this young woman!—To the questions I have already made, I must add two more:

8. Have you reason to believe, amidst your lavish praise, she can bear to be contradicted?

9. Are you persuaded her love for you is fo blended with a sense of duty, as a wife, she will be constant in it, and in sickness and adversity cleave to you?"—

To this he answered, professing his confidence

in the *virtuous principles* in which she had been educated.—His father then continued, "These, my son, are the conditions of human life, and often happen to those who are least prepared to meet them. If you give her so high a notion of herself, she may soon think you not good enough for her. Alas, my son! you are not well acquainted with the heart, nor the temptations to which it is subject, when wretched mortals intoxicate each other with *praise*. Government, by an absurd delegation of power to a tyrant, is not more injurious to a state, than the *tyranny of beauty*, when exercised by a woman, whose mind has been poisoned by *flattery*!—Nor do you think what a fading flower *beauty* is! Mark well my words! You are enamoured with this young woman's beauty, and it doth not follow that she is deficient in other respects; but I have observed, that those to whom nature has been uncommonly bountiful, in bestowing outward ornaments, she hath dealt out the virtues of the *soul* more frugally. This is no *general rule*; nor can I tell, when it happens, whether it proceeds from the *pride* which grows from admiration, or the *neglect* of useful things. Sometimes the most beautiful in person are prompted, by the consciousness of this advantage, to exert themselves the more, in acquiring knowledge and virtue; a proper regard to their *fellow-creatures*; and a more perfect obedience to *God*. Though I am willing to trust you in all other respects, you talk so much the language of passion, I must make enquiry concerning the young woman, by whose charms you are captivated."

D. This perhaps was more than he did for himself. I hope, however, that *Susan* will not make him the worse wife, for his being so much in love with her: She will be an ungrateful jade if she does. As to the praise which is worth coveting, the more virtue a woman has, will not admiration follow her the closer?

F. It were well if men admired nothing so much as *virtue*. But what use can a *virtuous married woman* make of admiration?

D. True, my father. To be covetous of it, is in effect to seek for occasions of danger.

F. After warning him of the effects of flattering *Susan*, and proposing his sober questions to be answered at leisure, he observed: "These things, my son, should be thought of in time. She is now in her bloom, which cannot last long, though it may outlive your admiration of it: you must

must bear *her* infirmities, as well as correct *your own*. When the heart of a man or woman is inflamed with love, they suppose that *perfection* has taken up her residence in the breast of each other: but common sense assures us, this fond opinion must create *disappointment*; and that *mortification* will ensue: and, as one *disgust* begets another, *mutual dislike* often succeeds."

D. This happens more frequently in *flaming passionate matches*, than in those where a portion of *reason* hath been thrown into the sweet cup of love.

F. The old gentleman proceeded: "Determine to be always as *much pleased* as possible; to be compassionate tenderly; to expostulate calmly; to make *reason* the umpire in all debates: these are obvious duties. Let it not be said, *You do not understand your own situation, and will probably soon lose your prospect of felicity. You will involve yourself in a scene of vexation, and become miserable.* This, I say, has often happened, when the heart hath been as much inflamed as yours. Remember, my dear *Harry*, if you cannot make your *wife* good, you may make *yourself* so. With regard to the ordinary occurrences of life, about which men are oftentimes so weak as to word it with their wives; it should be a constant *maxim* to strive who shall yield, rather than who shall be victorious; I mean in *little matters*, that you may retain your power in *great ones*; still making reason and religion your guide. *Love* and *friendship* will not be the less faithful to you. In a word, if you do not place your happiness in the proper objects of it, you will find it as little in *marringe*, as in any other concern of life."—*Harry*, then

softening his tone, said, "Do you believe a bachelor is capable of half the happiness a husband enjoys, if he properly conducts himself?" Mr. *Lovely* answered: "Not if his wife is as good as she is pleasing to him.—If you think this young woman will take her share, and contribute to increase your joys, and alleviate your sorrows; for aught I know, she may be the very object which Heaven, in mercy to you, has appointed; and you must endeavour to *deserve* her."—*Harry*, who had heard his father with great attention, though seemingly disturbed in thought, began to brighten up.

D. He seems to have triumphed in his father's tenderness for him, as well as in his love for *Susan*. She is the handsomest girl in this neighbourhood; yet I never heard her spoken of as such a *beauty* as he represents her.

F. It will not be his father's fault, if he does not perform his duty in making this young woman's days roll on in peace.

D. But do you think women are generally such fools, as old Mr. *Lovely* supposes; that because they are *flattered*, they will forget their duty to their husbands?

F. *Flattery* is always dangerous, let it come from what quarter it may. It is not the language of *true love*; and ill suited to a state of imperfection: Flattery carries with it a degree of deceit, whether fraud be intended or not: and considering how frail and imperfect we all are in the sight of God, whose judgments alone are perfect, can *sinful man* be too much on his guard, with respect to *truth* and humbleness of spirit?

## CONVERSATION VII.

*The folly of women displayed in the love of admiration. Virtue and understanding essential to happiness in wedlock. Considerations of the qualities of beauty, the best check to the vanity of personal charms. Prudence in wedlock with respect to expences. Expostulation of a sensible, tender husband. Description of a happy pair.*

F. IF you suppose virtue to be the object of it, you are not of opinion that *beauty* is more choice in men's eyes. The object of admiration chiefly relates to personal charms: Men rather *applaud*, than *admire* virtue; though some are captivated with extraordinary in-

stances of *disinterestedness*; or the disdain of preferring themselves to others. The precepts of *Christianity* harmonize with the highest exertion of reason, and the noblest instinct in our nature.

D. If *gentleness of manners, meanness, humility,*  
P P P piety,

*fifty*, and such excellent endowments, are the chief ornaments of a woman: are they not the highest recommendations in the esteem of men!

*F.* Among men of understanding, such qualities undoubtedly claim attention, esteem, and applause; but high expressions of admiration are never safe. Modesty and prudence equally defend and adorn your sex; but when these are so far laid aside, as to admit of *flattery* or *praise*, the greater the *beauty*, the more dangerous the sin.

*D.* Can any woman who is a *Christian*, having sense enough to know how precarious a thing *beauty* is, and how subject to misfortunes, indulge a passion for *admiration*?

*F.* *True Christianity* will restrain her: but you know not what the hearts of some women are made of! It is the misfortune of these admiration-loving butterflies, to be governed by fancy, as *fancy* captivates the weak part of men. Every gaudy appearance charming her, she is pleased when she beholds others under the same delusion. The thoughts of a woman of this kind, flutter about, and she knows no resting-place, even in the bosom of her husband.

*D.* If a woman hath not understanding to discover that the exercise of her heart in the law of kindness, and the gratefulness of her manners, have charms far more lasting and valuable than *beauty* in person, or any external circumstance which creates admiration in men: if she cannot discover that meekness, modesty, and prudence in living according to the circumstances of her husband, are her truest ornaments, she is ignorant of her true interest.

*F.* Like a vessel afloat in a wide ocean without *sail* or *compass*, she will be driven on a rock, and wrecked.

*D.* Do you think that the love of admiration is the occasion of misfortunes in marriage?

*F.* No passion works half so strongly in the breast, or does half so much mischief: *Beauty* is often the cause of it; for though it is fading as a flower; subject to wither by the heat of the sun, and every wind from heaven: though it is so much shorter than the life of a man, that little accidents may deprive us of it; yet fading and short-lived as it is, it governs with an arbitrary sway, demanding the homage of beholders.

*D.* "A fair woman, without discretion, is like a jewel in a swine's snout."

*F.* This is a strong expression of a choice thing grossly abused.

*D.* But you grant there is a power, in beauty, more capable of giving pleasure to the heart, and transporting the fancy, than any other object.

*F.* Where gentleness of manners, understanding and innocence combine, it wears the looks of nature, when arrayed with all the charms, in which we can suppose the earth appeared, in the world's first spring, when *Adam* met his fair companion. But it is good, only to the *good*; and as far as I can judge, oftener perverts the heart, than purifies it. Compared to the noble properties of the *mind*, it is but a mere shadow: like a meteor, it blazes forth and dazzles, but it doth not lighten our paths, nor direct our steps aright.

*D.* Even lovers do not always see the same object with an equal eye.

*F.* The fancy, by which the heart is enraptured, may, as old Mr. *Lovely* observed, most easily carry them to new objects: and we often see *love-matches*, where only the consideration of beauty seems to have had any share, prove unhappy.

*D.* We should take heed to our ways, not to sacrifice comfort and peace, to the short-lived pleasure of the fancy.

*F.* To own the *power* of beauty; and to be a *slave* to it, are very different. Many have soiled the lustre of their characters, or plunged themselves into inextricable woe, by the mere force of beauty.

*D.* Do you think ugliness any security in the married state?

*F.* It renders both sexes less subject to be spoiled of their property: but I fancy no woman was ever preferred, because she was ugly; though many have been chosen for their beauty. There are various degrees of charms in person, and many opinions concerning it: but a *good wife* is the cordial drop which Heaven hath thrown into the cup of life, to make it palatable: and a *bado ve*, though she wore an angel's form, would be a bitter draught. To be tender to the *good*; and labour to *correct* the *evil*, is the duty of a man of understanding, from which he can never depart, without wounding his character.

*D.* She who is guided with *silken strings*, will sooner learn to honour and respect her husband, for knowledge and resolution, than if he ruled with a rod of iron.

*F.* It is humorously said, that it is more easy to *obey*, than to *rule*. But if a husband proves a mere dotard, weak and irresolute in his deter-

determinations, a wife will secretly despise him, if not openly avow a right of independency. If he is steady in what is *right*, she will be the same: she cannot mistake in regard to *great* faults; and *little* ones he will forgive. *Godliness, purity, simplicity of mind*, supported by industry and good humour, are qualities not subject to decay, as our *persons* are. These depend on the *understanding*, which is steady, not on the *fancy*, which is variable: Fix *your* heart on *them*; and consider all other advantages as agreeable accidents, not as things which constitute the essential part of your happiness. Remember that a *married woman*, who in the vanity of her heart throws herself into the eyes of any man but her husband, for the sake of being *admired*, can hardly fail of doing some evil to *herself* or *others*; especially if she is young, and possessed of many personal charms. You need not be in pain, lest beauty should lose its power. This will maintain its empire in the world, though *virtue* itself should be treated with contempt. A young woman, who entertains a right sense of religion, and is a candidate for everlasting happiness, whilst she attends to the necessary concerns of this world, as the state of trial, can never lose sight of the life to come. This is the character you should aspire at; that your alliance in marriage may become so much the more honourable and important, as it contributes to this great end. To compare *minds*, and make *sentiments* harmonize, is not common among modern lovers.

D. Many, I fear, are so weak, they think of no heaven, but that which they expect to find in each others arms. *Harry Lovely's* father seems to consider how harmony of sentiment may promote the great concern of *immortality*.

F. He is no less mindful of those mutual ties, by which *children* may be bred up in an awful reverence for the great Deliverer of mankind, whose laws observed, will give every alliance all the pleasures, as well as advantages, which the great Author of nature intended we should enjoy.

D. If they are attentive to the admonitions of so good and wise a parent, he and *Susan* will be a happy pair.

F. In regard to this world, you find that he is no less particular in his enquiry, whether his son be well satisfied, that the young woman will accommodate herself to his fortune; that when the period of transport shall cease, she may not

think the extravagant applause of her charms, fondly bestowed on her by her husband; entitles her to better fare than *he* can afford.

D. It is very right to shew a prudential regard to expence very early, lest his passion for her may induce him to be extravagant, though he should not be otherwise inclined to it.

F. This is often the case. You make me think of *Jane Sprightly*: she is young and lively, and much loved by her husband. She desired him the other day to carry her to the *fair*, fourteen miles distant: he told her it would cost more than he could afford before they returned home, besides the loss of time; adding, that he hoped she would think better of it. She looked *displeased*, and said, "I do not understand you." He replied, "My dear *Jane*, I have no greater gain at present, than supports us and our children; and our family is increasing. Whatever I spend wantonly to-day, I must feel to-morrow; or put off the *evil-day*. I shall also suffer the reproach of doing a wrong thing; and one false step will lead us to another. It is because I love you, and look forward for your happiness, that I desire to decline your proposal. I mean to defend you and our family to the last farthing, and the last drop of my blood; but I must do it in the way, which my reason and experience tell me it can be done most effectually. *Food* and *raiment* we must have; these are *necessary*; going to this fair is not *necessary*: We are already *happy* in each others love; can we be more than happy? Why should we tempt Providence? Let us be *contented*! Wait till *to-morrow*, and you will think I judged well *to-day*. It is ten to one, but some of our neighbours come home worse than they went out: some excess, or unruly passion, will ensnare them: some untoward accident, which they had not experience to foresee, nor prudence to ward off, will come across them; especially if they go out of their depth in *expence*. But if nothing of this kind happens; if *they can afford* to bear such expences, and we *cannot*, let us make up our deficiency in the joys of *contentment*; and wait till such kind of unnecessary charges become us:." Then embracing her tenderly, he added, "My dear *Jane*, you look as if you were *displeased*!—What are all the fairs in the world; or all the women that attend the fairs, to me, compared to *your smiles*! I can bear any thing better than your frowns, *except the consciousness of doing That, which in its*

*effects will hurt you: I would not do you harm for the world! not even at your own request: and no one can judge so well as myself, what will hurt you.*" *Jane* has good sense and candour, and heard him attentively. He spoke with such persuasive eloquence, in regard to the sincerity of his love, she could no longer resist; but smoothing her brow, with a sweet smiling air she said; "In good faith, my dear *Joshua*, though I had a fancy for the fair, it was but a fancy—and I believe thou art in the right: give me thy hand!" As a token of calm obedience, and sincere affection, she kissed it eagerly.—Now, my dear *Mary*, do you not reckon this a happy incident for them?

*D.* I shall remember *Jane's* good conduct. For my own part, I have set the evils to which life is subject in marriage, as well as the pleasures of contentment, in the fairest light. I know it is the will of Heaven, that we should labour with our hands; and fill up the measure of our virtue, by *useful industry*; not by a childish indulgence of *fancy*.—*Joshua* is a wise man: but I believe it is more easy to make a good husband to a good wife, than to a bad one.

*F.* *Joshua's* elder brother *Benedict*, lives not many miles from him: he is of a singular character, and a man of some fortune: We passed by his delightful tenement.

*D.* Was it the house which stands upon a rising ground, with a fine lawn before it; sheltered on each side with stately oaks? There is a clump of trees behind it, from whence appears a most enchanting prospect. The meadows below are rendered the more charming, by three luxuriant oaks, whose branches spread over the trout-stream which runs through his grounds.

*F.* That is the place! There he sometimes sits and meditates, protected from the sun's parching heat. Near it is a shallow stream, running in winding murmurs, chiding the pebbles as it rolls along. Hence he beholds the verdant lawns, and the leaves which quiver with the cooling breeze; whilst the melody of birds lulls his temperate mind to rest. Pleased with the warbling strains of feathered songsters, dancing in the nestling boughs, he asks no other music than the voice of his dear *Sophy*. When the winter comes, the neighbouring hills echo back the sound of the brisk huntsman's horn, and yelling hound, in the warm chace, which so much delights the sportsman. This happy pair, mix not

in the crowd, but taste the calm of joy, when others are in a storm of pleasure.

*D.* A storm of pleasure!—This seems to be the case in all great crowds, or much noise, as I observed in *London*.

*F.* Here they attend a little farm to furnish themselves with *necessaries*. They are frugal and temperate: every one who has the least pretension, is sure of their good offices. She delights in flowers: even the poor *cowslip*, the *daisy*, and the *blue-bell* of the fields, raising her mind to the contemplation of the great Author of nature, afford her a pleasure, unknown to the vulgar. She has also a nursery of plants and vegetables. When the herbs are in season, she cuts quantities and dries them; and by the proper use in decoction or infusion, she restores many to health. *Ground-ivy* she says is cooling and pectoral; and tells you of a gentleman who never took any other tea, and lived to the age of ninety. *Rosemary* she recommends as dissolving viscidities, or glutinous blood, and helping the free circulation. *Ginger* is her grand medicine, whether drank in beer or water, in *delicacy pains*. She uses it to correct the crudities of her fruit puddings, pies, or tarts.—For pains of a gouty nature, she says nothing is superior to *tansey*, whether in the infusion or decoction: by boiling it in wine, in some desperate cases, she has been successful. She is at the same time very ingenious: most of the ornamental part of the furniture of their house, is the produce of her ingenuity: and one beholds nothing but cleanliness, good order, and industry, which bespeak the virtues of the master and mistress.

*D.* Was *Benedict's* wife a beauty too?

*F.* She is comely. He fell in love with her piety, her good sense and ingenuity, not overlooking the delicacy of her hands. This pair is blest with two charming children, to whom the mother is school-mistress. She was married out of a great family, where the lady delighted in fine works of embroidery; and from seeing some scraps of such pieces, the eldest girl of eight years old, takes natural flowers; and assisted by a few water colours draws and shades, according to nature, to a perfection which is astonishing. What pleased me most the other day, when I paid this happy pair a visit, was the expression of humanity displayed in the grief of this sweet urchin, from an apprehension she had been the occasion

occasion of another's pain. She had been playing with her little maid-servant, and imagined she had accidentally hurt her. I was delighted in the distress of so young a person, seeing humanity operate in the breast, by a kind of instinct. I remember a boy of nine years old, who in his wrath cut a gash in a man's leg which had nearly killed him. It was a strong indication of cruelty; but it had such an effect on him, as to render him one of the most humane among the children of men. The tempers of mankind do not *always* depend on their parents, as every day's experience proves; yet they *gene-*

rally partake of the same disposition: and as to example, it rarely fails to make a good or bad impression.

D. I am glad to find that *Benedict* and his wife are so happy; but is it right to indulge their little girl, in works which may be superior to her fortune?

F. Who can tell what her fortune will be? If she does not make the better farmer's wife, on account of her taste, she may marry one of superior condition, so much the more easily; or obtain the higher station in service. They may safely encourage her *genius*.

## C O N V E R S A T I O N    V I I I .

*Good-nature and good-humour, with a sense of duty, essential to happiness in the married state.*

F. **N**OTHING can contribute to it more than *good-nature*. We find it easy to pursue a *good*, to which we are inclined by temper, and with a bad temper difficult to oppose many kinds of evil, though convinced of their malignity. I hope you will never find any repugnance to the exercise of That sweetness of disposition, we call *good-nature*. In order to preserve it, think as *well* of the world as you can; and not as *ill* of it as disappointments may induce you to believe it deserves.

D. Some deceptions which render us happy, are less malignant than some truths, which create misery.

F. Venerate *truth*: yet, if you follow her *too close*, she will kick your teeth out. *Good-nature* puts the best constructions on the kindnesses which we receive of others; while it inclines us to be forward in executing all such good offices, as constitute an essential part of the amusement, as well as the *duties* of life, particularly in the *marriage state*. It is this happy quality, which proves the best spur to *kindness*: it prompts us to outrun the expectation of our friends and acquaintance: It is sometimes misunderstood, as if it were too much to proceed from views divested of all passion and interest.

D. Persons who are in the highest degree of our esteem, influence us most. But neither in the married nor single state, all who are virtuously inclined, have the advantage of *good-nature*.

