Youth of Paul and Virginia.
PAUL AND VIRGINIA,

BY

BERNARDIN DE SAINT PIERRE.

WITH A

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

ILLUSTRATED.

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PREFACE.

In introducing to the Public the present edition of this well known and affecting Tale,—the chef-d'œuvre of its gifted author, the Publishers take occasion to say, that it affords them no little gratification, to apprise the numerous admirers of "Paul and Virginia," that the entire work of St. Pierre is now presented to them. All the previous editions have been disfigured by interpolations, and mutilated by numerous omissions and alterations, which have had the effect of reducing it from the rank of a Philosophical Tale, to the level of a mere story for children.

Of the merits of "Paul and Virginia," it is hardly necessary to utter a word; it tells its own story eloquently and impressively, and in a language simple, natural and true, it touches the common heart of the world. There are but few works that have obtained a greater degree of popularity, none are more deserving it; and the Publishers cannot therefore refrain from expressing a hope that their efforts in thus giving a faithful
transcript of the work,—an acknowledged classic by the European world,—may be, in some degree, instrumental in awakening here, at home, a taste for those higher works of Fancy, which, while they seek to elevate and strengthen the understanding, instruct and purify the heart. It is in this character that the Tale of "Paul and Virginia" ranks pre-eminent.
Love of Nature, that strong feeling of enthusiasm which leads to profound admiration of the whole works of creation, belongs, it may be presumed, to a certain peculiarity of organization, and has, no doubt, existed in different individuals from the beginning of the world. The old poets and philosophers, romance writers and troubadours had all looked upon Nature with observing and admiring eyes. They have most of them given incidentally charming pictures of spring, of the setting sun, of particular spots, and of favorite flowers.

There are few writers of note, of any country or of any age, from whom quotations might not be made in proof of the love with which they regarded Nature. And this remark applies as much to religious and philosophic writers as to poets,—equally to Plato, St. François de Sales, Bacon and Fenelon, as to Shakspeare, Racine, Calderon, or Burns; for from no really philosophic or religious doctrine can the love of the works of Nature be excluded.

But before the days of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Buffon, and Bernardin de St. Pierre, this love of Nature had not been expressed in all its intensity. Until their day, it had not been written on exclusively. The lovers of Nature were not, till then, as they may perhaps since be considered, a sect apart. Though perfectly sincere in all the adoration they offered, they were less entirely, and certainly less diligently and constantly, her adorers.

It is the great praise of Bernardin de St. Pierre, that coming immediately after Rousseau and Buffon and being one of the most proficient writers of the same school, he was in no degree their imitator, but perfectly original and new. He intuitively perceived the immensity of the subject he intended to
explore, and has told us that no day of his life passed without his collecting some valuable materials for his writings. In the divine works of Nature, he diligently sought to discover her laws. It was his early intention not to begin to write until he had ceased to observe; but he found observation endless, and that he was "like a child, who with a shell digs a hole in the sand to receive the waters of the ocean." He elsewhere humbly says, that not only the general history of Nature, but even that of the smallest plant, was far beyond his ability. Before, however, speaking further of him as an author, it will be necessary to recapitulate the chief events of his life.

HENRI-JACQUES BERNARDIN DE ST. PIERRE, was born at Havre in 1737. He always considered himself descended from Eustache de St. Pierre, who is said by Froissart (and I believe by Froissart only), to have so generously offered himself as a victim to appease the wrath of Edward the Third against Calais. He, with his companions in virtue, it is also said, was saved by the intercession of Queen Philippa. In one of his smaller works, Bernardin asserts this descent, and it was certainly one of which he might be proud. Many anecdotes are related of his childhood, indicative of the youthful author,—of his strong love of Nature, and his humanity to animals.

That "the child is father of the man," has been seldom more strongly illustrated. There is a story of a cat, which, when related by him many years afterwards to Rousseau, caused that philosopher to shed tears. At eight years of age, he took the greatest pleasure in the regular culture of his garden; and possibly then stored up some of the ideas which afterwards appeared in the "Fraisier." His sympathy with all living things was extreme.

In "Paul and Virginia," he praises, with evident satisfaction, their meal of milk and eggs, which had not cost any animal its life. It has been remarked, and possibly with truth, that every tenderly disposed heart, deeply imbued with a love of Nature, is at times somewhat Braminical. St. Pierre's certainly was.

When quite young, he advanced with a clenched fist towards a carter who was ill-treating a horse. And when taken for the first time, by his father, to Rouen, having the towers of the cathedral pointed out to him, he exclaimed, "My God! how high they fly." Every one present naturally laughed. Bernardin had only noticed the flight of some swallows who had built their nests there. He thus early revealed those instincts which afterwards became the guidance of his life; the strength
of which possibly occasioned his too great indifference to all monuments of art. The love of study and of solitude were also characteristics of his childhood. His temper is said to have been moody, impetuous, and intractable. Whether this faulty temper may not have been produced or rendered worse by mismanagement, cannot now be ascertained. It undoubtedly became afterwards, to St. Pierre, a fruitful source of misfortune and of woe.

The reading of voyages was with him, even in childhood, almost a passion. At twelve years of age, his whole soul was occupied by Robinson Crusoe and his island. His romantic love of adventure seeming to his parents to announce a predilection in favor of the sea, he was sent by them with one of his uncles to Martinique. But St. Pierre had not sufficiently practised the virtue of obedience to submit, as was necessary, to the discipline of a ship. He was afterwards placed with the Jesuits at Caen, with whom he made immense progress in his studies. But, it is to be feared, he did not conform too well to the regulations of the college, for he conceived, from that time, the greatest detestation for places of public education. And this aversion he has frequently testified in his writings. While devoted to his books of travels, he in turn anticipated being a Jesuit, a missionary or a martyr; but his family at length succeeded in establishing him at Rouen, where he completed his studies with brilliant success, in 1757. He soon after obtained a commission as an engineer, with a salary of one hundred louis. In this capacity he was sent (1760) to Dusseldorf, under the command of Count St. Germain. This was a career in which he might have acquired both honor and fortune; but, most unhappily for St. Pierre, he looked upon the useful and necessary etiquettes of life as many unworthy prejudices. Instead of conforming to them, he sought to trample on them. In addition, he evinced some disposition to rebel against his commander, and was unsocial with his equals. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that at this unfortunate period of his existence, he made himself enemies; or that, notwithstanding his great talents, or the coolness he had exhibited in moments of danger, he should have been sent back to France. Unwelcome, under these circumstances, to his family, he was ill received by all.

It is a lesson yet to be learned, that genius gives no charter for the indulgence of error,—a truth yet to be remembered, that only a small portion of the world will look with leniency on the failings of the highly gifted; and, that from themselves,
the consequences of their own actions can never be averted. It is yet, alas! to be added to the convictions of the ardent in mind, that no degree of excellence in science or literature, not even the immortality of a name, can exempt its possessor from obedience to moral discipline; or give him happiness, unless "temper's image" be stamped on his daily words and actions. St. Pierre's life was sadly embittered by his own conduct. The adventurous life he led after his return from Dusseldorf, some of the circumstances of which exhibited him in an unfavorable light to others, tended, perhaps, to tinge his imagination with that wild and tender melancholy so prevalent in his writings. A prize in the lottery had just doubled his very slender means of existence, when he obtained the appointment of geographical engineer, and was sent to Malta. The Knights of the Order were at this time expecting to be attacked by the Turks. Having already been in the service, it was singular that St. Pierre should have had the imprudence to sail without his commission. He thus subjected himself to a thousand disagreeables, for the officers would not recognize him as one of themselves. The effects of their neglect on his mind were tremendous; his reason for a time seemed almost disturbed by the mortifications he suffered. After receiving an insufficient indemnity for the expenses of his voyage, St. Pierre returned to France, there to endure fresh misfortunes.

Not being able to obtain any assistance from the ministry or his family, he resolved on giving lessons in the mathematics. But St. Pierre was less adapted than most others for succeeding in the apparently easy, but really ingenious and difficult, art of teaching. When education is better understood, it will be more generally acknowledged, that, to impart instruction with success, a teacher must possess deeper intelligence than is implied by the profoundest skill in any one branch of science or of art. All minds, even to the youngest, require, while being taught, the utmost compliance and consideration; and these qualities can scarcely be properly exercised without a true knowledge of the human heart, united to much practical patience. St. Pierre, at this period of his life, certainly did not possess them. It is probable that Rousseau, when he attempted in his youth to give lessons in music, not knowing anything whatever of music, was scarcely less fitted for the task of instruction, than St. Pierre with all his mathematical knowledge. The pressure of poverty drove him to Holland. He was well received at Amsterdam, by a French refugee named Mustel, who edited a popular journal there, and who procured him em-
ployment, with handsome remuneration. St. Pierre did not, however, remain long satisfied with this quiet mode of existence. Allured by the encouraging reception given by Catherine II. to foreigners, he set out for St. Petersburg. Here, until he obtained the protection of the Marechal de Munich, and the friendship of Duval, he had again to contend with poverty. The latter generously opened to him his purse, and by the Marechal he was introduced to Villebois, the Grand Master of Artillery, and by him presented to the Empress. St. Pierre was so handsome, that by some of his friends it was supposed, perhaps, too, hoped, that he would supersede Orloff in the favor of Catherine. But more honorable illusions, though they were but illusions, occupied his own mind. He neither sought nor wished to captivate the Empress. His ambition was to establish a republic on the shores of the lake Aral, of which, in imitation of Plato or Rousseau, he was to be the legislator. Pre-occupied with the reformation of despotism, he did not sufficiently look into his own heart, or seek to avoid a repetition of the same errors that had already changed friends into enemies, and been such a terrible barrier to his success in life. His mind was already morbid, and in fancying that others did not understand him, he forgot that he did not understand others. The Empress, with the rank of captain, bestowed on him a grant of fifteen hundred francs; but when General Dubosquet proposed to take him with him to examine the military position of Finland, his only anxiety seemed to be to return to France: still he went to Finland; and his own notes of his occupations and experiments on that expedition prove, that he gave himself up in all diligence to considerations of attack and defence. He, who loved Nature so intently, seems only to have seen in the extensive and majestic forests of the north, a theatre of war. In this instance, he appears to have stifled every emotion of admiration, and to have beheld, alike, cities and countries in his character of military surveyor.

On his return to St. Petersburg, he found his protector Villebois, disgraced. St. Pierre then resolved on espousing the cause of the Poles. He went into Poland with a high reputation,—that of having refused the favors of despotism, to aid the cause of liberty. But it was his private life, rather than his public career, that was affected by his residence in Poland. The Princess Mary fell in love with him, and, forgetful of all considerations, quitted her family to reside with him. Yielding, however, at length, to the entreaties of her mother, she returned to her home. St. Pierre, filled with regret, resorted to
Vienna; but, unable to support the sadness which oppressed him, and imagining that sadness to be shared by the Princess, he soon went back to Poland. His return was still more sad than his departure; for he found himself regarded by her who had once loved him, as an intruder. It is to this attachment he alludes so touchingly in one of his letters. "Adieu! friends dearer than the treasures of India! Adieu! forests of the North, that I shall never see again!—tender friendship, and the still dearer sentiments which surpassed it!—days of intoxication and of happiness adieu! adieu! We live but for a day, to die during a whole life!"

This letter appears to one of St. Pierre's most partial biographers, as if steeped in tears; and he speaks of his romantic and unfortunate adventure in Poland, as the ideal of a poet's love.

"To be," says M. Sainte-Beuve, "a great poet, and loved before he had thought of glory! To exhale the first perfume of a soul of genius, believing himself only a lover! To reveal himself, for the first time, entirely, but in mystery!"

In his enthusiasm, M. Sainte-Beuve loses sight of the melancholy sequel, which must have left so sad a remembrance in St. Pierre's own mind. His suffering, from this circumstance, may perhaps have condued to his making Virginia so good and true, and so incapable of giving pain.

In 1766, he returned to Havre; but his relations were by this time dead or dispersed, and after six years of exile, he found himself once more in his own country, without employment and destitute of pecuniary resources.

The Baron de Breteuil at length obtained for him a commission as Engineer to the Isle of France, whence he returned in 1771. In this interval, his heart and imagination doubtless received the germs of his immortal works. Many of the events, indeed, of the "Voyage a l'Ile de France," are to be found modified by imagined circumstances in "Paul and Virginia." He returned to Paris poor in purse, but rich in observation and mental resources, and resolved to devote himself to literature. By the Baron de Breteuil he was recommended to D'Alembert, who procured a publisher for his "Voyage," and also introduced him to Mlle. de l'Espinasse. But no one, in spite of his great beauty, was so ill calculated to shine or please in society as St. Pierre. His manners were timid and embarrassed, and, unless to those with whom he was very intimate, he scarcely appeared intelligent.

It is sad to think, that misunderstanding should prevail to
such an extent, and heart so seldom really speak to heart, in 
the intercourse of the world, that the most humane may appear 
cruel, and the sympathizing indifferent. Judging of Mlle. de 
L'Espinasse from her letters, and the testimony of her contem-
poraries, it seems quite impossible that she could have given 
pain to any one, more particularly to a man possessing St. 
Pierre's extraordinary and profound sensibility. Both she and 
D'Alembert were capable of appreciating him; but the society 
in which they moved laughed at his timidity, and the tone of 
raillery in which they often indulged was not understood by 
him. It is certain that he withdrew from their circle with 
wounded and mortified feelings, and, in spite of an explanatory 
letter from D'Alembert, did not return to it. The inflicts of 
all this pain, in the mean time, were possibly as unconscious of 
the meaning attached to their words, as were the birds of old 
of the augury drawn from their flight.

St. Pierre, in his "Preambule de l'Arcadie," has patheti-
cally and eloquently described the deplorable state of his health 
and feelings, after frequent humiliating disputes and disappoint-
ments had driven him from society; or rather, when, like Rou-
seau, he was "self-banished" from it.

"I was struck," he says, "with an extraordinary malady. 
Streams of fire, like lightning, flashed before my eyes; every 
object appeared to me double, or in motion: likeŒdipus, I 
saw two suns. * * In the finest day of summer, I could not 
cross the Seine in a boat without experiencing intolerable anxi-
ety. If, in a public garden, I merely passed by a piece of 
water, I suffered from spasms and a feeling of horror. I could 
not cross a garden in which many people were collected: if 
they looked at me, I immediately imagined they were speaking 
ill of me." It was during this state of suffering that he devoted 
himself with ardor to collecting and making use of materials 
for that work which was to give glory to his name.

It was only by perseverance, and disregarding many rough 
and discouraging receptions, that he succeeded in making ac-
quaintance with Rousseau, whom he so much resembled. St. 
Pierre devoted himself to his society with enthusiasm, visiting 
him frequently and constantly, till Rousseau departed for Er-
menonville. It is not unworthy of remark, that both these 
men, such enthusiastic admirers of Nature and the natural in 
all things, should have possessed factitious rather than practi-
cal virtue, and a wisdom wholly unfitted for the world. St. 
Pierre asked Rousseau, in one of their frequent rambles, if in 
delineating St. Preux, he had not intended to represent him-
self. "No," replied Rousseau, "St. Preux is not what I have been, but what I wished to be." St. Pierre would most likely have given the same answer, had a similar question been put to him with regard to the Colonel in "Paul and Virginia." This at least, appears the sort of old age he loved to contemplate, and wished to realize.

For six years, he worked at his "Etudes," and with some difficulty found a publisher for them. M. Didot, a celebrated typographer, whose daughter St. Pierre afterwards married, consented to print a manuscript which had been declined by many others. He was well rewarded for the undertaking. The success of the "Etudes de la Nature" surpassed the most sanguine expectation, even of the author. Four years after its publication, St. Pierre gave to the world "Paul and Virginia," which had for some time been lying in his portfolio. He had tried its effect, in manuscript, on persons of different characters and pursuits. They had given it no applause; but all had shed tears at its perusal: and perhaps few works of a decidedly romantic character have ever been so generally read, or so much approved. Among the great names whose admiration of it is on record, may be mentioned Napoleon and Humboldt.

In 1789, he published "Les Vœux d'un Solitaire," and "La Suite des Vœux." By the Moniteur of the day, these works were compared to the celebrated pamphlet of Sieyes,—"Qu'est-ce que le tiers etat?" which then absorbed all the public favor. In 1791, "La Chaumiere Indienne" was published: and in the following year, about thirteen days before the celebrated roth of August, Louis XVI. appointed St. Pierre superintendent of the "Jardin des Plantes." Soon afterwards, the King, on seeing him, complimented him on his writings, and told him he was happy to have found a worthy successor to Buffon.

Although deficient in the exact knowledge of the sciences, and knowing little of the world, St. Pierre was, by his simplicity, and the retirement in which he lived, well suited, at that epoch, to the situation. About this time, and when in his fifty-seventh year, he married Mil. Didot.

In 1795, he became a member of the French Academy, and, as was just, after his acceptance of this honor, he wrote no more against literary societies. On the suppression of his place, he retired to Essonne. It is delightful to follow him there, and to contemplate his quiet existence. His days flowed on peaceably, occupied in the publication of "Les Harmonies de la Nature," the republication of his earlier works, and the
composition of some lesser pieces. He himself affectingly regrets an interruption to these occupations. On being appointed Instructor to the Normal School, he says, "I am obliged to hang my harp on the willows of my river, and to accept an employment useful to my family and my country. I am afflicted at having to suspend an occupation which has given me so much happiness."

He enjoyed in his old age a degree of opulence which, as much as glory, had perhaps been the object of his ambition. In any case, it is gratifying to reflect, that after a life so full of chance and change, he was, in his latter years, surrounded by much that should accompany old age. His day of storms and tempests was closed by an evening of repose and beauty.

Amid many other blessings, the elasticity of his mind was preserved to the last. He died at Eragny sur l'Oise, on the 21st of January, 1814. The stirring events which then occupied France, or rather the whole world, caused his death to be little noticed at the time. The Academy did not, however, neglect to give him the honor due to its members. Mons. Parseval Grand Maison pronounced a deserved eulogium on his talents, and Mons. Aignan, also, the customary tribute, taking his seat as his successor.

Having himself contracted the habit of confiding his griefs and sorrows to the public, the sanctuary of his private life was open alike to the discussion of friends and enemies. The biographer, who wishes to be exact, and yet set down nought in malice, is forced to the contemplation of his errors. The secret of many of these, as well as of his miseries, seems revealed by himself in this sentence: "I experience more pain from a single thorn, than pleasure from a thousand roses." And elsewhere, "The best society seems to me bad, if I find in it one troublesome, wicked, slanderous, envious, or perfidious person." Now, taking into consideration that St. Pierre sometimes imagined persons who were really good, to be deserving of these strong and very contumacious epithets, it would have been difficult indeed to find a society in which he could have been happy. He was therefore wise in seeking retirement, and indulging in solitude. His mistakes,—for they were mistakes,—arose from a too quick perception of evil, united to an exquisite and diffuse sensibility. When he felt wounded by a thorn, he forgot the beauty and perfume of the rose to which it belonged; and from which perhaps it could not be separated. And he was exposed (as often happens) to the very description of trials that were least in harmony with his defects. Few dis-
positions could have run a career like his, and have remained unscathed. But one less tender than his own would have been less soured by it. For many years, he bore about with him the consciousness of unacknowledged talent. The world cannot be blamed for not appreciating that which had never been revealed. But we know not what the jostling and elbowing of that world, in the mean time, may have been to him—how often he may have felt himself unworthily treated—or how far that treatment may have preyed upon and corroded his heart. Who shall say that with this consciousness there did not mingle a quick and instinctive perception of the hidden motives of action,—that he did not sometimes detect, where others might have been blind, the under-shuffling of the hands, in the by-play of the world?

Through all his writings, and throughout his correspondence, there are beautiful proofs of the tenderness of his feelings,—the most essential quality, perhaps, in any writer. It is at least one that if not possessed, can never be attained. The familiarity of his imagination with natural objects, when he was living far removed from them, is remarkable, and often affecting.

"I have arranged," he says to Mr. Henin, his friend and patron, "very interesting materials, but it is only with the light of Heaven over me that I can recover my strength. Obtain for me a rabbit's hole, in which I may pass the summer in the country." And again, "With the first violet, I shall come to see you." It is soothing to find, in passages like these, such pleasing and convincing evidence that

"Nature never did betray,
The heart that loved her."

In the noise of a great city, in the midst of annoyances of many kinds, these images, impressed with quietness and beauty, came back to the mind of St. Pierre, to cheer and animate him.

In alluding to his miseries, it is but fair to quote a passage from his "Voyage," which reveals his fond remembrance of his native land. "I should ever prefer my own country to every other," he says, "not because it was more beautiful, but because I was brought up in it. Happy he, who sees again the places where all was loved, and all was lovely!—the meadows in which he played, and the orchard that he robbed!"

He returned to this country, so fondly loved and deeply cherished in absence, to experience only trouble and difficulty.
Away from it, he had yearned to behold it,—to fold it, as it were, once more to his bosom. He returned to feel as if neglected by it, and all his rapturous emotions were changed to bitterness and gall. His hopes had proved delusions—his expectations, mockeries. Oh! who but must look with charity and mercy on all discontent and irritation consequent on such a depth of disappointment: on what must have then appeared to him such unmitigable woe. Under the influence of these saddened feelings, his thoughts flew back to the island he had left, to place all beauty, as well as all happiness there!

One great proof that he did beautify the distant, may be found in the contrast of some of the descriptions in the "Voyage a l'Ile de France," and those in "Paul and Virginia." That spot, which when peopled by the cherished creatures of his imagination, he described as an enchanting and delightful Eden, he had previously spoken of as a "rugged country covered with rocks,"—"a land of Cyclops blackened by fire." Truth, probably, lies between the two representations; the sadness of exile having darkened the one, and the exuberance of his imagination embellished the other.

St. Pierre's merit as an author has been too long and too universally acknowledged, to make it needful that it should be dwelt on here. A careful review of the circumstances of his life induces the belief, that his writings grew (if it may be permitted so to speak) out of his life. In his most imaginative passages, to whatever height his fancy soared, the starting point seems ever from a fact. The past appears to have been always spread out before him when he wrote, like a beautiful landscape, on which his eye rested with complacency, and from which his mind transferred and idealized some objects, without a servile imitation of any. When at Berlin, he had had it in his power to marry Virginia Tabenheim; and in Russia, Mlle. de la Tour, the niece of General Dubosquet, would have accepted his hand. He was too poor to marry either. A grateful recollection caused him to bestow the names of the two on his most beloved creation. Paul was the name of a friar, with whom he had associated in his childhood, and whose life he wished to imitate. How little had the owners of these names anticipated that they were to become the baptismal appellations of half a generation in France, and to be re-echoed through the world to the end of time!

It was St. Pierre who first discovered the poverty of language with regard to picturesque descriptions. In his earliest work, the often-quoted "Voyage," he complains that the terms
for describing nature are not yet invented. "Endeavor," he says, "to describe a mountain in such a manner that it may be recognized. When you have spoken of its base, its sides, its summit, you will have said all! But what variety there is to be found in those swelling, lengthened, flattened, or cavernous forms! It is only by periphrasis that all this can be expressed. The same difficulty exists for plains and valleys. But if you have a palace to describe, there is no longer any difficulty. Every moulding has its appropriate name.

It was St. Pierre's glory, in some degree, to triumph over this dearth of expression. Few authors ever introduced more new terms into descriptive writing: yet are his innovations ever chastened, and in good taste. His style, in its elegant simplicity, is, indeed, perfection. It is at once sonorous and sweet, and always in harmony with the sentiment he would express, or the subject he would discuss. Chenier might well arm himself with "Paul and Virginia," and the "Chaumiere Indienne," in opposition to those writers, who, as he said, made prose unnatural, by seeking to elevate it into verse.

The "Etudes de la Nature" embraced a thousand different subjects, and contained some new ideas on all. It is to the honor of human nature, that after the uptearing of so many sacred opinions, a production like this, revealing the chain of connection through the works of Creation, and the Creator in his works, should have been hailed, as it was, with enthusiasm.

His motto, from his favorite poet Virgil, "Taught by calamity, I pity the unhappy," won for him, perhaps, many readers. And in its touching illusions, the unhappy may have found suspension from the realities of life, as well as encouragement to support its trials. For, throughout, it infuses admiration of the arrangements of Providence, and a desire for virtue. More than one modern poet may be supposed to have drawn a portion of his inspiration, from the "Etudes." As a work of science it contains many errors. These, particularly his theory of the tides,* St. Pierre maintained to the last, and so eloquently, that it was said at the time, to be impossible to unite less reason with more logic.

In "Paul and Virginia," he was supremely fortunate in his subject. It was an entirely new creation, uninspired by any previous work; but which gave birth to many others, having furnished the plot to six theatrical pieces. It was a subject to which the author could bring all his excellences as a writer and man, while his deficiencies and defects were necessarily ex-

* Occasioned, according to St. Pierre, by the melting of the ice at the Poles.
cluded. In no manner could he incorporate politics, science, or misapprehension of persons, while his sensibility, morals, and wonderful talent for description, were in perfect accordance with, and ornaments to it. Lemontey and Sainte-Beuve both consider success to be inseparable from the happy selection of a story so entirely in harmony with the character of the author; and that the most successful writers might envy him so fortunate a choice. Bonaparte was in the habit of saying, whenever he saw St. Pierre, "M. Bernardin, when do you mean to give us more Pauls and Virginias, and Indian Cottages? You ought to give us some every six months."

The "Indian Cottage," if not quite equal in interest to "Paul and Virginia," is still a charming production, and does great honor to the genius of its author. It abounds in antique and Eastern gems of thought. Striking and excellent comparisons are scattered through its pages; and it is delightful to reflect, that the following beautiful and solemn answer of the Paria was, with St. Pierre, the result of his own experience:—"Misfortune resembles the Black Mountain of Bember, situated at the extremity of the burning kingdom of Lahore; while you are climbing it, you only see before you barren rocks; but when you have reached its summit, you see heaven above your head, and at your feet the kingdom of Cachemere."

When this passage was written, the rugged and sterile rock had been climbed by its gifted author. He had reached the summit,—his genius had been rewarded, and he himself saw the heaven he wished to point out to others. SARAH JONES.

**For the facts contained in this brief Memoir, I am indebted to St. Pierre's own works, to the "Biographie Universelle," to the "Essai sur la Vie et les Ouvrages de Bernardin de St. Pierre," by M. Aime Martin, and to the very excellent and interesting "Notice Historique et Litteraire," of M. Sainte-Beuve.**
PAUL AND VIRGINIA.

Situate on the eastern side of the mountain which rises above Port Louis, in the Mauritius, upon a piece of land bearing the marks of former cultivation, are seen the ruins of two small cottages. These ruins are not far from the centre of a valley, formed by immense rocks, and which opens only towards the north. On the left rises the mountain called the Height of Discovery, whence the eye marks the distant sail when it first touches the verge of the horizon, and whence the signal is given when a vessel approaches the island. At the foot of this mountain stands the town of Port Louis. On the right is formed the road which stretches from Port Louis to the Shaddock Grove, where the church bearing that name lifts its head, surrounded by its avenues of bamboo, in the middle of a spacious plain; and the prospect terminates in a forest extending to the furthest bounds of the island. The front view presents the bay, denominated the Bay of the Tomb; a little on the right is seen the Cape of Misfortune; and beyond rolls the expanded ocean, on the surface of which appear a few uninhabited islands; and, among others, the Point of Endeavor, which resembles a bastion built upon the flood.

At the entrance of the valley which presents these various objects, the echoes of the mountain incessantly repeat the hollow murmurs of the winds that shake the neighboring forests, and the tumultuous dashing of the waves which break at a distance upon the cliffs; but near the ruined cottages all is calm and still, and the only objects which there meet the eye are rude steep rocks, that rise like a surrounding rampart. Large clumps of trees grow at their base, on their rifted sides, and even on their majestic tops, where the clouds seem to repose. The showers, which their bold points attract, often paint the vivid colors of the rainbow on their green and brown declivities, and swell the sources of the little river which flows at their
feet, called the river of Fan-Palms. Within this inclosure reigns the most profound silence. The waters, the air, all the elements are at peace. Scarcely does the echo repeat the whispers of the palm-trees, spreading their broad leaves, the long points of which are gently agitated by the winds. A soft light illumines the bottom of this deep valley, on which the sun shines only at noon. But, even at break of day, the rays of light are thrown on the surrounding rocks; and their sharp peaks, rising above the shadows of the mountain, appear like tints of gold and purple gleaming upon the azure sky.

To this scene I loved to resort, as I could here enjoy at once the richness of an unbounded landscape, and the charm of uninterrupted solitude. One day, when I was seated at the foot of the cottages, and contemplating their ruins, a man, advanced in years, passed near the spot. He was dressed in the ancient garb of the island, his feet were bare, and he leaned upon a staff of ebony: his hair was white, and the expression of his countenance was dignified and interesting. I bowed to him with respect; he returned the salutation; and, after looking at me with some earnestness, came and placed himself upon the hillock on which I was seated. Encouraged by this mark of confidence I thus addressed him: "Father, can you tell me to whom those cottages once belonged?"—"My son," replied the old man, "those heaps of rubbish, and that untilled land, were, twenty years ago, the property of two families, who then found happiness in this solitude. Their history is affecting; but what European, pursuing his way to the Indies, will pause one moment to interest himself in the fate of a few obscure individuals? What European can picture happiness to his imagination amidst poverty and neglect? The curiosity of mankind is only attracted by the history of the great, and yet from that knowledge little use can be derived."—"Father," I rejoined, "from your manner and your observations, I perceive that you have acquired much experience of human life. If you have leisure, relate to me, I beseech you, the history of the ancient inhabitants of this desert; and be assured, that even the men who are most perverted by the prejudices of the world, find a soothing pleasure in contemplating that happiness which belongs to simplicity and virtue." The old man, after a short silence, during which he leaned his face upon his hands, as if he were trying to recall the images of the past, thus began his narration:—

Monsieur de la Tour, a young man who was a native of Normandy, after having in vain solicited a commission in the French
army, or some support from his own family, at length determined to seek his fortune in this island, where he arrived in 1726. He brought hither a young woman, whom he loved tenderly, and by whom he was no less tenderly beloved. She belonged to a rich and ancient family of the same province: but he had married her secretly and without fortune, and in opposition to the will of her relations, who refused their consent because he was found guilty of being descended from parents who had no claims to nobility. Monsieur de la Tour, leaving his wife at Port Louis, embarked for Madagascar, in order to purchase a few slaves, to assist him in forming a plantation on this island. He landed at Madagascar during that unhealthy season which commences about the middle of October; and soon after his arrival died of the pestilential fever, which prevails in that island six months of the year, and which will forever baffle the attempts of the European nations to form establishments on that fatal soil. His effects were seized upon by the rapacity of strangers, as commonly happens to persons dying in foreign parts; and his wife, who was pregnant, found herself a widow in a country where she had neither credit nor acquaintance, and no earthly possession, or rather support, but one negro woman. Too delicate to solicit protection or relief from any one else after the death of him whom alone she loved, misfortune armed her with courage, and she resolved to cultivate, with her slave, a little spot of ground, and procure for herself the means of subsistence.