F. For the same reason, the *virtuous* are not equally happy. Those alone deserve the description of *good-natured*, who are prompted by a sense of humanity to extend their kindness uniformly, though not in the same degree, to all the world: and in proportion as they have good sense and virtue joined with it, they distinguish degrees of merit, and nearness of connexion and affinity; whilst they comfort the afflicted, and add *gladness* to such as rejoice. People of this turn, never find themselves truly happy, but when they are acting according to their natural disposition: they hardly ever fail, in *love* to a husband or wife; or in *duty* to parents: they are no less affectionate to children, faithful to friends, and compassionate to their domestics. If servants themselves, they are the more cheerful, industrious, and dutiful; affable in behaviour under every circumstance; and benevolent to all the world. Whether in master or servant, slowness in repentment, quickness in forgiving, superiority over the little incidents of life, which usually disturb the *proud* or *weak*, are at once proofs of good nature, and qualities essential to the happiness of the *married state*.

D. Sensible people are not *always* good-natured.

F. But good-natured persons are seldom without a portion of good-sense. Good-nature always engenders kindness, which disarms anger, and

and converts disgust into an occasion of benevolence.—*Beauty*, like a triumphant enemy, sometimes invades the heart with stings and poisoned darts; but the kindness which proceeds from *good-nature* extracts the venom of evil passions, without wounding itself. If cold indifference seizes the heart, this virtue revives it with a genial warmth: this gives the wings of *time* such varied plumes as please the eye; and by this the heart oppressed with woe is often healed.

*D.* Do you ascribe all this to *good-nature* and *good-sense*?

*F.* Without these, we seldom see the exercise of such *kindness*, as operates in the manner I have related: if we *do* no good, we cannot *receive* any—and what is happiness, but as we *do good*; particularly to those most nearly related to us, as in the *married state*? Independent of our condition in life, this quality makes all states *easy*. “Kindness will creep, when it cannot run.” An obliging disposition hardly ever fails to engage the attention of superiors: kindness calls on our *equals*; and if our gratitude is proportioned to their regard, in spite of all the perverseness we sometimes find, it will render us acceptable to all sorts of persons in every condition. A disposition to *please*, draws attention by a kind of force, convincing others that we are resolved to *deserve* it. You have won your mistress’s regard, by your *good-nature* and readiness to obey: be equally attentive to win your husband’s love and esteem. I am the better persuaded this will happen, as the love of a worthy child towards a tender parent, seems to be the best preparative for making a good wife. The man who expects to be happy in a woman as a wife, who has not been a good daughter, is under a delusion.

*D.* Heaven grant the man whom I shall wed, may possess the virtue of *desiring to please*!

*F.* Of this also be assured: the same placid disposition by which you will render your husband happy, will be no less grateful an offering to the Father of mankind, who delights in the happiness of his creatures: and as nothing is so chearful as innocence, no circumstance can contribute more to render the course of your days happy and prosperous, were it from no other consideration than the making him happy, who by the order of Providence is appointed your guardian and protector. Every wife gains as much in virtue, as the trial of her patience

amounts to, without injuring her temper. Gentleness in manners; carefulness in conduct; zeal in the duties of life, depend so far upon *good-nature*, that *with* it these social offices grow familiar and pleasant: *without* it, they proceed only from a sense of *duty*; and God knows how often this fails! The bare reflection, on the force and efficacy of *good-nature*, as shewn in a placid easy conduct, gives comfort to the heart; it makes us pleased with ourselves, and gives us the power of pleasing the rest of the world. It is for want of this quality, so many unkind things are *said* and *done*, by people who would resent the imputation of *cruelty*. What think you of a father, who, having fixed his heart on a match, to which his daughter was averse, as she was playing on the harpsichord said, I wish that instrument were your coffin?

*D.* What! in the anguish of her soul, when struggling between a sense of duty and love! O cruel father!

*F.* Cruel indeed! for it made such an impression on the poor girl’s mind, already wounded with tenderness for her lover, and sorrow for her father’s disgust, that she put herself to death!

*D.* Good Heaven! There she seemed to prove herself a miserable slave to passion, though it might not render the father less severe.

*F.* He was covetous and petulant, rather than cruel; for this sad accident broke his heart.

*D.* Passion uncontrolled acts tragedies in every quarter.

*F.* Few men are always equal or consistent with themselves: But for the same reason, that you would think it cruel, to be called *ill-natured*, for being sometimes out of humour; you are not to expect perfection in an other. In marriage, as in all instances of human commerce, *compassion* is necessary: and a wife must recollect, that she is married to a *creature abounding in frailties*.

*D.* I am sensible it is one of the chief excellences in marriage, to learn to compassionate an untoward disposition.

*F.* For the same reason that *husbands* are more apt to make their remarks, than *wives* generally imagine, themselves should be attentive not to err. Remember, my child, that your husband will have a title to know your sorrows, and may have it in his power and inclination to relieve you; yet the fewer sorrows you have, the more

happy



happy he will be, your happiness making a part of his : therefore rather conceal real complaints, than grow wanton in cherishing imaginary evils, or magnifying the little events of life, into evils.

*D.* It may be hoped he will rejoice in my joys, and give them additional sweets.—How doth it fare with those, who are perpetually complaining of the want of *health*, or of evil accidents? Are they fit to be *married*?

*F.* One of the worst recommendations to wedlock, is being prone to be *comfortless*; for this arises more from weakness of mind, or strength of *passion*, than from any evils that are unavoidable. I have often told you, that vexation of spirit is the vainest of all vanities. While this prevails, life is at a stand; we might as well *not live at all*: Let us support our good humour, on rational principles, and one day is worth an hundred; and if all our days are spent in *good temper*, we may safely pronounce, that we live a long

and happy life. *Cheerfulness* can exist only as it is attended by good-humour; and virtue itself, without it, droops and changes her name. When good-humour and good-nature unite in a habit of conscious uprightness, it has such a sympathetic power, it is almost impossible to receive a companion so endowed, without an inexpressible satisfaction; not from his words or sentiments only, but from his very looks and gestures. We converse with one who represents every thing in pleasing colours, with a peculiar joy. By a sympathy in our nature, we are led to rejoice, without reflecting from whence our joy arises.

*D.* You give me so high an opinion of *good-humour*, and *good-nature*, as necessary to the married state, I must practise myself in them before I give my hand; and as far as *words* are warrantable, make one that I will never be out of humour.

## CONVERSATION IX.

*The nature and effects of jealousy. Fable of the doves. Jealousy productive of much misery. Candid confessions concerning it. Gentle expostulations the surest cure.*

*D.* NOTHING startles me so much as the thoughts of a *man's jealousy*.

*F.* The more amiable a woman is, the more she may be coveted by other men. She must therefore be so much the more reserved. If she be truly good, and her husband in his senses, his heart will be at ease. Whether a woman marries a young, middle-aged, or old man, she must consult his temper. A wife woman will not teach a young man an evil lesson against herself; nor distress one who is elder, nor convert a sincere friend into a dangerous enemy.

*D.* Can any good come of jealousy in *marriage*?

*F.* There is something like it, which for want of another word, may be called *caution*, of singular service. With respect to the *purity of marriage*, and integrity of intention, it can have no evil tendency: yet if it goes beyond a due circumspection, it becomes a disease, which even ugliness in a woman, can hardly cure a man of;

nor hoary age in man, heal a woman's mind. Such is the *force* of jealousy.

*D.* How can it be proved to any man, that his wife loves him so entirely, as he may desire? No *words* nor *actions* can give such convincing evidence of love, or a sense of duty, as a hot-brained man may aspire at.

*F.* True: if nothing but the knowledge of her *heart* can satisfy him; how, indeed, is he to come at it? And if he knows what a variable thing the *heart* is, he will find himself distressed. Besides, himself may be amiable to-day, and contemptible to-morrow.

*D.* If he grows jealous, yet makes no discovery of it!

*F.* That is hardly possible: but if a man will gnaw his own bowels, he cannot find any relief from pain.

*D.* He may attempt to change the conduct of his wife, without making any discovery to offend her.

*F.* If she needs a change, he may do so, if he has

has good judgment and temper, and uses the *caution* I have just mentioned; but he should not wantonly hazard the loss of the portion of *love* she may entertain for him. Jealous *men* and *women* are so unfortunately circumstanced, they can find nothing like happiness, but in *disappointment*; for they search after *knowledge*, which either they *cannot find*, but labour in vain; or they discover the guilt which becomes their misery.

*D.* This is a very sad condition!—I perceive it is not enough for a wife to be a *good woman*, but she must be *cautious* too not to torment her *husband*. As for the jealousy of *lovers*, it seems to be a proof of *love*.

*F.* Aye, and of *hatred* also, as the occasion may suggest. It is sometimes carried to the height of madness; even to murder. Commend me to the ingenuousness of a person of my acquaintance. Before he married, he spoke to his intended bride in these terms. “I am apt to be jealous: it is an infirmity in my nature. You must compassionate it, and be so much the more prudent: and I will make the greater allowance for the proper liberty which you may take, by suppressing my own weakness: and let it be understood, that whenever I discover this infirmity, it is so much in proof of my love for you; and the less cause for your entertaining any apprehension of infidelity on my part. I am sensible, that to a woman of less understanding than yourself, what I am saying would *startle* her.—But you will draw *good* from it, both to yourself and me. If I do not distress *you* by my *weakness*, knowing it from my confession, you will not think it a reason to distress *me*, because nature, or my own fault, has made me weak in this instance; especially when I tell you, that as good comes out of evil, it hath been the best security to my own virtue through life. If the making a candid discovery of it before our hands are joined, doth not alter your mind, in my disfavour, my confession will make you think of me so much the more as a man of honour: and if it doth change your sentiments of *love*, I shall enjoy the greater share in your good opinion:—and now, *Madam*, I beg you will take your time to consider whether, having this great imperfection, I am really worthy of you?”

*D.* What said the intended bride?

*F.* She answered: “The more candour you now treat me with, the more I shall expect hereafter,

by such conduct as will bind you the stronger to my heart; and afford me, in my turn, more occasions of convincing *you*, that you only keep the key of my affections. I am not so ignorant of the turn of your mind, as perhaps you may imagine. If I am happy enough to be considered, as the fountain from which your joys will run; as far as I can answer for myself, and my own infirmities, which are numerous, the more I shall cherish *you*, with the united force of affection, gratitude, and duty. I suppose every man of sentiment is *jealous* in a degree: I have *many* faults: you have but *one*, and this may be converted into an occasion of our mutual felicity.” To this he replied, “I speak freely *now*, meaning to be silent for ever after, leaving you as I find you, the guardian of your own honour. The rest I will prove by my actions.”

*D.* She accepted of him, I dare say, notwithstanding his declaration.

*F.* They live most happily together. There are many instances in which caution may be employed to excellent purposes, to *prevent* the evils to which human nature is prone. This is exemplified in the fable of the *does*. The hen and her mate, with their brood, had lived happily together, for many years, though inclosed within a cage. Happening one day to find the door of it open, she was struck with a sudden desire of some new pleasure, and flew abroad into an adjacent wood, not meaning any harm, yet exposing herself to treachery or violence. Agitated in thought what she should do, she sat contemplative on the bough of an oak, till the owner drawing nigh unseen, seized her, and brought her back to her family. Her mate rejoiced to see her, and expostulated in these terms: “How couldst thou think of abandoning me, for the company of birds to whom thou art a stranger? I have been ever constant to *thee*, and should have died a martyr to despair without thee.” To which she replied, “Have patience, and hear my story. Never before this unhappy moment have I entertained a thought of roving: I was tempted by an uncommon accident of my cage door being open; and when I had trespassed, I was in suspense whether I should return or not. Pardon this crime, which I will never repeat: the consciousness of the *possibility of my judging amiss*, shall restrain me: if at any time the door of my cage should be open, shut it; and be it your care to protect me from all misfortunes.” You see how

how expreffive this is of the weaknefs and folly of the human foul ; and of the danger of temptation to do *foolifh* things, as well as *wicked* ones.

*D.* I understand the meaning of your fable ; but I believe women rarely act unfaithfully, unlefs they previously *intend* to do it.

*F.* There are many cafes, in which an *imprudent love of liberty* draws into fcenes of danger ; and a woman may become a prey, from an opinion it will be fufpected, from her imprudent conduct, that ſhe hath *really* offended. Keep within the line of prudence, and a ſenſe of duty will guide you.

*D.* Unwarrantable indulgences are never fafe. Whether we are tempted by our own hearts, or by other people's words or actions, of which fo many are calculated to enſnare, I lean much to opinion, that *jealoufy*, or *fufpicion*, in a certain degree, may be made a good uſe of.

*F.* Many have been loſt from their ignorance of the human heart. The ſituation of the doves teaches us to be watchful not to expoſe each other, by removing the barrier which keeps us within wholeſome reſtraint. As bad a thing as *jealoufy* is generally ſuppoſed to be, you ſee it may be conſidered as a *centinel* planted as an *out-guard*, not *ſeeming* to fear any harm, yet *preventing* danger, by keeping the enemy *without doors*.

*D.* But in this caſe, the *guard* itſelf muſt be watched, leſt it ſhould become an enemy.

*F.* Every thing hath its bounds. *Jealoufy* is ſometimes only another word for *temper*. The gentleman I mentioned was a wife man : he was ſenſible of his own infirmity, and ſaw the neceſſity of correcting it.

*D.* The *wiſe man* ſays, “ Be not jealous over the wife of thy boſom, and teach her not an evil leſſon againſt thyſelf ! ” and of a *wiſe*, “ What grief of heart and ſorrow, is a *woman* that is jealous of *another woman*, and a ſcourge of the tongue which communicateth with all.”

*F.* Excellent admonition ! Where there is no affection, hard words can do but little good ; and where love prevails, the heart teaches the ſoſteſt ſpeech.

*D.* Is a woman to be *paſſive* under all circumſtances ?

*F.* We are ſpeaking of *jealoufy*, not of *real* injuries. I adviſe you to ſtudy ſuch *Chriſtian* weakneſs of *temper*, as may incline you to forgive

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*real offences* in your husband,—rather than conjure up *imaginary ones* ; ſince nothing is more evident, than that *jealoufy*, blown into a flame of *repentment*, converts the heaven of love, into the anguiſh and torture of the damned. If once the mind is fired with *jealoufy*, and burſts into a flame, the powers of reaſon are loſt. *Jealoufy* is armed with the ſtings of ſcorpions to poiſon peace : if it invades you, give it to the wind. The evil may be beſt ſubdued by *gentleneſs*. I remember the ſtory of a great lady, who wore a necklace of diamonds, which ſhe knew her husband had intended as a preſent to his miſtreſs. On its being admired, ſhe ſaid, “ It is pretty, and it fits me ; yet I never put it on, but it pains me exceedingly ; I feel it at my heart.” The husband underſtood this language better than the reſt of the company ; and it wrought on his affections, and ſubdued him to her love. Where a woman is perſuaded of real infidelity in her husband, if ſhe has a wiſh to *ſhare* his heart, or *regain all* his affection, and turn it into its proper channel, *tenderneſs* and *love* will ſubdue him, when nothing elſe will. In this diſeaſe of the mind, contraries cure. The ſtings of conſcience may convert a man, when repentments would diſcover *too much*, and drive him to an extremity. If neither a ſenſe of guilt before his God ; nor ingratitude to a woman, in return for her fidelity, can win him ; if he hath no ſentiment of virtue, rage and repentment, *on her part*, will but aggravate her miſfortune.

*D.* But a woman's repentment may be meaſured by the offence committed againſt her.

*F.* In ſome cafes, the laws ſeparate man and wife.

*D.* There may be great mercy in the law, though the parties are *unlucky* in having ever come together. But to make up a breach, and prevent the parties from being reduced to the laſt extremity, is moſt to be applauded.

*F.* The greateſt miſfortune is, when a woman is *fooliſh*, or perverſe enough to think herſelf authorized to be as wicked as her husband.

*D.* When this happens, *repentance* muſt enſue, or farewel to *hope*, and all her balmy comforts.

*F.* Farewel, indeed !—*Deſpair*, with her *ſharp fangs*, and *grief*, with her mournful train, will follow at the heels of *ſhame*.

*D.* Many a poor girl has fought her own miſery in *jealoufy*, by *babbling confidants*. Ned

*Nailer* lately married *Susky Sprig*, a weak-headed creature; however they lived very comfortably together, till his wife's *confident*, more foolish than herself, suggested to her, that before *Ned's* marriage he was beloved by former *Harrow's* daughter; and that he had lately visited her and her father. This was true: but not that they had any discourse together of the least affinity with love. His wife, in the anxiety of her heart, burst into tears before him; and with a passionate fondness said, "I hope what I have heard is *not true*." Upon enquiry, the matter came out; and he addressed her in these terms.—"My dear *Susan*, as I have already plighted my faith at the altar, so I now declare, that I have been, that I am, and that I intend to be, most *true* to you. There is no woman in the world engages the least of my attention, except yourself. But it is impossible for me to silence slanderous tongues, or prevent falsehood from being propagated: and *falsehood* may be dressed up, so much like *truth*, as to deceive the wisest and most experienced woman. Do yourself justice. Be not deceived. Let not your doubts and scruples rob you of your peace. So far from your having just cause to complain, nothing can render me wretched, but to see you so. Slander cannot hurt *me*, but as it affects *you*. Your innocence does not exempt you from *sorrow*; but let not your tender mind vex you with *imaginary calamities*. It is but the other day I received you to my arms with rapture! My love for you is the same it ever was; and when I am unfaithful, I shall expect the heaviest curses on my head. Do you think, my dear *Susan*, because I have charms in your eyes, that this must be the case of *Polly Harrow*: and if I had, would you draw a conclusion so disadvantageous to yourself and me? Is it *charitable*? Is it just?—I appeal to your own understanding. Have I given you reason to imagine that I am guided by any vicious fancy, to give her a preference? I did not chuse to marry her, as I might have done: you are now my true and much-loved wife. And how could you think I would give up my reputation, and my God, for a pursuit so criminal and absurd? I love you too well to *flatter* you: indeed you are much to blame: listen not

to such cursed tales, to plunge yourself, as well as me, into misery. Drive such babblers from you: It is of such we ought both of us to be jealous: give this proof of your love for *me*. Banish sorrow, I beseech you, and make *me your confident*. I am your faithful, honourable friend, your *guardian*, your *monitor*, your *lover*, and above all, your *husband*. To you I have sworn eternal faith; and I will keep it unswerving with my latest breath."

*E*. This was much to the purpose; and I suppose satisfied her. A false man might say this; but it is so much the native language of truth, while men are judged by their words, as well as their deeds, I should believe him.

*D*. He went on further, by saying, "I am sensible that your weakness, in this instance, is the effect of your love for me; and this endears you to me so much the more: but do you not see how you may be burnt in a flame of your own lighting? I am not *angry*, but I am *sorry*, you should be so much deceived, or suffer such a passion to take hold of your mind. I commend the integrity of your heart, for giving it this early vent, as it affords me an opportunity of justifying myself, and avowing the principle of the love which is rooted in me. If you should hereafter be distressed by any thought, that robs you of your peace, make *me your confessor*: I am bound by the most sacred ties to *preserve you, even from yourself*, whenever you are in danger from any *untoward* passion."

*F*. What said she to such professions of fidelity?

*D*. She burst into tears of tenderness: she pleaded her love for him: she owned her weakness; and has since been as happy as a woman of her measure of understanding can be.

*E*. You see what little instances inflame a weak, or jealous mind.

*D*. I perceive that the cause often is, *weakness of head, or pride of heart*.

*F*. And sometimes from the well-grounded knowledge of the viciousness of mankind. You seem to understand the nature of the evil: guard yourself against it. Keep religion in your eye, and make the laws of God your law; and you will have nothing to fear.