Desert as was the island, and the ground left to the choice of the settler, she avoided those spots which were most fertile and most favorable to commerce: seeking some nook of the mountain, some secret asylum where she might live solitary and unknown, she bent her way from the town towards these rocks, where she might conceal herself from observation. All sensitive and suffering creatures, from a sort of common instinct, fly for refuge amidst their pains to haunts the most wild and desolate; as if rocks could form a rampart against misfortune—as if the calm of Nature could hush the tumults of the soul. That Providence, which lends its support when we ask but the supply of our necessary wants, had a blessing in reserve for Madame de la Tour, which neither riches nor greatness can purchase:—this blessing was a friend.

The spot to which Madame de la Tour had fled had already been inhabited for a year by a young woman of a lively, good-natured and affectionate disposition. Margaret (for that was her name) was born in Brittany, of a family of peasants, by
whom she was cherished and beloved, and with whom she might have passed through life in simple rustic happiness, if, mislead by the weakness of a tender heart, she had not listened to the passion of a gentleman in the neighborhood, who promised her marriage. He soon abandoned her, and adding inhumanity to seduction, refused to insure a provision for the child of which she was pregnant. Margaret then determined to leave forever her native village; and retire, where her fault might be concealed, to some colony distant from that country where she had lost the only portion of a poor peasant girl—her reputation. With some borrowed money she purchased an old negro slave, with whom she cultivated a little corner of this district.

Madame de la Tour, followed by her negro woman, came to this spot, where she found Margaret engaged in suckling her child. Soothed and charmed by the sight of a person in a situation somewhat similar to her own, Madame de la Tour related, in a few words, her past condition and her present wants. Margaret was deeply affected by the recital; and more anxious to merit confidence than to create esteem, she confessed without disguise, the errors of which she had been guilty. "As for me," said she, "I deserve my fate; but you, madam—you! at once virtuous and unhappy"—and, sobbing, she offered Madame de la Tour both her hut and her friendship. That lady, affected by this tender reception, pressed her in her arms, and exclaimed,—"Ah, surely Heaven has put an end to my misfortunes, since it inspires you, to whom I am a stranger, with more goodness towards me than I have ever experienced from my own relations!"

I was acquainted with Margaret: and, although my habitation is a league and a half from hence, in the woods behind that sloping mountain, I considered myself as her neighbor. In the cities of Europe, a street, even a simple wall, frequently prevents members of the same family from meeting for years; but in new colonies we consider those persons as neighbors from whom we are divided only by woods and mountains; and above all at that period, when this island had little intercourse with the Indies, vicinity alone gave a claim to friendship, and hospitality towards strangers seemed less a duty than a pleasure. No sooner was I informed that Margaret had found a companion, than I hastened to her, in the hope of being useful to my neighbor and her guest. I found Madame de la Tour possessed of all those melancholy graces which, by blending sympathy with admiration gave to beauty additional power. Her countenance was interesting, expressive at once of dignity and de-
jection. She appeared to be in the last stage of her pregnancy. I told the two friends that for the future interest of their children, and to prevent the intrusion of any other settler, they had better divide between them the property of this wild, sequestered valley, which is nearly twenty acres in extent. They confided that task to me, and I marked out two equal portions of land. One included the higher part of this inclosure, from the cloudy pinnacle of that rock, whence springs the river of Fan-Palms, to that precipitous cleft which you see on the summit of the mountain, and which, from its resemblance in form to the battlement of a fortress, is called the Embrasure. It is difficult to find a path along this wild portion of the enclosure, the soil of which is encumbered with fragments of rock, or worn into channels formed by torrents; yet it produces noble trees, and innumerable springs and rivulets. The other portion of land comprised the plain extending along the banks of the river of Fan-Palms, to the opening where we are now seated, whence the river takes its course between those two hills, until it falls into the sea. You may still trace the vestiges of some meadow land; and this part of the common is less rugged, but not more valuable than the other; since in the rainy season it becomes marshy, and in dry weather is so hard and unyielding, that it will almost resist the stroke of a pickaxe. When I had thus divided the property, I persuaded my neighbors to draw lots for their respective possessions. The higher portion of land, containing the source of the river of Fan-Palms, became the property of Madame de la Tour; the lower, comprising the plain on the banks of the river, was allotted to Margaret; and each seemed satisfied with her share. They entreated me to place their habitations together, that they might at all times enjoy the soothing intercourse of friendship, and the consolation of mutual kind offices. Margaret’s cottage was situated near the centre of the valley, and just on the boundary of her own plantation. Close to that spot I built another cottage for the residence of Madame de la Tour; and thus the two friends, while they possessed all the advantages of neighborhood, lived on their own property. I myself cut palisades from the mountain, and brought leaves of fan-palms from the sea-shore in order to construct those two cottages, of which you can now discern neither the entrance nor the roof. Yet, alas! there still remain but too many traces for my remembrance! Time, which so rapidly destroys the proud monuments of empires, seems in this desert to spare those of friendship, as if to perpetuate my regrets to the last hour of my existence,
As soon as the second cottage was finished, Madame de la Tour was delivered of a girl. I had been the godfather of Margaret's child, who was christened by the name of Paul. Madame de la Tour desired me to perform the same office for her child also, together with her friend, who gave her the name of Virginia. "She will be virtuous," cried Margaret, "and she will be happy. I have only known misfortune by wandering from virtue."

About the time Madame de la Tour recovered, these two little estates had already begun to yield some produce, perhaps in a small degree owing to the care which I occasionally bestowed on their improvement, but far more to the indefatigable labors of the two slaves. Margaret's slave, who was called Domingo, was still healthy and robust, though advanced in years: he possessed some knowledge, and a good natural understanding. He cultivated indiscriminately, on both plantations, the spots of ground that seemed most fertile, and sowed whatever grain he thought most congenial to each particular soil. Where the ground was poor, he strewed maize; where it was most fruitful, he planted wheat; and rice in such spots as were marshy. He threw the seeds of gourds and cucumbers at the foot of the rocks, which they loved to climb and decorate with their luxuriant foliage. In dry spots he cultivated the sweet potato; the cotton-tree flourished upon the heights, and the sugar-cane grew in the clayey soil. He reared some plants of coffee on the hills, where the grain, although small, is excellent. His plantain-trees, which spread their grateful shade on the banks of the river, and encircled the cottages, yielded fruit throughout the year. And lastly, Domingo, to soothe his cares, cultivated a few plants of tobacco. Sometimes he was employed in cutting wood for firing from the mountain, sometimes in hewing pieces of rock within the enclosure, in order to level the paths. The zeal which inspired him enabled him to perform all these labors with intelligence and activity. He was much attached to Margaret, and not less to Madame de la Tour, whose negro woman, Mary, he had married on the birth of Virginia; and he was passionately fond of his wife. Mary was born at Madagascar, and had there acquired the knowledge of some useful arts. She could weave baskets, and a sort of stuff, with long grass that grows in the woods. She was active, cleanly, and, above all, faithful. It was her care to prepare their meals, to rear the poultry, and go sometimes to Port Louis, to sell the superfluous produce of these little plantations, which was not, however, very considerable. If you add to the personages already men-
tioned two goats, which were brought up with the children, and a
great dog, which kept watch at night, you will have a complete
idea of the household, as well as of the productions of these two
little farms.

Madame de la Tour and her friend were constantly em-
ployed in spinning cotton for the use of their families. Desti-
tute of everything which their own industry could not supply,
at home they went barefooted: shoes were a convenience re-
served for Sunday, on which day, at an early hour, they attended
mass at the church of the Shaddock Grove, which you see
yonder. That church was more distant from their homes than
Port Louis; but they seldom visited the town, lest they should
be treated with contempt on account of their dress, which con-
sisted simply of the coarse blue linen of Bengal, usually worn by
slaves. But is there, in that external deference which fortune
commands, a compensation for domestic happiness? If these
interesting women had something to suffer from the world,
their homes on that very account became more dear to them.
No sooner did Mary and Domingo, from this elevated spot,
perceive their mistresses on the road of the Shaddock Grove,
than they flew to the foot of the mountain in order to help them
to ascend. They discerned in the looks of their domestics the
joy which their return excited. They found in their retreat
neatness, independence, all the blessings which are the recom-
pense of toil, and they received the zealous services which
spring from affection. United by the tie of similar wants, and
the sympathy of similar misfortunes, they gave each other the
tender names of companion, friend, sister. They had but one
will, one interest, one table. All their possessions were in com-
mon. And if sometimes a passion more ardent than friendship
awakened in their hearts the pang of unavailing anguish, a pure
religion, united with chaste manners, drew their affections
towards another life: as the trembling flame rises towards
heaven, when it no longer finds any aliment on earth.

The duties of maternity became a source of additional hap-
piness to these affectionate mothers, whose mutual friendship
gained new strength at the sight of their children, equally the off-
spring of an ill-fated attachment. They delighted in washing
their infants together in the same bath, in putting them to rest
in the same cradle, and in changing the maternal bosom at
which they received nourishment. "My friend," cried Madame
de la Tour, "we shall each of us have two children, and each
of our children will have two mothers." As two buds which
remain on different trees of the same kind, after the tempest
has broken all their branches, produce more delicious fruit, if each, separated from the maternal stem, be grafted on the neighboring tree, so these two infants, deprived of all their other relations, when thus exchanged for nourishment by those who had given them birth, imbibed feelings of affection still more tender than those of son and daughter, brother and sister. While they were yet in their cradles, their mothers talked of their marriage. They soothed their own cares by looking forward to the future happiness of their children; but this contemplation often drew forth their tears. The misfortunes of one mother had arisen from having neglected marriage; those of the other for having submitted to its laws. One had suffered by aiming to rise above her condition, the other by descending from her rank. But they found consolation in reflecting that their more fortunate children, far from the cruel prejudices of Europe, would enjoy at once the pleasures of love and the blessings of equality.

Rarely, indeed, has such an attachment been seen as that which the two children already testified for each other. If Paul complained of anything, his mother pointed to Virginia: at her sight he smiled, and was appeased. If any accident befell Virginia, the cries of Paul gave notice of the disaster; but the dear little creature would suppress her complaints if she found that he was unhappy. When I came hither, I usually found them quite naked, as is the custom of the country, tottering in their walk, and holding each other by the hands and under the arms, as we see represented the constellation of the Twins. At night these infants often refused to be separated, and were found lying in the same cradle, their cheeks, their bosoms pressed close together, their hands thrown round each other's neck, and sleeping, locked in one another's arms.

When they began to speak, the first name they learned to give each other were those of brother and sister, and childhood knows no softer appellation. Their education, by directing them ever to consider each other's wants, tended greatly to increase their affection. In a short time, all the household economy, the care of preparing their rural repasts, became the task of Virginia, whose labors were always crowned with the praises and kisses of her brother. As for Paul, always in motion, he dug the garden with Domingo, or followed him with a little hatchet into the woods; and if in his rambles he espied a beautiful flower, any delicious fruit, or a nest of birds, even at the top of the tree, he would climb up and bring the spoil to his sister. When you met one of these children, you might be sure the other was not far off.
One day as I was coming down that mountain, I saw Virginia at the end of the garden running towards the house with her petticoat thrown over her head, in order to screen herself from a shower of rain. At a distance, I thought she was alone; but as I hastened towards her in order to help her on, I perceived she held Paul by the arm, almost entirely enveloped in the same canopy, and both were laughing heartily at their being sheltered together under an umbrella of their own invention. Those two charming faces in the middle of a swelling petticoat, recalled to my mind the children of Leda, enclosed in the same shell.

Their sole study was how they could please and assist one another; for of all other things they were ignorant, and indeed could neither read nor write. They were never disturbed by inquiries about past times, nor did their curiosity extend beyond the bounds of their mountain. They believed the world ended at the shores of their own island, and all their ideas and all their affections were confined within its limits. Their mutual tenderness, and that of their mothers, employed all the energies of their minds. Their tears had never been called forth by tedious application to useless sciences. Their minds had never been wearied by lessons of morality, superfluous to bosoms unconscious of ill. They had never been taught not to steal, because everything with them was in common: or not to be intemperate, because their simple food was left to their own discretion; or not to lie, because they had nothing to conceal. Their young imaginations had never been terrified by the idea that God has punishment in store for ungrateful children, since with them, filial affection arose naturally from maternal tenderness. All they had been taught of religion was to love it, and if they did not offer up long prayers in the church, wherever they were, in the house, in the fields, in the woods, they raised towards heaven their innocent hands, and hearts purified by virtuous affections.

All their early childhood passed thus, like a beautiful dawn, the prelude of a bright day. Already they assisted their mothers in the duties of the household. As soon as the crowing of the wakeful cock announced the first beam of the morning, Virginia arose, and hastened to draw water from a neighboring spring: then returning to the house she prepared the breakfast. When the rising sun gilded the points of the rocks which overhang the enclosure in which they lived, Margaret and her child repaired to the dwelling of Madame de la Tour, where they offered up their morning prayer together. This
sacrifice of thanksgiving always preceded their first repast, which they often took before the door of the cottage, seated upon the grass, under a canopy of plantain: and while the branches of that delicious tree afforded a grateful shade, its fruit furnished a substantial food ready prepared for them by nature, and its long glossy leaves, spread upon the table, supplied the place of linen. Plentiful and wholesome nourishment gave early growth and vigor to the persons of these children, and their countenances expressed the purity and peace of their souls. At twelve years of age the figure of Virginia was in some degree formed: a profusion of light hair shaded her face, to which her blue eyes and coral lips gave the most charming brilliancy. Her eyes sparkled with vivacity when she spoke; but when she was silent they were habitually turned upwards with an expression of extreme sensibility, or rather of tender melancholy. The figure of Paul began already to display the graces of youthful beauty. He was taller than Virginia: his skin was a darker tint; his nose more aquiline; and his black eyes would have been too piercing, if the long eyelashes by which they were shaded, had not imparted to them an expression of softness. He was constantly in motion, except when his sister appeared, and then, seated by her side, he became still. Their meals often passed without a word being spoken; and from their silence, the simple elegance of their attitudes, and the beauty of their naked feet, you might have fancied you beheld an antique group of white marble, representing some of the children of Niobe, but for the glances of their eyes, which were constantly seeking to meet, and their mutual soft and tender smiles, which suggested rather the idea of happy celestial spirits, whose nature is love, and who are not obliged to have recourse to words for the expression of their feelings.

In the mean time Madame de la Tour, perceiving every day some unfolding grace, some new beauty, in her daughter, felt her maternal anxiety increase with her tenderness. She often said to me, "If I were to die, what will become of Virginia without fortune?"

Madame de la Tour had an aunt in France, who was a woman of quality, rich, old, and a complete devotee. She had behaved with so much cruelty towards her niece upon her marriage, that Madame de la Tour had determined no extremity of distress should ever compel her to have recourse to her hard-hearted relation. But when she became a mother, the pride of resentment was overcome by the stronger feelings of maternal tenderness. She wrote to her aunt, informing her of the sudden
death of her husband, and the birth of her daughter, and the
difficulties in which she was involved, burdened as she was with
an infant, and without means of support. She received no
answer; but notwithstanding the high spirit natural to her char-
acter, she no longer feared exposing herself to mortification;
and, although she knew her aunt would never pardon her for
having married a man who was not of noble birth, however
 estimable, she continued to write to her, with the hope of
awakening her compassion for Virginia. Many years, however,
passed without receiving any token of her remembrance.

At length, in 1738, three years after the arrival of Monsieur
de la Bourdonnais in this island, Madame de la Tour was in-
formed that the Governor had a letter to give her from her
aunt. She flew to Port Louis; maternal joy raised her mind
above all trifling considerations, and she was careless on this
occasion of appearing in her homely attire. Monsieur de la
Bourdonnais gave her a letter from her aunt, in which she in-
formed her, that she deserved her fate for marrying an adven-
turer and a libertine: that the passions brought with them their
own punishment; that the premature death of her husband was
a just visitation from Heaven; that she had done well in going
to a distant island, rather than dishonor her family by remain-
ing in France; and that, after all, in the colony where she had
taken refuge, none but the idle failed to grow rich. Having
thus censured her niece, she concluded by eulogizing herself.
To avoid, she said, the almost inevitable evils of marriage, she
had determined to remain single. In fact, as she was of a very
ambitious disposition, she had resolved to marry none but a
man of high rank; but although she was very rich, her fortune
was not found a sufficient bribe, even at court, to counterbalance
the malignant dispositions of her mind, and the disagreeable
qualities of her person.

After mature deliberations, she added, in a postscript, that
she had strongly recommended her niece to Monsieur de la
Bourdonnais. This she had indeed done, but in a manner of
late too common, which renders a patron perhaps even more to
be feared than a declared enemy; for, in order to justify herself
for her harshness, she had cruelly slandered her niece, while
she affected to pity her misfortunes.

Madame de la Tour, whom no unprejudiced person could
have seen without feelings of sympathy and respect, was re-
ceived with the utmost coolness by Monsieur de la Bourdonnais,
biased as he was against her. When she painted to him her
own situation and that of her child, he replied in abrupt sen-
tences,—"We will see what can be done—there are so many to relieve—all in good time—why did you displease your aunt?—you have been much to blame."

Madame de la Tour returned to her cottage, her heart torn with grief, and filled with all the bitterness of disappointment. When she arrived she threw her aunt's letter on the table, and exclaimed to her friend, "There is the fruit of eleven years of patient expectation!" Madame de la Tour being the only person in the little circle who could read, she again took up the letter, and read it aloud. Scarcely had she finished, when Margaret exclaimed, "What have we to do with your relations? Has God then forsaken us? He only is our father! Have we not hitherto been happy? Why then this regret? You have no courage." Seeing Madame de la Tour in tears, she threw herself upon her neck, and pressing her in her arms,—"My dear friend!" cried she, "my dear friend!"—but her emotion choked her utterance. At this sight Virginia burst into tears, and pressed her mother's and Margaret's hand alternately to her lips and heart; while Paul, his eyes inflamed with anger, cried, clasping his hands together, and stamping with his foot, not knowing whom to blame for this scene of misery. The noise soon brought Domingo and Mary to the spot, and the little habitation resounded with cries of distress,—"Ah, madam!—My good mistress!—My dear mother!—Do not weep!" These tender proofs of affection at length dispelled the grief of Madame de la Tour. She took Paul and Virginia in her arms, and, embracing them, said, "You are the cause of my affliction, my children, but you are also my only source of delight! Yes, my dear children, misfortune has reached me, but only from a distance: here I am surrounded with happiness." Paul and Virginia did not understand this reflection; but when they saw that she was calm, they smiled, and continued to caress her. Tranquillity was thus restored in this happy family, and all that had passed was but as a storm in the midst of fine weather, which disturbs the serenity of the atmosphere but for a short time, and then passes away.

The amiable disposition of these children unfolded itself daily. One Sunday, at daybreak, their mothers having gone to mass at the church of the Shaddock Grove, the children perceived a negro woman beneath the plantains which surrounded their habitation. She appeared almost wasted to a skeleton, and had no other garment than a piece of coarse cloth thrown around her. She threw herself at the feet of Virginia, who was preparing the family breakfast, and said, "My good young lady,
have pity on a poor runaway slave. For a whole month I have wandered among these mountains, half dead with hunger, and often pursued by the hunters and their dogs. I fled from my master, a rich planter of the Black River, who has used me as you see;” and she showed her body marked with scars from the lashes she had received. She added, “I was going to drown myself, but hearing you lived here, I said to myself, Since there are still some good white people in this country, I need not die yet.” Virginia answered with emotion,—“Take courage, unfortunate creature! here is something to eat;” and she gave her the breakfast she had been preparing, which the slave in a few minutes devoured. When her hunger was appeased, Virginia said to her,—“Poor woman! I should like to go and ask forgiveness for you of your master. Surely the sight of you will touch him with pity. Will you show me the way?”—“Angel of heaven!” answered the poor negro woman, “I will follow you where you please!” Virginia called her brother, and begged him to accompany her. The slave led the way, by winding and difficult paths, through the woods, over mountains, which they climbed with difficulty, and across rivers, through which they were obliged to wade. At length, about the middle of the day, they reached the foot of a steep descent upon the borders of the Black River. There they perceived a well-built house, surrounded by extensive plantations, and a number of slaves employed in their various labors. Their master was walking among them with a pipe in his mouth, and a switch in his hand. He was a tall thin man, of a brown complexion; his eyes were sunk in his head, and his dark eyebrows were joined in one. Virginia, holding Paul by the hand, drew near, and with much emotion begged him, for the love of God, to pardon his poor slave, who stood trembling a few paces behind. The planter at first paid little attention to the children, who, he saw, were meanly dressed. But when he observed the elegance of Virginia’s form, and the profusion of her beautiful light tresses which had escaped from beneath her blue cap; when he heard the soft tone of her voice, which trembled, as well as her whole frame, while she implored his compassion; he took his pipe from his mouth, and lifting up his stick, swore, with a terrible oath, that he pardoned his slave, not for the love of Heaven, but of her who asked his forgiveness. Virginia made a sign to the slave to approach her master; and instantly sprang away followed by Paul.

They climbed up the steep they had descended; and having gained the summit, seated themselves at the foot of a tree,
overcome with fatigue, hunger and thirst. They had left their home fasting, and walked five leagues since sunrise. Paul said to Virginia,—"My dear sister, it is past noon, and I am sure you are thirsty and hungry: we shall find no dinner here; let us go down the mountain again, and ask the master of the poor slave for some food."—"Oh, no," answered Virginia, "he frightens me too much. Remember what mamma sometimes says, 'The bread of the wicked is like stones in the mouth.'"—"What shall we do then," said Paul; "these trees produce no fruit fit to eat; and I shall not be able to find even a tama-rind or a lemon to refresh you."—"God will take care of us," replied Virginia; "he listens to the cry even of the little birds when they ask him for food." Scarcely had she pronounced these words when they heard the noise of water falling from a neighboring rock. They ran thither, and having quenched their thirst at this crystal spring, they gathered and ate a few cresses which grew on the border of the stream. Soon afterwards, while they were wandering backwards and forwards in search of more solid nourishment, Virginia perceived in the thickest part of the forest, a young palm-tree. The kind of cabbage which is found at the top of the palm, enfolded within its leaves, is well adapted for food; but, although the stock of the tree is not thicker than a man's leg, it grows to above sixty feet in height. The wood of the tree, indeed, is composed only of very fine filaments; but the bark is so hard that it turns the edge of the hatchet, and Paul was not furnished even with a knife. At length he thought of setting fire to the palm-tree; but a new difficulty occurred: he had no steel with which to strike fire; and although the whole island is covered with rocks, I do not believe it is possible to find a single flint. Necessity, however, is fertile in expedients, and the most useful inventions have arisen from mere placed in the most destitute situations. Paul determined to kindle a fire after the manner of the negroes. With the sharp end of a stone he made a small hole in the branch of a tree that was quite dry, and which he held between his feet: he then, with the edge of the same stone, brought to a point another dry branch of a different sort of wood, and, afterwards, placing the piece of pointed wood in the small hole of the branch which he held with his feet and turning it rapidly between his hands, in a few minutes smoke and sparks of fire issued from the point of contact. Paul then heaped together dried grass and branches, and set fire to the foot of the palm-tree, which soon fell to the ground with a tremendous crash. The fire was further useful to him in strip-
ping off the long, thick, and pointed leaves, within which the cabbage was inclosed. Having thus succeeded in obtaining this fruit, they ate part of it raw, and part dressed upon the ashes, which they found equally palatable. They made this frugal repast with delight, from the remembrance of the benevolent action they had performed in the morning: yet their joy was embittered by the thoughts of the uneasiness which their long absence from home would occasion their mothers. Virginia often recurred to this subject; but Paul, who felt his strength renewed by their meal, assured her, that it would not be long before they reached home, and, by the assurance of their safety, tranquillized the minds of their parents.

After dinner they were much embarrassed by the recollection that they had now no guide, and that they were ignorant of the way. Paul, whose spirit was not subdued by difficulties, said to Virginia,—"The sun shines full upon our huts at noon: we must pass, as we did this morning, over that mountain with its three points, which you see yonder. Come, let us be moving." This mountain was that of the Three Breasts, so called from the form of its three peaks. They then descended the steep bank of the Black River, on the northern side; and arrived, after an hour's walk, on the banks of a large river, which stopped their further progress. This large portion of the island, covered as it is with forests, is even now so little known that many of its rivers and mountains have not yet received a name. The stream, on the banks of which Paul and Virginia were now standing, rolls foaming over a bed of rocks. The noise of the water frightened Virginia, and she was afraid to wade through the current: Paul therefore took her up in his arms, and went thus loaded over the slippery rocks, which formed the bed of the river, careless of the tumultuous noise of its waters. "Do not be afraid," cried he to Virginia; "I feel very strong with you. If that planter at the Black River had refused you the pardon of his slave, I would have fought with him."—"What!" answered Virginia, "with that great wicked man? To what have I exposed you! Gracious heaven! how difficult it is to do good! and yet it is so easy to do wrong."

When Paul had crossed the river, he wished to continue the journey carrying his sister: and he flattered himself that he could ascend in that way the mountain of the Three Breasts, which was still at the distance of half a league; but his strength soon failed, and he was obliged to set down his burden, and to rest himself by her side. Virginia then said to him, "My dear brother, the sun is going down; you have still some
strength left, but mine has quite failed: do leave me here, and return home alone to ease the fears of our mothers."—"Oh no," said Paul, "I will not leave you if night overtakes us in this wood, I will light a fire, and bring down another palm-tree: you shall eat the cabbage, and I will form a covering of the leaves to shelter you." In the mean time, Virginia being a little rested, she gathered from the trunk of an old tree, which overhung the bank of the river, some long leaves of the plant called hart's tongue, which grew near its root. Of these leaves she made a sort of buskin, with which she covered her feet, that were bleeding from the sharpness of the stony paths; for in her eager desire to do good, she had forgotten to put on her shoes. Feeling her feet cooled by the freshness of the leaves, she broke off a branch of bamboo, and continued her walk, leaning with one hand on the staff, and with the other on Paul.

They walked on in this manner slowly through the woods; but from the height of the trees, and the thickness of their foliage, they soon lost sight of the mountain of the Three Breasts, by which they had hitherto directed their course, and also of the sun, which was now setting. At length they wandered, without perceiving it, from the beaten path in which they had hitherto walked, and found themselves in a labyrinth of trees, underwood, and rocks, whence there appeared to be no outlet. Paul made Virginia sit down, while he ran backwards and forwards, half frantic, in search of a path which might lead them out of this thick wood; but he fatigued himself to no purpose. He then climbed to the top of a lofty tree, whence he hoped at least to perceive the mountain of the Three Breasts: but he could discern nothing around him but the tops of trees, some of which were gilded with the last beams of the setting sun. Already the shadows of the mountains were spreading over the forests in the valleys. The wind lulled, as is usually the case at sunset. The most profound silence reigned in those awful solitudes, which was only interrupted by the cry of the deer, who came to their lairs in that unfrequented spot. Paul, in the hope that some hunter would hear his voice, called out as loud as he was able,—"Come, come to the help of Virginia." But the echoes of the forest alone answered his call, and repeated again and again, "Virginia—Virginia."

Paul at length descended from the tree, overcome with fatigue and vexation. He looked around in order to make some arrangement for passing the night in that desert; but he could find neither fountain, nor palm-tree, nor even a branch of dry wood fit for kindling a fire. He was then impressed,
by experience, with the sense of his own weakness, and began to weep. Virginia said to him,—"Do not weep, my dear brother, or I shall be overwhelmed with grief. I am the cause of all your sorrow, and of all that our mothers are suffering at this moment. I find we ought to do nothing, not even good, without consulting our parents. Oh, I have been very imprudent!"—and she began to shed tears. "Let us pray to God, my dear brother," she again said, "and he will hear us." They had scarcely finished their prayer, when they heard the barking of a dog. "It must be the dog of some hunter," said Paul, who comes here at night, to lie in wait for the deer." Soon after, the dog began barking again with increased violence. "Surely," said Virginia, "it is Fidele, our own dog: yes,—now I know his bark. Are we then so near home?—at the foot of our own mountain?" A moment after Fidele was at their feet, barking, howling, moaning, and-devouring them with caresses. Before they could recover from their surprise, they saw Domingo running towards them. At the sight of the good old negro, who wept for joy, they began to weep too, but had not the power to utter a syllable. When Domingo had recovered himself a little, "Oh, my dear children," said he, "how miserable have you made your mothers! How astonished they were when they returned with me from mass, on not finding you at home. Mary, who was at work at a little distance, could not tell us where you were gone. I ran backwards and forwards in the plantation, not knowing where to look for you. At last I took some of your old clothes, and showing them to Fidele, the poor animal, as if he understood me, immediately began to scent your path; and conducted me, wagging his tail all the while, to the Black River. I there saw a planter, who told me you had brought back a Maroon negro woman, his slave, and that he had pardoned her at your request. But what a pardon! he showed her to me with her feet chained to a block of wood, and an iron collar with three hooks fastened round her neck! After that, Fidele, still on the scent, led me up the steep bank of the Black River, where he again stopped, and barked with all his might. This was on the brink of a spring, near which was a fallen palm-tree, and a fire, still smoking. At last he led me to this very spot. We are now at the foot of the mountain of the Three Breasts, and still four good leagues from home. Come eat, and recover your strength." Domingo then presented them with a cake, some fruit, and a large gourd full of beverage composed of wine, water, lemon-juice, sugar, and nut-
meg, which their mothers had prepared to invigorate and re-

fresh them. Virginia sighed at the recollection of the poor
slave, and at the uneasiness they had given their mothers.
She repeated several times. "Oh, how difficult it is to do
good!" While she and Paul were taking refreshment, it be-
ing already night, Domingo kindled a fire: and having found
among the rocks a particular kind of twisted wood, called bois
de ronde, which burns when quite green, and throws out a
great blaze, he made a torch of it, which he lighted. But when
they prepared to continue their journey, a new difficulty oc-
curred; Paul and Virginia could no longer walk, their feet be-
ing violently swollen and inflamed. Domingo knew not what
to do; whether to leave them and go in search of help, or re-
main and pass the night with them on that spot. "There was
a time," said he, "when I could carry you both together in
my arms! But now you are grown big, and I am grown old." 
While he was in this perplexity, a troop of Maroon negroes
appeared at a short distance from them. The chief of the
band, approaching Paul and Virginia, said to them,—"Good
little white people, do not be afraid. We saw you pass this
morning, with a negro woman of the Black River. You went
to ask pardon for her of her wicked master; and we, in return for
this, will carry you home upon our shoulders." He then made
a sign, and four of the strongest negroes immediately formed
a sort of litter with the branches of trees and lianas, and hav-
ing seated Paul and Virginia on it, carried them upon their
shoulders. Domingo marched in front with his lighted torch,
and they proceeded amidst the rejoicings of the whole troop,
who overwhelmed them with their benedictions. Virginia, af-
fected by this scene, said to Paul, with emotion,—"Oh, my dear
brother! God never leaves a good action unrewarded."

It was midnight when they arrived at the foot of their
mountain, on the ridges of which several fires were lighted.
As soon as they began to ascend, they heard voices exclam-
ing—"Is it you, my children?" They answered immediately,
and the negroes also,—"Yes, yes, it is." A moment after
they could distinguish their mothers and Mary coming towards
them with lighted sticks in their hands. "Unhappy children,"
cried Madame de la Tour, "where have you been? What
agonies you have made us suffer!"—"We have been," said Vir-
ginia, "to the Black River, where we went to ask pardon for a
poor Maroon slave, to whom I gave our breakfast this morning,
because she seemed dying of hunger; and these Maroon negroes
have brought us home." Madame de la Tour embraced her
daughter, without being able to speak; and Virginia, who felt her face wet with her mother’s tears, exclaimed, “Now I am repaid for all the hardships I have suffered.” Margaret, in a transport of delight, pressed Paul in her arms, exclaiming, “And you also, my dear child, you have done a good action.” When they reached the cottages with their children, they entertained all the negroes with a plentiful repast, after which the latter returned to the woods, praying Heaven to shower down every description of blessing on those good white people.

Every day was to these families a day of happiness and tranquillity. Neither ambition nor envy disturbed their repose. They did not seek to obtain a useless reputation out of doors, which may be procured by artifice and lost by calumny; but were contented to be the sole witnesses and judges of their own actions. In this island, where, as is the case in most colonies, scandal forms the principal topic of conversation, their virtues, and even their names, were unknown. The passer-by on the road to the Shaddock Grove, indeed, would sometimes ask the inhabitants of the plain, who lived in the cottages up there? and was always told, even by those who did not know them, “They are good people.” The modest violet thus, concealed in thorny places, sheds all unseen its delightful fragrance around.

Slander, which, under an appearance of justice, naturally inclines the heart to falsehood or to hatred, was entirely banished from their conversation; for it is impossible not to hate men if we believe them to be wicked, or to live with the wicked without concealing that hatred under a false pretence of good feeling. Slander thus puts us ill at ease with others and with ourselves. In this little circle, therefore, the conduct of individuals was not discussed, but the best manner of doing good to all; and although they had but little in their power, their unceasing good-will and kindness of heart made them constantly ready to do what they could for others. Solitude, far from having blunted these benevolent feelings, had rendered their dispositions even more kindly. Although the petty scandals of the day furnished no subject of conversation to them, yet the contemplation of nature filled their minds with enthusiastic delight. They adored the bounty of that Providence, which, by their instrumentality, had spread abundance and beauty amid these barren rocks, and had enabled them to enjoy those pure and simple pleasures, which are ever grateful and ever new.

Paul, at twelve years of age, was stronger and more intelli-
gent than most European youths are at fifteen; and the plantations, which Domingo merely cultivated, were embellished by him. He would go with the old negro into the neighboring woods, where he would root up the young plants of lemon, orange, and tamarind trees, the round heads of which are so fresh a green, together with date-palm trees, which produce fruit filled with a sweet cream, possessing the fine perfume of the orange flower. These trees, which had already attained to a considerable size, he planted round their little enclosure. He had also sown the seed of many trees which the second year bear flowers or fruit; such as the agathis, encircled with long clusters of white flowers which hang from it like the crystal pendants of a chandelier; the Persian lilac, which lifts high in air its gray flax-colored branches; the pappaw tree, the branchless trunk of which forms a column studded with green melons, surmounted by a capital of broad leaves similar to those of the fig-tree.

The seeds and kernels of the gum tree, terminalia, mango, alligator pear, the guava, the bread-fruit tree, and the narrow-leaved rose-apple, were also planted by him with profusion: and the greater number of these trees already afforded their young cultivator both shade and fruit. His industrious hands diffused the riches of nature over even the most barren parts of the plantation. Several species of aloes, the Indian fig, adorned with yellow flowers spotted with red, and the thorny torch thistle, grew upon the dark summits of the rocks, and seemed to aim at reaching the long lianas, which, laden with blue or scarlet flowers, hung scattered over the steepest parts of the mountain.

I loved to trace the ingenuity he had exercised in the arrangement of these trees. He had so disposed them that the whole could be seen at a single glance. In the middle of the hollow he had planted shrubs of the lowest growth; behind grew the more lofty sorts; then trees of the ordinary height; and beyond and above all, the venerable and lofty groves which border the circumference. Thus this extensive enclosure appeared, from its centre, like a verdant amphitheatre decorated with fruits and flowers, containing a variety of vegetables, some strips of meadow land, and fields of rice and corn. But, in arranging these vegetable productions to his own taste, he wandered not too far from the designs of Nature. Guided by her suggestions, he had thrown upon the elevated spots such seeds as the winds would scatter about, and near the borders of the springs those which float upon the water. Every plant
thus grew in its proper soil, and every spot seemed decorated by Nature's own hand. The streams which fell from the summits of the rocks formed in some parts of the valley sparkling cascades, and in others were spread into broad mirrors, in which were reflected, set in verdure, the flowering trees, the overhanging rocks, and the azure heavens.

Notwithstanding the great irregularity of the ground, these plantations were, for the most part, easy of access. We had, indeed, all given him our advice and assistance, in order to accomplish this end. He had conducted one path entirely round the valley, and various branches from it led from the circumference to the centre. He had drawn some advantage from the most rugged spots, and had blended, in harmonious union, level walks with the inequalities of the soil, and trees which grow wild with the cultivated varieties. With that immense quantity of large pebbles which now block up these paths, and which are scattered over most of the ground of this island, he formed pyramidal heaps here and there, at the base of which he laid mould, and planted rose-bushes, the Barbadoes flower-fence, and other shrubs which love to climb the rocks. In a short time the dark and shapeless heaps of stones he had constructed were covered with verdure, or with the glowing tints of the most beautiful flowers. Hollow recesses on the borders of the streams shaded by the overhanging boughs of aged trees, formed rural grottoes, impervious to the rays of the sun, in which you might enjoy a refreshing coolness during the mid-day heats. One path led to a clump of forest trees, in the centre of which, sheltered from the wind, you found a fruit-tree, laden with produce. Here was a corn-field; there, an orchard; from one avenue you had a view of the cottages; from another, of the inaccessible summit of the mountain. Beneath one tufted bower of gum-trees, interwoven with lianas, no object whatever could be perceived: while the point of the adjoining rock, jutting out from the mountain, commanded a view of the whole enclosure, and of the distant ocean, where, occasionally, we could discern the distant sail, arriving from Europe, or bound thither. On this rock the two families frequently met in the evening, and enjoyed in silence the freshness of the flowers, the gentle murmurs of the fountain, and the last blended harmonies of light and shade.

Nothing could be more charming than the names which were bestowed upon some of the delightful retreats of this labyrinth. The rock of which I have been speaking, whence they could discern my approach at a considerable distance, was
called the Discovery of Friendship. Paul and Virginia had amused themselves by planting a bamboo on that spot; and whenever they saw me coming, they hoisted a little white handkerchief, by way of signal at my approach, as they had seen a flag hoisted on the neighboring mountain on the sight of a vessel at sea. The idea struck me of engraving an inscription on the stalk of this reed; for I never, in the course of my travels, experienced anything like the pleasure in seeing a statue or other monument of ancient art, as in reading a well-written inscription. It seems to me as if a human voice issued from the stone, and, making itself heard after the lapse of ages, addressed man in the midst of a desert, to tell him that he is not alone, and that other men, on that very spot, had felt, and thought, and suffered like himself. If the inscription belongs to an ancient nation, which no longer exists, it leads the soul through infinite space, and strengthens the consciousness of its immortality, by demonstrating that a thought has survived the ruins of an empire.

I inscribed then, on the little staff of Paul and Virginia's flag, the following lines of Horace:

Fratres Helenæ, lucida sidera,  
Ventorumque regat pater,  
Obstrictis, alis, præter Iapiga.

"May the brothers of Helen, bright stars like you, and the Father of the winds, guide you; and may you feel only the breath of the zephyr."

There was a gum-tree, under the shade of which Paul was accustomed to sit, to contemplate the sea when agitated by storms. On the bark of this tree, I engraved the following lines from Virgil:

Fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestes!

"Happy art thou, my son, in knowing only the pastoral divinities."

And over the door of Madame de la Tour's cottage, where the families so frequently met, I placed this line:

At secura quies, et nescia fallere vita.

"Here dwell a calm conscience, and a life that knows not deceit."

But Virginia did not approve of my Latin: she said, that what I had placed at the foot of her flag-staff was too long and too learned. "I should have liked better," added she, "to have seen inscribed, EVER AGITATED, YET CONSTANT." — "Such
a motto,” I answered, “would have been still more applicable to virtue.” My reflection made her blush.

The delicacy of sentiment of these happy families was manifested in everything around them. They gave the tenderest names to objects in appearance the most indifferent. A border of orange, plantain, and rose-apple trees, planted round a green sward where Virginia and Paul sometimes danced, received the name of Concord. An old tree, beneath the shade of which Madame de la Tour and Margaret used to recount their misfortunes, was called the Burial-place of Tears. They bestowed the names of Brittany and Normandy on two little plots of ground, where they had sown corn, strawberries, and peas. Domingo and Mary, wishing, in imitation of their mistresses, to recall to mind Angola and Foullepointe, the places of their birth in Africa, gave those names to the little fields where the grass was sown with which they wove their baskets, and where they had planted a calabash-tree. Thus by cultivating the productions of their respective climates, these exiled families cherished the dear illusions which bind us to our native country, and softened their regrets in a foreign land. Alas! I have seen these trees, these fountains, these heaps of stones, which are now so completely overthrown,—which now, like the desolated plains of Greece, present nothing but masses of ruin and affecting remembrances, all but called into life by the many charming appellations thus bestowed upon them!

But perhaps the most delightful spot of this enclosure was that called Virginia’s resting-place. At the foot of the rock which bore the name of the Discovery of Friendship, is a small crevice, whence issues a fountain, forming, near its source, a little spot of marshy soil in the middle of a field of rich grass. At the time of Paul’s birth I had made Margaret a present of an Indian cocoa which had been given me, and which she planted on the border of this fenny ground, in order that the tree might one day serve to mark the epoch of her son’s birth. Madame de la Tour planted another cocoa with the same view, at the birth of Virginia. These nuts produced two cocoa-trees, which formed the only records of the two families; one was called Paul’s tree, the other, Virginia’s. Their growth was in the same proportion as that of the two young persons, not exactly equal: but they rose, at the end of twelve years, above the roofs of the cottages. Already their tender stalks were interwoven, and clusters of young cocoas hung from them over the basin of the fountain. With the exception of these two trees, this nook of the rock was left as it had been decorated
by nature. On its embrowned and moist sides broad plants of maiden-hair glistened with their green and dark stars; and tufts of wave-leaved hart's tongue, suspended like long ribbons of purpled green, floated on the wind. Near this grew a chain of the Madagascar periwinkle, the flowers of which resemble the red gilliflower; and the long-podded capsicum, the seed-vessels of which are of the color of blood, and more resplendent than coral. Near them, the herb balm, with its heart-shaped leaves, and the sweet basil, which has the odor of the clove, exhaled the most delicious perfumes. From the precipitous side of the mountain hung the graceful lianas, like floating draperies, forming magnificent canopies of verdure on the face of the rocks. The sea-birds, allured by the stillness of these retreats, resorted here to pass the night. At the hour of sunset we could perceive the curlew and the stint skimming along the sea-shore; the frigate-bird poised high in air; and the white bird of the tropic, which abandons, with the star of day, the solitudes of the Indian ocean. Virginia took pleasure in resting herself upon the border of this fountain, decorated with wild and sublime magnificence. She often went thither to wash the linen of the family beneath the shade of the two cocoa-trees, and thither too she sometimes led her goats to graze. While she was making cheeses of their milk, she loved to see them browse on the maiden-hair fern which clothed the steep sides of the rock, and hung suspended by one of its cornices, as on a pedestal. Paul, observing that Virginia was fond of this spot, brought thither, from the neighboring forest, a great variety of bird's nests. The old birds following their young, soon established themselves in this new colony. Virginia, at stated times, distributed amongst them grains of rice, millet, and maize. As soon as she appeared, the whistling blackbird, the amadavid bird, whose note is so soft, the cardinal, with its flame-colored plumage, forsook their bushes; the parroquet, green as an emerald, descended from the neighboring fan-palms, the partridge ran along the grass; all advanced promiscuously towards her, like a brood of chickens: and she and Paul found an exhaustless source of amusement in observing their sports, their repasts, and their loves.

Amiable children! thus passed your earlier days in innocence, and in obeying the impulses of kindness. How many times, on this very spot, have your mothers, pressing you in their arms, blessed Heaven for the consolation your unfolding virtues prepared for their declining years, while they at the same time enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing you begin life
under the happiest auspices! How many times, beneath the shade of those rocks, have I partaken with them of your rural repasts, which never cost any animal its life! Gourds full of milk, fresh eggs, cakes of rice served up on plantain leaves, with baskets of mangoes, oranges, dates, pomegranates, pine-apples, furnished a wholesome repast, the most agreeable to the eye, as well as delicious to the taste, that can possibly be imagined.

Like the repast, the conversation was mild, and free from everything having a tendency to do harm. Paul often talked of the labors of the day and of the morrow. He was continually planning something for the accommodation of their little society. Here he discovered that the paths were rugged; there, that the seats were uncomfortable: sometimes the young arbors did not afford sufficient shade, and Virginia might be better pleased elsewhere.

During the rainy season the two families met together in the cottage, and employed themselves in weaving mats of grass, and baskets of bamboo. Rakes, spades, and hatchets, were ranged along the walls in the most perfect order; and near these instruments of agriculture were heaped its products,—bags of rice, sheaves of corn, and baskets of plantains. Some degree of luxury usually accompanies abundance; and Virginia was taught by her mother and Margaret to prepare sherbert and cordials from the juice of the sugar-cane, the lemon and the citron.

When night came, they all supped together by the light of a lamp; after which Madame de la Tour or Margaret related some story of travellers benighted in those woods of Europe that are still infested by banditti; or told a dismal tale of some shipwrecked vessel, thrown by the tempest upon the rocks of a desert island. To these recitals the children listened with eager attention, and earnestly hoped that Heaven would one day grant them the joy of performing the rites of hospitality towards such unfortunate persons. When the time for repose arrived, the two families separated and retired for the night, eager to meet again the following morning. Sometimes they were lulled to repose by the beating of the rains, which fell in torrents upon the roofs of their cottages, and sometimes by the hollow winds, which brought to their ear the distant roar of the waves breaking upon the shore. They blessed God for their own safety, the feeling of which was brought home more forcibly to their minds by the sound of remote danger.

Madame de la Tour occasionally read aloud some affecting
history of the Old or New Testament. Her auditors reasoned but little upon these sacred volumes, for their theology centred in a feeling of devotion towards the Supreme Being, like that of nature; and their morality was an active principle, like that of the Gospel. These families had no particular days devoted to pleasure, and others to sadness. Every day was to them a holiday, and all that surrounded them one holy temple, in which they ever adored the Infinite Intelligence, the Almighty God, the Friend of human kind. A feeling of confidence in his supreme power filled their minds with consolation for the past, with fortitude under present trials, and with hope in the future. Compelled by misfortune to return almost to a state of nature, these excellent women had thus developed in their own and their children's bosoms the feelings most natural to the human mind, and its best support under affliction.

But, as clouds sometimes arise, and cast a gloom over the best regulated tempers, so whenever any member of this little society appeared to be laboring under dejection, the rest assembled around, and endeavored to banish her painful thoughts by amusing the mind rather than by grave arguments against them. Each performed this kind office in their own appropriate manner: Margaret, by her gayety; Madame de la Tour, by the gentle consolations of religion; Virginia, by her tender caresses; Paul, by his frank and engaging cordiality. Even Mary and Domingo hastened to offer their succor, and to weep with those that wept. Thus do weak plants interweave themselves with each other, in order to withstand the fury of the tempest.

During the fine season, they went every Sunday to the church of the Shaddock Grove, the steeple of which you see yonder upon the plain. Many wealthy members of the congregation, who came to church in palanquins, sought the acquaintance of these united families, and invited them to parties of pleasure. But they always repelled these overtures with respectful politeness, as they were persuaded that the rich and powerful seek the society of persons in an inferior station only for the sake of surrounding themselves with flatterers, and that every flatterer must applaud alike all the actions of his patron, whether good or bad. On the other hand, they avoided, with equal care, too intimate an acquaintance with the lower class, who are ordinarily jealous, calumniating, and gross. They thus acquired, with some, the character of being timid, and with others, of pride: but their reserve was accompanied with so much obliging politeness, above all towards the unfortunate
and the unhappy, that they insensibly acquired the respect of 
the rich and the confidence of the poor.

After service, some kind office was often required at their 
hands by their poor neighbors. Sometimes a person troubled 
in mind sought their advice; sometimes a child begged them 
to visit its sick mother, in one of the adjoining hamlets. They 
always took with them a few remedies for the ordinary diseases 
of the country, which they administered in that soothing man-
ner which stamps a value upon the smallest favors. Above all, 
they met with singular success in administering to the disorders 
of the mind, so intolerable in solitude, and under the infirmities 
of a weakened frame. Madame de la Tour spoke with such 
sublime confidence of the Divinity, that the sick, while listening 
to her, almost believed him present. Virginia often returned 
home with her eyes full of tears, and her heart overflowing 
with delight, at having had an opportunity of doing good; for 
to her generally was confided the task of preparing and admin-
istering the medicines,—a task which she fulfilled with angelic 
sweetness. After these visits of charity, they sometimes ex-
tended their walk by the Sloping Mountain, till they reached 
my dwelling, where I used to prepare dinner for them on the 
banks of the little rivulet which glides near my cottage. I pro-
cured for these occasions a few bottles of old wine, in order to 
heighten the relish of our Oriental repast by the more genial 
productions of Europe. At other times we met on the sea-shore 
at the mouth of some little river, or rather mere brook. We 
brought from home the provisions furnished us by our gardens; 
to which we added those supplied us by the sea in abundant 
variety. We caught on these shores the mullet, the roach, and 
the sea-urchin, lobsters, shrimps, crabs, oysters, and all other 
kinds of shell-fish. In this way, we often enjoyed the most 
tranquil pleasures in situations the most terrific. Sometimes, 
seated upon a rock, under the shade of the velvet sunflower-tree, 
we saw the enormous waves of the Indian Ocean break beneath 
our feet with a tremendous noise. Paul, who could swim like 
a fish, would advance on the reefs to meet the coming billows; 
then, at their near approach, would run back to the beach, 
closely pursued by the foaming breakers, which threw them-
selves, with a roaring noise, far on the sands. But Virginia, at 
this sight, uttered piercing cries, and said that such sports 
frightened her too much.

Other amusements were not wanting on these festive occa-
sions. Our repasts were generally followed by the songs and 
dances of the two young people. Virginia sang the happiness
of pastoral life, and the misery of those who were impelled by avarice to cross the raging ocean, rather than cultivate the earth, and enjoy its bounties in peace. Sometimes she performed a pantomime with Paul, after the manner of the negroes. The first language of man is pantomime: it is known to all nations, and is so natural and expressive, that the children of the European inhabitants catch it with facility from the negroes. Virginia, recalling, from among the histories which her mother had read to her, those which had affected her most, represented the principal events in them with beautiful simplicity. Sometimes at the sound of Domingo's tantam she appeared upon the green sward, bearing a pitcher upon her head, and advanced with a timid step towards the source of a neighboring fountain to draw water. Domingo and Mary, personating the shepherds of Midian, forbade her to approach, and repulsed her sternly. Upon this Paul flew to her succor, beat away the shepherds, filled Virginia's pitcher, and placing it upon her head, bound her brows at the same time with a wreath of the red flowers of the Madagascar periwinkle, which served to heighten the delicacy of her complexion. Then joining in their sports, I took upon myself the part of Raguel, and bestowed upon Paul, my daughter Zephora in marriage.

Another time Virginia would represent the unhappy Ruth, returning poor and widowed with her mother-in-law, who, after so prolonged an absence, found herself as unknown as in a foreign land. Domingo and Mary personated the reapers. The supposed daughter of Naomi followed their steps, gleaning here and there a few ears of corn. When interrogated by Paul,—a part which he performed with the gravity of a patriarch,—she answered his questions with a faltering voice. He then, touched with compassion, granted an asylum to innocence, and hospitality to misfortune. He filled her lap with plenty; and, leading her towards us as before the elders of the city, declared his purpose to take her in marriage. At this scene, Madame de la Tour, recalling the desolate situation in which she had been left by her relations, her widowhood, and the kind reception she had met with from Margaret, succeeded now by the soothing hope of a happy union between their children, could not forbear weeping; and these mixed recollections of good and evil caused us all to unite with her in shedding tears of sorrow and of joy.

These dramas were performed with such an air of reality that you might have fancied yourself transported to the plains of Syria or of Palestine. We were not unfurnished with deco-
rations, lights, or an orchestra, suitable to the representation. The scene was generally placed in an open space of the forest, the diverging paths from which formed around us numerous arcades of foliage, under which we were sheltered from the heat all the middle of the day; but when the sun descended towards the horizon, its rays, broken by the trunks of the trees, darted amongst the shadows of the forest in long lines of light, producing the most magnificent effect. Sometimes its broad disk appeared at the end of an avenue, lighting it up with insufferable brightness. The foliage of the trees, illuminated from beneath by its saffron beams, glowed with the lustre of the topaz and the emerald. Their brown and mossy trunks appeared transformed into columns of antique bronze; and the birds, which had retired in silence to their leafy shades to pass the night, surprised to see the radiance of the second morning, hailed the star of day all together with innumerable carols.

Night often overtook us during these rural entertainments; but the purity of the air and the warmth of the climate, admitted of our sleeping in the woods, without incurring any danger by exposure to the weather, and no less secure from the molestation of robbers. On our return the following day to our respective habitations, we found them in exactly the same state in which they had been left. In this island, then unsophisticated by the pursuits of commerce, such were the honesty and primitive manners of the population, that the doors of many houses were without a key, and even a lock itself was an object of curiosity to not a few of the native inhabitants.

There were, however, some days in the years celebrated by Paul and Virginia in a more peculiar manner; these were the birth-days of their mothers. Virginia never failed the day before to prepare some wheaten cakes, which she distributed among a few poor white families, born in the island, who had never eaten European bread. These unfortunate people, uncared for by the blacks, were reduced to live on tapioca in the woods; and as they had neither the insensibility which is the result of slavery, nor the fortitude which springs from a liberal education, to enable them to support their poverty, their situation was deplorable. These cakes were all that Virginia had in her power to give away, but she conferred the gift in so delicate a manner as to add tenfold to its value. In the first place, Paul was commissioned to take the cakes himself to these families, and get their promise to come and spend the next day at Madame de la Tour’s. Accordingly, mothers of families, with two or three thin; yellow, miserable looking daughters, so
timid that they dared not look up, made their appearance. Virginia soon put them at their ease; she waited upon them with refreshments, the excellence of which she endeavored to heighten by relating some particular circumstance which in her own estimation, vastly improved them. One beverage had been prepared by Margaret; another, by her mother: her brother himself had climbed some lofty tree for the very fruit she was presenting. She would then get Paul to dance with them, nor would she leave them till she saw that they were happy. She wished them to partake of the joy of her own family. "It is only," she said, "by promoting the happiness of others, that we can secure our own." When they left, she generally presented them with some little article they seemed to fancy, enforcing their acceptance of it by some delicate pretext, that she might not appear to know they were in want. If she remarked that their clothes were much tattered, she obtained her mother's permission to give them some of her own, and then sent Paul to leave them secretly at their cottage doors. She thus followed the divine precept,—concealing the benefactor, and revealing only the benefit.

Your Europeans, whose minds are imbued from infancy with prejudices at variance with happiness, cannot imagine all the instruction and pleasure to be derived from nature. Your souls, confined to a small sphere of intelligence, soon reach the limit of its artificial enjoyments: but nature and the heart are inexhaustible. Paul and Virginia had neither clock, nor almanack, nor books of chronology, history or philosophy. The periods of their lives were regulated by those of the operations of nature, and their familiar conversation had a reference to the changes of the seasons. They knew the time of day by the shadows of the trees; the seasons, by the times when those trees bore flowers or fruit; and the years, by the number of their harvests. These soothing images diffused an inexpressible charm over their conversation. "It is time to dine," said Virginia, "the shadows of the plantain-trees are at their roots:" or, "Night approaches, the tamarinds are closing their leaves." "When will you come and see us?" inquired some of her companions in the neighborhood. "At the time of the sugar-canes," answered Virginia. "Your visit will be then still more delightful," resumed her young acquaintances. When she was asked what was her own age and that of Paul,—"My brother," said she, "is as old as the great cocoa-tree of the fountain; and I am as old as the little one: the mangoes have bore fruit twelve times, and the orange-trees have flowered four-and-twenty times, since I
came into the world." Their lives seemed linked to that of the trees, like those of Fauns or Dryads. They knew no other historical epochs than those of the lives of their mothers, no other chronology than that of their orchards, and no other philosophy than that of doing good, and resigning themselves to the will of Heaven.

What need, indeed, had these young people of riches or learning such as ours? Even their necessities and their ignorance increased their happiness. No day passed in which they were not of some service to one another, or in which they did not mutually impart some instruction. Yes, instruction; for if errors mingled with it, they were, at least, not of a dangerous character. A pure-minded being has none of that description to fear. Thus grew these children of nature. No care had troubled their peace, no intemperance had corrupted their blood, no misplaced passion had depraved their hearts. Love, innocence, and piety, possessed their souls; and those intellectual graces were unfolding daily in their features, their attitudes, and their movements. Still in the morning of life, they had all its blooming freshness: and surely such in the garden of Eden appeared our first parents, when coming from the hands of God, they first saw, and approached each other, and conversed together, like brother and sister. Virginia was gentle, modest, and confiding as Eve; and Paul, like Adam, united the stature of manhood with the simplicity of a child.

Sometimes, if alone with Virginia, he has a thousand times told me, he used to say to her, on his return from labor,—

"When I am wearied, the sight of you refreshes me. If from the summit of the mountain I perceive you below in the valley, you appear to me in the midst of our orchard like a blooming rose-bud. If you go towards our mother's house, the partridge, when it runs to meet its young, has a shape less beautiful, and a step less light. When I lose sight of you through the trees, I have no need to see you in order to find you again. Something of you, I know not how, remains for me in the air through which you have passed, on the grass whereon you have been seated. When I come near you, you delight all my senses. The azure of the sky is less charming than the blue of your eyes, and the song of the amadavid bird less soft than the sound of your voice. If I only touch you with the tip of my finger, my whole frame trembles with pleasure. Do you remember the day when we crossed over the great stones of the iver of the Three Breasts? I was very tired before we reached the bank: but as soon as I had taken you in my arms,
I seemed to have wings like a bird. Tell me by what charm you have thus enchanted me? Is it by your wisdom?—Our mothers have more than either of us. Is it by your caresses?—They embrace me much oftener than you. I think it must be by your goodness. I shall never forget how you walked bare-footed to the Black River, to ask pardon for the poor runaway slave. Here, my beloved, take this flowering branch of a lemon-tree, which I have gathered in the forest: you will let it remain at night near your bed. Eat this honey-comb too, which I have taken for you from the top of a rock. But first lean on my bosom, and I shall be refreshed."