## CONVERSATION X.

*The wickedness of coquetry. Candid behaviour in love necessary. The gross folly of resenting the weakness of others. The duty of studying ourselves. Wisdom shewn by bearing with humility, and judging with caution. Virtue the true path to happiness.*

F. NO woman can covet the love, and at the same time disdain the lover, without acting an unwarrantable part.

D. Yet I fear this is often done out of mere vanity.

F. Some men have too much reason to pine with inward rage and anguish: others torment themselves foolishly, from the consideration, that although the laws of God, and the land, give them the possession of a woman's person; they can by no authority controul her fancy.

D. Do they expect impossibilities?

F. They too often expect from others, that which they do not practise themselves; and while they pretend to the greatest degree of *strength*, shew the greatest *weakness*. But she who tortures a man to gratify her vanity, shews no sign of a *tender heart*.

D. May not a woman be jealous of a man she does not love? There are many worthy of the greatest esteem, yet unpleasing as lovers.

F. But it is more honest for a woman to forego a man's friendship, or give up his acquaintance, than hold him bound under circumstances of having no chance of engaging her heart. The woman that plays off her arts to keep him enthralled, deserves a harsher name than I chuse to mention. The tempers of men are such, that some resent the very conduct which is most fortunate for them. But what enrages a man, is the discovery of a passion which he means should be a secret to the world.

D. But you see many women have a rooted love of admiration; some for their personal charms; and perhaps some for the strength of ingenuity or understanding.

F. Both are open to *flattery*: and those who have not prudence to direct them, often lay the foundation of *jealousy*. Some men are absurd enough to expect *sincerity* and *constancy*, in false

connections, as if they could make *virtue* herself yield to their passions. I remember the story of a gentleman who lived in high credit and happiness with his wife and children. A young lady came to his house, upon a visit of some weeks. Unfortunately he was not proof against her charms. He was assiduous in the expressions of his regard, and contracted a strong passion for her; of which she was not ignorant,—yet did not leave him, in *modest silence*, as she ought to have done.

D. Not leave him!—

F. Motives of interest induced her to remain in his house. At length he discovered, that she had acted a double part; and that his passion for her was become the talk of the town. Indignation, pride, and anger, joined to love, and conscious weakness, drove him into *madness*.—Taking an opportunity of walking with her in the garden, he expostulated on the subject of her *insincerity*; and then plunged his sword into his bosom, and fell dead at her feet!

D. O horrible! Do the *tender* passions ever produce such dreadful effects?

F. When they are suffered to take possession of the mind, without the checks which *religion* has provided. You see artfulness may operate with as much force, to ensnare a man or woman, as affection; and bring on evils which terminate in destruction. The tender passions, *uncontrolled*, sometimes do such mischief!

D. And do not the fierce and turbulent desires of the heart, overwhelm all that is excellent in our nature?—What you mention is rather an instance of the effects of *lawless* passion.

F. A lesson equally interesting to men and women, to take care what part they act in respect to each other.

D. But surely this gentleman was not a *Christian*.

F. Not such as he ought to have been:

—yet, except this catastrophe, he was esteemed a *good man*.

*D.* This proves that we ought to be the more cautious how we transgress, by indulging any *foolish habit* or *irregular passion* or *desire*.—*Jealousy* doth not work so strongly on the mind in other instances, as in love.

*E.* This passion is frequently mixed with pride and vanity: we see it in many of the ordinary occurrences of life. One often hears people complain very foolishly: “I expected a visit, which was my due; I am treated with *contempt*.—My correspondent should have written to me: I receive no letter.—I expected to have been invited to a dinner, made by my next neighbour and acquaintance: I am left out of the company.—The treatment I met with the other day, from such a person, was not in the least equal to the cordiality I had reason to expect from him.—I grow old and infirm; my friends regard me as a *useless person*; it is high time I should march soberly off the stage of life.”—Thus do many utter their *trifling* complaints. The advice most salutary in such cases is, to consider how much we should carry to the account of *pride* or *folly suspicion*; how much to the *weakness*, or to the *wickedness*, of other people; or to our own peculiar situation. Reason thus: Either I am wrong, or *others* err in *their* conduct; or there is an error on *both* sides. If their behaviour teaches me to understand *myself*, or to form just notions of my friend or neighbour; in either case I am so much the wiser, and should be the happier: true wisdom is never productive of misery: She loses her name, when she learns to torment herself. It is sometimes not good to know too much.—In many cases of complaint, there is no *real evil*: it exists only in the temper and mind of the complainant. But let there be a fault, if it doth not lie at my door; why should I act like a *fool*, and take it up?

*D.* Why indeed! Yet I believe there are great numbers who wantonly distress themselves.

*E.* You may justly pronounce them to be foolish, who thus put their happiness to the issue of every little accident. Some are delicate in their sentiments, as if human nature could be purged from all gross alloys: they expect a purity of behaviour, which is rarely to be found. They cannot alter their sentiments of right and wrong; nor will they accommodate themselves

to the *indelicate* conduct of others. Shall we say they are *too good*, or not good enough for the world?—Many *refine* away their happiness, and, taking mankind as we find them, are extremely absurd.

*D.* They can hardly be said to have *too much goodness*; but they have *too little understanding* and *resolution*.

*E.* A small share of common sense will suffice, in the instances I have mentioned, to shew the necessity of waiting to see if absence from home, *sickness* or *forgetfulness*, was the cause: and were you to discover it to be *neglect*, then to repay it; not by *resentment*, but by the *forgetfulness* of so trifling an injury. I would consider, whether the seeming negligence may not arise from the same cause: and likewise, whether I might not have been a loser by his civility. There may be reasons why my acquaintance leaves me unnoticed, though I may be much *higher* in his esteem than those he seems to care for.—A great part of our commerce, of this kind, is so *farcical*, it is not worth the attention of a person of *good sense* to lose a moment's peace about it. Such events are fit only for the chat of those who are unable to talk of any thing higher. If we really *sink* in the esteem of the world *unjustly*, we may *rise* again, by shewing our superiority over the world, and laugh at such events. Endeavour to *deserve* applause, so far as it will follow *sense* and *virtue*, and no farther.

*D.* Trifling as such incidents may appear to you, they interrupt the happiness of a considerable part of mankind.

*E.* You mean That part which confines itself to *trifling objects*. Where pride rages, or any unhappiness in the constitution favours a disposition to *melancholy* or *ill-humour*, we sometimes see the most *trivial causes* produce the most *dreadful effects*. What are *duels*, but the effect of a silly pride, or a jealousy of honour, in affairs of little or no signification, but as they regard the capriciousness of mankind? We ought to laugh, rather than *weep*, at all imaginary grievances; and never suffer them to grow into *real evils*. Implore the mercies of Heaven, that your soul may be guarded from the *folly* and *vanity* of *weeping*, where you ought rather to *smile*: or indulging your *folly*, where you should consult your reason. Thus you will often enjoy a cheerful heart, when otherwise you would languish in sorrow. The partiality you have for yourself, cannot

cannot be more usefully employed, on occasions of this kind, than in putting such constructions as are the least displeasing to you: whilst your humility or good sense, restrains you from shewing resentments for trifling injuries. Thus you may keep yourself in *good humour*, whilst others are tormenting themselves, as if  *vexation of spirit* were a delightful property of the mind.

D. If I can observe your rules, I shall avoid a thousand disquiets, and thousands of resentments; and instead of rendering myself unhappy, turn them into laughter.

F. Or furnish yourself with occasions of useful instruction, on the follies and humours of mankind. Your intercourse with the world should glide smoothly on—and being at length satisfied with what you have seen and heard, you will be contented to leave the scene. All the events of life require the assistance of *reason*; but no virtue is so easily carried about us, as *humility*.

D. But we must first acquire it. It is obvious, that of all follies, the greatest is to make rods to scourge ourselves withal.

F. If we are *glad* when we *act right*; and again rejoice when we stand corrected for *doing wrong*; we shall consider compassion for others, as one of the most right and fit things in our

commerce with mankind; and thus preserve a proper affection for the world in general. The *first* principle in nature is *self-love*; but virtuous self-love, as I have often told you, leads us to seek *true satisfaction*; not to torture ourselves with *jealous fears* and *fantastic hopes*. We are to lay up treasures of wisdom, which neither the moth nor rust of such human frailties can affect, and look towards *heaven* for *happiness*.

D. To be *true* to ourselves, you would have us lighten all pain that is *real* and unavoidable; and suffer none that is *imaginary*.

F. Even so: *humility*, as I have just observed, is of very easy carriage; but we sweat and groan under the burthen of *pride*. Let the *foolish* and the *vicious* insult us occasionally, as they do each other; the remedy by repentment is generally worse than the disease. Pride is a *foolish* passion. In general, our folly consists in attempting to accommodate our notions of virtue to the weakness and corruption of our hearts; and in shewing such a fond partiality to ourselves. Let us *make up our minds* on this subject, and confine all our *suspicious* and *foolish jealousies* within so small a circle, that we may give them laws, not receive laws from them; or in other words, from our *folly* concerning them.

## CONVERSATION XI.

*The effects of jealousy. The usual punishment of adultery in some countries. The praises due to good wives.*

D. I Grant your conclusions to be just; yet in the management of so delicate a situation as a woman is in, when married to a jealous-pated man; with *whom* is she to converse?

F. I have known men so tormented by this passion, as hardly to permit their wives to converse with a sister; or, if it were possible to prevent it, with their own hearts. But if this proves any thing, it is only that they are *mad*. In all social and domestic commerce, the first step is to know the characters of the people with whom we converse: and all good women carry about them a kind of *reserve*, which reminds them, that the most virtuous *may* be betrayed to do evil: and

if at the same time, they totally decline the acquaintance of such persons as are vicious, or of *suspected characters*, what can they do more?

D. But if trifles, light as air, furnish food to a jealous mind, and nourish it into *madness*, what is to be done with such people?

F. It is hardly possible to provide against such *extremes*, which are but a remove from *madness*. In general, jealousy is a child of imprudence, and nursed by *folly* and *irresolution*.

D. Is it worth the hazard of the gallows, for a man to defend a woman who is apparently prodigal of her honour? Is it not better to give her up to her own heart?

F. Many a *bad one* is given up—and the world

world is seldom cruel to *good ones*. By the consent of most civilized nations, the husband is pardonable if he slays the offender, when taken in the fact, as I have had occasion to mention, supposing it to be the effect of a transport of just rage, in a cause so interesting to him.

*D.* But is it warrantable by the laws of *Christ*, to hurry the offender to his last account, with his sins in blossom?

*F.* Certainly not: A *Christian* would forget himself extremely. He is not to give way to his rage in any instance, consequently not in this. He will consider an evil of this kind, like many other: it may be a very severe trial of himself.

*D.* In every event, we should make the *best* of our situation, not the *worst* of it.

*F.* A man may act with bravery and honesty; he may shew a just and noble resentment, yet not embroil his hands in blood. To be free from temptation, is the constant prayer of a *Christian*; to avoid it, one of the clearest dictates of *prudence*. It is too apparent, that appetites and passions often acquire the command; and reason serves only as a pander: but we are not the less accountable for all our *actions*. If we have not obeyed our reason, in flunning the paths which led to danger, when the *day of retribution comes*, the nice distinctions which mankind have made, will only prove they have exercised their reason in flunning their consciences, not in obeying their God. We ought, in every circumstance of our lives, to fix our eyes on *that day*; for let the world judge of events as it may, all other considerations are light in the balance. There have been times, when persons guilty of *adultery*, “were excommunicated, for ever from the church; and unqualified, all their lives after, from bearing a part in *Christian* assemblies, notwithstanding they might seek it with tears, and all the appearances of the most unfeigned repentance.”

*D.* Was this in all respects right? By *real repentance*, in the sight of God, every sinner may hope to obtain his pardon.

*F.* The practice seems to have been not a little absurd; though it might carry the appearance of *rigid discipline*; and *rigid* indeed it was! The case is now altered; for we have no discipline of the kind in *England*; and in *Scotland* it is grown into ridicule.—It was formerly extended to *men*, who are often the greater crimi-

nals, as well as *women*, and in the issue we must leave it to *shame*, to the *laws*, and to the *last account*.

*D.* The worst part is, when women take revenge on their husbands.

*F.* The *revenge*, which some have taken, has been as much a proof of their *viciousness* as of their *resentment*; and a symptom of *madness*. What should you think of a woman’s murdering herself, because another attempted to kill her? She who proceeds to the extremity of repaying an injury by *prostitution*, plunges a dagger into her own bosom; as if she were the aggressor, and meant to seek the punishment.

*D.* God forbid that I should be tried, by any gross infidelity on the part of my husband! But I see no reason why I should consign myself to perdition, because he has shewn me the *example*.

*F.* Fools only aggravate their misfortunes: *patience* and good humour do every thing but work miracles; and I hope these will secure your husband’s love; that your days may pass in an uninterrupted tranquillity; remembering, that *religion* is of most use, when the greatest calamities invade us; that a calm resignation to the will of God, is the grand medicine which cures all the evils incident to human life; that prevention is much easier than cure; and *industry* the best means of *promoting good*, as well as *preventing evil*. She that hath nothing to do; or does nothing; is most exposed to evil. A woman inclined to virtue and industry, is at once able to manage her family, educate her children according to her condition in the fear of God, and make her husband happy.

*D.* To be *good*, is the only road to happiness in every state.

*F.* This is beyond all dispute: and the gravest philosopher, not being a *cecomb in wisdom*, acknowledges that life hath no joy more exalted than *love*, nor any pleasure so unmixed as *friendship*. But although “a friend and companion never meet amiss, yet above both, is a *wife* with her *husband*.” None of the works of creation, that we have any knowledge of, are superior to the human kind: none are so lovely on the earth, as a *good man*, or a *good woman*; but each appears in the most amiable character, when united.

*D.* Do you think this union gives them the better opportunities of being good?

*F.* Our royal preacher says, “a virtuous woman



woman is a crown to her husband—but she that maketh *ashamed*, is *rottenness in his bones*.”—What a fine contrast is here: the one veils him with a diadem; the other plunges him into the depths of pain, disease, and misery!

*D.* It is a *most interesting description*: but he sets a good woman, in as glorious a point of view, when he says, that—“children, and the building of a city, continue a man’s name; but a *blameless wife is counted above them both*?” adding these charming words: “If there be kindness, meekness, and comfort in her tongue, then is not her husband like other men.”

*E.* This description enchants the heart with tenderness, while it teaches the most rational love. I am glad to find you have stored up maxims which do honour to your sex: It is good to enrich the memory. You may perceive how well *he* thought of marriage; and how much he gave this state a preference to the satisfaction of those, who roam like *brutes*; or, being left in a kind of solitude, feed on their own thoughts, and beat out a *speculative studious kind of happiness*, which very few have any knowledge of; and fewer still can truly relish. Observe this sentence: “The man that hath a virtuous wife is blessed; the number of his days will be doubled.”

*D.* If such a man lives *two days in one*; the wretch, who is linked to vice and infamy, *drags* life about; he cannot be said to *live*.—

*F.* These are high praises of human happiness, which is so much in the gift of wife and good women, to wife and good men:—Heaven hath thrown this cordial drop into the cup of life, to make the potion go down: and if evil comes to their lot, *good men* lighten their burthen.

*D.* How is the *poor domestic* to swallow his potion of life, *unwedded*?

*F.* If the wife brings her share of labour and virtue to the common flock, such pairs may be as happy as Heaven intends *all* should be. It is not to be *imagined*, the Author of nature, who has appointed every thing to its proper end, should oppose *their* marriage, as if it were agreeable to his providence to prevent the increase of mankind.—It is yet more difficult to conceive, that one part of the people should have

a *right* to sentence the other to a denial of their *natural affections*. On the other hand, you may suppose that many domesticities are thus prevented, from suffering the *distress*, which penury, and a number of mouths to fill, often create.

*D.* But still you grant that this obstruction is an evil.

*F.* Of all kinds of bondage, that of controlling natural affections, *well directed*, is the worst.

*D.* I flatter myself, I shall bring my share of virtue and industry, and be able to bear the weight of all the distress with which it may please Divine Providence to try me.

*F.* If every young person were to think and act in this manner, marriage would be in higher esteem.—If you maintain the same sentiments, your husband will rejoice.—You will convince him, “that he whose wife never chides him, is a happy man.” The most useful lesson I can give you, is founded on the plainest reason; *namely*, that the ready way to secure a *husband’s* affections and duty, is to be truly affectionate and dutiful as a *wife*; always striving to be *agreeable*. Be you a *friend to virtue*, that your husband may never be her *foe*.—It is in marriage, as between master and servant: if either forgets his obligation, and the duties of the station in which Providence hath placed him, both must suffer. As want of thought and perverseness are the cause of *ignorance* of duty; ignorance of duty is the cause of *pride*. These beget *misery*, in which the wicked and foolish live and die; while the *good and wife* are happy in *hope*, if not in *enjoyment*. If you marry, you must think of being your own mistress.—You and your lover are young and unexperienced with regard to the directing part of œconomy: you have both been used to the *comforts of life*, under the kind eye of a parent: now learn to be *provident*, without any diminution of your native generosity; and as truly pious, without *enthusiasm*.—*Domestic cares* sometimes divert our thoughts from God; but such cares are much lightened by resignation. Every object derives its most pleasing satisfaction from considerations of religion, and the solid joyful hopes of a life to come!

*D.* In all stations, I would direct my thoughts to God!

## CONVERSATION XII.

*The obligation to the observance of religious ordinances. The face of nature a field for religious contemplation, particularly of husband and wife in humble life in the country. Highly recommended. The charms of domestic life in wedlock.*

**F.** IT is often attended with an indifference that is shocking. The ordinance of *confirmation*, either for grown persons, or *children*, is not generally observed; nor the baptismal vow, as *Christians*, renewed.

**D.** I am afraid it is not much thought of, though they say there is a *general confirmation* in *London* once in *three* years. The neglect seems to be of fatal consequence both to parent and child.

**F.** Relaxation of discipline, proves that we are negligent in the great concerns of religion. Many who think themselves old enough, and wise enough to be wedded, are not *wise* enough to take on themselves their baptismal vow. They will not make a solemn public declaration, ratifying and confirming what their godfathers and godmothers promised they should do.

**D.** These supposed the infant would be bred up in the fear and love of God, and a belief in *Jesus Christ*, as his Mediator and Redeemer.—

**F.** But he should be ready to acknowledge himself bound to believe and do all such things, as they engaged for, as express'd in the *catechism*. If our help is in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth, we should bless his name *on this occasion*, that he may at all times hear our prayers, and increase our strength, with the spirit of wisdom and understanding; with every mark of true godliness. If we affect a superior wisdom in our own conceit, and are too proud to ask for such mercy, how are we to receive it?

**D.** When the bishop laid his hand upon my head, and solemnly invoked the *Almighty* to make me constant in my obedience to his holy laws; or, as the church terms it, to continue *his*, that I might be admitted into his everlasting kingdom, it afforded me great satisfaction: I felt myself much the happier for it.

**F.** It is to be supposed, that Mr. *Worthy* has

been mindful of his *son*, to instruct him in his duty to the great Father of mankind; yet I fear the young man never received half so many lessons upon this subject as *you* have. My advice therefore is, if you find him too little inclined to religion, you take every fair opportunity of discoursing familiarly upon the blessings of Providence, and the bounties of nature. *Farmers* have the best opportunities of observing them; and as no person will be so dear to him as yourself, without falling into any visionary strain of piety, you may often remind him of the great affinity there is, between the *moral* and *natural* world. These furnish a well-instructed mind with a continued opportunity of praising and adoring the God of nature; from the field where the corn is sown, to ripen for the nourishment of the *body*, to the *seeds* of religion which are sown in the mind, to grow up in the soul, till we reap That heavenly harvest, which is to be the reward of our obedience in the regions of everlasting bliss!

**D.** Mr. *Worthy* seems to have a mind strongly impressed with religion: I hope I shall find it to be so.

**F.** When he ploughs up the earth with a view to its fertility, he may think of the evils which *wound* the mind; and by affliction, render it fruitful of good thoughts, words, and deeds. You may remind him also, now in the days of his youth, that the *scythe*, which *mows* down the grass, without distinction of the *flourishing* or *withered* blade, gives a lively picture of the uncertainty of human life; and shews the danger, when *young men* take it for granted, they shall live to *old age*; or *old men*, that they shall not die *this day*, nor perhaps *this year*; and therefore are *never ready*; which is the case of the greatest part of mankind.—If he *weds* his ground, let him not forget the growth of evil in the soul, which is so apt to choke the seeds, which God hath

hath sown in the heart.—Nor should he forget, when he *reaps* his corn, how happy he might be to separate it from the *tares*, as he wishes to render his soul *clean*, that it may be acceptable to the Almighty, in whom there is no *imperfection*. In regard to his *tythes*; let him consider, to what purpose they were dedicated by the piety of our ancestors; and when he *pays* a *tenth* part, recollect that nine are *given* to him by the bounty of heaven; and that those, from whom he receives *spiritual* things, and the knowledge of *Christ*, should not languish in distress, for want of a *temporal* support.

D. Here is a noble field for *moralizing*, on every object, as they occur in *our way of life*, in which we converse so much with the *works of God*.

F. Yet alas! a poor old *thresher* complained, the other day, “that he was obliged to *eat his bread in the sweat of his face*.” I reminded him, that the sentence was pronounced against mankind in general; adding this question: “Have you never done yourself more mischief, on a *holyday*, than on a *working-day*? What think you of a *young lord*, or *gentleman*, who is agitated, ten times more than you are, in a *military* enterprize, or a *mercantile* voyage of hazard? What disquiets are often created in the pursuit of a *harlot*, a *gaming-table*, a *duel*, or some desperate exploit, in which life is in danger? If a great part of our time were not spent in providing ourselves with the *necessaries of life*, should we not spend it in a stupid *inactive* state, or in doing *evil to ourselves or others*?”

D. What said the poor man?

F. “Why, in truth, master,” said he, “one had better be *threshing*, than have nothing to do; therefore I will e’en take your advice, and *endeavour to be contented*, in hopes that after the work of this life is finished, I shall *rest* with my fathers, and be *happy*; for indeed I cannot say I am so at present. Some of my children are dead; some untoward; and some as poor as myself; and they do not cheer my hoary age, as I once *hoped* they would.”

D. Alas, *poor man*!—he might then well utter his *complaints*, though he ought not to *murmur*.—In regard to taking advantage of the objects before us, and keeping ourselves in mind of the things of the life to come, I have often thought, when I have seen your *sheep* in the fold, how much safer they were, than when

straying; and how devoutly I ought to pray, for the protection of the *great Shepherd of souls*.—So, when you were *foddering* your cattle; if men were as sensible of their *spiritual* wants, as the beasts are urged by their feelings of hunger, to support their bodies, how much more diligent should we be, in reading the *Scriptures*, and meditating on the books, in which are contained the words of *eternal life*!

F. Well observed! I hope you will be a *good monitor* to *George*, whenever there is a just occasion; rather *erring* on the *pious*, than the *careless* side.—When he *goes to market*, remind him constantly of the words of the son of *Syrach*: “As a *nail* sticketh fast between the joinings of the stones; so doth *sin* stick close betwixt buying and selling.” We are so apt to depreciate *our neighbour’s goods*; and to extol *our own*, beyond the measure we know to be *true*, this often becomes a scandal to those professing the name of *Christ*, who should depart from all evil. We are a trading people; and more subject to fall into this wickedness, than the nations less commercially engaged. Many of us, I fear, are betrayed into evils of this kind, by driving, what we call, a *good bargain*: I never liked *your good bargains*; *fair bargains* are much better things: we are sure That never can be *cheap*, which costs a man his *innocence*. The *world* can profit him nothing, if he loses his *soul*. Encourage your husband to *keep* his uprightness, for *your* sake, and for the sake of his *children*: let him seek a blessing *at the hand of God*; and therefore be true and just in his dealings with *men*: since That only “*will bring him peace at the last*.”

D. Indeed, my father, I would rather perish, than countenance a fraud, for my own convenience, in *any* person; but in *him*, whom I should most love, it would be shocking to me. How can we express our love for those who are most dear to us, so well, as by consulting their everlasting happiness?

F. I hope he will be as careful to keep *his accounts exact with God*, as to pay his *landlord* his rent with punctuality. In regard to the *freehold*, which his father is to give him; let him *take care of it*! The day will come, when this also must change its master; either by his death, or by some other accident:—He *loves* his being of his God; and is accountable for all the talents put into his hand. The *earthly landlord* requires payment for his own sake;

God demands the tribute of *man*, for the good of him, of whom it is demanded; and the more he *pays*, the *richer* he is.

*D.* This differs much from worldly interests; and affords a silent comfort to the breast, which no earthly good can furnish.

*F.* When we search into the likeness of the *natural* and *moral* world, we find a singular affinity in regard to *fruit*. However rough and unpleasant some fruits are, proceeding from their proper stock, the *graft* of *good fruit* will be mild and pleasant, though the juices pass through the same trunk. Man, in his *corrupt state*, uninfluenced by the Spirit of God, brings forth nothing but the fruits of *iniquity*; and as the bad tree is subject to be cut down, and *cast into the fire*; so is man, in such a state.—If *George Worthy* is so virtuous a young man, as you represent him, he will be watchful of the *croaking of the rick*; and rise to his work, as he would avoid indulging himself in the *sleep of sin and ignorance*. He will then view the glories of the rising sun; not without reflecting on the light of the gospel, which disperses darkness and the shadow of death.

*D.* He shall share in the *stores*, with which you have so plentifully supplied *me*: and, for my sake, as well as his own, I hope he will render himself a pattern of a well-governed life; and do his duty with wisdom and assiduity.

*F.* And put off nothing till *to-morrow*, which he can do *to-day*; whether it relate to the spiritual or temporal concerns of life. Thus he will lay up his stores, with the foresight of the *aut*; not for age or sickness only, but for the hour of death, and the hopes of a blessed eternity.

*D.* Heaven grant, that your good wishes may be accomplished!

*F.* If he remembers his creator in the days of his youth; when the winter of *old age* comes, he will not droop in sorrow; but enjoy the comfort of a *good conscience*: the *music* of the woods may still delight him, and he will learn to be happy under the care of Providence, as the *swallows of the air* teach us all to be.

*D.* A life under such pleasing circumstances, though it were short, must be full of joy and comfort.

*F.* You will contribute to *enlarge his heart*, and *refresh his spirit*; and make his kindness to you, one of the chief objects of your mutual comfort; whilst it gives wings to *his own* prayers and *yours*. The *pleasures of the imagination*, as well as those of the *senses*, in spite of the utmost exertion of human invention, will flag; nothing can render them *lasting*: But those of the *understanding* and *affections*, well digested by *time*, are in a state of *perpetual spring*, and afford uninterrupted joy.

### CONVERSATION XIII.

*Recommending a placid disposition in the married state. The advantages the indigent enjoy over the affluent, in a religious view. False impressions received from education in great schools. The duty of parents to children, with regard to the body and mind. Observations on orphans, and illegitimate children.*

*F.* SO it happens.

*D.* But did you ever hear a married woman say, "I am tired of seeing my husband pleased?" or a man, "I love to vex my wife?"

*F.* I am acquainted with a woman who takes pains to vex her husband. Though his displeasure constantly falls heavily on herself, she will notwithstanding give *him* no peace.

*D.* Nor allow *herself* any.

*F.* There are people, *Mary*, perverse even to this degree; as if they delighted in *mischief*; though not so diabolically inclined, as to avow it. Seek your happiness in *pleasing* your husband: and as a virtuous man, *he will be pleased with your virtue*. Be watchful of yourself, that *familiarity* of intercourse may not breed *indifference*; and be yet more anxious to avoid *contempt*. Among some foolish people it often happens,

happens, that because they are so *closely allied*; they imagine they may act as if they had no *mutual regard*; making That administer to *evil*, which the Author of nature intended should produce their *greatest good*.

D. Be satisfied, my father, that if *kindness* can soften my husband's toils, and render his hours sweet, when he *retires* from his labour, this shall not be wanting on my part.

F. The more you smile upon him, the more inclined he will be to bless the Author of his Being, and be gratefully pious. When he *returns* to his work, he will sow his grain, in the stronger expectation of the blessings of heaven. But if the *vermin* should *devour*, or *blasting showers milderw his corn*: if the *tempest* should destroy his growing crop; yet if your tongue obeys the *law of kindness*, under the care of heaven; it will give him hopes of a better season another year; when his *meadows* shall look gay, and the nodding ear of corn make his valleys laugh and sing. Under all circumstances, he will lift his hands to heaven; and with gratitude return all the *good* which *you* are instrumental to, with regard to the peace of his *mind*, whence all pleasure flows. Such, my daughter, are the happy fruits of *true conjugal love*!

D. You give me a lively picture of what may be in *my* power, supposing my husband's love for me, to surpass his love for any other earthly object.

F. What object can possibly deserve his love so well, if you behave as you ought? If he is the man of virtue you take him to be, and with natural good sense, he will shew it, by the *equality* of his behaviour, and the *consistency* of his conduct. He will know and understand what his *end* is. If *heaven* be his aim, he will not lose it, for any thing on earth.—The closer he fixes his eye on it, the more he will love and cherish *you*, because it is his *duty*. In proportion as *your kindness* helps him forward in this pursuit, you will be as a *guardian angel*, administering the mercies of God to his soul.—And the *good* which you *do to him*, you will receive *ten-fold into you own bosom*, from the same gracious hand of Heaven.

D. My *dear father*, you open my mind to such a scene of joy, in *virtuous wedlock*, where religion is the foundation, on which mutual happiness is built, methinks it is by far the

brightest, and the fairest path, to the regions of the *blessed*.

F. Heaven grant you may find it! I think well of the state, or I should not myself have married, nor advised you to marry any man. It is a serious concern; for while you are considering the force of *affection* and *duty*, you must reflect how both are concerned in the care of *children*. Here also, *great nature* pleads with a solemn voice, which captivates the soul; for if none are so dear to us, as those who proceed from us; and if we stand bound to instruct them, and hand down the knowledge of *God*, and the *Redeemer of the world*, from generation to generation: if the saving a soul from death, will give us a rank and station, to shine in glory as the stars of heaven, can we avoid crying out, *how wonderful are all thy works, O God!* The mind is lost in the contemplation of his infinite goodness, in thus making things to answer to each other, for our common happiness; and the great ends of our creation.

D. O, my father! I see with rapturous astonishment, the charms of religion; and how it draws with the attractive smiles of angels!

F. It derives strength from the union of the sexes. A woman may naturally expect to gain knowledge, prudence, and good counsel from a husband; and he in return receive *gentleness of manners*, *cheerfulness*, and *pleasing thoughts*. “As the *levity*, *rashness*, and *folly* of early life is tempered with the *gravity*, *caution*, and *wisdom* of age; the *timidity*, *cobliness of heart*, and *languor* incident to declining years, are supported and assisted by the *courage*, the *warmth*, and *vivacity* of *youth*.”——So it seems to be in the strength derived from the happy union of a virtuous pair.

D. Whatever state we are in, we should consider the designs of Providence in the order of things, as calculated for our happiness.

F. It is a most amazing circumstance, that Heaven should be so indulgent to us, notwithstanding our *ignorance* and *ingratitude*. But, alas, we often take hold of things by the *wrong handle*!

D. And *let them fall*:—if children were more exactly taught to reverence God, as the great Author of nature, in the appointments of all things on earth, it would be happy for them!

F. Well observed, *Mary*: this would indeed

open their minds to new pleasures, and afford them joys they are now totally unacquainted with : they would become religious from a principle of *gratitude*.

D. The poor would rejoice in the comfort of stronger hopes.

F. In regard to the *indigent*, it seems to be happy for them, in point of knowledge, that their education confines them chiefly to their *religion*, as *Christians*. They are not confounded with *Latin books*, which give an account of *pagan virtues*, and the exploits of *pagan heroes*, so foreign to the *meek and humble spirit* which our *holy religion* so strongly recommends in every page of the *New Testament*. Often have I lamented the fate of *young gentlemen*, who have been sent to *great schools*, or *little ones*, being taught every thing, except their religion. *Blood and slaughter* have been early familiarized to their imaginations ; and tales of *violence and injustice* set off with all the splendid representations of *heroism*. Thus *poor Christianity* has dwindled in their esteem, whilst the sublime virtues which the Saviour of mankind has taught, were in a great measure concealed from the eyes of these youths. Some have been *unhappy* by means of the large fortunes they were born heirs to. Others have been nursed in *infidelity*, learning it from *example and conversation*, as if it were a *science* on which their happiness depended. *Christian virtues* have appeared in their eyes, as *emblems of poverty and meanness*. Instead of being objects of their highest veneration, such virtues have sunk below their notice. Such has been the fate of numbers, cherished in the very bosoms of our most *celebrated public schools*. Perhaps the father was educated there. He made his fortune by his wits ; or it was made for him. Such as he is, such will his children generally be. I would venture to form an opinion, what the parent is, by observing the manners of the child. We judge of the principles of men, not by the *parade* of their *words*, but the *reality* of their *actions* : we acquire prudence from the *prudent*, and *heroism* from the *brave* ; and we love with generosity, or hate with inveterate rage, generally according to the company we keep : so will be our children, according to their *education*, and the *examples* they behold. Allowing for *extraordinary cases*, it can hardly be otherwise.

D. I am sensible of the vast consequence of giving children *true impressions*. Your goodness has taught me what *true virtue* means.

F. It is from the breast of others we usually catch the flame, which burns bright or languid, lightens our paths, or consumes us. You remember what I mentioned of *Benedict Lovely's* little daughter. How charming is the dawning of *soft humanity* in the infant breast, unpractised in the arts of vile disguise ! It shines like stars, to guide the traveller ! When *nature* displays herself in the minds of children, the maturer our reason is, the more exquisite lesson we learn from them.

D. You not only make me think of children with the more *tenderness*, but with the greater *respect*, as being so much more innocent than myself. I shall hereafter think more of the words of our blessed Lord. It seems to be incumbent on parents, to observe the workings of their tender minds, and to regulate their own conduct by the *innocence* of their children.

F. They may also learn to correct the errors of their own ways, by suppressing the evil passions they discover in their children. Passions and prejudices soon appear ; and we often hear more *truth* from children, than from grave adults.—*Truth* and *falsehood* are mixed in a wild confusion. It would be difficult to explain *how minds are infected as well as bodies* : but we are sure they are infected ; and “ that there is such a thing in nature as a *healthy sympathy*, and a *deadly infection* :” therefore, my child, be on your guard with whom you converse.

D. I am always watchful of myself. As to tenderness for children, I have long been of opinion, that she who is insensible of the *love of them*, deserves not the name of a woman.

F. This love may be considered as an affection of the mind, common to both sexes ; but it is the particular office of *women to take care of children*. The *obligation* of a *mother*, to cherish her infant at her own breast, unless there are good reasons to the contrary, creates a fondness not easy to describe. Children are born, as the mere effects of *desire* ; and come into the world in common with *brutes* ; but the *preserving* them, is the effect of *reason, religion*, and every affection which can grace the human soul. *Brutes*, by the strength of That power we call *instinct*, preserve their young, at the hazard of their own lives. Animals that are *domestic*, forget their habitual subjection to *man*, when their *young* are in danger ; and some that have strength will destroy a man in defence of their young, when he might otherwise pass *unmolested*. The weakest  
shew

shew a repentment in such cases, as if man were to them a *savage*. We are all derived from one common parent, and by instinct preserve our young. The earth is called the mother of *all creatures*: we live upon her bounty: she supports *our* parents: she supports *us*: and we return into her bosom.

*D.* The truth of your observation is undeniable; yet if I mistake not, you once told me, it is the custom of the most part of the nobility and gentry, and even of some tradesmen, to give up their children to be nursed by strangers.

*F.* This is certainly the case with many.

*D.* The stranger who takes the infant to her breast, must cherish *two*, or abandon *her own child*.

*F.* If her own be living, she must give it to another woman whose child is *dead*, or *wean* it. — I have known several instances of one woman attempting to suckle *two children*; but she generally starved them both: and she who declines giving suck to her own infant, hazards her health. *Custom* cannot change the appointed course of *nature*. The mercenary nurse can hardly be supposed to have so generous a mind, or virtuous disposition as the *mother*. The preservation of the life of the child is the *first consideration*; and the only good reason which can be urged in defence of the practice of parting with them, on any consideration, is, when the mother is sickly, to a degree that renders the attempt hazardous both to herself and the child.

*D.* You will allow that a *healthy* nurse often saves a *sickly child*; or the child of a *sickly mother*, from the grave: and I understand that many infants are bred by *hand*; consequently the nurse's health cannot affect them.

*F.* I beg your pardon: a nurse should be healthy, whether she suckles a child or not. Some I have observed, give them food out of their own mouths. This seems to be a nasty trick: and though birds and beasts teach this lesson, they live according to nature, and never debauch themselves. In every case a nurse ought to be a healthy, cleanly, and temperate woman.

*D.* Some people pretend, that the *tempers* of children, nursed by strangers, are frequently dif-

ferent from those of their parents. Do you imagine any impressions have been received with their milk?

*F.* I am inclined to believe many *evils* arise from the most apparent laws of nature being neglected.

*D.* A woman may perhaps create in herself an inability to suckle her child, through a habit of neglecting this duty.

*F.* It seems probable that it may be so; for *force*, or *habit*, in some cases, offends against the ordinary course of nature. Of this I am sure, that in great towns some women neglect their infants, because they *will not* be at the trouble to *cherish* them: and others, because they *will* pursue such amusements, as admit not of the *necessary confinement*.

*D.* So far as the preservation of a child depends on the tenderness of a nurse; it is reasonable to conclude, it hath the best chance at the mother's breast.

*F.* Certainly: What numbers of children, nursed by strangers, have I seen, *consumptive*, *rickety*, afflicted with *fits*, *gripes*, *scoury*, *evil*, and other distempers! Such as the blood is, such must the milk of a woman be: and considering how wonderfully the soul depends on the body; some of the evil passions which prevail in a child, may be derived from the nurse. We are sure at least that many accidents, which arise from *carelessness*, not only spoil the *nake of the body*, but with it ruin the *understanding* also. How far inclinations to certain vices depend on the milk we suck, is, I say, a matter of opinion, in which no great satisfaction can be obtained. But if we do not receive them with our *milk*, we acquire them by false precepts, or pernicious examples.

*D.* You now speak only of the children of the poor, who are left in the hands of the *strange nurse*.

*F.* I have known many rich people, who might bring them home, and support them; yet whether to save *expences*, or to avoid *trouble*, have left them at nurse much longer than you can imagine.