Virginia would answer him,—"Oh, my dear brother, the rays of the sun in the morning on the tops of the rocks give me less joy than the sight of you. I love my mother,—I love yours; but when they call you their son, I love them a thousand times more. When they caress you, I feel it more sensibly than when I am caressed myself. You ask me what makes you love me. Why, all creatures that are brought up together love one another. Look at our birds; reared up in the same nests, they love each other as we do; they are always together like us. Hark! how they call and answer from one tree to another. So when the echoes bring to my ears the air which you play on your flute on the top of the mountain, I repeat the words at the bottom of the valley. You are dear to me more especially since the day when you wanted to fight the master of the slave for me. Since that time how often have I said to myself, 'Ah, my brother has a good heart; but for him, I should have died of terror.' I pray to God every day for my mother and for yours, and for our poor servants; but when I pronounce your name, my devotion seems to increase;—I ask so earnestly of God that no harm may befall you! Why do you go so far, and climb so high, to seek fruits and flowers for me? Have we not enough in our garden already? How much you are fatigued,—you look so warm!"—and with her little white handkerchief she would wipe the damps from his face, and then imprint a tender kiss on his forehead.

For some time past, however, Virginia had felt her heart agitated by new sensations. Her beautiful blue eyes lost their lustre, her cheek its freshness, and her frame was overpowered with a universal languor. Serenity no longer sat upon her brow, nor smiles played upon her lips. She would become all at once gay without cause for joy, and melancholy without any subject for grief. She fled her innocent amusements, her gentle toils, and even the society of her beloved family; wander,
ing about the most unfrequented parts of the plantations, and seeking everywhere the rest which she could nowhere find. Sometimes, at the sight of Paul, she advanced sportively to meet him; but, when about to accost him, was overcome by a sudden confusion; her pale cheeks were covered with blushes, and her eyes no longer dared to meet those of her brother. Paul said to her,—"The rocks are covered with verdure, our birds begin to sing when you approach, everything around you is gay, and you only are unhappy." He then endeavored to soothe her by his embraces, but she turned away her head, and fled, trembling towards her mother. The caresses of her brother excited too much emotion in her agitated heart, and she sought, in the arms of her mother, refuge from herself. Paul, unused to the secret windings of the female heart, vexed himself in vain in endeavoring to comprehend the meaning of these new and strange caprices. Misfortunes seldom come alone, and a serious calamity now impended over these families.

One of those summers, which sometimes desolate the countries situated between the tropics, now began to spread its ravages over this island. It was near the end of December, when the sun, in Capricorn, darts over the Mauritius, during the space of three weeks, its vertical fires. The south-east wind, which prevails throughout almost the whole year, no longer blew. Vast columns of dust arose from the highways, and hung suspended in the air; the ground was everywhere broken into clefts; the grass was burnt up; hot exhalations issued from the sides of the mountains, and their rivulets, for the most part, became dry. No refreshing cloud ever arose from the sea: fiery vapors, only, during the day, ascended from the plains, and appeared, at sunset, like the reflection of a vast conflagration. Night brought no coolness to the heated atmosphere; and the red moon rising in the misty horizon, appeared of supernatural magnitude. The drooping cattle, on the sides of the hills, stretching out their necks towards heaven, and panting for breath, made the valleys re-echo with their melancholy lowings: even the Caffre by whom they were led threw himself upon the earth, in search of some cooling moisture: but his hopes were vain; the scorching sun had penetrated the whole soil, and, the stifling atmosphere everywhere resounded with the buzzing noise of insects, seeking to allay their thirst with the blood of men and of animals.

During this sultry season, Virginia's restlessness and disquietude were much increased. One night, in particular, being
unable to sleep, she arose from her bed, sat down, and returned to rest again; but could find in no attitude either slumber or repose. At length she bent her way, by the light of the moon, towards her fountain, and gazed at its spring, which, notwithstanding the drought, still trickled, in silver threads down the brown sides of the rock. She flung herself into the basin: its coolness reanimated her spirits, and a thousand soothing recollections came to her mind. She recollected that in her infancy her mother and Margaret had amused themselves by bathing her with Paul in this very spot; that he afterwards, reserving this bath for her sole use, had hallowed out its bed, covered the bottom with sand, and sown aromatic herbs around its borders. She saw in the water, upon her naked arms and bosom, the reflection of the two cocoa trees which were planted at her own and her brother's birth, and which interwove above her head their green branches and young fruit. She thought of Paul's friendship, sweeter than the odor of the blossoms, purer than the waters of the fountain, stronger than the intertwining palm-tree, and she sighed. Reflecting on the hour of the night, and the profound solitude, her imagination became disturbed. Suddenly she flew, affrighted, from those dangerous shades, and those waters which seemed to her hotter than the tropical sunbeam, and ran to her mother for refuge. More than once, wishing to reveal her sufferings, she pressed her mother's hand within her own; more than once she was ready to pronounce the name of Paul: but her oppressed heart left her lips no power of utterance, and, leaning her head on her mother's bosom, she bathed it with her tears.

Madame de la Tour, though she easily discerned the source of her daughter's uneasiness, did not think proper to speak to her on the subject. "My dear child," said she, "offer up your supplications to God, who disposes at his will of health and of life. He subjects you to trial now, in order to recompense you hereafter. Remember that we are only placed upon earth for the exercise of virtue."

The excessive heat in the mean time raised vast masses of vapor from the ocean, which hung over the island like an immense parasol, and gathered round the summits of the mountains. Long flakes of fire issued from time to time from these mist-embosomed peaks. The most awful thunder soon after re-echoed through the woods, the plains, and the valleys; the rains fell from the skies in cataracts; foaming torrents rushed down the sides of this mountain; the bottom of the valley became a sea, and the elevated platform on which the cottages
were built, a little island. The accumulated waters, having no other outlet, rushed with violence through the narrow gorge which leads into the valley, tossing and roaring, and bearing along with them a mingled wreck of soil, trees, and rocks.

The trembling families meantime addressed their prayers to God all together in the cottage of Madame de la Tour, the roof of which cracked fearfully from the force of the winds. So incessant and vivid were the lightnings, that although the doors and window-shutters were securely fastened, every object without could be distinctly seen through the joints in the wood-work! Paul, followed by Domingo, went with intrepidity from one cottage to another, notwithstanding the fury of the tempest; here supporting a partition with a buttress, there driving in a stake; and only returning to the family to calm their fears, by the expression of a hope that the storm was passing away. Accordingly, in the evening the rains ceased, the trade-winds of the south-east pursued their ordinary course, the tempestuous clouds were driven away to the northward, and the setting sun appeared in the horizon.

Virginia’s first wish was to visit the spot called her Resting-place. Paul approached her with a timid air, and offered her the assistance of his arm; she accepted it with a smile, and they left the cottage together. The air was clear and fresh: white vapors arose from the ridges of the mountain, which was furrowed here and there by the courses of torrents, marked in foam, and now beginning to dry up on all sides. As for the garden, it was completely torn to pieces by deep water-courses, the roots of most of the fruit trees were laid bare, and vast heaps of sand covered the borders of the meadows, and had choked up Virginia’s bath. The two cocoa trees, however, were still erect, and still retained their freshness; but they were no longer surrounded by turf, or arbors, or birds, except a few amadavid birds, which, upon the points of the neighboring rocks, were lamenting, in plaintive notes, the loss of their young.

At the sight of this general desolation, Virginia exclaimed to Paul,—"You brought birds hither, and the hurricane has killed them. You planted this garden, and it is now destroyed. Everything then upon earth perishes, and it is only Heaven that is not subject to change."—"Why," answered Paul, "cannot I give you something that belongs to Heaven? but I have nothing of my own even upon the earth." Virginia with a blush replied, "You have the picture of St. Paul." As soon as she had uttered the words, he flew in quest of it to his
mother's cottage. This picture was a miniature of Paul the Hermit, which Margaret, who viewed it with feelings of great devotion, had worn at her neck while a girl, and which, after she became a mother, she had placed round her child's. It had even happened, that being, while pregnant, abandoned by all the world, and constantly occupied in contemplating the image of this benevolent recluse, her offspring had contracted some resemblance to this revered object. She therefore bestowed upon him the name of Paul, giving him for his patron a saint who had passed his life far from mankind by whom he had been first deceived and then forsaken. Virginia, on receiving this little present from the hands of Paul, said to him, with emotion, "My dear brother, I will never part with this while I live; nor will I ever forget that you have given me the only thing you have in this world." At this tone of friendship,—this unhoped for return of familiarity and tenderness, Paul attempted to embrace her; but, light as a bird, she escaped him, and fled away, leaving him astonished, and unable to account for conduct so extraordinary.

Meanwhile Margaret said to Madame de la Tour, "Why do we not unite our children by marriage? They have a strong attachment for each other, and though my son hardly understands the real nature of his feelings, yet great care and watchfulness will be necessary. Under such circumstances, it will be as well not to leave them too much together." Madame de la Tour replied, "They are too young, and too poor. What grief would it occasion us to see Virginia bring into the world unfortunate children, whom she would not perhaps have sufficient strength to rear! Your negro, Domingo, is almost too old to labor; Mary is infirm. As for myself, my dear friend, at the end of fifteen years, I find my strength greatly decreased; the feebleness of age advances rapidly in hot climates, and, above all, under the pressure of misfortune. Paul is our only hope: let us wait till he comes to maturity, and his increased strength enables him to support us by his labor; at present you well know that we have only sufficient to supply the wants of the day; but were we to send Paul for a short time to the Indies, he might acquire, by commerce, the means of purchasing some slaves; and at his return we could unite him to Virginia; for I am persuaded no one on earth would render her so happy as your son. We will consult our neighbor on this subject."

They accordingly asked my advice, which was in accordance with Madame de la Tour's opinion. "The Indian seas," I ob-
served to them, "are calm, and, in choosing a favorable time of the year, the voyage out is seldom longer than six weeks; and the same time may be allowed for the return home. We will furnish Paul with a little venture from my neighborhood, where he is much beloved. If we were only to supply him with some raw cotton, of which we make no use for want of mills to work it, some ebony, which is here so common that it serves us for firing, and some rosin, which is found in our woods, he would be able to sell those articles, though useless here, to good advantage in the Indies."

I took upon myself to obtain permission from Monsieur de la Bourdonnais to undertake this voyage; and I determined previously to mention the affair to Paul. But what was my surprise, when this young man said to me, with a degree of good sense above his age, "And why do you wish me to leave my family for this precarious pursuit of fortune? Is there any commerce in the world more advantageous than the culture of the ground, which yields sometimes fifty or a hundred-fold? If we wish to engage in commerce, can we not do so by carrying our superfluities to the town without my wandering to the Indies? Our mothers tell me, that Domingo is old and feeble; but I am young, and gather strength every day. If any accident should happen during my absence, above all to Virginia, who already suffers—Oh, no, no!—I cannot resolve to leave them."

So decided an answer threw me into great perplexity, for Madame de la Tour had not concealed from me the cause of Virginia's illness and want of spirits, and her desire of separating these young people till they were a few years older. I took care, however, not to drop anything which could lead Paul to suspect the existence of these motives.

About this period a ship from France brought Madame de la Tour a letter from her aunt. The fear of death, without which hearts as insensible as her's would never feel, had alarmed her into compassion. When she wrote she was recovering from a dangerous illness, which had, however, left her incurably languid and weak. She desired her niece to return to France: or, if her health forbade her to undertake so long a voyage, she begged her to send Virginia, on whom she promised to bestow a good education, to procure for her a splendid marriage and to leave her heiress of her whole fortune. She concluded by enjoining strict obedience to her will, in gratitude, she said, for her great kindness.

At the perusal of this letter general consternation spread
itself through the whole assembled party, Domingo and Mary began to weep. Paul, motionless with surprise, appeared almost ready to burst with indignation; while Virginia, fixing her eyes anxiously upon her mother, had not power to utter a single word. "And can you now leave us?" cried Margaret to Madame de la Tour. "No, my dear friend, no, my beloved children," replied Madame de la Tour; "I will never leave you. I have lived with you, and with you I will die. I have known no happiness but in your affection. If my health be deranged, my past misfortunes are the cause. My heart has been deeply wounded by the cruelty of my relations, and by the loss of my beloved husband. But I have since found more consolation and more real happiness with you in these humble huts, than all the wealth of my family could now lead me to expect in my own country."

At this soothing language every eye overflowed with tears of delight. Paul, pressing Madame de la Tour in his arms, exclaimed,—"Neither will I leave you! I will not go to the Indies. We will all labor for you, dear mamma; and you shall never feel any want with us." But of the whole society, the person who displayed the least transport, and who probably felt the most, was Virginia: and during the remainder of the day, the gentle gayety which flowed from her heart, and proved that her peace of mind was restored, completed the general satisfaction.

At sunrise the next day, just as they had concluded offering up, as usual, their morning prayer before breakfast, Domingo came to inform them that a gentleman on horseback, followed by two slaves, was coming towards the plantation. It was Monsieur de la Bourdonnais. He entered the cottage, where he found the family at breakfast. Virginia had prepared, according to the custom of the country, coffee, and rice boiled in water. To these she had added hot yams, and fresh plantains. The leaves of the plantain-tree supplied the want of table-linen; and calabash shells, split in two, served for cups. The governor exhibited, at first, some astonishment at the homeliness of the dwelling; then, addressing himself to Madame de la Tour, he observed, that although public affairs drew his attention too much from the concerns of individuals, she had many claims on his good offices. "You have an aunt at Paris, madam," he added, "a women of quality, and immensely rich, who expects that you will hasten to see her, and who means to bestow upon you her whole fortune." Madame de la Tour replied, that the state of her health would not per-
mit her to undertake so long a voyage. "At least," resumed Monsieur de la Bourdonnais, "you cannot without injustice, deprive this amiable young lady, your daughter, of so noble an inheritance. I will not conceal from you, that your aunt has made use of her influence to secure your daughter being sent to her; and that I have received official letters, in which I am ordered to exert my authority, if necessary, to that effect. But as I only wish to employ my power for the purpose of rendering the inhabitants of this country happy, I expect from your good sense the voluntary sacrifice of a few years, upon which your daughter's establishment in the world, and the welfare of your whole life depends. Wherefore do we come to these islands? Is it not to acquire a fortune? And will it not be more agreeable to return and find it in your own country?"

He then took a large bag of piastres from one of his slaves, and placed it upon the table. "This sum," he continued, "is allotted by your aunt to defray the outlay necessary for the equipment of the young lady for her voyage." Gently reproaching Madame de la Tour for not having had recourse to him in her difficulties, he extolled at the same time her noble fortitude. Upon this Paul said to the governor,—"My mother did apply to you, Sir, and you received her ill."—"Have you another child, madam?" said Monsieur de la Bourdonnais to Madame de la Tour. "No, Sir," she replied; "this is the son of my friend; but he and Virginia are equally dear to us, and we mutually consider them both as our own children." "Young man," said the governor to Paul, "when you have acquired a little more experience of the world, you will know that it is the misfortune of people in place to be deceived, and bestow, in consequence, upon intrigue vice, which they would wish to give to modest merit."

Monsieur de la Bourdonnais, at the request of Madame de la Tour, placed himself next to her at table, and breakfasted after the manner of the Creoles, upon coffee, mixed with rice boiled in water. He was delighted with the order and cleanliness which prevailed in the little cottage, the harmony of the two interesting families, and the zeal of their old servants. "Here," he exclaimed, "I discern only wooden furniture: but I find serene countenances and hearts of gold." Paul, enchanted with the affability of the governor, said to him,—"I wish to be your friend: for you are a good man." Monsieur de la Bourdonnais received with pleasure this insular compliment, and, taking Paul by the hand, assured him he might rely upon his friendship.
After breakfast, he took Madame de la Tour aside and informed her that an opportunity would soon offer itself of sending her daughter to France, in a ship which was going to sail in a short time; that he would put her under the charge of a lady, one of the passengers, who was a relation of his own; and that she must not think of renouncing an immense fortune, on account of the pain of being separated from her daughter for a brief interval. "Your aunt," he added, "cannot live more than two years; of this I am assured by her friends. Think of it seriously. Fortune does not visit us every day. Consult your friends. I am sure that every person of good sense will be of my opinion." She answered, "that, as she desired no other happiness henceforth in the world than in promoting that of her daughter, she hoped to be allowed to leave her departure for France entirely to her own inclination."

Madame de la Tour was not sorry to find an opportunity of separating Paul and Virginia for a short time, and provide by this means, for their mutual felicity at a future period. She took her daughter aside, and said to her,—"My dear child, our servants are now old. Paul is still very young, Margaret is advanced in years, and I am already infirm. If I should die what would become of you, without fortune, in the midst of these deserts? You would then be left alone, without any person who could afford you much assistance, and would be obliged to labor without ceasing, as a hired servant, in order to support your wretched existence. This idea overcomes me with sorrow." Virginia answered,—"God has appointed us to labor, and to bless him every day. Up to this time he has never forsaken us, and he never will forsake us in time to come. His providence watches most especially over the unfortunate. You have told me this very often, my dear mother! I cannot resolve to leave you." Madame de la Tour replied, with much emotion,—"I have no other aim than to render you happy, and to marry you one day to Paul, who is not really your brother. Remember then that his fortune depends upon you."

A young girl who is in love believes that every one else is ignorant of her passion; she throws over her eyes the veil with which she covers the feelings of her heart; but when it is once lifted by a friendly hand, the hidden sorrows of her attachment escape as through a newly-opened barrier, and the sweet outpourings of unrestrained confidence succeed to her former mystery and reserve. Virginia, deeply affected by this new proof of her mother's tenderness, related to her the cruel
struggles she had undergone, of which heaven alone had been witness; she saw, she said, the hand of Providence in the assistance of an affectionate mother, who approved of her attachment; and would guide her by her counsels; and as she was now strengthened by such support, every consideration led her to remain with her mother, without anxiety for the present, and without apprehension for the future.

Madame de la Tour, perceiving that this confidential conversation had produced an effect altogether different from that which she expected, said,—"My dear child, I do not wish to constrain you; think over it at leisure, but conceal your affection from Paul. It is better not to let a man know that the heart of his mistress is gained."

Virginia and her mother were sitting together by themselves the same evening, when a tall man, dressed in a blue cossock, entered their cottage. He was a missionary priest and the confessor of Madame de la Tour and her daughter, who had now been sent them by the governor. "My children," he exclaimed as he entered, "God be praised! you are now rich. You can now attend to the kind suggestions of your benevolent hearts, and do good to the poor. I know what Monsieur de la Bourdonnaix has said to you, and what you have said in reply. Your health, dear madam, obliges you to remain here; but you, young lady, are without excuse. We must obey the direction of Providence: and we must also obey our aged relations, even when they are unjust. A sacrifice is required of you; but it is the will of God. Our Lord devoted himself for you; and you in imitation of his example, must give up something for the welfare of your family. Your voyage to France will end happily. You will surely consent to go, my dear young lady.

Virginia, with downcast eyes, answered, trembling, "If it is the command of God, I will not presume to oppose it. Let the will of God be done!" As she uttered these words, she wept.

The priest went away, in order to inform the governor of the success of his mission. In the meantime Madame de la Tour sent Domingo to request me to come to her, that she might consult me respecting Virginia's departure. I was not at all of opinion that she ought to go. I consider it as a fixed principle of happiness, that we ought to prefer the advantages of nature to those of fortune, and never go in search of that at a distance, which we may find at home,—in our own bosoms. But what could be expected from my advice, in opposition to
the illusions of a splendid fortune?—or from my simple reason-
ing, when in competition with the prejudices of the world, and
an authority held sacred by Madame de la Tour? This lady
indeed had only consulted me out of politeness; she had
closed to deliberate since she had heard the decision of her
confessor. Margaret herself, who, notwithstanding the advan-
tages she expected for her son from the possession of Virginia's
fortune, had hitherto opposed her departure, made no further
objections. As for Paul, in ignorance of what had been deter-
mined, but alarmed at the secret conversations which Virginia
had been holding with her mother, he abandoned himself to
melancholy. "They are plotting something against me," cried
he, "for they conceal everything from me."

A report having in the meantime been spread in the island
that fortune had visited these rocks, merchants of every de-
scription were seen climbing their steep ascent. Now, for the
first time, were seen displayed in these humble huts the richest
stuffs of India; the fine dimity of Gondelore; the handker-
chiefs of Pellicate and Masulipatan; the plain, striped, and
embroidered muslins of Dacca, so beautifully transparent: the
delicately white cottons of Surat, and linens of all colors.
They also brought with them the gorgeous silks of China,
satin damasks, some white, and others grass-green and bright
red; pink taffetas, with a profusion of satins and gauze of
Tonquin, both plain and decorated with flowers; soft pekins,
downy as cloth; with white and yellow nankeens, and the cali-
coes of Madagascar.

Madame de la Tour wished her daughter to purchase
whatever she liked; she only examined the goods, and in-
quired the price, to take care that the dealers did not cheat
her. Virginia made choice of everything she thought would
be useful or agreeable to her mother, or to Margaret and her
son. "This," said she, "will be wanted for furnishing the
cottage, and that will be very useful to Mary and Domingo." In
short, the bag of piastres was almost emptied before she
even began to consider her own wants; and she was obliged to
receive back for her own use a share of the presents which she
had distributed among the family circle.

Paul, overcome with sorrow at the sight of these gifts of
fortune, which he felt were a presage of Virginia's departure,
came a few days after to my dwelling. With an air of deep
despondency he said to me,—"My sister is going away; she is
already making preparations for her voyage. I conjure you to
come and exert your influence over her mother and mine, in
order to detain her here.” I could not refuse the young man’s solicitations, although well convinced that my representations would be unavailing.

Virginia had ever appeared to me charming when clad in the coarse cloth of Bengal, with a red handkerchief tied around her head: you may therefore imagine how much her beauty was increased, when she was attired in the graceful and elegant costume worn by the ladies of this country! She had on a white muslin dress, lined with pink taffeta. Her somewhat tall and slender figure was shone to advantage in her new attire, and the simple arrangement of her hair accorded admirably with the form of her head. Her fine blue eyes were filled with an expression of melancholy; and the struggles of passion, with which her heart was agitated, imparted a flush to her cheek, and to her voice a tone of deep emotion. The contrast between her pensive look and her gay habiliments rendered her more interesting then ever, nor was it possible to see or hear her unmoved. Paul became more and more melancholy; and at length Margaret, distressed at the situation of her son, took him aside, and said to him,—“Why, my dear child, will you cherish vain hopes, which will only render your disappointment more bitter? It is time for me to make known to you the secret of your life and of mine. Mademoiselle de la Tour belongs, by her mother’s side, to a rich and noble family, while you are but the son of a poor peasant girl; and what is worse you are illegitimate.”

Paul, who had never heard this last expression before, inquired with eagerness its meaning. His mother replied, “I was not married to your father. When I was a girl, seduced by love, I was guilty of a weakness of which you are the offspring. The consequence of my fault is, that you are deprived of the protection of a father’s family, and by my flight from home you have also lost that of your mother’s. Unfortunate child! you have no relation in the world but me!”—and she shed a flood of tears. Paul, pressing her in his arms, exclaimed, “Oh, my dear mother! since I have no relation in the world but you, I will love you all the more. But what a secret have you just disclosed to me! I now see the reason why Mademoiselle de la Tour has estranged herself so much from me for the last two months, and why she has determined to go to France. Ah! I perceive too well that she despises me!”

The hour of supper being arrived, we gathered round the table; but the different sensations with which we were agitated
left us little inclination to eat, and the meal, if such it may be
called, passed in silence. Virginia was the first to rise; she
went out, and seated herself on the very spot where we now
are. Paul hastened after her, and sat down by her side. Both
of them, for some time, kept a profound silence. It was one
of those delicious nights which are so common between the
tropics, and to the beauty of which no pencil can do justice.
The moon appeared in the midst of the firmament, surrounded
by a curtain of clouds, which was gradually unfolded by her
beams. Her light insensibly spread itself over the mountains
of the island, and their distant peaks glistened with a silvery
green. The winds were perfectly still. We heard among the
woods, at the bottom of the valleys, and on the summits of the
rocks, the piping cries and the soft notes of the birds, wan-
toning in their nests, and rejoicing in the brightness of the
night and the serenity of the atmosphere. The hum of insects
was heard in the grass. The stars sparkled in the heavens,
and their lucid orbs were reflected, in trembling sparkles, from
the tranquil bosom of the ocean. Virginia's eye wandered
distractedly over its vast and gloomy horizon, distinguishable
from the shore of the island only by the red fires in the fish-
ing boats. She perceived at the entrance of the harbor a
light and a shadow; these were the watchlight and the hull of
the vessel in which she was to embark for Europe, and which,
all ready for sea, lay at anchor, waiting for a breeze. Affected
at this sight, she turned away her head, in order to hide her
tears from Paul.

Madame de la Tour, Margaret, and I, were seated at a
little distance, beneath the plantain trees; and, owing to the
stillness of the night, we distinctly heard their conversation,
which I have not forgotten.

Paul said to her,—"You are going away from us, they tell
me, in three days. You do not fear then to encounter the
danger of the sea, at the sight of which you are so much terri-
fied?" "I must perform my duty," answered Virginia, "by
obeying my parent." "You leave us," resumed Paul, "for a
distant relation, whom you have never seen." "Alas!" cried
Virginia, "I would have remained here my whole life, but my
mother would not have it so. My confessor, too, told me it
was the will of God that I should go, and that life was a scene
of trials!—and Oh! this is indeed a severe one."

"What!" exclaimed Paul, "you could find so many reasons
for going, and not one for remaining here! Ah! there is one
reason for your departure that you have not mentioned. Riches
have great attractions. You will soon find in the new world to which you are going, another, to whom you will give the name of brother, which you bestow on me no more. You will choose that brother from amongst persons who are worthy of you by their birth, and by a fortune which I have not to offer. But where can you go to be happier? On what shore will you land, and find it dearer to you than the spot which gave you birth?—and where will you form around you a society more delightful to you than this, by which you are so much beloved? How will you bear to live without your mother's caresses, to which you are so much accustomed? What will become of her, already advanced in years, when she no longer sees you at her side at table, in the house, in the walks, where she used to lean upon you? What will become of my mother, who loves you with the same affection? What shall I say to comfort them when I see them weeping for your absence? Cruel Virginia! I say nothing to you of myself; but what will become of me, when in the morning I shall no more see you; when the evening will come, and not reunite us?—when I shall gaze on these two palm trees, planted at our birth, and so long the witnesses of our mutual friendship? Ah! since your lot is changed,—since you seek in a far country other possessions than the fruits of my labor, let me go with you in the vessel in which you are about to embark. I will sustain your spirits in the midst of those tempests which terrify you so much even on shore. I will lay my head upon your bosom: I will warm your heart upon my own; and in France, where you are going in search of fortune and of grandeur, I will wait upon you as your slave. Happy only in your happiness, you will find me, in those palaces where I shall see you receiving the homage and adoration of all, rich and noble enough to make you the greatest of all sacrifices, by dying at your feet."

The violence of his emotions stopped his utterance, and we then heard Virginia, who, in a voice broken by sobs, uttered these words:—"It is for you that I go,—for you whom I see tired to death every day by the labor of sustaining two helpless families. If I have accepted this opportunity of becoming rich, it is only to return a thousand-fold the good which you have done us. Can any fortune be equal to your friendship? Why do you talk about your birth? Ah! if it were possible for me still to have a brother, should I make choice of any other than you? Oh, Paul, Paul! you are far dearer to me than a brother! How much has it cost me to repulse you from me! Help me to tear myself from what I value more
than existence, till Heaven shall bless our union. But I will stay or go,—I will live or die,—dispose of me as you will. Unhappy that I am! I could have repelled your caresses; but I cannot support your affliction.”

At these words Paul seized her in his arms, and, holding her pressed close to his bosom, in a piercing tone, “I will go with her,—nothing shall ever part us.” We all ran towards him; and Madame de la Tour said to him, “My son, if you go, what will become of us!”

He, trembling, repeated after her the words,—“My son!—my son! You my mother!” cried he; “you, who would separate the brother from the sister! We have both been nourished at your bosom; we have both been reared upon your knees; we have learnt of you to love one another; we have said so a thousand times; and now you would separate her from me!—you would send her to Europe, that inhospitable country which refused you an asylum, and to relations by whom you yourself were abandoned. You will tell me that I have no right over her, and that she is not my sister. She is everything to me;—my riches, my birth, my family,—all that I have! I know no other. We have had but one roof,—one cradle,—and we will have but one grave! If she goes, I will follow her. The governor will prevent me! Will he prevent me from flinging myself into the sea?—will he prevent me from following her by swimming? The sea cannot be more fatal to me than the land. Since I cannot live with her, at least I will die before her eyes, far from you. Inhuman mother!—woman without compassion!—may the ocean, to which you trust her, restore her to you no more! May the waves, rolling back our bodies amid the shingles of this beach, give you, in the loss of your two children, an eternal subject of remorse!”

At these words, I seized him in my arms, for despair had deprived him of reason. His eyes sparkled with fire, the perspiration fell in great drops from his face; his knees trembled, and I felt his heart beat violently against his burning bosom.

Virginia, alarmed, said to him,—“Oh, my dear Paul, I call to witness the pleasures of our early age, your griefs and my own, and everything that can forever bind two unfortunate beings to each other, that if I remain at home, I will live but for you; that if I go, I will one day return to be yours. I call you all to witness;—you who have reared me from my infancy, who dispose of my life, and who see my tears. I swear by that Heaven which hears me, by the sea which I am going to pass, by the air I breathe, and which I never sullied by a falsehood.”
As the sun softens and precipitates an icy rock from the summit of one of the Appenines, so the impetuous passions of the young man were subdued by the voice of her he loved. He bent his head, and a torrent of tears fell from his eyes. His mother, mingling her tears with his, held him in her arms, but was unable to speak. Madame de la Tour, half distracted, said to me, "I can bear this no longer. My heart is quite broken. This unfortunate voyage shall not take place. Do take my son home with you. Not one of us has had any rest the whole week."