## CONVERSATION XIV.

*The operations of Providence in the protection of the human species. A peculiar care necessary towards those who are the least quick of apprehension. Education of children with religious impressions. Fable of the ant and the caterpillar. Example of the fast Christians proposed. Religion the most important object. Cause of false impressions. Reflections on health and dress, particularly of women's heads. Regard to children born under the disadvantage of concubinage.*

F. WHAT can we do more than exert the utmost of our power? To preserve the life of a child, seems to be one of the first principles that nature teaches; but it is a work of the understanding and the heart, to extend our regards to the unbounded duration of their existence. He that entertains a steady persuasion of the immortality of the soul, will be more attentive to the mind than to the body; and though it would be absurd to talk of learning, in our rank of life, a due portion of knowledge is essential to the welfare of every accountable Being. God being no respecter of persons, having endowed us all with reason, expects our gratitude for so noble a gift; and that we shall render an account, what use we have made of it. If perchance you become a mother, you should consider yourself as the instrument of Providence in giving an existence to so many wonderful Beings as you have children. Though nature has pointed out her path, under her God, is it the less astonishing? Every human being you behold, demands your adoration of That power which has called such a creature into life. The animation of a fly, is as much the work of an all-powerful Creator, as that of an elephant; but man, on whose soul is stamped the image of his Maker, cannot be considered with too much awe and reverence, being the next in rank to angels, and made only a little lower than them. On one side, think of yourself as a worm; on the other, as an angel, in thought soaring to heaven, and adoring your Creator. When I look into my own mind, what I am, and what I may be, my soul is absorbed in thought. Helpless is man, in his infant state; yet, as created a social being, and placed in society, the same law of Providence which makes it our duty, hath implanted it deep in the affections, as well as the understanding and the

heart, that neither the body, nor the soul of the dear child, shall be in want, with regard to the preservation of either.

D. I wish your principles were more attended to, and better understood; but they seem to be above the common level. I am sensible of the wants of infants; food, raiment, and a little aid of medicine when it is wanted, with covering from the inclemency of the sky, are the only necessaries for the body: the soul demands a more constant watchfulness, lest the thoughts of it should lead it into destruction.

F. Nothing is so interesting to the heart as the morals of children. They receive early impressions of the great Author of Nature; but to know and consider the end and design of their being; and the part they are to act, when they grow to maturity, is a work of time. Even the heavens, which they behold with their eyes, will not excite a due attention, till they are taught how stupendously wonderful all around them is. But when they receive information that a Saviour was sent down from thence, of whom an account is given in the Sacred Writings; if it is properly introduced, curiosity will lead them on, before much piety can take place in their hearts. Considering the distance of time since the Scriptures were written; the difference of language; and the customs which prevailed in the countries where the authors lived; to hurry a child in the reading these sacred records, is one of the most capital absurdities.

D. I always understood, and I suppose this is as true as the Scriptures themselves; that the parts which are easy to comprehend are sufficient, to us who have no learning, to point out the paths to eternal life.

F. True: but we usefully hurry children into the reading of the whole. If they have a general



neral intimation of the great design, by the abridgment I recommended to you, it is sufficient: What a prostitution of the dignity of the Scriptures it is, for the *parent* to require the *child* to read what himself does not understand. As to quick parts, they are desirable, but we do not find they always succeed: boys of slender capacities frequently make useful men; and, whether by their *labour* and application, or some other power in nature, acquire knowledge, while the lively depending on their talents are *idle*, and grow into insignificance. You remember the fable of the *ant* and the *caterpillar*? The *ant* reproached the caterpillar as a poor *creeping* animal, seeming but half formed, wriggling as an insignificant being; yet when he went to work, and wound himself up in a silken cell, at the time nature had appointed he came out a *beautiful butterfly*; “and now, says he to the *ant*, behold me exalted in the air, whilst thou art condemned to *creep* as long as thou livest. Learn to despise none for his condition.”

D. This is applicable to changes in the powers of the understanding: but goodness of heart makes up for deficiency of parts.

E. Inferior talents are best fitted to some offices in life. *Humility* at all times forbids us to depreciate others. *Nature* brings all her works to perfection by degrees.—The noblest production is *man*; and the most time is necessary to make him a finished piece; to regulate his passions; to inform his understanding; and to improve his bodily strength.—Those who are born to fortunes, or in a rank to get their bread by *science*, often fail by an injudicious pursuit: *some* study too much, and impair their health: *others* make that laborious, which might be rendered easy.—*Activity* is but another name for *industry*; in which nature rejoices, or we should not see children so much delighted with motion, till they sink down with fatigue.—But as it is a cruel and absurd practice to oblige children to carry burthens, to the *utmost* of their strength, not shewing them the same regard as we do to our *colts*, we should exercise their minds by degrees.—I mean that they should be early trained to *labour*, to render their bodies so much the stronger; but not to exceed the due bounds to insure *growth* and *health*.

D. The people in *London* complain *every day* of *catching cold*; it is not so with us.

E. The reason is obvious: we labour in the

open air, and therefore the inclemencies of the sky do not affect us in the same manner.—Our clothing is coarser and warmer; and we are hardly ever exposed to the danger of over-heated rooms, or crowds, which poison the air.

D. These seem to be advantages which we enjoy, over those who are apt to look down on us. Your observation on *clothing* makes me think of the *modern head-dress*, which every chambermaid runs mad to indulge herself in. I am sure they *clothe* their heads enough: what with their false hair, their wool-packs and hair-bags, gauze, lace, spangles, flowers, feathers, and a variety of ornaments, they build themselves up to a height that would astonish you.

E. So I have heard; but this gives them none of the *comforts* I am speaking of, nor tends in the least to preserve their health, their souls, or their fortunes: I rather believe it is injurious to them all. To the mind, as gratifying a fantastical vanity, and diverting their thoughts from God, spending their precious time in ornamenting themselves with so much *wanton labour*. It must be acknowledged to be wandering widely from That purity and simplicity of manners which Christianity inculcates. We find that females were fond of attire in the days of the great apostle, and that he chastized the *Christian* women. Were he now to rise from the grave, would he take our women to be *Christians*, seeing they know so little what bounds to fix in the decoration of their persons; nor how to employ their time in a more profitable manner? It is impossible, in the nature of things, but that such extravagant decorations must alienate their thoughts so much the more from the great business of domestic and religious duties.

D. Do men promise themselves the more happiness from such extravagance? The women certainly mean, if they mean any thing, to make themselves the more charming in the sight of men: how it answers this end I am not so good a judge.

E. Every man thinks for himself; but how such indulgence of vanity, under the name of *fashion*, can promote conjugal or mutual love, is beyond my comprehension. I remember to have heard my master talk of *Queen* *Races*, and that the little head was always considered as the greatest beauty. What do you think of *Jean* *Magnus*? Do we admire her beauty, for her monstrous large head? We rather consider her as a

monster.

monster. You talk of *London*: fashions soon creep in amongst us, and we become as great slaves to this tyrant *custom* as the greatest lady in the land. I have observed of late, in our market-town, numbers of women whom I used to think might boast of personal charms, and in whose countenance the *graces* had taken up their abode; but now they appear to me as if the face were only an appendage to the head-dress, the greater object attracting the eye; and instead of being an advantage to their beauty, there is something so monstrous in the disproportion and height, that every woman appears as if she emulated the distinction of a *grenadier*; when *nature* meant to give them the greater charm, from their stature being smaller than the male of the same species. But let us talk of something of more consequence, and leave this folly to cure itself.

*D.* As in all probability it will do in a short time.

*F.* With regard to the corruption of the heart, and the force of example, some children very early learn to be cunning and artful; and nature, unimproved and uncorrected, will prompt them continually to little selfish gratifications. To obviate such evils, talk to them early and late after this manner: “*Self-preservation* is the first law, but mankind have *souls* as well as bodies *to be saved*; and they must have regard to both.—Understand, “that true greatness of mind, is to be maintained only by *Christian* principles;” and that God requires truth in the inward parts.—The first Christian principle is “love thy neighbour as thyself.” Diffuse thy generosity. Cherish a sweetness of temper towards all thy fellow-creatures. Be *modest*, *sincere*, *inoffensive*, and *obliging*. Remove the oppressions, and relieve the wants of others; and better the condition of mankind to the utmost of thy power. Let thy life be a life of labour for the *good of others*, so shall the good centre in thine own bosom, and thou wilt be happy, as a *child of God*!

*D.* I shall be happy in giving children such advice: I wish they may have sense and gratitude enough to digest it. It is very obvious they can never stand on higher ground, in the esteem of the world, than by a constant desire of helping those, who are in no condition to help themselves. But I fear, my dear father, there are too many in the world, arrived to the best understanding they ever will have, who do not comprehend, that there is more satisfaction in *doing good*, than in

*receiving kingdoms*. This requires a mind anxious to imitate the goodness of the Almighty; one that is capable of this foretaste of heavenly joys!

*F.* It will be one grand step towards giving your children this turn of thought, to be possessed of it yourself: and be assured, my daughter, this is the soil which bids fairest to bring your virtue to *maturity*.—Were you to know one half the miseries mankind are subject to, the first lesson you would teach your children is; “Hear others unboisom themselves, and make known their wants, and give the wretched *gentle words*, when you can give no more: this is the way to make a *friend of God*, who may in his good time enable you to succour the miserable, were it only for the desire you have to do it.” But while you point out to your children the heaven in view, as a reward of *good actions*, remind them that *humility* is an essential property of *goodness*—and that the mind can receive no real satisfaction, without a *consciousness of its integrity*; consequently *honest* and *wise* people are equally aware, not to *flatter others*, nor suffer themselves to be *flattered*: for so much flattery as they may receive in payment, even for *good actions*, is a diminution of the *value of them*, in the *sight of God*, to whom alone all praise is due! To him alone we owe the happy inclination and ability *to do good*.

*D.* All this I am truly sensible of. Amidst the vast variety you have seen, what have you observed in regard to *illegitimate* children? I am acquainted with a poor girl so born, who is sometimes melancholy on this account. I have heard that such persons generally turn out very good, or very bad people.

*F.* I am afraid your acquaintance has more mistaken piety, than solid judgment. Strictly speaking, we have no other concern in the sins of our own, than in the sins of other people’s parents; and all who return from the evil of their ways, why should not their paths be peaceful? There are various kinds of what are called *natural children*, as distinguished from those whose parents have conformed to the laws of God and their country; and such are differently esteemed in different countries, both in reputation and in rights derived from laws. But with respect to the tenderness of parents, I do not comprehend why there should be any difference, except that the superior credit, in which men live with their *wives*, and their mutual constancy, endear their progeny so much the more. Many such opinions

as you mention are the offspring of *superstition*. Though there is less profligacy in concubinage than in promiscuous commerce, the seduction of women, when men do not marry them, adds to the abomination. In all *Christian* countries *concubinage* is an high offence.—But you are not so foolish as to imagine, that we are warranted to shew the less respect to persons, on account of their parents not having discharged a particular duty to God and society.

D. Except that we usually shew persons the more favour, when we know their parents are distinguished for extraordinary virtue.

F. If the mother or the father is a libertine, whether married or single, they are dangerous to children, particularly the female part of the family: And the *children* knowing that the parents live without law, it may sometimes flatter the corruption of their hearts, and train them up in the same practices. Thus iniquity is *sometimes* handed down from *generation* to *generation*. But of this be assured; our regards to the welfare of others, under every circumstance, should not be confined to accidents, in which the parties themselves had no choice. Virtue claims regard, and *vice* excites our horror.

D. I understand the distinction you make; and that charity forbids our drawing any conclusion, to the disadvantage of those who are born under circumstances, themselves would not have chosen, had it been possible for them to be consulted. This is as obvious, as that good children wish their parents may live and be happy.

F. As to the early loss of parents, it is generally deemed a misfortune: but the providence of God is over all his works. The Almighty looks down from the seat of his glory, smiling on the children of men, distinguishing the fatherless by calling them his own children. He is the Father and Protector of all! Thus the *wisdom* and justice of God are displayed in all the majesty of his *power*, and the lustre of his *mercy* and *goodness*! What is distinction? — Can any one pretend that your soul is less precious in the sight of God, than the soul of a *queen*?

D. Every event of life, whether we are *princes* or *peasants*, equally leads the mind to the consideration of the *Christian* dispensation.

F. Yet you find, through the whole history of *Christ*, the prejudices prevailing among the Jews concerning a *powerful* temporal prince, constituted the grand obstacle to their receiving our

blest Saviour, clothed as he was in the appearance of *humble* life.

D. To make a child sensible that such a Saviour was foretold, through so many ages, and at length came, does it not require more *attention* than children generally possess?

F. Attention is absolutely necessary to certain passages in the Old Testament. These indeed should not be read over in a cursory manner, but being *often repeated*, as relating to a great event, a young person may be easily satisfied that *Christ* really came, and that he has left a divine law for the guide of our lives; and what the law is, will be the more readily learnt. Such parts of the Old Testament as convey just and *enlarged ideas* of God, his *providence* and *boundless perfections*, with the *love*, the *reverence*, the *submission*, and *resignation* we owe to him, are highly necessary; but the mind opens like blossoms by degrees; and as the graft produces the fruit, derived from its proper trunk, a conviction of the most *obvious* truths will grow from education. A child may easily comprehend that he was not the cause of his own existence; but it requires more reason to discover on whom he depends for his support; and to carry his thoughts up to that Supreme Power which governs all. He will find, from the conduct of his natural parents, if they act consistently, that a *wise* *governor* will require wisdom of his dependants, and a merciful ruler, mercy: that *obedience* is the best offering we can make him: and that it is impossible to be *good children* to a *parent*, or *good subjects* to a *prince*, but as we are exercised constantly, and submit to discipline, as the condition of the protection we stand in need of. The history of the *New Testament* will inform him, that the followers of *Christ* were *obedient* even unto death; and *in death*, triumphed in the hope of the reward of a *glorious immortality*!

D. But to despise all the splendor of this world, when set in competition with That of a world to come, cannot be taught but by slow degrees.

F. True: but That infant tongue which lisps the praises of the Almighty, is not without a heart to conceive, there is a state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death; and that the rewards are bestowed on the *good*; and the punishments inflicted on the *wicked*. In the mean while, pure religion not only civilize our manners, but as it makes its progress in the heart, it inspires senti-

ments of *mutual benevolence*; teaching us to adorn every station of life, with the practice of those virtues, which are best suited to it, and most honourable to human nature.

D. I apprehend that all the knowledge we can imagine necessary to our happiness, as *moral* and *accountable beings*, may be learnt in the *New Testament*.

F. *History* is the best repository of knowledge, and instruction; but the *Sacred History* opens an intercourse between *heaven* and *earth*, revealing to us the *will of the Almighty*, and giving proof of his providence over us.

D. The account we have of the *creation of the world*, and of *man*, and the *end* for which he was created, is surely the most interesting concern in the world, especially as we learn by the same means, the way to That new heaven, and new earth, in which *truth* and *righteousness*, and *eternal happiness*, dwell in *perfect friendship*.

F. I have often told you, my dear *Mary*, that the great science of the human understanding, whatever our *age* or *temporal condition* may be, is That of our *divine religion*; for “in this are contained the words of eternal life, having God for its author, and salvation for it’s end.”

D. But is it possible to give children *right impressions* of it during their earliest years?

F. If we do not exact too much of them; and never giving them *wrong impressions*, they will be generally awed by *religion*, just as they see it treated by their parents; and by familiar notices, such as will prevent the perplexity of their minds. Perplexities will naturally prevail, in our tender years, especially if more is intruded on the mind than it can bear. Errors of this kind are often committed, and they are as often followed by this bad consequence, that the child becomes disgusted, and loses his relish of the  *sacred writings*, than which a greater evil cannot befall him.

D. If religion is founded in the light of the understanding, we must *know* what we *believe*, before we can judge if we *obey*.

F. All improvements in *faith* and *practice* depend on our knowledge. That so few children arrive at *proper knowledge*, for their years, arises not from the incapacity of the child to learn, so much as from the carelessness and inability of the parents and masters to teach. Had these a clearer judgment, more diligent attention, and a more prudent address and *manner*

of *teaching*, they would explain in free and easy language the lessons which are given them; and by an *affectionate* concern for the welfare of children, become acquainted with their dispositions, and degrees of comprehension. They would regulate their conduct according to such discovery, and adapt their lessons to their respective capacities. Instead of resting on a *formal reading* or *verbal repetition* of lessons, they would study how to convey meaning and sentiment, together with words, and impress them on the heart.

D. How few children, on your principle, have *fair play*!

F. It is obvious that the *infant-mind* must be gently and gradually instructed: some notions of religion may be early insinuated; but the more plain and intelligible these are, and the more correspondent with the *common sense of mankind*, the more success may be expected.

D. I can easily conceive that if we do not suit our address, our language, our manner, to the temper and apprehension of children, they cannot learn; and no instruction can be *profitable* that is not *comprehended*.

F. And That which wearies or embarrasses the mind, must certainly grow *irksome*. When you come to teach the children, whom it may please the Almighty to give you, let all your passions be calm, and your reason guide your affections as a mother. You must consider that they are *children*, to whom much tenderness is due as such; not as some who give them heavy blows, such as may at once create a disease in the body; while the example of anger greatly injures the mind. They can have no acquaintance with the world, but they will soon learn, that God hath given them a natural desire of knowledge; and placed them in society where they may acquire it; and that you are the instrument of his providence to convey it. You must have patience, and clear every step of the way as you proceed, leading them gently by the hand, from one degree of knowledge to another.

D. I am well assured, from the tenderness I feel for other people’s children, I shall be fond of my own; but in the method you propose, they will go on but *slowly*.

F. The common race of mortals can go on no other way: those who hurry children, beyond the measure of their abilities to receive instruction, defeat their own purpose. By attempting

attempting to do a great deal, they often do *nothing*. If they go on slowly, they will still go forward, and whatever is done, will be done effectually. *Short, frequent* exercises, such as you may find suited to their age and abilities, will make a deeper impression, and be more improving, than *long heavy tasks*, which grow irksome, to a degree even of disgust, defeating the end of the teacher. Do you not observe among grown persons, whose years have ripened their reason; in every science, the business is generally done by insensible degrees; but in children, a little one day, and a little another; *line upon line, and precept upon precept*; lead them into *knowledge*, as they grow in *stature*. According to a just and beautiful observation, "the minds of children are like vessels with narrow necks, which receive but little liquor, when it is poured upon them in abundance; but are insensibly filled, if it is poured in gently, and as it were drop by drop." (a)

*D.* I believe nothing is better adapted, to fix in the minds of children what they read, than questioning them frequently concerning it; that, according to their improvement, they may be called to give an account of the most easy passages, and repeat the substance of the matter.

*F.* In doing this, the master should point out the path; remove all difficulties in their way; remind them of the most material circumstances, and give them such assistance as they stand in need of, till by custom and diligence they can do it of themselves.

*D.* If pains were taken to encourage the *curiosity* which is natural to children, would they of themselves ask questions, and enquire into the sense and meaning of expressions and things?

*F.* Your question, my daughter, is extremely just: we should satisfy Children readily and cheerfully, by clear and express answers, and commend them for their desire of knowledge and information. It is easy to comprehend, how useful this sort of exercise may be, to expand the mind, to enlarge the *understanding*, to strengthen the memory, and improve the judgment.

*D.* Would you have the history of the Bible explained and imprinted on their hearts?

*F.* The most material of it, and such as has regard to the precepts of Christianity: I

have received much satisfaction from an Abstract of the Scriptures, well digested; the events are calculated to please the *highest* and the *lowest* of mankind. The dullest understanding will comprehend how interesting the events are, whilst they inspire the noblest ideas, to those whom God hath blessed with superior talents (b). You must be cautious to divide the *good* from the *bad part* of *examples*, shewing human nature as it is, and has been, through all ages; yet rather brightening the shades, than giving them an additional gloom. Alarm the *fears*; but animate the *hopes*, of a child; and let not the general name of a *good man* be thought to justify a *particular bad action*. By observing the *characters, tempers,* and *inclinations* of youth, they may be the more easily taught, and their minds *enriched* with the most powerful excitements to virtue. No *story* nor *fable* should be without its application to *real life*; nor any thing be deemed worthy the name of *life*, which has not some relation to *immortality*. If *religion* is natural to the mind, and *God* should be in *all* our thoughts, every incident ought to be referred to that supreme invisible power, without which not a sparrow falleth to the ground. Let the child, by his daily lessons, be fortified to carry on the *warfare of life*, against the *tyranny* of vicious prejudices and customs. Thus the mind will grow strong: the root of the *important truth* will shoot downward into the heart; and as the stately oak which requires an hundred years, as is commonly imagined, before it comes to maturity, we might see the child, from six to twelve years of age, grow *strong* and *flourishing*; and at length prepared to resist the *storms* of passion and *adverse fortune*.

*D.* He must be first persuaded that religion and virtue alone will bring him to such maturity, as will fit him for the great purpose heaven intended, in the happiness of a life to come. In good time I will endeavour to exercise myself in your generous lessons: The great art will be to sweeten the work, and render it pleasing. But it seems to be impossible, totally to divest young persons of the opinion, that *learning is labour*.

*F.* But when enlivened by variety, and the affections interested, *knowledge* becomes pleasant to the soul; and the mind seeks after it with greediness.

*D.* The custom of forcing children to read  
S i f f 2 difficult

(a) QUINTILIAN.

(b) Rev. Mr. Sellon's Abridgment.

difficult and obscure passages, before they have the least conception of their meaning, must create a dislike to That book, which should be their greatest joy to peruse.

*F.* Aye, *Mary*, many have contracted a prejudice against it in their youth, which has never been removed through their whole lives. *Benedict Lovely* infuses into the tender breasts of his children a *taste* and *relish* of the *oracles of truth*, and kindles a desire of improving themselves in spiritual knowledge, by talking continually of the happiness of the *blest*. His children begin with reading the judicious abridgement of the Sacred Writings I have mentioned, with a promise that if they mind what they are about, they shall, in due time, have the *honour* to read the Oracles of God, in their full majesty and supreme excellence. He looks on them with a pleasing expectation, and directs them in the paths of life from their very *infancy*. To be instrumental to life, and not strive to make it agreeable and happy, he says, is *unnatural*. As *immortal* creatures, committed to his especial and immediate charge, by the great Father of mankind, he thinks it his indispensable duty, as far as it is in his power, to preserve the *precious trust*. He watches the dawning of their reason, and forms the rising thought, cultivating the understanding in its infant state; he stamps religious impressions on their minds, opening every blossom of piety and goodness, guarding it to its full maturity.

*D.* *Blessed Benedict!* This is charming indeed; but to do this requires familiar conversation.

*F.* He enforces his instruction with the persuasive argument of *example*, and by the most judicious choice of his company; chusing his sub-

jects of conversation, in the determined resolution of keeping them, as much as possible, out of *bad company*. Whatever he teaches them, or causes to be taught them, he thinks it the most essential part of education to ground them in the principles of That religion, on which their *everlasting welfare* depends.

*D.* Is *Benedict* mindful that *good humour* and *cheerfulness of temper* are absolutely necessary to *happiness*?

*F.* Very much so: he says, that to tell a young person you must never be *merry*, is in effect telling him he must wear a sad countenance all the days of his life; a precept directly contrary to That which the religion of our blessed Lord every where inculcates. He observes, that in general we are naturally inclined in youth to mirth and festivity; but that it is necessary a child should be taught to distinguish between *mirth* and *cheerfulness*. He explains to them, that the first, as they easily find, *can* exist only for a *short time*; but the last may be *equal, uniform* and *constant*, always *smiling*, and full of *peace*. For want of this distinction, while they avoid *sadness* as a *disease*, many become dissipated and careless, bringing on themselves the worst of evils.

*D.* *Benedict* talks like a *wise man*. The *Christian lessons* say, “ Rejoice always; yea, I say unto you, rejoice.—Be not sorrowful, as men without hope.—Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!”

*F.* What splendid, pleasing ideas do these words convey! They cannot be too deeply rooted; but you perceive the child must be *early* taught; for *true joy* can only spring from *hope*, and hope from *innocence*, and *obedience* to the laws of God!

## CONVERSATION XV.

*The advantages of giving children early impressions of religion. The necessity of taking right method of imprinting it on their minds. General rules to be observed by servants, comprehending moral and religious duties. Instructions to a boy leaving a charity-school, in the mode of an harangue, repeated by himself. Harangue of a boy of fifteen years of age on the duty of commemorating the death of Christ. Negligence of masters in regard to religion. The folly of parents in shewing an over-weening fondness to children. The necessity of giving early impressions of industry. The duty of landlords with respect to the lives and conversations of their dependants. The high importance of early thinking of God. The general idea of harmony, particularly in the married state. The instability of all human concerns compared to a life of virtue, and the immortality of the soul. Trueman's blessing to his daughter.*

**F.** YOU should not be apprehensive that if you take proper measures, when they are young, they will be *unmindful* of their duty, as they advance in years. Let them know, that religion is *truth*, and whosoever deserts the cause of truth, from that moment commences a subject to the prince of darkness; and if he does not speedily repent and return to his duty, will be treated as a rebel in the sight of God. Let them know, that if they transgress, sooner or later they will feel that *disobedience* produces *fear*; and that fear destroys the joys and comforts of life; and by the likeness of things they may as easily find out, that the same which befalls them in *common life*, will happen to them in religious concerns, and the relation they bear to a life to come. This kind of analogy and comparison of things is so frequently taught, and so strongly inculcated by the *Saviour of the World*, it is wonderful mankind should affect to refine so much upon religion, that they frequently lose the substance of it. I was once acquainted with a country schoolmaster, who aspired at making his pupils *Christians* as well as *scholars*. For this purpose he endeavoured to explain to them upon what false and inconsistent principles many of those men acted, who yet retain the reputation of the greatest heroes of antiquity, tho' in effect they were so many scourges to mankind; and that the best mere man, that ever appeared on the earth, must be him, who most resembled the Son of God.

**D.** But our Saviour says, his kingdom is not of this world.

**F.** It therefore follows, that the perfection of man consists in the imitation of the blef-

fed Saviour of the World; for the *Christian* precepts do not allow us to set our affections on things below, but, as *immortal beings*, to look up to the regions of immortality, where true glory alone is to be found. Can any kind of fraud or violence be *necessary* to the good order of the world? The reputation of justice and mercy, truth and devotion of the heart to the great Author of Life, would give a man such a reputation, and enlighten his understanding so much, he would be the fittest of all others, whatever his rank or condition might be, to discharge every relative duty with the highest and most exact propriety. The master, I have just mentioned, had the care of a number of charity boys; and several youths, the children of gentlemen, tradesmen, and mechanics. It is the custom to distinguish schools by a painted board to inform the passenger: His, contained in large gilded characters, these words:

*Boys under the Age of fifteen, taught their Duty to God, with the learned Languages, Writing, &c.*

**D.** Is not this always understood; and was not he deemed a *whimsical* fellow?

**F.** It is *fondly* taken for granted; and perhaps this is one great cause, that many masters are extremely remiss in the part which regards *religion*. Whether it relates to the children of the higher or the lower classes, the omission is attended with the worst consequences imaginable. This gentleman very justly considered all his scholars on one common level, and shewed the most countenance to him who seemed to be of the best principles, and the most understanding, with regard to his duty to God, and his neighbour. He observed that he had never

known.

known a boy but might be taught to venerate religion, more easily than to understand Greek or Latin. He had a short lecture, every other day, on the immortality of the soul, and the attributes of the Deity, in language suited to the capacity of boys. He also tried their attention by questions, and the repetition of texts from Scripture, rather than burthening their minds with a multitude of useless Latin verses. He commended him who made the most proper answer, and sometimes recorded it *in writing*, reminding his scholars that religion consisted in deeds, as well as thoughts and words. He used to say, "Experience has taught me that young persons are seldom attentive to occasional harangues, made to them on religious duties, unless they are set off by examples from history, and the reasonableness and advantages of a religious conduct." He pointed out the danger of negligence, by familiar examples and maxims, drawn from the *Christian faith*. "By making such the subjects of *Latin themes*, said he, my scholar becomes familiarized to his religion. The *Christian creed* is often repeated, in a formal manner: My method enforces attention to it, with obedience to social and Christian duties. I was the other day much pleased with one of my boys, about thirteen years of age, the son of a farmer, on occasion of his leaving me (*a*). He expressed himself in these terms: "I think myself happy at all times to make my acknowledgments to you, my much honoured master, for the instructions you have given me. You are the instrument, in the hands of the Almighty, in opening my mind to a just sense of my duty to God, my neighbour, and myself.—I perceive, by daily proofs before my eyes, that all men die; and I am as well satisfied there is a state of rewards and punishments after death; and that it will last for ever! I am therefore resolved to cherish my hopes of the reward, by doing what I ought; and banish my fears, by forbearing to do that which is forbidden. I am no less persuaded, that idleness and stubbornness are frequently attended with poverty, pain and sorrow, whilst cheerfulness and good humour furnish a perpetual feast to the mind, and become the greatest pleasure a man can enjoy.—I apprehend it is great folly to imagine, that any master or mistress whom I may serve

will feed and clothe me, and supply *my wants*, unless I obey *their commands*, and shew them that I do it with a willing mind.—I consider a dogged temper as equally foolish and wicked, most provoking in a child, or a servant, and indeed in every other relation. When I grow to manhood, if so it pleases God, and that I have authority over others, I shall think it my duty to chastise those who act contrary to reason and the duties of a Christian:—for the same reason, when I am negligent of *my duty*, I expect to be punished. If I know any person to be a liar, I consider him also as a knave, if not a coward, for this is the case, if he intends to deceive me; or dares not tell the truth boldly like a man. I am resolutely determined, Sir, to avoid all such imputations, lest I should draw down the vengeance of heaven on my guilty head.—Nor will I offend by destroying that confidence, without which there can be no credit or reputation in the world. I am resolved, if I should be betrayed into doing a *wrong thing*, I will do a *right one* in confessing my error, in hopes of pardon from God and man.—I will not aggravate my crime by obstinately persisting in a falsehood.—It would be absurd to *expect* the mercies of heaven without *asking* for them; yet, without such mercies, I am sensible I can have no security of my life, nor of any other blessing. I will therefore be constant in my prayers *morning and night*, begging the assistance of God to help my endeavours after virtue and true religion.—Knowing that *honesty* is the most honourable distinction among men, and that *theft* is forbidden by the commandments of God, and punishable upon earth by the gallows, I will not take that which doth not belong to me; nor connive at any other person's taking what I know does not belong to him. I will be careful, as much as in me lies, that every thing shall be enjoyed by its proper owner, so that I may do unto others as I would they should do unto me, with every thing, of what kind or nature soever it may be; and rather perish with hunger, than break the commandments. God preserve me from eternal punishment in the world to come!—*Swearing*, and *taking God's name in vain*, or suffering myself to become angry or proud, I am equally sensible leads to *destruction*.—Seeing that  
there

(*a*) This idea is taken from observing how inefficacious instructions given to children sent from public schools and hospitals generally prove. The child should repeat his own lesson, or it signifies nothing to him.



there is so much wickedness in the world, as you, *my honoured master*, have assured me, I will be watchful as I grow up not to trespass, by any want of *modesty* in my behaviour, lest I draw down on my head the wrath of heaven, and expose myself to all the mischiefs which forbidden desires bring upon mankind in this world.— If I do justice unto others, I shall hope that justice will be done unto me; but whatever my fortune shall be, in this world, I trust that through the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, after I have finished my life in piety and virtue, I shall be received into *everlasting happiness*. I believe this is the end for which I was born: and shall condemn myself as the most *foolish* of all mortals, if I do not endeavour to live like a *Christian*, which, of all characters, whether a man be rich or poor, is the highest and most glorious in the world!"

D. What a charming boy he must have been, who could think so justly and express himself so properly!

F. This is what the master taught him, and endeavoured to make his own sentiments, and by force of memory to *impress* it on his mind. And what is there but any boy, educated in the fear of God, may learn and *think* by the time he reaches the age of thirteen or fourteen? This would be frequent if young persons were exercised in speaking and delivering their *rule of life*. But this gentleman goes much further; he treats his scholars with so much tenderness and regard, they love him as a father. He does not chuse that any boy shall leave his school turned of fifteen, without receiving the sacrament of our Lord's Supper. The last he discharged, he told me, made the following harangue: "It is with no little grief of heart I take my leave of you, my very honoured master, instructor, and friend, to whom I am under the highest obligations for the knowledge by which I hope to acquire my bread: And what is of still greater moment, to be happy in a life to come! I am sensible that from the moment I was born I began my progress to eternity! I am now, by the mercies of God, advanced near to my fifteenth year: How many more I may *live*, God only knows! I have many dangers yet to go through, even before I arrive at the maturity of manhood; but I hope, Sir, by means of the wholesome instruction which you have given me, my mind will improve in virtue as my body

increases in strength. It is with much pleasure I embrace this opportunity of declaring, that I think the best means of keeping myself stedfast in the paths of virtue and religion, and to remember the Great Founder of my faith, is to commemorate his death, and the end for which he suffered. I am sensible that as a consequence of the transgression of *Adam*, all men would have shed the death of the unrighteous; but that in *Christ* all men, who obey his laws, will live for ever, in a state of inexpressible happiness. I see not how we can *obey* him, unless we *remember* him; and I know not how this is to be done, if we neglect to come to his table, to which he has so mercifully invited us. It is by my acceptance of his invitation, that I have a title to the glorious name of a *Christian*. I consider, Sir, that the lowest degree of common sense must teach every one, who is arrived even at my tender age, if he rejects the heavenly food which is offered him, to nourish his soul unto everlasting life, he can with no propriety be said to have any inclination to live in friendship with him. I see not how he can pretend to be a *Christian*, and not remember Christ. If he believes that the Saviour of mankind said, "*Do this in remembrance of Me,*" and *he will not do it*, but seeks for frivolous excuses, he condemns himself. These words, by your goodness to me, are continually present to my thoughts, and I am fully purposed to *remember* them. I hope I shall never be so weak or so wicked as to forget this solemn injunction. The *unworthy* is him who will not recollect, or stifles the remembrance for what purpose *Christ* died. He is not sincere; he does not *intend* to lead a *new life*. — For my part, I can satisfy my heart by no other means. If I *reject* the mercy held out to me, by the compassion of my heavenly Father, my Friend, my Saviour, and my God, how can I expect to receive it? I am fully persuaded that this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving will be accepted at the throne of God, whose mercy is over all his works! The means of obtaining mercy is to remember the Son of God, whose body was broken and whose blood was spilt for my sins, and the sins of the world. I hope That blood will not be spilt in vain for *me*! And you, my *illustrious scholars*, when you arrive at my age, I trust will be at least as well inclined as myself, to *remember Christ*, not according to your fancy, or the presumption of your hearts; but in the way he hath commanded

us all to remember him. I hope you will gladly commemorate his agonizing pains and precious death: whilst you mourn for your own sins, and the sins of the world, which occasioned this great event! He who intends to *lead a new life*, let him use the means to *strengthen his faith*, invigorate his *understanding*, and correct his *heart*, that he may return to God, and abide in his laws. If I *remember Christ*, I hope I shall *obey him*. Can I *think* of him, and at the same time offer him an affront: beholding his mighty love for *me*, even in the bitter tortures of an ignominious death? I was *glad*, when I offered him the *sacrifice of my heart* at his table; and considered how the sacred elements might nourish my soul unto everlasting life!—You, my honoured master, have assured me, that in all Christian countries it is the constant practice to perform this *Christian duty*; and the neglect of it amongst *us* must give high offence to God. I am informed, that when *Christians* of *profligate churches* abroad reach to my age, they go to the communion-table; and why should they not, if they understand the meaning of it; and how can a boy of common sense mistake it?—I hope, Sir, when I get into the world, to communicate the lessons you have taught me, and remind even *my parents*, if I see them negligent, that they may not, like the *rich man's* brethren, fall into danger of perishing everlastingly. If they will not *remember Christ*! O God!—if they *will* not remember him, will he remember them, when he returns in tremendous glory to judge the children of men! May he not then say, *Depart from me, ye generation of ungrateful mortals!*—*I commanded you to remember me, and you would not?* There needs no power of *legis* to prove, that to *report*, and not to *amend*, is a contradiction. To amend, and not to *remember our merciful Redeemer*, after the manner appointed by himself, is *folly* and *madness*. There is nothing in this duty but a child may understand, or why are we, when children, taught our catechism? What doth this say? *Why was the sacrament of the Lord's supper ordained?*—For the *continual remembrance* of the sacrifice of the death of *Christ*, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.—*What is the outward part, or sign of the Lord's supper?*—Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.—*What is the inward part, or thing signified?*—The body and blood of *Christ*, which are verily and indeed taken (a),

and received by the *faithful* in the Lord's Supper.—*What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?*—The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of *Christ*, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.—*What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?*—To *examine* themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life, having a lively faith in God's mercy, through *Christ*, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and being in charity with all men.—This is taught us in *childhood*, but it is, I apprehend, the sense of a *man*.—I thank you, Sir, for making me so far a *man*, and for the *Little Book* you have given me (b); I will preserve it as the apple of my eye, esteeming it next to the *sacred Scriptures*.—After giving you this assurance of my sincerity, and the sense I have of my obligations to you, I take my leave, heartily wishing you all imaginable happiness: and to you, my *dear* fellow-scholars, I shall not cease to pray, that *Christian virtue* may ever be your guide, and the *smiles of Providence* your companion.”

D. Dear excellent lad! What may not a master do!—Why should not this be always done? But I fear there are not many such masters. Is it the fault of parents that *these things* are so?

F. It is their fault that many a youth is neglected, as if neither himself, nor his parents, were *Christians*!—Too many school-masters go down the stream of *folly* and *carelessness*, and drag their disciples along with them. — I once heard a younger boy repeat to my master *four hundred lines* out of a *Latin book*, not one word of which signified a *farthing* to his happiness in either world, except to exercise his memory. How easily might *boys* be taught to be *men in sentiment*, with regard to the object in question. Nothing in our religion is more familiar: nothing more early taught: nothing so scandalously neglected!—If parents would suppress their *false tenderness*, and employ their *good sense, reason, and resolution*, not with a moroseness and *austerity*, but a *gentle and persuasive tenderness*, what might they not accomplish! Whence arises the vast difference between the least imperfect among men, and the *thief* or the *murderer*? Is it not generally occasioned by *education* and *habit*? If in the last resort, *reason* and *religion* are the only true guides of life; to

*reason*

(a) As a commemorative sacrifice of his body and blood, performed in faith of the truth of the Christian religion.

(b) See Vol. I. p. 28, Prayers on the Sacrament; and Vol. II. p. 278.