I said to Paul, "My dear friend, your sister shall remain here. To-morrow we will talk to the governor about it; leave your family to take some rest, and come and pass the night with me. It is late; it is midnight; the southern cross is just above the horizon."

He suffered himself to be led away in silence; and, after a night of great agitation, he arose at break of day, and returned home.

But why should I continue any longer to you the recital of this history? There is but one aspect of human existence which we can ever contemplate with pleasure. Like the globe upon which we revolve, the fleeting course of life is but a day; and if one part of that day be visited by light, the other is thrown into darkness.

"My father," I answered, "finish, I conjure you, the history which you have begun in a manner so interesting. If the images of happiness are the most pleasing, those of misfortune are the more instructive. Tell me what became of the unhappy young-man."

The first object beheld by Paul in his way home was the negro woman Mary, who, mounted on a rock, was earnestly looking towards the sea. As soon as he perceived her, he called to her from a distance,—"Where is Virginia?" Mary turned her head towards her young master, and began to weep. Paul, distracted, retracing his steps, ran to the harbor. He was informed, that Virginia had embarked at the break of day, and that the vessel had immediately set sail, and was now out of sight. He instantly returned to the plantation, which he crossed without uttering a word.

Quite perpendicular as appears the walls of rocks behind us, those green platforms which separate their summits are so many stages, by means of which you may reach, through some difficult paths, that cone of sloping and inaccessible rocks, which is called The Thumb. At the foot of that cone is an extended
slope of ground, covered with lofty trees, and so steep and elevated that it looks like a forest in the air, surrounded by tremendous precipices. The clouds, which are constantly attracted round the summit of The Thumb, supply innumerable rivulets, which fall to so great a depth in the valley situated on the other side of the mountain, that from this elevated point the sound of their cataracts cannot be heard. From that spot you can discern a considerable part of the island, diversified by precipices and mountain peaks; and amongst others, Peter-Booth, and the Three Breasts, with their valleys full of woods. You also command an extensive view of the ocean, and can even perceive the Isle of Bourbon, forty leagues to the westward. From the summit of that stupendous pile of rocks Paul caught sight of the vessel which was bearing away Virginia, and which now, ten leagues out at sea, appeared like a black spot in the midst of the ocean. He remained a great part of the day with his eyes fixed upon this object: when it had disappeared, he still fancied he beheld it; and when, at length, the traces which clung to his imagination were lost in the mists of the horizon, he seated himself on that wild point, forever beaten by the winds, which never cease to agitate the tops of the cabbage and gum-trees, and the hoarse and moaning murmurs of which, similar to the distant sound of organs, inspire a profound melancholy. On this spot I found him, his head reclining on the rock, and his eyes fixed upon the ground. I had followed him from the earliest dawn, and, after much importunity, I prevailed on him to descend from the heights, and return to his family. I went home with him, where the first impulse of his mind, on seeing Madame de la Tour, was to reproach her bitterly for having deceived him. She told us that a favorable wind having sprung up at three o'clock in the morning, and the vessel being ready to sail, the governor, attended by some of his staff and the missionary, had come with a palanquin to fetch her daughter; and that, notwithstanding Virginia's objections, her own tears and entreaties, and the lamentations of Margaret, everybody exclaiming all the time that it was for the general welfare, they had carried her away almost dying. "At least," cried Paul, "if I had bid her farewell, I should now be more calm. I would have said to her,—'Virginia, if, during the time we have lived together, one word may have escaped me which has offended you, before you leave me forever, tell me that you forgive me.' I would have said to her,—'Since I am destined to see you no more, farewell, my dear Virginia, farewell! Live far from me contented and happy!'" When he saw that his
Mother and Madame de la Tour were weeping,—"You must now," said he, "seek some other hand to wipe away your tears;" and then, rushing out of the house, and groaning aloud, he wandered up and down the plantation. He hovered in particular about those spots which had been most endearing to Virginia. He said to the goats, and their little ones, which followed him, bleating,—"What do you want of me? You will see with me no more her who used to feed you with her own hand." He went to the bower called Virginia's Resting-place, and, as the birds flew around him, exclaimed, "Poor birds! you will fly no more to meet her who cherished you!"—and observing Fidele running backwards and forwards in search of her, he heaved a deep sigh, and cried,—"Ah! you will never find her again." At length he went and seated himself upon a rock where he had conversed with her the preceding evening; and at the sight of the ocean upon which he had seen the vessel disappear which had borne her away, his heart overflowed with anguish, and he wept bitterly.

We continually watched his movements, apprehensive of some fatal consequence from the violent agitation of his mind. His mother and Madame de la Tour conjured him, in the most tender manner, not to increase their affliction by his despair. At length the latter soothed his mind by lavishing upon him epithets calculated to awaken his hopes,—calling him her son, her dear son, her son-in-law, whom she destined for her daughter. She persuaded him to return home, and to take some food. He seated himself next to the place which used to be occupied by the companion of his childhood; and, as if she had still been present, he spoke to her, and made as though he would offer her whatever he knew was most agreeable to her taste: then, starting from this dream of fancy, he began to weep. For some days he employed himself in gathering everything which had belonged to Virginia, the last nosegays she had worn, the cocoa-shell from which she used to drink; and after kissing a thousand times these relics of his beloved, to him the most precious treasures which the world contained, he hid them in his bosom. Amber does not shed so sweet a perfume as the veriest trifles touched by those we love. At length, perceiving that the indulgence of his grief increased that of his mother and Madame de la Tour, and that the wants of the family demanded continual labor, he began, with the assistance of Domingo, to repair the damage done to the garden.

But, soon after, this young man, hitherto indifferent as a Creole to everything that was passing in the world, begged of me
to teach him to read and write, in order that we might correspond with Virginia. He afterwards wished to obtain a knowledge of geography, that he might form some idea of the country where she would disembark; and of history, that he might know something of the manners of the society in which she would be placed. The powerful sentiment of love, which directed his present studies, had already instructed him in agriculture, and in the art of laying out grounds with advantage and beauty. It must be admitted, that to the fond dreams of this restless and ardent passion, mankind are indebted for most of the arts and sciences, while its disappointments have given birth to philosophy, which teaches us to bear up under misfortune. Love, thus, the general link of all beings, becomes the great spring of society, by inciting us to knowledge as well as to pleasure.

Paul found little satisfaction in the study of geography, which, instead of describing the natural history of each country, gave only a view of its political divisions and boundaries. History, and especially modern history, interested him little more. He there saw only general and periodical evils, the causes of which he could not discover; wars without either motive or reason; uninteresting intrigues; with nations destitute of principle, and princes void of humanity. To this branch of reading he preferred romances, which, being chiefly occupied by the feelings and concerns of men, sometimes represented situations similar to his own. Thus, no book gave him so much pleasure as Telemachus, from the pictures it draws of pastoral life, and of the passions which are most natural to the human breast. He read aloud to his mother and Madame de la Tour those parts which affected him most sensibly; but sometimes, touched by the most tender remembrances, his emotion would choke his utterance, and his eyes be filled with tears. He fancied he had found in Virginia the dignity and wisdom of Antiope, united to the misfortunes and the tenderness of Eucharis. With very different sensations he perused our fashionable novels, filled with licentious morals and maxims, and when he was informed that these works drew a tolerably faithful picture of European society, he trembled, and not without some appearance of reason, lest Virginia should become corrupted by it, and forget him.

More than a year and a half, indeed, passed away before Madame de la Tour received any tidings of her aunt or her daughter. During that period she only accidently heard that Virginia had safely arrived in France. At length, however, a
vessel which stopped here in its way to the Indies brought a packet to Madame de la Tour, and a letter written by Virginia's own hand. Although this amiable and considerate girl had written in a guarded manner that she might not wound her mother's feelings, it appeared evident enough that she was unhappy. The letter painted so naturally her situation and her character, that I have retained it almost word for word.

"My dear and beloved mother,

"I have already sent you several letters, written by my own hand, but having received no answer, I am afraid they have not reached you. I have better hopes for this, from the means I have now gained of sending you tidings of myself, and of hearing from you.

"I have shed many tears since our separation, I who never used to weep, but for the misfortunes of others! My aunt was much astonished, when, having, upon my arrival, inquired what accomplishments I possessed, I told her that I could neither read nor write. She asked me what then I had learnt, since I came into the world; and when I answered that I had been taught to take care of the household affairs, and to obey your will, she told me that I had received the education of a servant. The next day she placed me as a boarder in a great abbey near Paris, where I have masters of all kinds, who teach me among other things, history, geography, grammar, mathematics, and riding on horseback. But I have so little capacity for all these sciences, that I fear I shall make but small progress with my masters. I feel that I am a very poor creature, with very little ability to learn what they teach. My aunt's kindness, however, does not decrease. She gives me new dresses every season; and she has placed two waiting women with me, who are dressed like fine ladies. She has made me take the title of countess; but has obliged me to renounce the name of La Tour, which is as dear to me as it is to you, from all you have told me of the sufferings my father endured in order to marry you. She has given me in place of your name that of your family, which is also dear to me, because it was your name when a girl. Seeing myself in so splendid a situation, I implored her to let me send you something to assist you. But how shall I repeat her answer! Yet you have desired me always to tell you the truth. She told me then that a little would be of no use to you, and that a great deal would only encumber you in the simple life you led. As you know I could not write, I endeavored upon my arrival, to send you tidings of myself by another hand; but,
finding no person here in whom I could place confidence, I applied night and day to learn to read and write, and Heaven, who saw my motive for learning, no doubt assisted my endeavors, for I succeeded in both for a short time. I entrusted my first letters to some of the ladies here, who, I have reason to think, carried them to my aunt. This time I have recourse to a boarder, who is my friend. I send you her direction, by means of which I shall receive your answer. My aunt has forbid me holding any correspondence whatever, with any one, lest, she says, it should occasion an obstacle to the great views she has for my advantage. No person is allowed to see me at the grate but herself, and an old nobleman, one of her friends, who, she says, is much pleased with me. I am sure I am not at all so with him, nor should I, even if it were possible for me to be pleased with any one at present.

"I live in all the splendor of affluence, and have not a soul at my disposal. They say I might make an improper use of money. Even my clothes belong to my femmes de chambre, who quarrel about them before I have left them off. In the midst of riches I am poorer than when I lived with you; for I have nothing to give away. When I found that the great accomplishments they taught me would not procure me the power of doing the smallest good, I had recourse to my needle, of which happily you had taught me the use. I send several pairs of stockings of my own making for you and my mamma Margaret, a cap for Domingo, and one of my red handkerchiefs for Mary. I also send with this packet some kernels, and seeds of various kinds of fruits which I gathered in the abbey park during my hours of recreation. I have also sent a few seeds of violets, daisies, buttercups, poppies and scabious, which I picked up in the fields. There are much more beautiful flowers in the meadows of this country than in ours, but nobody cares for them. I am sure that you and my mamma Margaret will be better pleased with this bag of seeds, than you were with the bag of piastres, which was the cause of our separation and of my tears. It will give me great delight if you should one day see apple-trees growing by the side of our plantains, and elms blending their foliage with that of our cocoa trees. You will fancy yourself in Normandy, which you love so much.

"You desired me to relate to you my joys and my griefs. I have no joys far from you. As for my griefs, I endeavor to soothe them by reflecting that I am in the situation in which it was the will of God that you should place me. But my greatest affliction is, that no one here speaks to me of you, and
that I cannot speak of you to any one. My femmes de chambre, or rather those of my aunt, for they belong more to her than to me, told me the other day, when I wished to turn the conversation upon the objects most dear to me: 'Remember, mademoiselle, that you are a French woman, and must forget that land of savages.' Ah! sooner will I forget myself, than forget the spot on which I was born and where you dwell! It is this country which is to me a land of savages, for I live alone, having no one to whom I can impart those feelings of tenderness for you which I shall bear with me to the grave. I am,

"My dearest and beloved mother,
"Your affectionate and dutiful daughter,
"Virginie de la Tour."

"I recommend to your goodness Mary and Domingo, who took so much care of my infancy; caress Fidele for me, who found me in the wood."

Paul was astonished that Virginia had not said one word of him,—she, who had not forgotten even the house-dog. But he was not aware that, however long a woman's letter may be, she never fails to leave her dearest sentiments for the end.

In a postscript, Virginia particularly recommended to Paul's attention two kinds of seed,—those of the violet and the scabious. She gave him some instructions upon the natural characters of these flowers, and the spots most proper for their cultivation. "The violet," she said, "produces a little flower of a dark purple color, which delights to conceal itself beneath the bushes; but it is soon discovered by its wide-spreading perfume." She desired that these seeds might be sown by the border of the fountain, at the foot of her cocoa-tree. "The scabious," she added, "produces a beautiful flower of a pale blue, and a black ground spotted with white. You might fancy it was in mourning; and for this reason it is also called the widow's flower. It grows best in bleak spots, beaten by the winds." She begged him to sow this upon the rock where she had spoken to him at night for the last time, and that, in remembrance of her, he would henceforth give it the name of the Rock of Adieu.

She had put these seeds into a little purse, the tissue of which was exceedingly simple; but which appeared above all price to Paul, when he saw on it a P and a V entwined together, and knew that the beautiful hair which formed the cypher was the hair of Virginia.
The whole family listened with tears to the reading of the letter of this amiable and virtuous girl. Her mother answered it in the name of the little society, desiring her to remain or return as she thought proper: and assuring her, that happiness had left their dwelling since her departure, and that, for herself, she was inconsolable.

Paul also sent her a very long letter, in which he assured her that he would arrange the garden in a manner agreeable to her taste, and mingle together in it the plants of Europe with those of Africa, as she had blended their initials together in her work. He sent her some fruit from the cocoa-trees of the fountain, now arrived at maturity; telling her, that he would not add any of the other productions of the island, that the desire of seeing them again might hasten her return. He conjured her to comply as soon as possible with the ardent wishes of her family, and above all, with his own, since he could never hereafter taste happiness away from her.

Paul sowed with a careful hand the European seeds, particularly the violet and the scabious, the flowers of which seemed to bear some analogy to the character and present situation of Virginia, by whom they had been so especially recommended; but either they were dried up in the voyage, or the climate of this part of the world is unfavorable to their growth, for a very small number of them even came up, and not one arrived at full perfection.

In the mean time, envy, which ever comes to embitter human happiness, particularly in the French colonies, spread some reports in the island which gave Paul much uneasiness. The passengers in the vessel which brought Virginia's letter, asserted that she was upon the point of being married, and named the nobleman of the court to whom she was engaged. Some even went so far as to declare that the union had already taken place, and that they themselves had witnessed the ceremony. Paul at first despised the report, brought by a merchant vessel, as he knew that they often spread erroneous intelligence in their passage; but some of the inhabitants of the island, with malignant pity, affecting to bewail the event, he was soon led to attach some degree of belief to this cruel intelligence. Besides, in some of the novels he had lately read, he had seen that perfidy was treated as a subject of pleasantry; and knowing that these books contained pretty faithful representations of European manners, he feared that the heart of Virginia was corrupted, and had forgotten its former engagements. Thus his new acquirements had already
only served to render him more miserable; and his apprehensions were much increased by the circumstance, that though several ships touched here from Europe, within the six months immediately following the arrival of her letter, not one of them brought any tidings of Virginia.

This unfortunate young man, with a heart torn by the most cruel agitation, often came to visit me, in the hope of confirming or banishing his uneasiness, by my experience of the world. I live, as I have already told you, a league and a half from this point, upon the banks of a little river which glides along the Sloping Mountain: there I lead a solitary life, without wife, children, or slaves.

After having enjoyed, and lost the rare felicity of living with a congenial mind, the state of life which appears the least wretched is doubtless that of solitude. Every man who has much cause of complaint against his fellow-creatures seeks to be alone. It is also remarkable that all those nations which have been brought to wretchedness by their opinions, their manners, or their forms of government, have produced numerous classes of citizens altogether devoted to solitude and celibacy. Such were the Egyptians in their decline, and the Greeks of the Lower Empire; and such in our days are the Indians, the Chinese, the modern Greeks, the Italians, and the greater part of the eastern and southern nations of Europe. Solitude, by removing men from the miseries which follow in the train of social intercourse, brings them in some degree back to the unsophisticated enjoyment of nature. In the midst of modern society, broken up by innumerable prejudices, the mind is in a constant turmoil of agitation. It is incessantly revolving in itself a thousand tumultuous and contradictory opinions, by which the members of an ambitious and miserable circle seek to raise themselves above each other. But in solitude the soul lays aside the morbid illusions which troubled her, and resumes the pure consciousness of herself, of nature, and of its Author, as the muddy water of a torrent which has ravaged the plains, coming to rest, and diffusing itself over some low grounds out of its course, deposits there the slime it has taken up, and, resuming its wonted transparency, reflects, with its own shores, the verdure of the earth and the light of heaven. Thus does solitude recruit the powers of the body as well as those of the mind. It is among hermits that are found the men who carry human existence to its extreme limits; such are the Bramins of India. In brief, I consider solitude so necessary to happiness, even in the world itself, that it appears
to me impossible to derive lasting pleasure from any pursuit whatever, or to regulate our conduct by any stable principle, if we do not create for ourselves a mental void, whence our own views rarely emerge, and into which the opinions of others never enter. I do not mean to say that man ought to live absolutely alone; he is connected by his necessities with all mankind; his labors are due to man: and he owes something too to the rest of nature. But, as God has given to each of us organs perfectly adapted to the elements of the globe on which we live,—feet for the soil, lungs for the air, eyes for the light, without the power of changing the use of any of these faculties, he has reserved for himself, as the Author of life, that which is its chief organ,—the heart.

I thus passed my days far from mankind, whom I wished to serve, and by whom I have been persecuted. After having travelled over many countries of Europe, and some parts of America and Africa, I at length pitched my tent in this thinly-peopled island, allured by its mild climate and its solitudes. A cottage which I built in the woods, at the foot of a tree, a little field which I cleared with my own hands, a river which glides before my door, suffice for my wants and for my pleasures. I blend with these enjoyments the perusal of some chosen books, which teach me to become better. They make that world, which I have abandoned, still contribute something to my happiness. They lay before me pictures of those passions which render its inhabitants so miserable; and in the comparison I am thus led to make between their lot and my own, I feel a kind of negative enjoyment. Like a man saved from shipwreck, and thrown upon a rock, I contemplate, from my solitude, the storms which rage through the rest of the world; and my repose seems more profound from the distant sound of the tempest. As men have ceased to fall in my way, I no longer view them with aversion; I only pity them. If I sometimes fall in with an unfortunate being, I try to help him by my counsels, as a passer-by on the brink of a torrent extends his hand to save a wretch from drowning. But I have hardly ever found but the innocent attentive to my voice. Nature calls the majority of men to her in vain. Each of them forms an image of her for himself, and invests her with his own passions. He pursues during the whole of his life this vain phantom, which leads him astray; and he afterwards complains to Heaven of the misfortunes which he has thus created for himself. Among the many children of misfortune whom I have endeavored to lead back to the enjoyments of nature, I have
not found one but was intoxicated with his own miseries. They have listened to me at first with attention, in the hope that I could teach them how to acquire glory or fortune, but when they found that I only wished to instruct them how to dispense with these chimeras, their attention has been converted into pity, because I did not prize their miserable happiness. They blamed my solitary life; they alleged that they alone were useful to men, and they endeavored to draw me into their vortex. But if I communicate with all, I lay myself open to none. It is often sufficient for me to serve as a lesson to myself. In my present tranquillity, I pass in review the agitating pursuits of my past life, to which I formerly attached so much value,—patronage, fortune, reputation, pleasure, and the opinions which are ever at strife over all the earth. I compare the men whom I have seen disputing furiously over these vanities, and who are no more, to the tiny waves of my rivulet, which break in foam against its rocky bed, and disappear, never to return. As for me, I suffer myself to float calmly down the stream of time to the shoreless ocean of futurity; while, in the contemplation of the present harmony of nature, I elevate my soul towards its supreme Author, and hope for a more happy lot in another state of existence.

Although you cannot descry from my hermitage, situated in the midst of a forest, that immense variety of objects which this elevated spot presents, the grounds are disposed with peculiar beauty, at least to one who, like me, prefers the seclusion of a home scene to great and extensive prospects. The river which glides before my door passes in a straight line across the woods, looking like a long canal shaded by all kinds of trees. Among them are the gum tree, the ebony tree, and that which is here called bois de pomme, with olive and cinnamon-wood trees; while in some parts the cabbage-palm trees raise their naked stems more than a hundred feet high, their summits crowned with a clustre of leaves, and towering above the woods like one forest piled upon another. Lianas, of various foliage, intertwining themselves among the trees, form, here, arcades of foliage, there, long canopies of verdure. Most of these trees shed aromatic odors so powerful, that the garments of a traveller, who has passed through the forest, often retain for hours the most delicious fragrance. In the season when they produce their lavish blossoms, they appear as if half-covered with snow. Towards the end of summer, various kinds of foreign birds hasten, impelled by some inexplicable
instinct, from unknown regions on the other side of immense oceans, to feed upon the grain and other vegetable productions of the island; and the brilliancy of their plumage forms a striking contrast to the more sombre tints of the foliage, embrowned by the sun. Among these are various kinds of parroquets, and the blue pigeon, called here the pigeon of Holland. Monkeys, the domestic inhabitants of our forests, sport upon the dark branches of the trees, from which they are easily distinguished by their gray and greenish skin, and their black visages. Some hang, suspended by the tail, and swing themselves in air; others leap from branch to branch, bearing their young in their arms. The murderous gun has never affrighted these peaceful children of nature. You hear nothing but sounds of joy,—the warblings and unknown notes of birds from the countries of the south, repeated from a distance by the echoes of the forest. The river, which pours, in foaming eddies, over a bed of rocks, through the midst of the woods, reflects here and there upon its limpid waters their venerable masses of verdure and of shade, along with the sports of their happy inhabitants. About a thousand paces from thence it forms several cascades, clear as crystal in their fall, but broken at the bottom into frothy surges. Innumerable confused sounds issue from these watery tumults, which, borne by the winds across the forest, now sink in distance, now all at once swell out, booming on the ear like the bells of a cathedral. The air, kept ever in motion by the running water, preserves upon the banks of the river, amid all the summer heats; a freshness and verdure rarely found in this island, even on the summits of the mountains.

At some distance from this place is a rock, placed far enough from the cascade to prevent the ear from being deafened with the noise of its waters, and sufficiently near for the enjoyment of seeing it, of feeling its coolness, and hearing its gentle murmurs. Thither, amidst the heats of summer, Madame de la Tour, Margaret, Virginia, Paul and myself, sometimes repaired, to dine beneath the shadow of this rock. Virginia, who always, in her most ordinary actions, was mindful of the good of others, never eat of any fruit in the fields without planting the seed or kernal in the ground. “From this,” said she, “trees will come, which will yield their fruit to some traveller, or at least to some bird.” One day, having eaten of the papaw fruit at the foot of that rock, she planted the seeds on the spot. Soon after, several papaw trees sprang up, among which was one with female blossoms, that is to say, a fruit-bearing tree. This tree at the time of Virginia’s departure, was scarcely as high as her
knee; but, as it is a plant of rapid growth, in the course of two years it had gained the height of twenty feet, and the upper part of its stem was encircled by several rows of ripe fruit. Paul, wandering accidentally to the spot, was struck with delight at seeing this lofty tree, which had been planted by his beloved; but the emotion was transient, and instantly gave place to a deep melancholy, at this evidence of her long absence. The objects which are habitually before us do not bring to our minds an adequate idea of the rapidity of life; they decline insensibly with ourselves: but it is those we behold again, after having for some years lost sight of them, that most powerfully impress us with a feeling of the swiftness with which the tide of life flows on. Paul was no less overwhelmed and affected at the sight of this great papaw tree, loaded with fruit, than is the traveller when, after a long absence from his own country, he finds his contemporaries no more, but their children, whom he left at the breast, themselves now become fathers of families. Paul sometimes thought of cutting down the tree, which recalled too sensibly the distracting remembrance of Virginia's prolonged absence. At other times, contemplating it as a monument of her benevolence, he kissed its trunk, and apostrophized it in terms of the most passionate regret. Indeed, I have myself gazed upon it with more emotion and more veneration than upon the triumphal arches of Rome. May nature, which every day destroys the monuments of kingly ambition, multiply in our forests those which testify the beneficence of a poor young girl!

At the foot of this papaw tree I was always sure to meet with Paul when he came into our neighborhood. One day, I found him there absorbed in melancholy, and a conversation took place between us, which I will relate to you, if I do not weary you too much by my long digressions; they are perhaps pardonable to my age and to my last friendships. I will relate it to you in the form of a dialogue, that you may form some idea of the natural good sense of this young man. You will easily distinguish the speakers, from the character of his questions and of my answers.

Paul.—I am very unhappy. Mademoiselle de la Tour has now been gone two years and eight months, and we have heard no tidings of her for eight months and a half. She is rich, and I am poor; she has forgotten me. I have a great mind to follow her. I will go to France; I will serve the king; I will make my fortune; and then Mademoiselle de la Tour's aunt will bestow her niece upon me when I shall have become a great lord.
The Old Man.—But, my dear friend, have not you told me that you are not of noble birth?

Paul.—My mother has told me so; but, as for myself, I know not what noble birth means. I never perceived that I had less than others, or that others had more than I.

The Old Man.—Obscure birth, in France, shuts every door of access to great employments; nor can you even be received among any distinguished body of men, if you labor under this disadvantage.

Paul.—You have often told me that it was one source of the greatness of France that her humblest subject might attain the highest honors; and you have cited to me many instances of celebrated men who, born in a mean condition, had conferred honor upon their country. It was your wish, then, by concealing the truth to stimulate my ardor?

The Old Man.—Never, my son, would I lower it. I told you the truth with regard to the past; but now, everything has undergone a great change. Everything in France is now to be obtained by interest alone; every place and employment is now become as it were the patrimony of a small number of families, or is divided among public bodies. The king is a sun, and the nobles and great corporate bodies surround him like so many clouds; it is almost impossible for any of his rays to reach you. Formerly, under less exclusive administrations, such phenomena have been seen. Then talents and merit showed themselves everywhere, as newly cleared lands are always loaded with abundance. But great kings, who can really form a just estimate of men, and choose them with judgment, are rare. The ordinary race of monarchs allow themselves to be guided by the nobles and people who surround them.

Paul.—But perhaps I shall find one of these nobles to protect me.

The Old Man.—To gain the protection of the great you must lend yourself to their ambition, and administer to their pleasures. You would never succeed; for, in addition to your obscure birth, you have too much integrity.

Paul.—But I will perform such courageous actions, I will be so faithful to my word, so exact in the performance of my duties, so zealous and so constant in my friendships, that I will render myself worthy to be adopted by some one of them. In the ancient histories, you have made me read, I have seen many examples of such adoptions.

The Old Man.—Oh, my young friend! among the Greeks
and Romans, even in their decline, the nobles had some respect for virtue; but out of all the immense number of men, sprung from the mass of the people, in France, who have signalized themselves in every possible manner, I do not recollect a single instance of one being adopted by any great family. If it were not for our kings, virtue, in our country, would be eternally condemned as plebeian. As I said before, the monarch sometimes, when he perceives it, renders to it due honor; but in the present day, the distinctions which should be bestowed on merit are generally to be obtained by money alone.

_Paul._—If I cannot find a nobleman to adopt me, I will seek to please some public body. I will espouse its interests and its opinions: I will make myself beloved by it.

_The Old Man._—You will act then like other men?—you will renounce your conscience to obtain a fortune?

_Paul._—Oh no! I will never lend myself to anything but the truth.

_The Old Man._—Instead of making yourself beloved, you would become an object of dislike. Besides, public bodies have never taken much interest in the discovery of truth. All opinions are nearly alike to ambitious men, provided only that they themselves can gain their ends.

_Paul._—How unfortunate I am! Everything bars my progress. I am condemned to pass my life in ignoble toil, far from Virginia.

As he said this he sighed deeply.

_The Old Man._—Let God be your patron, and mankind the public body you would serve. Be constantly attached to them both. Families, corporations, nations and kings have, all of them, their prejudices and their passions; it is often necessary to serve them by the practice of vice: God and mankind at large require only the exercise of the virtues.

But why do you wish to be distinguished from other men? It is hardly a natural sentiment, for, if all men possessed it, every one would be at constant strife with his neighbor. Be satisfied with fulfilling your duty in the station in which Providence has placed you; be grateful for your lot, which permits you to enjoy the blessing of a quiet conscience, and which does not compel you, like the great, to let your happiness rest on the opinion of the little, or, like the little, to cringe to the great, in order to obtain the means of existence. You are now placed in a country and a condition in which you are not reduced to deceive or flatter anyone, or debase yourself, as the greater part of those who seek their fortune in Europe are
Paul and Virginia.

obliged to do; in which the exercise of no virtue is forbidden you; in which you may be, with impunity, good, sincere, well-informed, patient, temperate, chaste, indulgent to others' faults, pious, and no shaft of ridicule be aimed at you to destroy your wisdom, as yet only in its bud. Heaven has given you liberty, health, a good conscience, and friends; kings themselves, whose favor you desire, are not so happy.

Paul.—Ah! I only want to have Virginia with me: without her I have nothing,—with her, I should possess all my desire. She alone is to me birth, glory, and fortune. But, since her relation will only give her to some one with a great name, I will study. By the aid of study and of books, learning and celebrity are to be attained. I will become a man of science: I will render my knowledge useful to the service of my country, without injuring any one, or owning dependence on any one. I will become celebrated, and my glory shall be achieved only by myself.