*reason and religion* must we ultimately appeal. If you suffer your *affections* to triumph over your *understanding*, you will, in effect, take part with your children, in support of their *perversefenes*. This hath been the case of many a parent, cherishing That evil disposition, and departure from truth, in words and *deeds*, which have ended in the destruction of their children. There is a principle of virtue in the human composition; but it must be cultivated as we *manure land* for vegetation. Enrich the soil with skill and labour; sow good seed in the hearts of your children, and your harvest will be plentiful. With the utmost care and assiduity you can exercise, you may not find all your children act consistently or virtuously, or prove *good tempered*; but you will bid fair to acquire these advantages; and at all events enjoy the satisfaction of having done *your duty*. Labour and piety will ever mutually support each other. I have seen children at so early a part of life as *seven years* contribute largely to their own support. I must repeat to you, that if you should be blessed with a *dozen*, or a greater number, let them be all taught to *spin and knit*; for this will lay the foundation of an uninterrupted scene of industry, and make provision for a material part of their *raiment*. If they were all *blind*, or lived in darkness, they might *knit*; and whilst they were knitting, discourse with more ease than if they were *eating*. These articles of industry, joined to husbandry, furnish the means of living. The more people there are, in this country, according to the probable events of things, the more *plenty* there will be.

D. No people can be so completely miserable, as one part of the *Londiners*. Very few, if any of them, teach their children to *spin or knit*; and consequently great numbers know not how to gain a morsel of bread.

F. Your remark is as *true*, as it is sorrowful. *Idleness* and *filthiness* are companions, and destroy like a two-edged sword.—This is the cause why *London* is obliged to us for so many *domestic servants*. Infants kept *clean*, and *properly fed*, live; others die there, as if they had the *plague*. Were mankind in general more temperate and *industrious*, every spot of earth would be converted to use, and we should find that twice the number of inhabitants might be supported, and *more* and *war* supplied. Without *discipline and economy*, a handful of people may droop in hunger and

rag; and with *industry and skill*, millions may flourish. The *lazy* will see the *sun* shine, and the *rains* fall in vain, while *nature*, or *nature's God*, smiles on the *laborious*.

D. I can easily comprehend that, by the force of labour, even a barren rock, with *sil* laid on it, may bring forth *increase*.

F. The case is the same in spiritual concerns. Without industry we can expect no fruit. If we work in the vineyard, we shall receive the *wages* which our great Lord and Master hath promised.

D. The commandment that we shall do no work on the *Sabbath-day*, implies that we shall work on other days. There needs no argument to prove that they who *will not work*, have no title to the *necessaries of life*. But do not many of the *regulations*, you wish to introduce, depend on persons of wealth, or great *landed property*?

F. Property of all kinds gives *power*; though the world is governed more by men of *wit*, or at least of *understanding*, than by *gilded fools*. But in these days, many of all kinds have their heads turned with notions of *city grandeur*, the *lust of the eye*, and the *pride of life*; and it is difficult to say where it will stop. However, we are to hope the *good sense* of the nation will restrain us from many fooleries, which occasionally predominate, and turn their thoughts to more manly pursuits, in which they may enjoy a *brighter prospect of heaven*. In the mean while many parts of the kingdom look dreary, notwithstanding it must be granted that our improvements of late years are a prodigy. The people assemble themselves too much in the metropolis; and there are thousands and ten thousands of acres, the proprietors of which have never seen them; and except by rent-rolls, can hardly tell the names of ten people who live on them.

D. That is not politic. If the eye of the master makes the ox fat, his neglect must make many to walk in the paths of *idleness* and *iniquity*.—With regard to the moral and religious education of children, of which you were speaking, have you any thing further to recommend to me?

F. I have only to intreat, that you will consider the love of truth as their first object; and as That on which all other virtues in a great measure depend. We are to observe this *great law*, not in our *words* only, but in our *actions* also. We may flatter ourselves, that by *say*ing the thing which is *right*, we renounce all assiduity

with the father of lies; but if we *do* the thing which is *wrong*, we deceive ourselves, and truth is not in us. We shall offend our conscience, and make an alliance with the *enemy of God*.

*D.* Young people who are taught to speak truth, notwithstanding sometimes behave perversely; offending their parents by a *stubborn silence*, and sometimes by an *avowed disobedience*.

*F.* Such cannot be said to *love truth*. To love *truth* in the genuine sense, is to love *virtue*; and in this sense a child cannot be *stubborn* nor *insolent*. It were happy if froward dispositions were seen only in *children*; but there is a *sickness in the soul, Mary*, which we inherit from *Adam*, shewing itself, even from the *cradle to the grave*. It is therefore that we are warned to “work out our salvation with *fear and trembling* ;” and “when we *stand*, to take heed lest we *fall* .”

*D.* To train up a child in the way he should go, I am persuaded, is absolutely necessary to the welfare of mankind.

*F.* A false indulgence to children has brought many a parent much earlier to the grave than would otherwise have happened. Though rods were made for the backs of *fools*, you are sensible they are not to be used with the same severity towards all that are foolish. The end of *chastisement* is *reformation* : corporal punishment by the rod is necessary for *some few* ; but many more may be soothed and persuaded : with a third class, *diviſion* will accomplish the work. You have heard of a kind of *fever*, for which physicians prescribe a potion of *strong drink* for its cure ; but in general a gentle and cooling diet is most proper : so it seems to be with regard to the *mind*, and the tenderness of parents for their children. I have seen a child of great generosity of temper, and a high disdain of *folly*, *indulged* so far, as to slight the injunctions of his parents ; yet where there is a *love of truth*, there is generally a sense of shame : and many a *generous heart* is won by it. Some children, I say, are subdued by being treated with a *careless indifference*, or *content* ; or laughing at their perverseness, instead of sympathizing at their imaginary distress. This has frequently cured *violent gusts of passion*, for when the child discovers it will not avail, he will try some other expedient, and grow virtuous, as it were, from mere cunning. With regard to *children in general*, you are sensible, it is not only the *preservation* of their *lives* by the best means,

that experience teaches ; but to consider them as a large part of human kind : and whilst they are without guile, they claim our *homage*, as well as *love*. The concern which was shewn, by the *Saviour* of the world, when in allusion to their *innocency*, he declared, “of such is the kingdom of heaven,” ought to make every *Christian* attentive to this sentence, as *words of eternal life*. My master used to say, that no compliment ever pleased him so much as that made to one of our poets (*a*) ; that he was a *man in sense*, but in the *simplicity* of his manners, a *child*. My dear *Mary*, let your heart be *tender*, where the necessities of your fellow-creatures are concerned, particularly towards *children* ; and *hard* only where your chastity is in danger.

*D.* I am sensible of the debt mankind owe to each other, particularly for the care shewn us in the *infant state*.

*F.* Having given these lessons on the duties of a wife, and a mother, I hope to be happy in so virtuous a son as *George Worthy* : and when I have fortunately disposed of *you*, the only *treasure* I have on earth, worth felicitude, I shall have only to lay down my head *in peace*.

*D.* I hope my marriage will afford you a satisfaction that will lengthen your days.

*F.* Indeed, *Mary*, my tenement is so much out of repair, I apprehend it will fall soon : it cannot be *rebuilt* till the day of retribution. Whether it shall stand for months, or only weeks, I hope to be excused hereafter from paying any taxes to my own folly or caprice, or the folly and capriciousness of the world. I only wish to devote the remainder of my days to *God*, and those to whom I can do any substantial service. As to the *events* of our actions, we know not what a day will bring forth : this is in the hands of *God* : it is enough that we have a *steady faith* in *him*, and make the best use of our reason, while we live and enjoy it. I promise myself no small satisfaction, in your being in my neighbourhood ; that I may be ready to succour you with my *advice*, whenever you shall stand in need of it. Your *first duty* will be to your *husband*, and *your care* to preserve your own children : the impressions which you have received of *filial piety* towards *me*, will teach you how to inspire them with the same sentiments.

*D.* Indeed, my father, it is upon this foundation only, that I hope for happiness ; and that  
my

my husband's fields will be crowned with golden crops : and the blooming virtues of my children, if I should have any, make *me* happy, and do honour to *your* grey locks !—The expression of your kindness subdues my heart. If you have no wish to prolong your life beyond that of promoting *my* happiness ; I certainly ought to devote my heart to your contentment and satisfaction.

*F.* It is well when we can discover what good it is we most wish for, with respect to both worlds. I am arrived at that period when the objects most desirable in this life should be contracted within a narrow circle : narrow as the probable limit of our days. What can we do with more, but torment ourselves about *trifles* ? As to any thing I shall leave behind me, excepting my good wishes for the welfare of my country and mankind, it may be contained in a nutshell : thus I ought to subdue this fever of the soul, of wishing for some distant *earthly good* : I know the affections of it ought to be set on things *above*, not on things on the earth. I am come, I say, to the verge of life, from whence we launch into *eternity*. Every hour that passes *beeded*, or *unbeeded* by, brings our labours nearer to an end : those labours, by which we are to stand or fall *for ever* ! You have seen the stupendous structure of *St. Paul's* cathedral at *London*, and the *bridge of Westminster* : you spoke of these objects, as works that filled your mind with *wonder* ! All the public buildings, and palaces of nobles, on which you have cast your eye, though they may stand during many ages of man, and have unnumbered owners ; yet *time* will return them to the earth, from whose bowels they were extracted. All the *labour* and *art*, *will be*, as if it *had never been* ! The *proud rocks* round the lake which you and I passed by in our journey to our cousin, whose summits we descry from *Puylor's hill* ; even these, which seem to disdain their foundations in this solid globe, and emulate the heights of the clouds : even these, my daughter, and the *earth* itself, will be dissolved !

*D.* In the mean while, we must *hope* for happiness, to ourselves and our country.

*F.* *Hope* is a proof of virtue. We often represent each other as *corrupt* and *reluctant* to obey the great Sovereign of the Universe : let us however *hope*, that so far as this is true, and true I fear it is in numerous instances, we may *amend* and *prevent* the decay, which without a miracle

may come upon us. We have still, in the comparative view, such rectitude in government ; such moderation in principle ; such candour, probity, and charity, existing in the hearts of numbers of subjects, we ought to be *grateful to heaven* : let us not cease to say, *Lord, help thou our languor, and warm our hearts to a due sense of the admirable frame of the government we live under* ! We may also pray that *pride* and *avarice*, *vanity* and *false ambition*, wherever they are found, may be so opposed by the virtuous part, that we may yet retain the favours of heaven ; ever judging *with candour* ; paying our taxes with cheerfulness ; and shedding our blood, rather than be idle spectators of any great evil to our country. A true sensibility of *civil* and *religious* duties, in their natural course, accompany each other. When the contrary happens, there is reason to fear something is amiss in the hearts of *individuals*. Some are weak and wicked enough to leave *religion out of their politics* ; but let any man of candor examine, if the *best Christians* are not the *best subjects* ; and if true patriotism, and *christian* charity, are not intimately allied, and never at enmity with the welfare of mankind. Rebellion is generally the offspring of pride and ambition ; it is nursed by *falsehood* and *ingratitude* ; and if it be not punished here below, the movers of it may feel the vengeance of heaven. Let serious reflection animate your zeal, and keep your mind attentive to this great *consideration* ; that although all things will pass away, like the shadow of your body at the setting sun ; your *soul* will live *for ever* !—This will smile in *immortal youth*, and be refreshed at the springs of *everlasting pleasure* ; unless, by evil conduct, you plunge into *everlasting pain* ! — The *choice* is before you. I can only give you my *instruction* and my *blissing* ; and in due time, if you deserve them, my *worldly goals*. *Instruction* you have had repeated, *line by line, and lesson by lesson*, in the most ample manner that I have been able to give it.

*D.* This is so true, I think the world can produce no instance of greater paternal love ; and I should be a monster of ingratitude, if I did not acknowledge it with my latest breath. Heaven grant me virtue to *teach* the lessons which I have *learnt* from you ; that generations yet unborn may profit by *your benevolence*.

*F.* You, *my daughter*, are comparatively *well-inclined* : I will not say you are *good* ; for, in the

language of a *Christian*, there is none good, but *God*, and well inclined as you are, *take heed* that you continue so. *Humble yourself in the sight of God*.—Make an offering of your heart to him. Humility is the essential property of a *Christian*; it is that without which, daily experience teaches, men continually commit violence on their own souls. *Pride* and *vanity*, and their usual companion *infidelity*, take possession of the heart, and lay waste all its fair prospects and blooming hopes, with regard to a life to come, rendering it no longer confident in the care of its infinitely wise and merciful Creator. *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, is the advice given by a very wise and experienced man, as I have more than once reminded you; and the reason is obvious: it is, that when age comes on, we may not say, we have no pleasure in any such remembrance! What will be the consequence to those who forget their Maker!

*D. Tribulation and anguish.* I hope, when I teach my own children, I shall the more constantly think of God.

*E.* If you have any anxious wish for their happiness, you *must* teach them. It is acknowledged universally that mankind are generally good or evil, useless or beneficial to society, as their *education* has rendered them; and what are we to expect if our parents neglect us? The slightest impressions on our tender age make a lasting impression on the future part of life, and the prospect of *eternity*.

*D.* Religious instruction must be the first object; but this will still be pleasing or not, according to the manner in which it is introduced. If it is done with affection, it will make a lasting impression.

*E.* A parent without what is vulgarly called *natural affection*, is a monster. But how many love their children by a kind of *instinct*, yet take very little care of their souls, as if they had not the *reason* of a man, much less the *faith* of a *Christian*. If you do not consider your children as related to the world of spirits, and born the heirs of immortality, you will fall very short of the duty of a parent. It is a very pathetic exhortation that we find delivered by *Moses* to the *Israelites* (a). “These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children;

and thou shalt talk to them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

*D.* This is very beautiful, though in simple terms, expressive of the duty we owe to our children.

*E.* Religious instruction is the most likely to promote their happiness in the present state, at least to secure them against those calamities which threaten destruction in both worlds;—for you are to consider, such as your children are, when they come into the world, such may their generation be; and if their light shines before men, they may bear to glorify the God of their fathers, and administer to the happiness of generations yet unborn. Nor is this all, your own comfort will grow out of your efforts to promote the happiness of your children; you cannot teach them without learning something towards your own salvation. Indeed the teaching them is a duty on which your own salvation depends, for you are commanded by God to teach them. How are they otherwise to learn? How are they to know, that sensual appetites, the love of money, and other irregular passions to which their breasts may yet be strangers, will as surely invade them when they grow up, as the rest of mankind, and must be *repelled courageously*. Pride and ambition, disobedience, and an impatience of control, we find even in *infancy*; but it is chiefly owing to the folly or the wickedness of parents that these vices are not crushed in the egg.—Let your instructions be frequent, or as often as you discover the least occasion; and if not applied to the child, to a third person present: But do not dwell long on the same string; the *sweetest* notes may become harsh and *tiresome*. Keep them in mind of historical passages, and the sad fate of the impenitent. Talk to them of what they have heard at church. This was the custom in my early days, and a good one it was; but it seems to be much out of date at present. Much depends on *miliness* and *cheerfulness*, *plainness* and *ease*; feeding them, as the apostle figuratively speaks, with milk, and not with strong meat, which they are not able to bear.—In regard to yourself, if you, my child, should forget your God, will he remember you? Yes: he will remember you, but it will be in anger, and resentment of your forgetfulness.

In

In such circumstances, what a view does *eternity* present? Eternity is a dreadful thought, to those who live as without God, by not *remembering* him! Many are reminded of him by sickness, pain, and inquietude; but this happens oftener to the aged than the young.—When we set out on the journey of life, or begin the world, objects of *fancy* play before our eyes with gilded wings, often binding the imagination, as it were, in the silken strings of vain amusement, or vicious pursuits. If in the morning of life you forget the object for which life itself was given you, the business of it will not go on.—The *evening* will come, overshadowed with dark perplexities.—Having arranged your affairs so ill, you will have fears of the *sad consequences*. Having spent the day in indolence or folly, you will not have leisure or inclination to think of the *solemn hour of retribution*.—What difference is so great, as That of *erving God*, or *erving him not*? Shew your homage by the *warmth* of your affection, the *depth* of your gratitude, and the *confidence* of your *hope* in his mercy.—Behold her whose generous spirit of social love, and true sense of moral and religious duties, gives courage and graceful confidence in the day of adversity, as well as under the smiles of heaven; and *her*, who has spent her days in vice or vanity, in a continued round of *dissipation* or *fruitless amusement*, scarce knowing what it is to be a *Christian*! Let religion give grace to all the works of your hands, and the works of your hands will display your faith; that the beholder may glorify our common Father, the Lord and Sovereign of Heaven and Earth!—I know your virtues, *Mary*.—I am persuaded you will never deceive me. If the young man has all the reverence for his parents, which you have shewn for *me*, he also will gather the *fragrant fruits* of his own virtues, and may live to see the richest harvests, not only of his fields, but in the growth of his children, and the cultivation of their minds, till time shall ripen them for the enjoyment of glory, in the regions of *eternity*! This is necessary: it is *your* duty to promote this end, and advance it all that is in your power. Under no circumstance, dare to offend your own *conscience*. In the language of the poet

“ *What conscience dictates to be done,  
Or warns thee not to do,  
This teach thee more than hell to shun,  
That more than heaven pursue.*”

*D.* This is nervously and poetically conceived, with regard to the attention due to the dictates of our own minds; yet in spite of all, how often do we trespass!

*E.* The more highly you think of *God*, and the more humbly of *yourself*, the awe and majesty of the Almighty, and the consciousness of your own imperfection, will unite their force in the great cause of preserving your soul. The *hand* of God is never shortened, that it cannot save; nor his *ear* heavy, that it cannot hear. Fly to *him* for mercy. Seek *him* daily, and delight to know *his ways*. “Bow down thine head as a bulrush before him, and spread sackcloth and ashes under thee, to loosen the bands of wickedness,” to the utmost of your power; “to break every yoke of affliction, and let the oppressed go free; to deal bread to the hungry, and receive the poor that are *cast out*, and cover him whom thou seest naked.” This, my dear daughter, in the language of the prophet, is the first and greatest business of social beings, in *his* sight, who is the *Parent*, the *Friend*, and *Protector* of all mankind!—Do this as far as in you lies; “then shall your light break forth as the MORNING, and your health shall flourish. Righteousness will go before you, and make your paths smooth.”—And the glory of the Lord will, in the issue, be your reward. “If thou openest thine heart to the hungry, and satisfiest the afflicted soul, thy *light* shall rise in obscurity, and thy *darkness* be as the noon-day.”

*D.* O my Father, these words penetrate my heart. They are beautifully and delightfully expressive of the inward satisfaction and peace of mind, which a sincere desire to relieve others, as an act of *obedience to God*, naturally produces.—But no mortal can say how he shall be tried! His faith however in the promises of God, is at once a virtue and a comfort.

*F.* *Hope* is sufficient for our present state: Could no other boon be granted, what can we lose? But can we look for the *smiles of heaven*, even amidst *sufferings*, and not *rejoice*? You who *believe*, cannot but exult with respect to your hopes in a life to come. I now give you *my blessing*. May the weighty business you have in hand be concluded happily.—May your life be as prosperous as your husband's fields, when rain and sun-shine shall most bless his industry, and nourish the fruitful earth!

—May

—May your love to God, and your neighbour, grow up, and reach the measure of your longings; and the fulness of the happiness this world is capable of affording you! — And may death, when *your death* shall come, be as welcome to *you*, as it ever was to *patriarch, saint, or mar-*

*tyr!*—As *their* hopes in the *life to come* made them rejoice, that they had “*fought a good fight, and finished their course,*” so, *my dear child, my much-lov'd daughter*, may your life end with the applause of GOD and *men!*



# A P P E N D I X.

IT may reasonably be supposed, that I am less a physician than a moralist or divine; notwithstanding it is said, every man, who is not a fool, is a physician by the age of forty, — for himself: but it is yet more every man's duty to learn the means of preserving his own soul.