The Old Man.—My son, talents are a gift yet more rare than either birth or riches, and undoubtedly they are a greater good than either, since they can never be taken away from us, and that they obtain for us everywhere public esteem. But they may be said to be worth all that they cost us. They are seldom acquired but by every species of privation, by the possession of exquisite sensibility, which often produces inward unhappiness, and which exposes us without to the malice and persecutions of our contemporaries. The lawyer envies not, in France, the glory of the soldier, nor does the soldier envy that of the naval officer; but they will all oppose you, and bar your progress to distinction, because your assumption of superior ability will wound the self-love of them all. You say that you will do good to men; but recollect, that he who makes the earth produce a single ear of corn more, renders them a greater service than he who writes a book.

Paul.—Oh! she, then, who planted this papaw tree, has made a more useful and more grateful present to the inhabitants of these forests than if she had given them a whole library.

So saying, he threw his arms around the tree, and kissed it with transport.

The Old Man.—The best of books,—that which preaches nothing but equality, brotherly love, charity, and peace,—the Gospel, has served as a pretext, during many centuries, for Europeans to let loose all their fury. How many tyrannies, both public and private, are still practiced in its name on the face of the earth! After this, who will dare to flatter himself
that anything he can write will be of service to his fellow-men? Remember the fate of most of the philosophers who have preached to them wisdom. Homer, who clothed it in such noble verse, asked for alms all his life. Socrates, whose conversation and example gave such admirable lessons to the Athenians, was sentenced by them to be poisoned. His sublime disciple, Plato, was delivered over to slavery by the order of the very prince who protected him; and, before them, Pythagoras, whose humanity extended even to animals, was burned alive by the Crotoniates. What do I say?—many even of these illustrious names have descended to us disfigured by some traits of satire by which they became characterized, human ingratitude taking pleasure in thus recognizing them; and if, in the crowd, the glory of some names is come down to us without spot or blemish, we shall find that they who have borne them have lived far from the society of their contemporaries; like those statues which are found entire beneath the soil in Greece and Italy, and which, by being hidden in the bosom of the earth, have escaped uninjured, from the fury of the barbarians.

You see, then, that to acquire the glory which a turbulent literary career can give you, you must not only be virtuous, but ready, if necessary, to sacrifice life itself. But, after all, do not fancy that the great in France trouble themselves about such glory as this. Little do they care for literary men, whose knowledge brings them neither honors, nor power, nor even admission at court. Persecution, it is true, is rarely practiced in this age, because it is habitually indifferent to everything except wealth and luxury; but knowledge and virtue no longer lead to distinction, since everything in the state is to be purchased with money. Formerly, men of letters were certain of reward by some place in the church, the magistracy, or the administration; now they are considered good for nothing but to write books. But this fruit of their minds, little valued by the world at large, is still worthy of its celestial origin. For these books is reserved the privilege of shedding lustre on obscure virtue, of consoling the unhappy, of enlightening nations, and of telling the truth even to kings. This is, unquestionably, the most august commission with which Heaven can honor a mortal upon this earth. Where is the author who would not be consoled for the injustice or contempt of those who are the dispensers of the ordinary gifts of fortune, when he reflects that his work may pass from age to age, from nation to nation, opposing a barrier to error and to tyranny: and that, from
amidst the obscurity in which he has lived, there will shine forth a glory which will efface that of the common herd of monarchs, the monuments of whose deeds perish in oblivion, notwithstanding the flatterers who erect and magnify them?

Paul.—Ah! I am only covetous of glory to bestow it on Virginia, and render her dear to the whole world. But can you, who know so much, tell me whether we shall ever be married? I should like to be a very learned man, if only for the sake of knowing what will come to pass.

The Old Man.—Who would live, my son, if the future were revealed to him?—when a single anticipated misfortune gives us so much useless uneasiness—when the foreknowledge of one certain calamity is enough to embitter every day that precedes it: It is better not to pry too curiously, even into the things which surround us. Heaven, which has given us the power of reflection to foresee our necessities, gave us also those very necessities to set limits to its exercise.

Paul.—You tell me that with money people in Europe acquire dignities and honors. I will go, then, to enrich myself in Bengal, and afterwards proceed to Paris, and marry Virginia. I will embark at once.

The Old Man.—What! would you leave her mother and yours?

Paul.—Why, you yourself have advised my going to the Indies.

The Old Man.—Virginia was then here; but you are now the only means of support both of her mother and of your own.

Paul.—Virginia will assist them by means of her rich relations.

The Old Man.—The rich care little for those, from whom no honor is reflected upon themselves in the world. Many of them have relations much more to be pitied than Madame de la Tour, who, for want of their assistance, sacrifice their liberty for bread, and pass their lives immured within the walls of a convent.

Paul.—Oh, what a country is Europe! Virginia must come back here. What need has she of a rich relation? She was so happy in these huts; she looked so beautiful and so well-dressed with a red handkerchief or a few flowers around her head! Return, Virginia! leave your sumptuous mansions and your grandeur, and come back to these rocks,—to the shade of these woods and of our cocoa trees. Alas! you are perhaps even now unhappy!"—and he began to shed tears. "My
father," continued he, "hide nothing from me; if you cannot
tell me whether I shall marry Virginia, tell me at least if she
loves me still, surrounded as she is by noblemen who speak to
the king, and who go to see her.

The Old Man.—Oh, my dear friend! I am sure, for many
reasons, that she loves you; but above all, because she is vir-
tuous. At these words he threw himself on my neck in a trans-
port of joy.

Paul.—But do you think that the women of Europe are false,
as they are represented in the comedies and books which you
have lent me?

The Old Man.—Women are false in those countries where
men are tyrants. Violence always engenders a disposition to
deceive.

Paul.—In what way can men tyrannize over women?

The Old Man.—In giving them in marriage without con-
sulting their inclinations;—in uniting a young girl to an old
man, or a women of sensibility to a frigid and indifferent
husband.

Paul.—Why not join together those who are suited to each
other,—the young to the young, and lovers to those they love?

The Old Man.—Because few young men in France have
property enough to support them when they are married, and
cannot acquire it till the greater part of their life is passed.
While young, they seduce the wives of others, and when they
are old, they cannot secure the affections of their own. At
first, they themselves are deceivers: and afterwards, they are
deceived in their turn. This is one of the reactions of that
eternal justice, by which the world is governed; an excess on
one side is sure to be balanced by one on the other. Thus, the
greater part of Europeans pass their lives in this twofold irregu-
larity, which increases everywhere in the same proportion that
wealth is accumulated in the hands of a few individuals. So-
ciety is like a garden, where shrubs cannot grow if they are
overshadowed by lofty trees; but there is this wide difference
between them,—that the beauty of a garden may result from
the admixture of a small number of forest trees, while the
prosperity of a state depends on the multitude and equality of
its citizens, and not on a small number of very rich men.

Paul.—But where is the necessity of being rich in order to
marry?

The Old Man.—In order to pass through life in abundance,
without being obliged to work.

Paul.—But why not work? I am sure I work hard enough,
The Old Man.—In Europe, working with your hands is considered a degradation; it is compared to the labor performed by a machine. The occupation of cultivating the earth is the most despised of all. Even an artisan is held in more estimation than a peasant.

Paul.—What! do you mean to say that the art which furnishes food for mankind is despised in Europe? I hardly understand you.

The Old Man.—Oh! it is impossible for a person educated according to nature to form an idea of the depraved state of society. It is easy to form a precise notion of order, but not of disorder. Beauty, virtue, happiness, have all their defined proportions; deformity, vice, and misery have none.

Paul.—The rich then are always very happy! They meet with no obstacles to the fulfilment of their wishes, and they can lavish happiness on those whom they love.

The Old Man.—Far from it, my son! They are, for the most part satiated with pleasure, for this very reason,—that it costs them no trouble. Have you never yourself experienced how much the pleasure of repose is increased by fatigue; that of eating, by hunger; or that of drinking, by thirst? The pleasure also of loving and being beloved is only to be acquired by innumerable privations and sacrifices. Wealth, by anticipating all their necessities, deprives its possessors of all these pleasures. To this ennui, consequent upon satiety, may also be added the pride which springs from their opulence, and which is wounded by the most trifling privation, when the greatest enjoyments have ceased to charm. The perfume of a thousand roses gives pleasure but for a moment; but the pain occasioned by a single thorn endures long after the infliction of the wound. A single evil in the midst of their pleasures is to the rich like a thorn among flowers; to the poor, on the contrary, one pleasure amidst all their troubles is a flower among a wilderness of thorns; they have a most lively enjoyment of it. The effect of everything is increased by contrast; nature has balanced all things. Which condition, after all, do you consider preferable,—to have scarcely anything to hope, and everything to fear, or to have everything to hope and nothing to fear? The former condition is that of the rich, the latter, that of the poor. But either of these extremes is with difficulty supported by man, whose happiness consists in a middle station of life, in union with virtue.

Paul.—What do you understand by virtue?

The Old Man.—To you, my son, who support your family
by your labor, it need hardly be defined. Virtue consists in endeavoring to do all the good we can to others, with an ultimate intention of pleasing God alone.

Paul.—Oh! how virtuous, then, is Virginia! Virtue led her to seek for riches, that she might practice benevolence. Virtue induced her to quit this island, and virtue will bring her back to it.

The idea of her speedy return firing the imagination of this young man, all his anxieties suddenly vanished. Virginia, he was persuaded, had not written, because she would soon arrive. It took so little time to come from Europe with a fair wind! Then he enumerated the vessels which had made this passage of four thousand five hundred leagues in less than three months; and perhaps the vessel in which Virginia had embarked might not be more than two. Shipbuilders were now so ingenious, and sailors were so expert! He then talked to me of the arrangements he intended to make for her reception, of the new house he would build for her, and of the pleasures and surprises which he would contrive for her every day, when she was his wife. His wife! The idea filled him with ecstasy. "At least, my dear father," said he, "you shall then do no more work than you please. As Virginia will be rich, we shall have plenty of negroes, and they shall work for you. You shall always live with us, and have no other care than to amuse yourself and be happy;"—and, his heart throbbing with joy, he flew to communicate these exquisite anticipations to his family.

In a short time, however, these enchanting hopes were succeeded by the most cruel apprehensions. It is always the effect of violent passions to throw the soul into opposite extremes. Paul returned the next day to my dwelling, overwhelmed with melancholy, and said to me,—"I hear nothing from Virginia. Had she left Europe she would have written me word of her departure. Ah! the reports which I have heard concerning her are but too well founded. Her aunt has married her to some great lord. She, like others, has been undone by the love of riches. In those books which paint women so well, virtue is treated but as a subject of romance. If Virginia had been virtuous, she would never have forsaken her mother and me. I do nothing but think of her, and she has forgotten me. I am wretched, and she is diverting herself. The thought distracts me; I cannot bear myself! Would to Heaven that war were declared in India! I would go there and die."

"My son," I answered, "that courage which prompts us on
to court death is but the courage of a moment, and is often excited only by the vain applause of men, or by the hope of posthumous renown. There is another description of courage, rarer and more necessary, which enables us to support, without witness and without applause, the vexations of life; this virtue is patience. Relying for support, not upon the opinions of others, or the impulse of the passions, but upon the will of God, patience is the courage of virtue,"

"Ah!" cried he, "I am then without virtue! Everything overwhelms me and drives me to despair."—"Equal, constant, and invariable virtue," I replied, "belongs not to man. In the midst of the many passions which agitate us, our reason is disordered and obscure: but there is an ever-burning lamp, at which we can rekindle its flame; and that is, literature.

"Literature, my dear son, is the gift of Heaven, a ray of that wisdom by which the universe is governed, and which man, inspired by a celestial intelligence, has drawn down to earth. Like the rays of the sun, it enlightens us, it rejoices us, it warms us with a heavenly flame, and seems, in some sort, like the element of fire, to bend all nature to our use. By its means we are enabled to bring around us all things, all places, all men, and all times. It assists us to regulate our manners and our life. By its aid, too, our passions are calmed, vice is suppressed, and virtue encouraged by the memorable examples of great and good men which it has handed down to us, and whose time-honored images it ever brings before our eyes. Literature is a daughter of Heaven who has descended upon earth to soften and to charm away all the evils of the human race. The greatest writers have ever appeared in the worst times,—in times in which society can hardly be held together,—the times of barbarism and every species of depravity. My son, literature has consoled an infinite number of men more unhappy than yourself: Xenophon, banished from his country after having saved to her ten thousand of her sons; Scipio Africanus, wearied to death by the calumnies of the Romans: Lucullus, tormented by their cabals; and Catinat, by the ingratitude of a court. The Greeks, with their never-failing ingenuity, assigned to each of the Muses a portion of the great circle of human intelligence for her especial superintendence; we ought in the same manner, to give up to them the regulation of our passions, to bring them under proper restraint. Literature in this imaginative guise, would thus fulfil, in relation to the powers of the soul, the same functions as the Hours, who yoked and conducted the chariot of the Sun.
"Have recourse to your books, then, my son. The wise men who have written before our days are travellers who have preceded us in the paths of misfortune, and who stretch out a friendly hand towards us, and invite us to join their society, when we are abandoned by everything else. A good book is a good friend."

"Ah!" cried Paul, "I stood in no need of books when Virginia was here, and she had studied as little as myself; but when she looked at me, and called me her friend, I could not feel unhappy."

"Undoubtedly," said I, "there is no friend so agreeable as a mistress by whom we are beloved. There is, moreover, in woman a liveliness and gayety, which powerfully tend to dissipate the melancholy feelings of a man; her presence drives away the dark phantoms of imagination produced by over-reflection. Upon her countenance sit soft attractions and tender confidence. What joy is not heightened when it is shared by her? What brow is not unbent by her smiles? What anger can resist her tears? Virginia will return with more philosophy than you, and will be quite surprised to find the garden so unfinished;—she who could think of its embellishments in spite of all the persecutions of her aunt, and when far from her mother and from you."

The idea of Virginia's speedy return reanimated the drooping spirits of her lover, and he resumed his rural occupations, happy amidst his toils, in the reflection that they would soon find a termination so dear to the wishes of his heart.

One morning, at break of day, (it was the 24th of December, 1744), Paul, when he arose, perceived a white flag hoisted upon the Mountain of Discovery. This flag he knew to be the signal of a vessel descried at sea. He instantly flew to the town to learn if this vessel brought any tidings of Virginia, and waited there till the return of the pilot, who was gone, according to custom, to board the ship. The pilot did not return till the evening, when he brought the governor information that the signalled vessel was the Saint-Geran, of seven hundred tons burden, and commanded by a captain of the name of Aubin; that she was now four leagues out at sea, but would probably anchor at Port Louis the following afternoon, if the wind became fair: at present there was a calm. The pilot then handed to the governor a number of letters which the Saint-Geran had brought from France, among which was one addressed to Madame de la Tour, in the handwriting of Virginia. Paul seized upon the letter, kissed it with transport, and plac-
ing it in his bosom, flew to the plantation. No sooner did he perceive from a distance the family, who were awaiting his return upon the rock of Adieus, than he waved the letter aloft in the air, without being able to utter a word. No sooner was the seal broken, than they all crowded round Madame de la Tour, to hear the letter read. Virginia informed her mother that she had experienced much ill-usage from her aunt, who, after having in vain urged her to a marriage against her inclination, had disinherited her, and had sent her back at a time when she would probably reach the Mauritius during the hurricane season. In vain, she added, had she endeavored to soften her aunt, by representing what she owed to her mother, and to her early habits; she was treated as a romantic girl, whose head had been turned by novels. She could now only think of the joy of again seeing and embracing her beloved family, and would have gratified her ardent desire at once, by landing in the pilot's boat, if the captain had allowed her: but that he had objected, on account of the distance, and of a heavy swell, which, notwithstanding the calm, reigned in the open sea.

As soon as the letter was finished, the whole of the family, transported with joy, repeatedly exclaimed, "Virginia is arrived!" and mistresses and servants embraced each other. Madame de la Tour said to Paul,—"My son, go and inform our neighbor of Virginia's arrival." Domingo immediately lighted a torch of bois de ronde, and he and Paul bent their way towards my dwelling.

It was about ten o'clock at night, and I was just going to extinguish my lamp, and retire to rest, when I perceived, through the palisades round my cottage, a light in the woods. Soon after, I heard the voice of Paul calling me. I instantly arose, and had hardly dressed myself, when Paul, almost beside himself, and panting for breath, sprang on my neck, crying,—"Come along, come along. Virginia is arrived. Let us go to the port; the vessel will anchor at break of day."

Scarceley had he uttered the words, when we set off. As we were passing through the woods of the Sloping Mountain, and were already on the road which leads from the Shaddock Grove to the port, I heard some one walking behind us. It proved to be a negro, and he was advancing with hasty steps. When he had reached us, I asked him whence he came, and whither he was going with such expedition. He answered, "I come from that part of the island called Golden Dust; and am sent to the port, to inform the governor that a ship from France
has anchored under the Isle of Amber. She is firing guns of distress, for the sea is very rough." Having said this, the man left us, and pursued his journey without any further delay.

I then said to Paul,—"Let us go towards the quarter of the Golden Dust, and meet Virginia there. It is not more than three leagues from hence." We accordingly bent our course towards the northern part of the island. The heat was suffocating. The moon had risen, and was surrounded by three large black circles. A frightful darkness shrouded the sky; but the frequent flashes of lightning discovered to us long rows of thick and gloomy clouds, hanging very low, and heaped together over the centre of the island, being driven in with great rapidity from the ocean, although not a breath of air was perceptible upon the land. As we walked along, we thought we heard peals of thunder; but, on listening more attentively, we perceived that it was the sound of cannon at a distance, repeated by the echoes. These ominous sounds, joined to the tempestuous aspect of the heavens, made me shudder. I had little doubt of their being signals of distress from a ship in danger. In about half an hour the firing ceased, and I found the silence still more appalling than the dismal sounds which had preceded it.

We hastened on without uttering a word, or daring to communicate to each other our mutual apprehensions. At midnight, by great exertion, we arrived at the sea-shore, in that part of the island called Golden Dust. The billows were breaking against the beach with a horrible noise, covering the rocks and the strand with foam of a dazzling whiteness, blended with sparks of fire. By these phosphoric gleams we distinguished, notwithstanding the darkness, a number of fishing canoes, drawn up high upon the beach.

At the entrance of a wood, a short distance from us, we saw a fire, round which a party of the inhabitants were assembled. We repaired thither, in order to rest ourselves till the morning. While we were seated near this fire, one of the standers-by related, that late in the afternoon he had seen a vessel in the open sea, driven towards the island by the currents; that the night had hidden it from his view; and that two hours after sunset he had heard the firing of signal guns of distress, but that the surf was so high, that it was impossible to launch a boat to go off to her; that a short time after, he thought he perceived the glimmering of the watch-lights on board the vessel, which, he feared, by its having approached so
near the coast, had steered between the main land and the little island of Amber, mistaking the latter for the Point of Endeavor, near which vessels pass in order to gain Port Louis; and that, if this were the case, which, however, he would not take upon himself to be certain of, the ship, he thought, was in very great danger. Another islander then informed us, that he had frequently crossed the channel which separates the isle of Amber from the coast, and had sounded it; that the anchorage was very good, and that the ship would there lie as safely as in the best harbor. "I would stake all I am worth upon it," said he, "and if I were on board, I should sleep as sound as on shore." A third bystander declared that it was impossible for the ship to enter that channel, which was scarcely navigable for a boat. He was certain, he said, that he had seen the vessel at anchor beyond the isle of Amber; so that, if the wind arose in the morning, she could either put to sea, or gain the harbor. Other inhabitants gave different opinions upon this subject, which they continued to discuss in the usual desultory manner of the indolent Creoles. Paul and I observed a profound silence. We remained on this spot till break of day, but the weather was too hazy to admit of our distinguishing any object at sea, everything being covered with fog. All we could descry to seaward was a dark cloud, which they told us was the isle of Amber, at the distance of a quarter of a league from the coast. On this gloomy day we could only discern the point of land on which we were standing, and the peaks of some inland mountains, which started out occasionally from the midst of the clouds that hung around them.

At about seven in the morning we heard the sound of drums in the woods: it announced the approach of the governor, Monsieur de la Bourdonnais, who soon after arrived on horseback, at the head of a detachment of soldiers armed with muskets, and a crowd of islanders and negroes. He drew up his soldiers upon the beach, and ordered them to make a general discharge. This was no sooner done, than we perceived a glimmering light upon the water which was instantly followed by the report of a cannon. We judged that the ship was at no great distance and all ran towards that part whence the light and sound proceeded. We now discerned through the fog the hull and yards of a large vessel. We were so near to her, that notwithstanding the tumult of the waves, we could distinctly hear the whistle of the boatswain, and the shouts of the sailors, who cried out three times, VIVE LE ROI! this being the cry of the French in extreme danger, as well as in exuberant joy;—as
though they wished to call their prince to their aid, or to testify to him that they are prepared to lay down their lives in his service.

As soon as the Saint-Geran perceived that we were near enough to render her assistance, she continued to fire guns regularly at intervals of three minutes. Monsieur de la Bourdontains caused great fires to be lighted at certain distances upon the strand, and sent to all the inhabitants of the neighborhood, in search of provisions, planks, cables, and empty barrels. A number of people soon arrived, accompanied by their negroes loaded with provisions and cordage, which they had brought from the plantations of Golden Dust, from the district of La Flaque, and from the river of the Rampart. One of the most aged of these planters, approaching the governor, said to him,—"We have heard all night hollow noises in the mountain; in the woods, the leaves of the trees are shaken, although there is no wind; the sea-birds seek refuge upon the land: it is certain that all these signs announce a hurricane." "Well, my friends," answered the governor, "we are prepared for it, and no doubt the vessel is also."

Everything, indeed, presaged the near approach of the hurricane. The centre of the clouds in the zenith was of a dismal black, while their skirts were tinged with a copper-colored hue. The air resounded with the cries of the tropic-birds, petrels, frigate-birds, and innumerable other sea-fowl, which notwithstanding the obscurity of the atmosphere, were seen coming from every point of the horizon, to seek for shelter in the island.

Towards nine in the morning we heard in the direction of the ocean the most terrific noise, like the sound of thunder mingled with that of torrents rushing down the steeps of lofty mountains. A general cry was heard of, "There is the hurricane!" and the next moment a frightful gust of wind dispelled the fog which covered the isle of Amber and its channel. The Saint-Geran then presented herself to our view, her deck crowded with people, her yards and topmasts lowered down, and her flag half-mast high, moored by four cables at her bow and one at her stern. She had anchored between the isle of Amber and the main land, inside the chain of reefs which encircles the island, and which she had passed through in a place where no vessel had ever passed before. She presented her head to the waves that rolled in from the open sea, and as each billow rushed into the narrow strait where she lay, her bow lifted to such a degree as to show her keel; and at the same
moment her stern, plunging into the water, disappeared alto-
gether from our sight, as if it were swallowed up by the surges.  
In this position, driven by the winds and waves towards the 
shore, it was equally impossible for her to return by the passage 
through which she had made her way; or, by cutting her 
cables, to strand herself upon the beach, from which she was 
separated by sandbanks and reefs of rocks.  Every billow 
which broke upon the coast advanced roaring to the bottom of 
the bay, throwing up heaps of shingle to the distance of fifty feet 
upon the land; then, rushing back, laid bare its sandy bed, 
from which it rolled immense stones, with a hoarse and dismal 
noise.  The sea, swelled by the violence of the wind, rose 
higher every moment; and the whole channel between this 
island and the isle of Amber was soon one vast sheet of white 
foam, full of yawning pits of black and deep billows.  Heaps 
of this foam, more than six feet high, were piled up at the 
bottom of the bay; and the winds which swept its surface car-
rried masses of it over the steep sea-bank, scattering it upon the 
land to the distance of half a league.  These innumerable 
white flakes, driven horizontally even to the very foot of the 
mountains, looked like snow issuing from the bosom of the 
ocean.  The appearance of the horizon portended a lasting 
tempest; the sky and the water seemed blended together. 
Thick masses of clouds, of a frightful form, swept across the 
zenith with the swiftness of birds, while others appeared motion-
less as rocks.  Not a single spot of blue sky could be discerned 
in the whole firmament; and a pale yellow gleam only light-
ened up all the objects of the earth, the sea, and the skies.

From the violent rolling of the ship, what we all dreaded 
happened at last.  The cables which held her bow were torn 
away; she then swung to a single hawser, and was instantly 
dashed upon the rocks, at the distance of half a cable’s length 
from the shore.  A general cry of horror issued from the spec-
tators.  Paul rushed forward to throw himself into the sea, 
when, seizing him by the arm, "My son," I exclaimed, "would 
you perish?"—"Let me go to save her," he cried, "or let me 
die!"  Seeing that despair had deprived him of reason, Dom-
ingo and I, in order to preserve him, fastened a long cord 
around his waist, and held it fast by the end.  Paul then pre-
cipitated himself towards the Saint-Geran, now swimming, 
and now walking upon the rocks.  Sometimes he had hopes 
of reaching the vessel, which the sea, by the reflux of its waves, 
had left almost dry, so that you could have walked round it on 
foot; but suddenly the billows, returning with fresh fury,
shrouded it beneath mountains of water, which then lifted it upright upon its keel. The breakers at the same moment threw the unfortunate Paul far upon the beach, his legs bathed in blood, his bosom wounded, and himself half dead. The moment he had recovered the use of his senses, he arose, and returned with new ardor towards the vessel, the parts of which now yawned asunder from the violent strokes of the billows. The crew then, despairing of their safety, threw themselves in crowds into the sea, upon yards, planks, hen-coops, tables, and barrels. At this moment we beheld an object which wrung our hearts with grief and pity; a young lady appeared in the stern-gallery of the Saint-Geran, stretching out her arms towards him who was making so many efforts to join her. It was Virginia. She had discovered her lover by his intrepidity. The sight of this amiable girl, exposed to such horrible danger, filled us with unutterable despair. As for Virginia, with a firm and dignified mien, she waved her hand, as if bidding us an eternal farewell. All the sailors had flung themselves into the sea, except one, who still remained upon the deck, and who was naked, and strong as Hercules. This man approached Virginia with respect, and, kneeling at her feet, attempted to force her to throw off her clothes; but she repulsed him with modesty, and turned away her head. Then were heard redoubled cries from the spectators, "Save her!—save her!—do not leave her!" But at that moment a mountain billow, of enormous magnitude, ingulfs itself between the isle of Amber and the coast, and engulfed the shattered vessel, towards which it rolled bellowing, with its black sides and foaming head. At this terrible sight the sailor flung himself into the sea; and Virginia, seeing death inevitable, crossed her hands upon her breast, and raising upwards her serene and beauteous eyes, seemed an angel prepared to take her flight to Heaven.

Oh, day of horror! Alas everything was swallowed up by the relentless billows. The surge threw some of the spectators, whom an impulse of humanity had prompted to advance towards Virginia, far upon the beach, and also the sailor who had endeavored to save her life. This man, who had escaped from almost certain death, kneeling on the sand, exclaimed,—

"Oh, my God I thou hast saved my life, but I would have given it willingly for that excellent young lady, who had persevered in not undressing herself as I had done." Domingo and I drew the unfortunate Paul to the shore. He was senseless, and blood was flowing from his mouth and ears. The
governor ordered him to be put into the hands of a surgeon, while we, on our part, wandered along the beach, in hopes that the sea would throw up the corpse of Virginia. But the wind having suddenly changed, as it frequently happens during hurricanes, our search was in vain: and we had the grief of thinking that we should not be able to bestow on this sweet and unfortunate girl the last sad duties. We retired from the spot overwhelmed with dismays, and our minds wholly occupied by one cruel loss, although numbers had perished in the wreck. Some of the spectators seemed tempted, from the fatal destiny of this virtuous girl, to doubt the existence of Providence: for there are in life such terrible, such unmerited evils, that even the hope of the wise is sometimes shaken.

In the mean time Paul, who began to recover his senses, was taken to a house in the neighborhood, till he was in a fit state to be removed to his own home. Thither I bent my way with Domingo to discharge the melancholy duty of preparing Virginia's mother and her friend for the disastrous event which had happened. When we had reached the entrance of the valley of the river of Fan-Palms, some negroes informed us that the sea had thrown up many pieces of the wreck in the opposite bay. We descended towards it and one of the first objects that struck my sight upon the beach was the corpse of Virginia. The body was half covered with sand, and preserved the attitude in which we had seen her perish. Her features were not sensibly changed, her eyes were closed, and her countenance was still serene; but the pale purple hues of death were blended on her cheek with the blush of virgin modesty. One of her hands was placed upon her clothes; and the other, which she held on her heart, was fast closed, and so stiffened, that it was with difficulty that I took from its grasp a small box. How great was my emotion when I saw that it contained the picture of Paul, which she had promised him never to part with while she lived! At the sight of this last mark of the fidelity and tenderness of the unfortunate girl, I wept bitterly. As for Domingo, he beat his breast, and pierced the air with his shrieks. With heavy hearts we then carried the body of Virginia to a fisherman's hut, and gave it in charge of some poor Malabar women, who carefully washed away the sand.

While they were employed in this melancholy office, we ascended the hill with trembling steps to the plantation. We found Madame de la Tour and Margaret at prayer; hourly expecting to have tidings from the ship. As soon as Madame
de la Tour saw me coming, she eagerly cried,—"Where is my daughter—my dear daughter,—my child?" My silence and my tears apprised her of her misfortune. She was instantly seized with convulsive stopping of the breath and agonizing pains, and her voice was only heard in sighs and groans. Margaret cried, "Where is my son? I do not see my son!" and fainted. We "ran to her assistance. In a short time she recovered, and being assured that Paul was safe, and under the care of the governor, she thought of nothing but of succoring her friend, who recovered from one fainting fit only to fall into another. Madame de la Tour passed the whole night in these cruel sufferings, and I became convinced that there was no sorrow like that of a mother. When she recovered her senses, she cast a fixed, unconscious look towards heaven. In vain her friend and myself pressed her hands in ours; in vain we called upon her by the most tender names; she appeared wholly insensible to these testimonials of our affection, and no sound issued from her oppressed bosom, but deep and hollow moans.

During the morning Paul was carried home in a palanquin. He had now recovered the use of his reason, but was unable to utter a word. His interview with his mother and Madame de la Tour, which I had dreaded, produced a better effect than all my cares. A ray of consolation gleamed on the countenance of the two unfortunate mothers. They pressed close to him, clasped him in their arms, and kissed him: their tears, which excess of anguish had till now dried up at the source, began to flow. Paul mixed his tears with theirs; and nature having thus found relief, a long stupor succeeded the convulsive pangs they had suffered, and afforded them a lethargic repose, which was in truth, like that of death.

Monsieur de la Bourdonnais sent to apprise me secretly that the corpse of Virginia had been borne to the town by his order, from whence it was to be transferred to the church of the Shaddock Grove. I immediately went down to Port Louis, where I found a multitude assembled from all parts of the island, in order to be present at the funeral solemnity, as if the isle had lost that which was nearest and dearest to it. The vessels in the harbor had their yards crossed, their flags half-mast, and fired guns at long intervals. A body of grenadiers led the funeral procession, with their muskets reversed, their muffled drums sending forth slow and dismal sounds. Dejection was depicted in the countenance of these warriors, who had so often braved death in battle without changing color. Eight young ladies of considerable families of the island,
dressed in white, and bearing palm-branches in their hands, carried the corpse of their amiable companion, which was covered with flowers. They were followed by a chorus of children, chanting hymns, and by the governor, his field officer, all the principal inhabitants of the island, and an immense crowd of people.

This imposing funeral solemnity had been ordered by the administration of the country, which was desirous of doing honor to the virtues of Virginia. But when the mournful procession arrived at the foot of this mountain, within sight of those cottages of which she had been so long an inmate and an ornament, diffusing happiness all around them, and which her loss had now filled with despair, the funeral pomp was interrupted, the hymns and anthems ceased, and the whole plain resounded with sighs and lamentations. Numbers of young girls ran from the neighboring plantations, to touch the coffin of Virginia with their handkerchiefs, and with chaplets and crowns of flowers, invoking her as a saint. Mothers asked of heaven a child like Virginia; lovers, a heart as faithful; the poor, as tender a friend; and the slaves as kind a mistress.

When the procession had reached the place of interment, some negresses of Madagascar and Caffres of Mozambique placed a number of baskets of fruit around the corpse, and hung pieces of stuff upon the adjoining trees, according to the custom of their several countries. Some Indian women from Bengal also, and from the coast of Malabar, brought cages full of small birds, which they set at liberty upon her coffin. Thus deeply did the loss of this amiable being affect the natives of different countries, and thus was the ritual of various religions performed over the tomb of unfortunate virtue.

It became necessary to place guards round her grave, and to employ gentle force in removing some of the daughters of the neighboring villagers, who endeavored to throw themselves into it, saying that they had no longer any consolation to hope for in this world, and that nothing remained for them but to die with their benefactress.

On the western side of the church of the Shaddock Grove is a small copse of bamboos, where, in returning from mass with her mother and Margaret, Virginia loved to rest herself, seated by the side of him whom she then called brother. This was the spot selected for her interment.

At his return from the funeral solemnity, Monsieur de la Bourdonnais came up here, followed by part of his numerous
retinue. He offered Madame de la Tour and her friend all the assistance it was in his power to bestow. After briefly expressing his indignation at the conduct of her unnatural aunt, he advanced to Paul, and said everything which he thought most likely to soothe and console him. "Heaven is my witness," said he, "that I wished to insure your happiness, and that of your family. My dear friend, you must go to France; I will obtain a commission for you, and during your absence I will take the same care of your mother as if she were my own." He then offered him his hand; but Paul drew away and turned his head aside, unable to bear his sight.

I remained for some time at the plantation of my unfortunate friends, that I might render to them and Paul those offices of friendship that were in my power, and which might alleviate, though they could not heal the wounds of calamity. At the end of three weeks Paul was able to walk; but his mind seemed to droop in proportion as his body gathered strength. He was insensible to everything; his look was vacant; and when asked a question, he made no reply. Madame de la Tour, who was dying, said to him often,—"My son, while I look at you, I think I see my dear Virginia." At the name of Virginia he shuddered, and hastened away from her, notwithstanding the entreaties of his mother, who begged him to come back to her friend. He used to go alone into the garden, and seat himself at the foot of Virginia’s cocoa-tree, with his eyes fixed upon the fountain. The governor's surgeon, who had shown the most humane attention to Paul and the whole family, told us that in order to cure the deep melancholy which had taken possession of his mind, we must allow him to do whatever he pleased, without contradiction: this, he said, afforded the only chance of overcoming the silence in which he persevered.

I resolved to follow this advice. The first use which Paul made of his returning strength was to absent himself from the plantation. Being determined not to lose sight of him I set out immediately, and desired Domingo to take some provisions and accompany us. The young man’s strength and spirits seemed renewed as he descended the mountain. He first took the road to the Shaddock Grove, and when he was near the church, in the Alley of Bamboos, he walked directly to the spot where he saw some earth fresh turned up; kneeling down there, and raising his eyes to heaven, he offered up a long prayer. This appeared to me a favorable symptom of the return of his reason; since this mark of confidence in the Supreme Being
showed that his mind was beginning to resume its natural functions. Domingo and I, following his example, fell upon our knees, and mingled our prayers with his. When he arose, he bent his way, paying little attention to us, towards the northern part of the island. As I knew that he was not only ignorant of the spot where the body of Virginia had been deposited, but even of the fact that it had been recovered from the waves, I asked him why he had offered up his prayer at the foot of those bamboos. He answered,—"We have been there so often."

He continued his course until we reached the borders of the forest, when night came on. I set him the example of taking some nourishment, and prevailed on him to do the same; and we slept upon the grass, at the foot of a tree. The next day I thought he seemed disposed to retrace his steps; for, after having gazed a considerable time from the plain upon the church of the Shaddock Grove, with its long avenues of bamboos, he made a movement as if to return home; but suddenly plunging into the forest, he directed his course towards the north. I guessed what was his design, and I endeavored, but in vain, to dissuade him from it. About noon we arrived at the quarter of Golden Dust. He rushed down to the sea-shore, opposite to the spot where the Saint-Geran had been wrecked. At the sight of the isle of Amber, and its channel, then smooth as a mirror, he exclaimed,—"Virginia! oh, my dear Virginia!" and fell senseless. Domingo and I carried him into the woods, where we had some difficulty in recovering him. As soon as he regained his senses, he wished to return to the sea-shore; but we conjured him not to renew his own anguish and ours by such cruel remembrances, and he took another direction. During a whole week he sought every spot where he had once wandered with the companion of his childhood. He traced the path by which she had gone to intercede for the slave of the Black River. He gazed again upon the banks of the river of the Three Breasts, where she had rested herself when unable to walk further, and upon the part of the wood where they had lost their way. All the haunts, which recalled to his memory the anxieties, the sports, the repasts, the benevolence of her he loved,—the river of the Sloping Mountain, my house, the neighboring cascade, the papaw tree she had planted, the grassy fields in which she loved to run, the openings of the forest where she used to sing, all in succession called forth his tears; and those very echoes which had so often resounded with their mutual shouts of joy, now repeated
only these accents of despair,—"Virginia! oh, my dear Virginia!"

During this savage and wandering life, his eyes became sunk and hollow, his skin assumed a yellow tint, and his health rapidly declined. Convinced that our present sufferings are rendered more acute by the bitter recollection of bygone pleasures, and that the passions gather strength in solitude, I resolved to remove my unfortunate friend from those scenes which recalled the remembrance of his loss, and to lead him to a more busy part of the island. With this view, I conducted him to the inhabited part of the elevated quarter of Williams, which he had never visited, and where the busy pursuits of agriculture and commerce ever occasioned much bustle and variety. Numbers of carpenters were employed in hewing down and squaring trees, while others were sawing them into planks; carriages were continually passing and repassing on the roads; numerous herds of oxen and troops of horses were feeding on those widespread meadows, and the whole country was dotted with the dwellings of man. On some spots the elevation of the soil permitted the culture of many of the plants of Europe: the yellow ears of ripe corn waved upon the plains; strawberry plants grew in the openings of the woods, and the roads were bordered by hedges of rose-trees. The freshness of the air, too, giving tension to the nerves, was favorable to the health of Europeans. From those heights, situated near the middle of the island, and surrounded by extensive forests, neither the sea, nor Port Louis, nor the church of the Shaddock Grove, nor any other object associated with the remembrance of Virginia could be discerned. Even the mountains, which present various shapes on the side of Port Louis, appear from hence like a long promontory, in a straight and perpendicular line, from which arise lofty pyramids of rock, whose summits are enveloped in the clouds.

Conducting Paul to these scenes, I kept him continually in action, walking with him in rain and sunshine, by day and by night. I sometimes wandered with him into the depths of the forests, or led him over untilled grounds, hoping that change of scene and fatigue might divert his mind from its gloomy meditations. But the soul of a lover finds everywhere the traces of the beloved object. Night and day, the calm of solitude and the tumult of crowds, are to him the same; time itself, which casts the shade of oblivion over so many other remembrances, in vain would tear that tender and sacred recollection from the heart. The needle, when touched by the load-
stone, however it may have been moved from its position, is no sooner left to repose, than it returns to the pole of its attraction. So, when I inquired of Paul, as we wandered amidst the plains of Williams,—"Where shall we now go?" he pointed to the north, and said, "Yonder are our mountains; let us return home."

I now saw that all the means I took to divert him from his melancholy were fruitless, and that no resource was left but an attempt to combat his passion by the arguments which reason suggested. I answered him,—"Yes, there are the mountains where once dwelt your beloved Virginia; and here is the picture you gave her, and which she held, when dying, to her heart—that heart, which even in its last moments only beat for you." I then presented to Paul the little portrait which he had given to Virginia on the borders of the cocoatree fountain. At this sight a gloomy joy overspread his countenance. He eagerly seized the picture with his feeble hands, and held it to his lips. His oppressed bosom seemed ready to burst with emotion, and his eyes were filled with tears which had no power to flow.

"My son," said I, "listen to one who is your friend, who was the friend of Virginia, and who, in the bloom of your hopes, has often endeavored to fortify your mind against the unforeseen accidents of life. What do you deplore with so much bitterness? Is it your own misfortunes, or those of Virginia, which affect you so deeply?

"Your own misfortunes are indeed severe. You have lost the most amiable of girls, who would have grown up to womanhood a pattern to her sex, one who sacrificed her own interests to yours: who preferred you to all that fortune could bestow, and considered you as the only recompense worthy of her virtues.

"But might not this very object, from whom you expected the purest happiness, have proved to you a source of the most cruel distress? She had returned poor and disinherited; all you could henceforth have partaken with her was your labor. Rendered more delicate by her education, and more courageous by her misfortunes, you might have beheld her every day sinking beneath her efforts to share and lighten your fatigues. Had she brought you children, they would only have served to increase her anxieties and your own, from the difficulty of sustaining at once your aged parents and your infant family.

"Very likely you will tell me that the governor would have helped you; but how do you know that, in a colony whose
governors are so frequently changed, you would have had others like Monsieur de la Bourdonnais?—that one might not have been sent destitute of good feeling and of morality?—that your young wife, in order to procure some miserable pit-tance, might not have been obliged to seek his favor? Had she been weak you would have been obliged to seek his favor; and if she had remained virtuous, you would have continued poor: forced even to consider yourself fortunate if, on account of the beauty and virtue of your wife, you had not to endure persecution from those who had promised you protection.

"It would still have remained to you, you may say, to have enjoyed a pleasure independent of fortune, that of protecting a beloved being, who, in proportion to her own helplessness, had more attached herself to you. You may fancy that your pains and sufferings would have served to en-dear you to each other, and that your passion would have gathered strength from your mutual misfortunes. Undoubtedly virtuous love does find consolation even in such melancholy retrospects. But Virginia is no more; yet those persons still live, whom, next to yourself, she held most dear; her mother, and your own: your inconsolable affliction is bringing them both to the grave. Place your happiness as she did hers, in affording them succor. My son, beneficence is the happiness of the virtuous: there is no greater or more certain enjoyment on the earth. Schemes of pleasure, repose, luxuries, wealth, and glory are not suited to man, weak, wandering, and transitory as he is. See how rapidly one step towards the acquisi-tion of fortune has precipitated us all to the lowest abyss of misery! You were opposed to it, it is true; but who would not have thought that Virginia's voyage would terminate in her happiness and your own? an invitation from a rich and aged relation, the advice of a wise governor, the approbation of the whole colony, and the well-advised authority of her confessor, decided the lot of Virginia. Thus do we run to our ruin, de-ceived even by the prudence of those who watch over us: it would be better, no doubt, not to believe them, nor even to listen to the voice or lean on the hopes of a deceitful world. But all men,—those you see occupied in these plains, those who go abroad to seek their fortunes, and those in Europe who enjoy repose from the labors of others, are liable to reverses! not one is secure from losing, at some period, all that he most values,—greatness, wealth, wife, children, and friends. Most of these would have their sorrow increased by the remembrance of their own imprudence. But you have nothing with which
you can reproach yourself. You have been faithful in your love. In the bloom of youth, by not departing from the dictates of nature, you evinced the wisdom of a sage. Your views were just, because they were pure, simple, and disinterested. You had, besides, on Virginia, sacred claims which nothing could countervail. You have lost her: but it is neither your own imprudence, nor your avarice, nor your false wisdom which has occasioned this misfortune, but the will of God, who has employed the passions of others to snatch from you the object of your love; God, from whom you derive everything, who knows what is most fitting for you, and whose wisdom has not left you any cause for the repentance and despair which succeed the calamities that are brought upon us by ourselves.

"Vainly, in your misfortunes, do you say to yourself 'I have not deserved them.' Is it then the calamity of Virginia—her death and her present condition that you deplore? She has undergone the fate allotted to all,—to high birth, to beauty, and even to empires themselves. The life of man, with all its projects, may be compared to a tower, at whose summit is death. When your Virginia was born, she was condemned to die; happily for herself, she is released from life before losing her mother, or yours, or you; saved, thus, from undergoing pangs worse than those of death itself.

"Learn then, my son, that death is a benefit to all men: it is the night of that restless day we call by the name of life. The diseases, the griefs, the vexations, and the fears, which perpetually embitter our life as long as we possess it, molest us no more in the sleep of death. If you inquire into the history of those men who appear to have been the happiest, you will find that they have bought their apparent felicity very dear; public consideration, perhaps, by domestic evils; the rare happiness of being beloved, by continual sacrifices; and often, at the expiration of a life devoted to the good of others, they see themselves surrounded only by false friends, and ungrateful relations. But Virginia was happy to her very last moment. When with us, she was happy in partaking of the gifts of nature; when far from us, she found enjoyment in the practice of virtue; and even at the terrible moment in which we saw her perish, she still had cause for self-gratulation. For, whether she cast her eyes on the assembled colony, made miserable by her expected loss, or on you, my son, who, with so much intrepidity, were endeavoring to save her, she must have seen how dear she was to all. Her mind was fortified against the future by
the remembrance of her innocent life; and at that moment she received the reward which Heaven reserves for virtue,—a courage superior to danger. She met death with a serene countenance.

"My son! God gives all the trials of life to virtue, in order to show that virtue alone can support them, and even find in them happiness and glory. When he designs for it an illustrious reputation, he exhibits it on a wide theatre, and contending with death. Then does the courage of virtue shine forth as an example, and the misfortunes to which it has been exposed receive forever, from posterity, the tribute of their tears. This is the immortal monument reserved for virtue in a world where everything else passes away, and where the names, even of the greater number of kings themselves, are soon buried in eternal oblivion.

"Meanwhile Virginia still exists. My son, you see that everything changes on this earth, but that nothing is ever lost. No art of man can annihilate the smallest particle of matter; can, then, that which has possessed reason, sensibility, affection, virtue and religion be supposed capable of destruction, when the very elements with which it is clothed are imperishable? Ah! however happy Virginia may have been with us, she is now much more so. There is a God, my son; it is unnecessary for me to prove it to you, for the voice of all nature loudly proclaims it. The wickedness of mankind lead them to deny the existence of a Being, whose justice they fear. But your mind is fully convinced of his existence, while his works are ever before your eyes. Do you then believe that he would leave Virginia without recompense? Do you think that the same Power which inclosed her noble soul in a form so beautiful,—so like an emanation from itself, could not have saved her from the waves?—that he who has ordained the happiness of man here, by laws unknown to you, cannot prepare a still higher degree of felicity for Virginia by other laws, of which you are equally ignorant? Before we were born into this world, could we, do you imagine, even if we were capable of thinking at all, have formed any idea of our existence here? And now that we are in the midst of this gloomy and transitory life, can we foresee what is beyond the tomb, or in what manner we shall be emancipated from it? Does God, like man, need this little globe, the earth, as a theatre for the display of his intelligence and his goodness?—and can he only dispose of human life in the territory of death? There is not, in the entire ocean, a single drop of water which is not peopled with living beings appertaining to
man: and does there exist nothing for him in the heavens above his head? What! is there no supreme intelligence, no divine goodness, except on this little spot where we are placed? In those innumerable glowing fires,—in those infinite fields of light which surround them, and which neither storms nor darkness can extinguish, is there nothing but empty space and an eternal void? If we, weak and ignorant as we are, might dare to assign limits to that Power from whom we have received everything, we might possibly imagine that we were placed on the very confines of his empire, where life is perpetually struggling with death, and innocence forever in danger from the power of tyranny!

"Somewhere, then, without doubt, there is another world, where virtue will receive its reward. Virginia is now happy. Ah! if from the abode of angels she could hold communication with you, she would tell you, as she did when she bade you her last adieu,—'O, Paul! life is but a scene of trial. I have been obedient to the laws of nature, love, and virtue. I crossed the seas to obey the will of my relations; I sacrificed wealth in order to keep my faith; and I preferred the loss of life to disobeying the dictates of modesty. Heaven found that I had fulfilled my duties, and has snatched me forever from all the miseries I might have endured myself, and all I might have felt for the miseries of others. I am placed far above the reach of all human evils, and you pity me! I am become pure and unchangeable as a particle of light, and you would recall me to the darkness of human life! O, Paul! O, my beloved friend! I recollect those days of happiness, when in the morning we felt the delightful sensations excited by the unfolding beauties of nature; when we seemed to rise with the sun to the peaks of those rocks, and then to spread with his rays over the bosom of the forests. We experienced a delight, the cause of which we could not comprehend. In the innocence of our desires, we wished to be all sight, to enjoy the rich colors of the early dawn; all smell, to taste a thousand perfumes at once; all hearing, to listen to the singing of our birds; and all hearts, to be capable of gratitude for those mingled blessings. Now, at the source of the beauty whence flows all that is delightful upon earth, my soul intuitively sees, tastes, hears, touches, what before she could only be made sensible of through the medium of our weak organs. Ah! what language can describe these shores of eternal bliss, which I inhabit forever! All that infinite power and heavenly goodness could create to console the unhappy: all that the friendship of
numberless beings, exulting in the same felicity can impart, we enjoy in unmixed perfection. Support, then, the trial which is now allotted to you, that you may heighten the happiness of your Virginia by love which will know no termination,—by a union which will be eternal. There I will calm your regrets, I will wipe away your tears. Oh, my beloved friend! my youthful husband! raise your thoughts towards the infinite, to enable you to support the evils of a moment.'

My own emotion choked my utterance. Paul, looking at me steadfastly, cried,—"She is no more! she is no more!" and a long fainting fit succeeded these words of woe. When restored to himself, he said, "Since death is a good, and since Virginia is happy, I will die too, and be united to Virginia." Thus the motives of consolation I had offered, only served to nourish his despair. I was in the situation of a man who attempts to save a friend sinking in the midst of a flood, and who obstinately refuses to swim. Sorrow had completely overwhelmed his soul. Alas! the trials of early years prepare man for the afflictions of after-life; but Paul had never experienced any.

I took him back to his own dwelling, where I found his mother and Madame de la Tour in a state of increased languor and exhaustion, but Margaret seemed to droop the most. Lively characters, upon whom petty troubles have but little effect, sink the soonest under great calamities.

"O my good friend," said Margaret, "I thought last night I saw Virginia, dressed in white, in the midst of groves and delicious gardens. She said to me, 'I enjoy the most perfect happiness:' and then approaching Paul with a smiling air, she bore him away with her. While I was struggling to retain my son, I felt that I myself too was quitting the earth, and that I followed with inexpressible delight. I then wished to bid my friend farewell, when I saw that she was hastening after me, accompanied by Mary and Domingo. But the strangest circumstance remains yet to be told; Madame de la Tour has this very night had a dream exactly like mine in every possible respect."

"My dear friend," I replied, "nothing, I firmly believe, happens in this world without the permission of God. Future events, too, are sometimes revealed in dreams."

Madame de la Tour then related to me her dream which was exactly the same as Margaret's in every particular; and as I had never observed in either of these ladies any propensity to superstition, I was struck with the singular coincidence of their dreams, and I felt convinced that they would soon be
realized. The belief that future events are sometimes revealed to us during sleep, is one that is widely diffused among the nations of the earth. The greatest men of antiquity have had faith in it; among whom may be mentioned Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, the Scipios, the two Catos, and Brutus, none of whom were weak-minded persons. Both the Old and the New Testament furnish us with numerous instances of dreams that came to pass. As for myself, I need only, on this subject, appeal to my experience, as I have more than once had good reason to believe that superior intelligences, who interest themselves in our welfare, communicate with us in these visions of the night. Things which surpass the light of human reason cannot be proved by arguments derived from that reason; but still, if the mind of man is an image of that of God, since man can make known his will to the ends of the earth by secret missives, may not the Supreme Intelligence which governs the universe employ similar means to attain a like end? One friend consoles another by a letter, which, after passing through many kingdoms, and being in the hands of various individuals at enmity with each other, brings at last joy and hope to the breast of a single human being. May not in like manner the Sovereign Protector of innocence come in some secret way, to the help of a virtuous soul, which puts its trust in him alone? Has he occasion to employ visible means to effect his purpose in this, whose ways are hidden in all his ordinary works?

Why should we doubt the evidence of dreams? for what is our life, occupied as it is with vain and fleeting imaginations, other than a prolonged vision of the night?

Whatever may be thought of this in general, on the present occasion the dreams of my friends were soon realized. Paul expired two months after the death of his Virginia, whose name dwelt on his lips in his expiring moments. About a week after the death of her son, Margaret saw her last hour approach with that serenity which virtue only can feel. She bade Madame de la Tour a most tender farewell, “in the certain hope,” she said, “of a delightful and eternal re-union. Death is the greatest of blessings to us,” added she, “and we ought to desire it. If life be a punishment, we should wish for its termination; if it be a trial, we should be thankful that it is short.”

The governor took care of Domingo and Mary, who were no longer able to labor, and who survived their mistresses but a short time. As for poor Fidele, he pined to death, soon after he had lost his master.

I afforded an asylum in my dwelling to Madame de la Tour,
who bore up under her calamities with incredible elevation of mind. She had endeavored to console Paul and Margaret till their last moments, as if she herself had no misfortunes of her own to bear. When they were no more, she used to talk to me every day of them as of beloved friends, who were still living near her. She survived them however, but one month. Far from reproaching her aunt for the afflictions she had caused, her benign spirit prayed to God to pardon her, and to appease that remorse which we heard began to torment her, as soon as she had sent Virginia away with so much inhumanity.

Conscience, that certain punishment of the guilty, visited with all its terrors the mind of this unnatural relation. So great was her torment, that life and death became equally insupportable to her. Sometimes she reproached herself with the untimely fate of her lovely niece, and with the death of her mother, which had immediately followed it. At other times she congratulated herself for having repulsed far from her two wretched creatures, who, she said, had both dishonored their family by their grovelling inclinations. Sometimes, at the sight of the many miserable objects with which Paris abounds, she would fly into a rage, and exclaim,—"Why are not these idle people sent off to the colonies?" As for the notions of humanity, virtue, and religion, adopted by all nations, she said, they were only the inventions of their rulers, to serve political purposes. Then, flying all at once to the other extreme, she abandoned herself to superstitious terrors, which filled her with mortal fears. She would then give abundant alms to the wealthy ecclesiastics who governed her, beseeching them to appease the wrath of God by the sacrifice of her fortune,—as if the offering to Him of the wealth she had withheld from the miserable could please her Heavenly Father! In her imagination she often beheld fields of fire, with burning mountains, wherein hideous spectres wandered about, loudly calling on her by name. She threw herself at her confessor's feet, imagining every description of agony and torture; for Heaven—just Heaven, always sends to the cruel the most frightful views of religion and a future state.

Atheist, thus, and fanatic in turn, holding both life and death in equal horror, she lived on for several years. But what completed the torments of her miserable existence, was that very object to which she had sacrificed every natural affection. She was deeply annoyed at perceiving that her fortune must go, at her death, to relations whom she hated, and she deter-
mined to alienate as much of it as she could. They, however, taking advantage of her frequent attacks of low spirits, caused her to be secluded as a lunatic, and her affairs to be put into the hands of trustees. Her wealth, thus completed her ruin; and, as the possession of it had hardened her own heart, so did its anticipation corrupt the hearts of those who coveted it from her. At length she died; and, to crown her misery, she retained reason enough at last to be sensible that she was plundered and despised by the very persons whose opinions had been her rule of conduct during her whole life.

On the same spot, and at the foot of the same shrubs as his Virginia, was deposited the body of Paul; and round about them lie the remains of their tender mothers and their faithful servants. No marble marks the spot of their humble graves, no inscription records their virtues; but their memory is engraved upon the hearts of those whom they have befriended, in indelible characters. Their spirits have no need of the pomp, which they shunned during their life; but if they still take an interest in what passes upon earth, they no doubt love to wander beneath the roofs of these humble dwellings, inhabited by industrious virtue, to console poverty discontented with its lot, to cherish in the hearts of lovers the sacred flame of fidelity, and to inspire a taste for the blessings of nature, a love of honest labor, and a dread of the allurements of riches.

The voice of the people, which is often silent with regard to the monuments raised to kings, has given to some parts of this island names which will immortalize the loss of Virginia. Near the isle of Amber, in the midst of sandbanks, is a spot called The Pass of the Saint-Geran, from the name of the vessel which was there lost. The extremity of that point of land which you see yonder, three leagues off, half covered with water, and which the Saint-Geran could not double the night before the hurricane, is called the Cape of Misfortune; and before us, at the end of the valley, is the Bay of the Tomb, where Virginia was found buried in the sand; as if the waves had sought to restore her corpse to her family, that they might render it the last sad duties on those shores where so many years of her innocent life had been passed.

Joined thus in death, ye faithful lovers, who were so tenderly united! unfortunate mothers! beloved family! these woods which sheltered you with their foliage,—these fountains which flowed for you,—these hill-sides upon which you reposed, still deplore your loss! No one has since presumed to cultivate that desolate spot of land, or to rebuild those humble
cottages. Your goats are become wild: your orchards are destroyed; your birds are all fled, and nothing is heard but the cry of the sparrow-hawk, as it skims in quest of prey around this rocky basin. As for myself, since I have ceased to behold you, I have felt friendless and alone, like a father bereft of his children, or a traveller who wanders by himself over the face of the earth."

Ending with these words, the good old man retired, bathed in tears; and my own, too, had flowed more than once during this melancholy recital.
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THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS,
Prince of Abyssinia.

CHAPTER I.
Description of a palace in a valley.

Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the history of Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the Father of Waters begins his course; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place, which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could without the help of engines open or shut them.
From the mountains on every side, rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life, and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity; to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight, which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those, on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to
the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time, and the building stood from century to century deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage, every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper storeys by private galleries, or by subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had deposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigences of the kingdom: and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperor attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAPTER II.

The discontent of Rasselas in the happy valley.

Here the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practiced to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages who instructed them told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the happy valley. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments; and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful: few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed
their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves; all but Rasselas, who in the twenty-sixth year of his age began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him; he rose abruptly in the midst of the song and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change and endeavored to renew his love of pleasure; he neglected their officiousness, and repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humor made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats, that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporal necessities with myself; he is hungry and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps; he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy; I long again to be hungry, that I may again quicken my attention. The birds pick the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the lutanist and the singer, but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted.
with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification; or he has some desires, distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and, seeing the moon rising walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me that walk thus among you, burdened with myself; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free: I fear pain when I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated. Surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned; uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

**CHAPTER III.**

The wants of him that wants nothing.

On the next day his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference; which the prince having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man thus intrude upon me; shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.
The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace, to loneliness and silence? "I fly from pleasures," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others." "You, sir," said the sage, "are the first who has complained of misery in the happy valley. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all that the emperor of Abyssinia can bestow; here is neither labor to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labor or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply; if you want nothing how are you unhappy?"

"That I want nothing," said the prince, "nor that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint. If I had any known want, I should have a certain wish; that wish would excite endeavor, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain, or lament when the day breaks, and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy that I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much; give me something to desire."

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. "Sir," said he, "if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness."
CHAPTER IV.

The Prince continues to grieve and muse.

At this time the sound of music proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame and grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long; or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet with distinctness either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavored to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened; he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought.

His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen; to place himself in various conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures; but his benevolence always
terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle that he forgot his real solitude; and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer, with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts; but, resolving to weary, by perseverance, him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then, raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!"

Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse; and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four and twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors and the absurd institutions of my country; I remember it with disgust, yet without remorse: but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I
formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored; I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: in this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies: the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and of the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves; and was awakened to more vigorous exertion by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it, having not known or not considered how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardor to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He, for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAPTER V.