Several of the following *recipes* have been delivered to me by persons who have experienced their efficacy; and, in the general purpose of this book, they seem to claim a memorial; and some of them are referred to, and they may be of use to those who cannot afford better assistance. They were inserted in the first edition as notes.

In several pages of this work I have thrown out my conceits as *reason* and *experience* guided my pen. Arrived as I am, to my sixty-fifth year, in strength and activity, after being often in danger of falling into my grave, though I might make a bad physician to others, I have learnt something for my own service. *Exercise, temperance, and regular rest*, seem to have a more powerful efficacy than *physic*; yet I am bound to do honour to my physician, to whom, under Providence, I think myself indebted for my life.

The following are the fifteen recipes, IV. V. and VI. being rather mementos of the food most proper for the sickly:

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## No. I.

### *For the Palsy.*

Put a spoonful of mustard-seed into a pint of white-wine whey, set it over a clear stove fire, and let it simmer an hour at least. Strain it from the seeds, take half in the morning fasting, and the other half at night going to bed. Keep it close shut that the spirit may not evaporate; and warm it before you take it.

## No. II.

### *When the Piles are very bad and painful.*

Take of elder flowers, and the flowers of camomile, of each a small quantity; boil them in half a pint of water, then strain the liquor, and dissolve one grain and a half of extract of opium (a) in two ounces of the strained liquor, which mix with two ounces of oil, and inject as a clyster.

## No. III.

### *To recover from Suffocation in apparent Death from Drowning.*

In very doubtful cases, force air into the body, either at the mouth, or up the intestines: the vapour of tobacco is more stimulating than common air.

Where they can be had, bellows are more proper than a tobacco-pipe, for forcing the tobacco-steam into the intestines: and such may be bought at several shops in *London*, being the the same, with only a smaller pipe, as those used

(a) The opium should be used only under the care of the faculty.

in gardens for expelling vermin and insects from hot-walls and hot-houses, by the means of tobacco-smoke.

*Secondly*, To strip off, as soon as possible, the wet clothes, and apply external heat to the body, by means of friction, with flannel warmed before a fire.

*Thirdly*, To rub the body all over, especially the back-bone, with woollen or flannel cloths wetted with brandy, and strewed over with salt.

*Fourthly*, To chafe the temples with a volatile spirit, holding the same to the nose.

*Fifthly* To put the person in a bed without sheets, and covered with many blankets.

*Sixthly*, To have the additional natural warmth of two persons in bed, putting at the same time a bottle of warm water to the sole of each foot.

And *Lastly*, As soon as any pulsation or breathing is perceptible, let eight or ten ounces of blood be taken from the patient (a).

*Remarks on the above.*

These remedies have been adopted with success by the board of health at *Venice*, and by the city of *Hamburg*; and the police at *Paris* has established fifteen different places in that city, where all the necessary implements to be used, in restoring the apparently dead, are deposited. A reward is also given to the person, who first carries to these depositaries, intelligence of an accident; and another reward to him who got the body out of the water.

*Sal Armoniac* is the volatile spirit recommended by the society at *Amsterdam*, in all cases where this remedy is applied; but it is left to physicians to decide, whether *Ether* and *Eau de luce*, as stronger volatiles, may not be more efficacious; no power so suddenly producing a brisk circulation, and strong natural heat, as a proper application of *Ether*.

There are near seventy cases of a similar kind, and some of persons said to have been half an hour under water; others by suffocation by coals set on fire in a pit, by charcoal, dutch-turf coal, &c. published in a very authentic manner, by the societies of *Amsterdam*, *Hamburg*, *Venice*, *Vienna*, *Paris*, &c.

The story I have related of the diver, Vol. II. p. 477, happened at *Marfeilles*.

The several instances prove the practicability of extending the benefit of this practice to the re-

covery of persons visibly dead by sudden stoppages of breath, suffocations, stiflings, swoonings, convulsions, and other accidents. The accounts published by Dr. *Alexander Johnson*, whose remarks are as obvious as just, that the accidents which produce appearances of sudden death, are twofold: either such as proceed from certain external causes, as drowning, hanging, stoppages of breath by noxious vapours, and otherwise: or from internal disorders, as apoplexies, swoonings, convulsions, and stifling. That the proofs of recovery, in many such cases, are incontestable, but in particular with regard to *drowning*. The society founded in *London*, justly named the *Humane Society*, according to the plan published, has no less than fifty-one *medical assistants* in different parts of *London* and *Westminster*, of whom *five* are *physicians*. The cases they relate of recoveries of persons, to appearance dead, are at this time very numerous. This society has given pecuniary rewards to those who have exerted themselves in the several unsuccessful attempts, as well as in those which have happily succeeded. It has also distributed *gold* medals, struck in honour of the *design*, to several of its most distinguished members, and *silver* ones to others, for their good services; and it was with great pleasure, that I saw them, lately, very much in earnest. The chief officers:—*James Horsfall*, Esq; is Treasurer; Dr. *Cogan*, physician; Mr. *William Hawes*, apothecary, &c.

No. IV.

See Vol. II. p. 187, 188.

*Kitchen physic*, recommended according to the ability of the patients, for hot or dry habits of body, become emaciated.

The skilful use of water, the infusion of herbs and balmy air, with moderate exercise, are beyond all the secrets of the *shop*, or even the *kitchen*. The food recommended is,

1. Fowls, chicken, lamb, or veal, not being *too young*, as preferable to other animal substances.
2. The sweetbreads and feet of calves, sheep, and pigs, when well boiled.
3. Mutton or veal, boiled in water, with a little sorrel, spinach, or lettuce, the tender part of asparagus, or a more liberal quantity of green

(a) Bleeding seems to require medical knowledge, in the propriety of using it.

green peas, of which some should be bruised before they are put in, make a good, cool, moist, cheap, and nourishing pottage.

4. Currants well cleansed boiled in chicken; or veal broth with currants, cools, loosens, and moistens the belly.

5. A pound of prunes, (the worst of them being picked out) boiled gently in two quarts of water for an hour. Put to them a tea-cupful or two of wheaten bran-water; letting the bran sleep in hot water till it is cold. Then strain it, and sweeten it with sugar, and drink of it a little at a time very often.

6. A pound of clean prunes, and two ounces of liquorice bruised, in two quarts of cold water, after standing for thirty-six hours, is a common good drink.

7. Apples, pears, plumbs, or cherries well stewed, or boiled, or baked, are good, in dry diseases.

8. *Lettuces, asparagus, or spinach boiled, or rather stewed,* are very salutary.

9. *Turnips,* well boiled, whole or mashed, excellent cooling food.

I have known the case of a gentleman despaired of, restored by living entirely on turnips (with the addition of good bread) and drinking the water of them.

10. *French, pearled, or Scotch barley,* either in broth, or as a *decoction,* being sufficiently boiled; very soft, pectoral food.

11. *Water-gruel,* made palatable, generally esteemed a cooling diet.

Our oatmeal is seldom bolted so fine as it ought to be: They call it *oat-meal,* when it should be *oaten-flour.* If the oats are not kiln-dried, the *flour* of them, and still more the *meal,* is apt to turn sour in a short time. This is one capital defect in the secrets of our *kitchen physic.*

12. *Oaten-flour puddings,* though not much known amongst us, is an excellent diet.

13. *Flummery,* not vulgarly known, is much recommended.

The method of making it is, to take the finest flour of the oatmeal, and soak it three or four days, in an earthen vessel, with so much water as will covert it, shifting the water every day, standing in the last water till it be sour. When you would use it, stir it well together, and strain so much as you have occasion for; then boil it up to the consistency of a jelly, and eat it cold, with wine or water, sugar, or whatever else may make it agreeable. That is deemed

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the very best, which looks clear, and taste sharp.

Flummery may be made of the flour of wheat, rice, or barley, &c.

14. In regard to air, That which is most serene, sharp, and dry, is generally most in esteem.

15. Our native air, supposed to have a sympathy with our first matter, oftentimes repairs or mends a decayed constitution.

16. Any quality of air opposite to the disease we labour under, supposing all things to cure by contraries, is desirable.

17. *Milk,* provided the digestion is not vitiated by hot and spirituous liquors. If it is rich, it requires being lowered with water; if boiled, it is the more comfortable; but it contracts a coarctive quality; therefore some take it heated, by putting in a pan, into hot water.

#### No. V.

See Vol. I. pages 187, 188.

#### *In Consumptive Cases.*

Dried *Turkey figs,* being good of their kind, cutting off the tops, or the thickest part of the skin and the stalks, are very pectoral and nutritious food, being eaten with good bread. When the figs become dry, they may be roasted.

*Suet of mutton kidneys,* pounded fine and boiled in milk, so as to be well mixed and incorporated. A coffee-cup of it taken as nutriment and medicine, two, three, or four times in a day. I have seen this restore a person given up as incurable. Some add a little pounded brown sugar candied.

#### No. VI.

#### *For Nutrition in Decay.*

1. Put calves feet, cow-hoel, trotters, fresh pig-pork, and veal, into a sufficient quantity of spring water, and simmer it ten or twelve hours by a soft fire, with *rosemary,* or *thyme,* or *sweet-majoram,* or mace or cinnamon, a small quantity: being almost boiled, add a crust of bread, and strain it. When eaten, some add the yolk of an egg, and sugar.

This aliment is nutritious to a *weak stomach* which can bear but a small quantity. The patient is left to judge of the nutriment by the quantities of the several articles used.

2. A quart of sack, or mountain wine, burnt with rosemary, nutmeg, and mace, tempered with

two new-laid eggs. Five spoonfuls clears and invigorates. Where wine is wanting, ale, stale beer, or cyder, serve the purpose.

3. Two spoonfuls of brandy in a pint of ale; boil and scum it; when sweetened with sugar, is a salutary potation.

4. Four leaves of sage, twelve of gardener's scurvy-grass, horse-raddish root shaved, as much as will lie on a shilling, and twenty or more sun-railins stowed; put them into a quart bottle of ale or beer.

After three days this liquor may serve as an ordinary drink, against the scurvy, dropsy, green-sickness, or any *cold disease*.

*N. B.* Liquid aliment, made with flesh, eggs, sugar, dried fruit, wine, or spices, tempered with bread, warms and nourishes more, and sooner, than things which are solid.

## No. VII.

*For the Piles.*

A handful of mullein, boiled in a quart of milk, and sweetened with one ounce of syrup of violets: a cup to be taken according to the pain, keeping the body open by an *aloatic* pill, and abstaining from mixtures of food and liquors, which irritate the bowels.

## No. VIII.

*Fever Powder.*

Four ounces of nitre,  
Two drachms of camphire,  
Four grains of cochineal,  
Half a drachm of saffron,

well powdered and mixed, and kept very close in a bottle. Ten grains (or nearly as much as lays on a six-pence) is a dose for a feverish heat.

It may be used night and morning.

Taken every three or four hours, carries off a continued fever.

## No. IX.

*For a Fever and Ague.*

One drachm of bark,  
Half a drachm of *Venice* treacle,  
made into a bolus, or taken in a draught, or in a glass of red or white wine, with the juice of half a lemon. To be taken immediately after

the hot fit of a *fever*. Three doses, at the distance of twelve hours, often succeeds.

## No. X.

*A Restorative Broth; from which many have received great benefit.*

A calf's liver,  
One large handful of chervil,  
boiled in a gallon of water, till it comes to a pint. A coffee cupful to be drank twice or thrice a-day.

## No. XI.

*For Gout in the Head or Stomach; or Complaints in the Bowels.*

A pint of brandy,  
Half an ounce of rhubarb,  
A quarter of an ounce of fennel,  
A quarter of an ounce of snakeroot,  
A quarter of an ounce of ginger,  
to stand three or four days; then strained off. A spoonful to be taken at going to rest. When very bad, two or three spoonfuls may be taken.

*An admirable Breakfast for persons of Weak Bowels.*

I have seen people disturbed with gouty or cholicky complaints, who could find no breakfast to agree with them, till they used milk corrected by good coffee, (*Moco* is the best) as much as will lay in a table-spoon, boiled in a pint of milk. This will tinge and correct the milk, and render it very comfortable to the bowels: these ingredients seem to correct each other's qualities, which alone are pernicious to some constitutions. Sweeten it with brown sugar candied and pounded.

## No. XII.

*Gargle for an ulcerated Throat.*

Take of Guaiacum chips, half an ounce. Boil them in a pint and an half of water, till half is consumed; then strain off the liquor, and add to it an ounce and an half of honey of roses, and two drachms of tincture of myrrh.

Relaxed glands I have known relieved by gargling a little nitre in water.—Or by a few drops of brandy on a lump of sugar, melting it in the mouth and swallowing it.

## No. XIII.

*An Antiscorbutic Broth.*

Lean mutton, fresh killed, one pound,  
Water-creffes, and scurvy-grafs, one hand-  
ful.

Boil them quick in a quart of water, and skim it  
well; then let it simmer, till it is consumed to  
three half-pints.

Half a pint, (or a less quantity, if found too  
much) drank warm every morning, has been  
found to be of great service.

## No. XIV.

*To cure the Scurvy.*

Half a pint of foreign juniper-berries,  
Three ounces of the green branches, with  
the stalks, of the juniper-shrub.

Cut the branches and stalks small; simmer the  
whole in four quarts of water, until reduced to  
*two*. Bottle it off, and drink a gill made milk-  
warm every morning fasting.

This hath proved amazingly beneficial to  
many, in breakings out, as well as in recruiting  
their flesh, strength, and spirits.

Two ounces of sarsaparilla boiled in three  
pints of water down to a quart or three half-  
pints, and sweetened with stick-liquorice, taking  
half a pint or less twice in a day, is much ap-  
proved of to correct the blood. In more virulent  
cases, where the body itches much, fifteen drops  
of Huxham's Antimonial Wine increased to 25  
or 30 drops, is much approved. The sarsapa-  
rilla should be boiled gently, and in a glazed  
pipkin.

## No. XV.

*For a Cough or a Consumption.*

One dozen of large pippins,  
One ounce of powder of elecampane,  
One ounce of powder of liquorice,  
One ounce of brown sugar-candy,  
One pound of *Virgin* honey,  
Four pennyworth of saffron.

Core the apples. Beat all in a marble mortar to  
a paste. Put it into an earthen pipkin, and  
bake it with the great bread.

Take a table spoonful fasting in the morn-  
ing; and, if you dine early, at four in the after-  
noon. This hath cured many, in obstinate cases.

## No. XVI.

*For the Itch.*

Native sulphur, and hogs lard.

Anoint all the body over, not the smallest part  
excepted: sleep in the ointment. Wash the  
next day in the warm bath; and the day after,  
anoint again; though once often answers effec-  
tually: and in the most obstinate cases, the *third*  
time is not known to fail.

*N. B.* In want of a bath, probably washing  
the body with warm water, may answer the same  
purpose.

The preceding *Recipe* for the itch is doubtless  
very efficacious, and is commonly preferred.  
But as it consists wholly of sulphur, and the  
smell may be offensive to some persons, and con-  
tinue long about the clothes, and in a house, and  
discover the nature of the disorder, to those who  
come to it, some patients have a great abhorrence  
of it, and rather venture upon *mercurial* or other  
preparations, which often prove hurtful to the  
constitution, and sometimes very fatal; there-  
fore the sulphur *medicine* ought to be preferred  
to it.

## No. XVII.

*Second safe Recipe to cure the Itch.*

This disorder, incident to the poor, particu-  
larly children collected as in hospitals and work-  
houses, or in common life, renders the remedy a  
very important object.

Take of bay-berries, two ounces;

Of white hellebore, one ounce;

Of flower of sulphur, a quarter of an ounce.

Pound the bay-berries and the hellebore to a  
very fine powder.

Boil half a pound of fresh butter, till it ceases  
to foam.

Throw into the butter the powder of the  
berries and hellebore, which you must boil a little  
together, and stir over a fire, a minute or two.

Then take it from the fire, and put in it the  
flour of sulphur, and stir it, till all the ingre-  
dients are well mixed together.

This turns into a kind of ointment.

When the patient goes to bed, he must  
anoint with this ointment, before a good fire, his  
whole body, more especially the parts affected,  
which will smart.

By the next morning the itch will be killed.

The patient is then to wash himself with soap  
and warm water.

The clothes used upon this occasion soon lose the fetid smell, especially if they are spread in the open air, upon ground lately turned up, or upon the grass turf.

I am assured, that using this remedy but *once*, it commonly cures the distemper so effectually, that it does not break out again; unless it has been suffered to grow very inveterate, or no proper caution is used after the cure.

This remedy has been found efficacious, when No. XVI. has failed, though probably through mismanagement.

A poor family, consisting of both parents, and *three* children, though they had been diseased *above half a year*, to their great joy were entirely cured *in one night*. The mother being far gone with child, was in a deplorable condition.

This *Recipe* cannot be made too public.

#### No. XVIII.

*For the Dropsy, when the patient is able to walk.*

Take of broom-feed, well powdered and passed through a sieve, one drachm; steep it all night

in a glass of good white wine, and take it in the morning, having shaken it well.

Walk an hour and an half after it.

Then take two ounces of olive oil, to which you may put some sugar, if you like it.

You must endeavour to avoid vomiting after either, for that would destroy the effect.

This powder gives but a slight motion to the belly, and often does not operate till five or six hours after it.

If the dropsy is in the belly, it discharges by urine, without any inconvenience.

If it is between the skin and flesh, little blisters will arise on the legs, by which it will run off: but this last does not happen to one in thirty; and in this case, red cabbage leaves must be applied, but no plaister, for this would hinder the running.

The medicine is to be taken once in two or three days.

T H E

I N D E X.

*N. B.* The vast variety of the matter, arising in the *conversations*, might have spun out this INDEX to a much greater length.

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*Considering this Work as the most laborious of the kind, in my life, I am naturally led to be the more anxious it should answer the rectitude of my wishes and design, agreeable to what I have said in the INTRODUCTION, Vol. I. As a conclusion I pray,*

*ALMIGHTY* Lord of Life, Father of Spirits, and Sovereign Disposer of all Events, by whose providence all human labours are accomplished; graciously accept this humble effort to promote the cause of true religion, that it may be instrumental to the merciful ends of thy covenant with mankind! Grant, *O Lord*, it may contribute to cherish the hopes, and exalt the joys, of all those whose hands it may reach; that, from duly weighing the sentiments, they may triumph, so much the more, in the merits of the great Redeemer of the World! — *O Almighty Lord of Hosts*, turn the wills and affections of my fellow-subjects, that they may combat the evil principle which reigns in *their* hearts; and discovering the *power of humility*, learn to relish the sweets of *innocence*, in humble rural life: or living assembled in multitudes, expand their hearts, and diffuse their benevolence and charity! Make them

watchful, to guard against the host of vices which spring up from opulence, traffick, and the resort of crowds.—Let thy mercy shine forth on all such as have zeal for thy glory, and compassion for the *ignorant*, the *thoughtless*, and the *perverse*, in whatever station of life they may be!—And, *O Great Jehovah! Omniscient, and Tremendous God!* to whom all hearts are open, and every desire known, let the laborious hours these pages have employed, be accepted by thee; and in thy great mercy and compassion blot out my manifold *sins* and *offences!* Give me wisdom and resolution so to devote the remainder of my days to every *social* and *religious* duty, that I may think, speak, and do, That which is righteous in thy sight: And confiding in the name of *Christ*, by his powerful mediation finally receive thy pardon, and be admitted into the regions of everlasting glory!

T H E E N D.











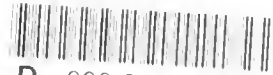
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