The Prince Meditates his Escape.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature, which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in the grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the powers of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels,
and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop anybody of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labor and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavors, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAPTER VI.

A Dissertation on the Art of Flying.

Among the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labor for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that ran through it gave a constant motion; the instruments of soft music were placed at
proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honors. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that, instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains: having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire further, before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly; to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied; I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent; and wings will be of no great use unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labor of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls, but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction and the body's gravity will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall; no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity
is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philoso-
pher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see
the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and pre-
senting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the coun-
tries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendi-
tent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cit-
ies and deserts! To survey with equal serenity the marts
of trade and the fields of battle; mountains infested by bar-
barians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty and lulled by
peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all
his passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face
of nature from one extremity to the other!

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired; but I
am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions
of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respira-
tion is difficult upon lofty mountains, yet from these precipices,
though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very
easy to fall: therefore I suspect, that, from any height where
life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if
all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will
favor my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I
have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find
the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommo-
dated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my
task to-morrow, and in a year expect to tower in the air beyond
the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this
condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you
shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great
an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal
good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay
the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should
with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the
security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them
from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds,
neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas could afford any security.
A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light
at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful
region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the re-
treat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by
the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm
on the coast of the southern sea."
The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished; and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions awhile to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

The Prince finds a Man of Learning.

The prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavors to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had ever been known; the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed upon the various
conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

The History of Imlac.

The close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased, and the princes retired. Rasselas then called for his companion and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and to hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Afric and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments and narrow comprehension: he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which
belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people that I may declare his crimes to the emperor."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardor is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abyssinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated: but no form of government has yet been discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on the one part, and subjection on the other, and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand, but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration."

"My father," proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education than such as might qualify me for commerce; and, discovering in me great strength of memory and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be sometime the richest man in Abyssinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right; but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he whose real wants are supplied must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would ex-
pose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been in-
structed, by successive masters, in all the literature of my
native country. As every hour taught me something new, I
lived in a continual course of gratifications; but as I advanced
towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I
had been used to look on my instructors: because, when the
lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than com-
mon men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce:
and, opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out
ten thousand pieces of gold. 'This, young man,' said he, 'is
the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less
than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony
have increased it. This is your own to waste or to improve.
If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for
death before you be rich; if, in four years, you double your
stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live
together as friends and partners; for he shall be always equal
with me who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.'"

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of
cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. When
I cast my eye upon the expanse of waters, my heart bounded
like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable
curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this oppor-
tunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning
sciences unknown in Abyssinia.

"I remember that my father had obliged me to the improve-
ment of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to
violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur; and
therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and, by
drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of
curiosity.

"As I was supposed to trade without connection with my
father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the mas-
ter of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I
had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage: it was suffi-
cient for me that, wherever I wandered, I should see a coun-
try which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship
bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my
intention."
"When I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and, thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round without satiety, but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for awhile whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities: it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life though I should miss it in nature.

"With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practiced, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval amusements when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn at the usual expense the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince. "Is there such depravity in man as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority; but your ignorance was merely accidental, which, being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they
had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning as betraying you.”

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate, it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich, and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince; "I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves, and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect anything that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamored of his goodness.

"My credit was now so high that the merchants, with whom I travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

"They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe: but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money; and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

"Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking char-
acters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

"From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike; who live without any settled habitation; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds; and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions."

CHAPTER X.

Imlac's History continued. A Dissertation on Poetry.

"Wherever I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the Angelic Nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best; whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent, which it received by accident at first: or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art; that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen: I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

"Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw everything with a new purpose; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged moun-
tains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful and whatever is dreadful must be familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety; for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study; and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived, till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendent truths, which will always be the same; he
must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; content the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superior to time and place.

"His labor is not yet at an end; he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony."

CHAPTER XI.

Imlac's Narrative continued. A Hint on Pilgrimage.

Imlac now felt the enthusiastic fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou hast convinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult."

"So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will at present hear no more of his labors. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe; the nations which are now in possession of all power and all knowledge: whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleet command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom, and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is difficult to wish for anything that may not be obtained: a thousand arts, of which we never heard, are continually laboring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful; or why, since they can so easily visit Asia or Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiatics and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, sir, than we," answered Imlac,
"because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate
over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why
their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can
be given, but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When," said the prince with a sigh, "shall I be able to
visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of
nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up
the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I
am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in
that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom
and piety, to which the best and wisest of every land must be
continually resorting;"

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few
visitants to Palestine; for many numerous and learned sects in
Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious or deride
it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made
me acquainted with diversity of opinions: it will be too long to
hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered
them, tell me the result;"

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety,
may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles
upon which it is performed. Long journeys in search of truth
are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regula-
tion of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change
of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevit-
ably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every
day to view the fields where great actions have been performed,
and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of
the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country
whence our religion had its beginning: and I believe no man
surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy
resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propiti-
ated in one place than in another is the dream of idle super-
stition; but that some places may operate upon our minds in
an uncommon manner is an opinion which hourly experience
will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more
successfully combated in Palestine will, perhaps, find himself
mistaken; yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks
they will be more freely pardoned dishonors at once his reason
and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I
will consider them another time. What have you found to be
the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"
“There is so much infelicity,” said the poet, “in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge, is certainly one of the means of pleasure as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced: it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

“In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines for the despatch of many laborious works which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all public inconveniences; they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure.”

“They are surely happy,” said the prince, “who have all these conveniences, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts.”

“The Europeans,” answered Imlac, are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is everywhere a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed.”

CHAPTER XII.

The Story of Imlac continued.

“I am not yet willing,” said the prince, to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would choose my friends among the wise and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkind-
ness. My children should, by my care, be learned had pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood and received. What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia, in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose, after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abyssinia. I hastened into Egypt, and notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes; for in a city, populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen, and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honor of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty
remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

"A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my disappointment, and endeavored to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit because my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at last with solicitations and repulses, I resolved to hide myself forever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the happy valley should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favor, and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?" "Tell me without reserve; art thou content with thy condition? or, dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual visit of the emperor invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollections of the incidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration, that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but that of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another: he that knows himself despised will always be envious; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live
in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by
which they allure others to a state which they feel to be
wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless mis-
ery. They are weary of themselves and of each other, and
expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty
which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all man-
kind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man
can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with
pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission into
captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of
their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my
whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the happy
valley. I have examined the mountains on every side, and find
myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my
prison: thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of
my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in
the choice of life."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult;
and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world,
which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in
the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests and boil-
ing with whirlpools: you will be sometimes overwhelmed with
the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks
of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and
anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of
quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the
prince; "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and
since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident that thy
former state was better than this. Whatever be the conse-
quence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine
own eyes of the various conditions of men, and then to make
deliberately my choice of life."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger
restraints than my persuasions; yet; if your determination is
fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impos-
sible to diligence and skill."
CHAPTER XIII.

Rasselas Discovers the Means of Escape.

The prince now dismissed his favorite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell in silent vexation. He thought that even the happy valley might be endured with such a companion; and that if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion; "knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanics laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the cony. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labor upward till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened, early in the morning, to choose a place proper for their mind. They clambered
with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favored their design. The second and third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work the next day with more eagerness than vigor. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labor for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will some time have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but by perseverance; yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigor three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day; and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes and fears than reason may suggest: if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAPTER XIV.

Rasselas and Imlac Receive an Unexpected Visit.

They had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their thoughts with the approach of liberty, when the prince coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.
“Do not imagine,” said the princess, “that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since, then, not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following.”

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the mean time, she should watch lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labor was at an end: they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasure of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father’s dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

The Prince and Princess leave the Valley, and see many Wonders.

The prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac’s direction, they might hide in their clothes; and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The prin-
cess was followed only by a single favorite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed: but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but, being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and ate the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavor than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journeys, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing that, though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having anything to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frightened because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behavior, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac, having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea-coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom everything was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further,
Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpracticed in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage; and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAPTER XVI.

They enter Cairo, and find every man happy:

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honorable: I will act as a merchant who has no other end of travel than curiosity; it will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure to make your choice of life."

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and for some days continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favorite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence, that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favor. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.
The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money; but the ladies could not for a long time comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had anything uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his choice of life.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gayety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laughter of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence; "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat awhile silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court. I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may by examining his own mind guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gayety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air and volatility of fancy as might have suited beings of a higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions inaccessible to care or sorrow; yet be-
lieve me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the choice of life."

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But, surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly cooperate; and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbor better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure; surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Prince associates with Young Men of Spirit and Gayety.

Rasselas rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted; but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and law; but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.
The prince soon concluded that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are sometimes to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils not to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Prince finds a Wise and Happy Man.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter; he followed the stream of people and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with
great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation, and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhortcd his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience; concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in everyone's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being; and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire, the teachers of morality; they discourse like angels, but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments,
paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Glimpse of Pastoral Life.

He was still eager upon the same inquiry; and having heard of a hermit that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and inquire whether that felicity, which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils or enduring them?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him; and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their
flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds' tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents, and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state; they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves as condemned to labor for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous; and was yet in doubt, whether life had anything that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAPTER XX.

The Danger of Prosperity.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the shades were darkest: the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces: and a rivulet that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its stream sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone heaped together to increase its murmurs,
They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who he could be, that, in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced, they heard the sound of music, and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still further, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have hitherto been protected against him by the princes of the country; but as the favor of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile; and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation that she retired to her apartment.

They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.
CHAPTER XXI.

The Happiness of Solitude. The Hermit's History.

They came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees; at such a distance from the cataract that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labor that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other, mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniencies for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him; and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended: we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the choice of life."

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince,
"who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigor was beginning to decay, I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbor, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasures of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grew in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment than led by devotion into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but after a short pause offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.
RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: everyone was desirous to dictate to the rest, and everyone was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him a hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labor of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion from duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of the public were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself to review his life and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly impressed that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our tormentor, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to inquire after happe-
ness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct: they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, That deviation from nature is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse; I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature?"

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up, and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.
CHAPTER XXIII.

The Prince and his Sister divide between them the Work of Observation.

Rasselas returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto," said she, "known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power; and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favors not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendor of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good; or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Prince Examines the Happiness of High Stations.

Rasselas applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition whom all approached with rever-
ence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man, only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power?" said Rasselas to his sister; "is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The Sultan that had advanced him was murdered by the Janizaries, and his successor had other views and different favorites.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Princess Pursues her Inquiry with more Diligence than Success.

The princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families; for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good humor, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful; but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother, to be much pleased with childish levity, and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as
they were, could not be preserved pure, but were imbittered by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient: everything floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow to discharge their secrets in her ear: and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. “Answer,” said she, “great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint!”

“You are then,” said Rasselas, “not more successful in private houses than I have been in courts.” “I have, since the last partition of our provinces,” said the princess, “enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest show of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

“I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw many poor, whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendor, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest; they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow,”
"This, however, was an evil which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants than pleased with my readiness to succor them, and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favors."

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Princess Continues her Remarks upon Private Life.

NEKAYAH, perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions and exposed to revolutions. An unpracticed observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy; in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

"Parents and children seldom act in concert: each child endeavors to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children: thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colors of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

"Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigor, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man defies prudence: the youth commits
himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who
intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore
acts with openness and candor; but his father, having suf-
fered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too
often allured to practice it. Age looks with anger on the
temper of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulous
of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live
on to love less and less: and if those whom nature has thus
closely united are the tormentors of each other, where shall we
look for tenderness and consolation."

"Surely," said the prince, "you must have been unfortunate
in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that
the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects
by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and
fatally necessary; but yet it is not easy to avoid. We seldom
see that a whole family is virtuous; the good and evil cannot
well agree; and the evil can yet less agree with one another;
even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues
are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general,
those parents have most reverence that most deserve it: for he
that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves
of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some
are kept in continual anxiety by the caprice of rich relations,
whom they cannot please and dare not offend. Some hus-
bands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and as it is
always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or
virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or
vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince,
"I shall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my
interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my
partner's fault."

"I have met," said the princess, "with many who live
single for that reason; but I have never found that their pru-
dence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time with-
out friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid them-
selves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish
amusements or vicious delights. They act as beings under the
constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds
with rancor; and their tongues with censure. They are
peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws
of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to
disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude; it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What, then, is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we inquire the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself that has no other inclination or regard."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Disquisition upon Greatness.

The conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity; the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another: those that are not favored will think themselves injured: and, since favors can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess, "which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indulgence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet he that sees inferior desert advanced above him will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by
nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist forever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution; he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favorites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover, in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those, from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavor to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous, and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural and almost all political evils are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain."
CHAPTER XXVIII.

Rasselas and Nekeyah Continue their Conversation.

"Dear princess," said Rasselas, "you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by producing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

"On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen, they must be endured. But it is evident that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestic evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward: the necessaries of life are required and obtained; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

"Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavor to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform; each laboring for his own happiness by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

"Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness."

"I know not," said the princess, "whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery."
When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues where both are supported by consciousness of good intention, I am sometimes disposed to think, with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference; but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder that, judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other, as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we differ from each other, when we see only parts of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politics and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies his opinion."

"Let us not add," said the prince, "to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavor to vie with each other in subtleties of argument. We are employed in a search, of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution: will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of Heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

"How the world is to be peopled," returned Nekayah, "is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourselves."
CHAPTER XXIX.

The Debate of Marriage Continued.

"The good of the whole," says Rasselas, "is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the incommodities of a single life are, in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and avoidable.

"I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardor of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children; the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

"Surely all these evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will allow better
opportunities of inquiry and selection: one advantage, at least, will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children.”

“What reason cannot collect,” said Nekayah, “and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those whose accuracy of remark and comprehensiveness of knowledge made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other, at a time when opinions are fixed, and habits are established; when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

“It is scarcely possible that two, travelling through the world, under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken: he that attempts to change the course of his own life very often labors in vain: and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves?”

“But surely,” interposed the prince, “you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?”

“Thus it is,” said Nekayah, “that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason never can decide; questions that elude investigation, and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestic day.
"Those who marry at an advanced age will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation; as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners."

"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms my prejudice in favor of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Those conditions, which flatter hope and attract desire, are so constituted, that, as we approach one, we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both, but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavors to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAPTER XXX.

Imlac enters, and changes the Conversation.

Here Imlac entered and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search."
"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants; a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestic life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders, and from the wonders which time has spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

"My curiosity," said Rasselas, "does not very strongly lead me to survey the piles of stone or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

"The things that are now before us," said the princess, "require attention and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which never can return, and heroes, whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of man requires or allows?"

"To know anything," returned the poet, "we must know its effects; to see men we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated, or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present, we must oppose it to the past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

"The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may be properly charged with evil who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

"There is no part of history so generally useful as that which
relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern have understandings to cultivate.

"Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labors of art are always at hand for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

"When the eye or the imagination is struck with an uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects."

"I am willing," said the prince, "to see all that can deserve my search." "And I," said the princess, "shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity."

"The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry," said Imlac, "are the Pyramids; fabrics raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these the greatest is still standing, very little injured by time."

"Let us visit them to-morrow," said Nekayah. "I have often heard of the Pyramids, and shall not rest until I have seen them within and without with my own eyes."

CHAPTER XXXI.

They visit the Pyramids.

The resolution being taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the Pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to everything remarkable, stopped
from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great Pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabric intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world; he showed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the Pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments; and, having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage, when the favorite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in forever." She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparitions," said the prince, "I will promise you safety; there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason why spectres should haunt the Pyramid more than other places, or why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?"
"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abyssinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die," returned the lady, "let her command some death less dreadful than enclosure in this horrid cavern; you know I dare not disobey you; I must go if you command me; but, if I once enter, I never shall come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof; and, embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was yet not satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the Pyramid. "Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I must not learn cowardice; nor leave at last undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAPTER XXXII.

They enter the Pyramid.

Pekuah descended to the tents, and the rest entered the Pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in the arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descend upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness rendered the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the Pyramids no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labor of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only
in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

"I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a Pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands laboring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the Pyramids, and confess thy folly."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Princess meets with an unexpected Misfortune.

They rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favorite a long narrative of dark labyrinths and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected; the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the Pyramid," said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us: we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried her away; the Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief.
Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir," said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valor? the Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

They return to Cairo without Pekuah.

There was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo, repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness, which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find anything proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favorite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor indeed could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set them-
selves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavored to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something, she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavored to raise in each other grew more languid; and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favorite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blamable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to Him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connection of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault: but, if we miscarry, the disappointment is irreme-
diably imbittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him!

“Consider, princess, what would have been your condition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and, being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how you would have borne the thought if you had forced her into the Pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror?”

“Had either happened,” said Nekayah, “I could not have endured life till now: I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself.”

“This, at least,” said Imlac, is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it.”

CHAPTER XXXV.

The Princess languishes for want of Pekuah.

NEKAYAH, being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was from that time delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women by whom she was attended knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great desire to collect notions which she had not convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavored first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them; and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste
of pleasure and her ambition of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till, not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence: I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gayety which life allows us? or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure is no very good reason for rejection of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow, that what satisfaction this world can afford must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness: wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner and goodness may be practised in retirement."
“How far solitude may admit goodness, or advance it, I shall not,” replied Imlac, “dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world when the image of your companion has left your thoughts.”—“That time,” said Nekayah, “will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah will always be more missed as I shall live longer to see vice and folly.”

“The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity,” said Imlac, “is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled: yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye: and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion: commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees; you will meet in your way some other favorite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation.”

“At least,” said the prince, “do not despair before all remedies have been tried; the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution.”

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah; but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would then be in no danger of a cloister.
CHAPTER XXXVI.

Pekuah is still remembered. The progress of Sorrow.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favorite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom she yet resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and at last wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was not yet diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that at least she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavor to attain that of which the possession cannot be secured. I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."
CHAPTER XXXVII.

The Princess hears news of Pekuah.

In seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hand of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favorite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Antony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price, he restored
her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo, beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favorite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The Adventures of the Lady Pekuah.

At what time and in what manner I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupefied than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger they slackened their course, and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time we stopped near a spring, shaded with trees, in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succor. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardor of desire or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavored to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives,
"When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moonlight to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I ate it rather to encourage my maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself therefore to be undressed, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vest was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendor of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and, taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was setting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. 'Illustrious lady,' said he, 'my fortune is better than I had presumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princess in my camp.'—'Sir,' answered I, 'your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned forever.'—'Whoever, or whencesoever you are,' returned the Arab, 'your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits
no distinction; the lance, that is lifted at guilt and power, will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness.'

" 'How little,' said I, 'did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me!'

" 'Misfortunes,' answered the Arab, should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransom, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality.'

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy, and, finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could be expected from a maid of common rank would be paid, but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then, smiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journeys. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honorably treated.

"I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniences for travel, my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

"The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked, in his erratic expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented and difficult
of access; for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendor, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite, and cottages of porphyry."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Adventures of Pekuah continued.

"We wandered about in this manner for some weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavored to appear contented where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavor conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely for riches. Avarice is a uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which soothes the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favor of the covetous there is a ready way; bring money, and nothing is denied.

"At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house built with stone in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. 'Lady,' said the Arab, 'you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security: here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.' He then led me into the inner apartments, and, seating me on the richest couch bowed to the ground. His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but being soon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.
"Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendor of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river-horses are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile; but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavored to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill; and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening; I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess, "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear for a few months that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room, as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They
danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needlework, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation; for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing: for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot: of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for anything but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small that I could not listen without interrupting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab, whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio, when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority; when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life; as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude: he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him
as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense; for notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house he made many excursions into the neighboring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavored to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honor and sincerity; and, when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

"I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

"He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah, having heard her favorite's relation, rose and embraced her; and Rasselas gave her a hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.
CHAPTER XL.

The History of a Man of Learning.

They returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice," answered Imlac, "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends once a month to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas and fluent conversation are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels; and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

'His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favorite studies are willingly interrupted for an opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance: 'For, though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never,' says he, 'bar my
doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.

"Surely," said the princess, "this man is happy."

"I visited him," said Imlac, "with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamored of his conversation; he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

"Amidst this willingness to be pleased and labor to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he was yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me, with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, he would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me."

CHAPTER XLI.

The Astronomer discovers the cause of his uneasiness.

"At last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat a while silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words:—'Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice, in the hour of imbecility and pain, to devolve it upon thee.'

"I thought myself honored by this testimony, and protested,
that whatever would conduce to his happiness would add like-wise to mine.

"Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather and the distribution of the seasons; the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervors of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempest, which I have found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator?"

CHAPTER XLII.

The Opinion of the Astronomer is explained and justified.

"I suppose he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:

"'Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am, probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem the distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitting vigilance.'

"'How long, sir,' said I, 'has this great office been in your hands?'

"'About ten years ago,' said he, 'my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened upon my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.
"One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall; and, by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips.'

"'Might not some other cause,' said I, 'produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day.'

"'Do not believe,' said he with impatience, 'that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and labored against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false.'

"'Why, sir,' said I, 'do you call that incredible which you know, or think you know, to be true?'

"'Because,' said he, 'I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I therefore shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself.'"

CHAPTER XLIII.

The Astronomer leaves Imlac his directions.

"'Hear, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat?—Hear me therefore with attention,
"I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are acquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.'

"I promised, that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand. 'My heart,' said he, 'will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet; I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun.'"

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge and we practise his virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected, and the favorite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted?

CHAPTER XLIV.

The dangerous prevalence of Imagination.

"Disorders of intellect," answered Imlac, "happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his at-
tion wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of sober probability; but while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any depravation of the mental faculties: It is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labor of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardor of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

"In time some particular train of ideas fixes the attention; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favorite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favorite, "imagine myself the queen of Abyssinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty,
till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have, in my chamber, heard the winds whistle and the sheep bleat: sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe, on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastic delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavored to image the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labor, of my solitude; and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," says Imlac, "are the effect of visionary schemes. When we first form them we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAPTER XLV.

They Discourse with an Old Man.

The evening was now far passed, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason: let us close the disquisitions of the night by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled a while, as acquaintances that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his
company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honor, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Everything must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty: I look round and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave?"

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honorable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage, with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honors of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended: but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity: endeavor to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though rea-
son knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay: and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained.”

He rose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account; for age had never been considered as the season of felicity; and if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigor and alacrity might be happy: that the noon of life could be bright if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they could confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection; or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented; “For nothing,” said she, “is more common than to call our own condition the condition of life.”

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung upon their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Princess and Pekuah visit the Astronomer.

The princess and Pekuah, having talked in private of Imlac’s astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.
This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans, who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared that by this artifice no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own; and, perhaps, the distrust, which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company; men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress."—"That," said Pekuah, "must be my care; I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it; and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar,
The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity: and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful; but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy? he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy: Pekuah displayed what she knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavored to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them; and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favorite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatual commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration: but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; labored to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and, lest he should draw any false hopes from the
civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience; in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life; I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity: but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations, which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the
dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors
which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more.
But I am sometimes afraid lest I indulge my quiet by criminal
negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which
I am intrusted. If I favor myself in a known error, or am de-
termined by my own ease in a doubtful question of this impor-
tance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so
difficult of cure as that which is complicated with the dread of
guilt: fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us,
and so often shift their places that the illusions of one are not
distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents
images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when
they give it pain; but when melancholic notions take the form
of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, be-
cause we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this rea-
son the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy
almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your
better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the proba-
bility of the obligation, which, when you consider it with free-
dom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less.
Open your heart to the influence of the light which, from time
to time, breaks in upon you: when scruples importune you,
which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand
to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this
thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the
mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice as that
you should be singled out for supernatural favors or afflic-
tions."

CHAPTER XLVII.

The Prince, enters, and brings a New Topic.

"All this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought,
but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrol-
lable and overwhelming idea that it durst not confide in its own
decisions. I now see how fatally I betray my quiet, by suffer-
ing chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks
from communication, and I never found a man before to whom
I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief.
I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who
are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to
deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? "Such," said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labor supplies them with necessaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed: one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayah, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with mankind, who succors the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life; and if he cannot conquer, he may
properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasure," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can imagine is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous by endearing us to a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use but that it disengages us from allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him "whether he could not delay her retreat by showing her something which she had not seen before?"

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found; but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the Catacombs, or the ancient repositories in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the Catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else is offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the Catacombs. When they were about to descend into the
sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return."—"No; I will not be left," answered Pekuah, "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterranean passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Imlac discourses on the Nature of the Soul.

"What reason," said the prince, "can be given why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcasses which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight as soon as decent rites can be performed?"

"The original ancient custom," said Imlac, "is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honorable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

"The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say that it may be material, who nevertheless believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul
is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of omnipotence," replied the poet, "to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriability seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is
destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive anything without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indiscerptible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He surely can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since, however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood a while silent and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die, that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on forever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns and under the protection of their guard returned to Cairo.
CHAPTER XLIX.

The Conclusion, in which nothing is Concluded.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the Catacombs the river began to rise. They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation to any excursions, and being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order; she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then proposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age, models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated a while what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abyssinia.

THE END.
THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD:

A TALE.

BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

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OF

GOLDSMITH'S WRITINGS.

The "Vicar of Wakefield" has long been considered one of the most interesting tales in our language. It is seldom that a story presenting merely a picture of common life, and a detail of domestic events, so powerfully affects the reader. The irresistible charm this novel possesses, evinces how much may be done, without the aid of extravagant incident, to excite the imagination and interest the feelings. Few productions of the kind afford greater amusement in the perusal, and still fewer inculcate more impressive lessons of morality. Though wit and humor abound in every page, yet in the whole volume there is not one thought injurious in its tendency, nor one sentiment that can offend the chastest ear. Its language, in the words of an elegant writer, is what "angels might have heard and virgins told." In the delineation of his characters, in the conduct of his fable, and in the moral of the piece, the genius of the author is equally conspicuous. The hero displays with unaffected simplicity the most striking virtues that can adorn social life; sincere in his professions, humane and generous in his disposition, he is himself a pattern of the character he represents. The other personages are drawn with similar discrimination. Each is distinguished by some peculiar feature; and the general grouping of the whole has this particular excellence, that not one could be wanted without injuring the unity and beauty of the design. The drama of the tale is also managed with equal skill and effect. There are no extravagant incidents, and no forced or improbable situations; one event rises out of another in the same easy and natural manner as flows the language of the narration; the interest never flags,
and is kept up to the last by the expedient of concealing the real character of Burchell. But it is the moral of the work which entitles the author to the praise of super-eminent merit in this species of writing. No writer has arrived more successfully at the great ends of a moralist. By the finest examples, he inculcates the practice of benevolence, patience in suffering, and reliance on the providence of God.

As a writer of prose, Dr. Anderson in his "British Poets" says, "Goldsmith must be allowed to have rivalled and even exceeded Dr. Johnson and his imitator Dr. Hawksworth, the most celebrated professional prose writer of his time. His prose may be regarded as the model of perfection, and the standard of our language; to equal which the efforts of most will be vain, and, to exceed it, every expectation folly."

Johnson, according to Boswell, said of his friend, "whether we take him as a poet, as a comic writer, or as a historian, he stands in the first class. He has the art of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner." In his works the Doctor has pronounced him to be, "A man of such variety of powers, and such facility of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness."—"He was," said Johnson emphatically, on other occasion, a very great man. Every year he lived he would have deserved Westminster Abbey the more!"

Sir Walter Scott has added his tribute to the throng. "The wreath of Goldsmith," he says, "is unsullied. He wrote to exalt virtue and expose vice; and he accomplished his task in a manner which raises him to the highest rank among British authors. We close his volume [The Vicar of Wakefield] with a sigh that such an author should have been so prematurely removed from the sphere of literature which he so highly adorned."

As a poet, all that he has written has been pronounced good by Lord Byron, while in the passage which contains this judgment, his Lordship says that not one-half is good of the Æneid, of Milton or of Dryden. Campbell, the author of the "Pleasures of Hope," says that "Goldsmith's poetry presents a distinct and unbroken view of poetical delightfulfulness. His descriptions and sentiments have the purest zest of nature. He is refined without false delicacy, and correct without insipidity. * * * He unbends from graver strains of reflec-
tion to tenderness, and even to playfulness, with an ease and grace almost exclusively his own; and connects extensive views of the happiness and interest of society with pictures of life that touch the heart by their familiarity.

To these ample praises it is unnecessary to make any addition. It may however be interesting to the reader to be informed that, both in his poetry and prose, Goldsmith usually drew from nature, not only in the common acceptance of the phrase, but literally and in fact.
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CHAPTER I.

The description of the family of Wakefield, in which a kindred likeness prevails, as well of minds as of persons.

I was ever of opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single and only talked of a population. From this motive, I had scarcely taken orders a year, before I began to think seriously of matrimony, and chose my wife, as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but for such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured notable woman; and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who could show more. She could read any English book without much spelling; but for pickling, preserving and cookery, none could excel her. She prided herself also upon being an excellent contriver in housekeeping; though I could never find that he grew richer with all her contrivances.

However we loved each other tenderly, and our fondness increased as we grew old. There was, in fact, nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had an elegant house situated in a fine country and a good neighborhood. The year was spent in moral or rural amusements, in visiting our rich neighbors, and relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fireside, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess with the veracity of a historian, that I never knew one of them to find fault with it. Our cousins too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the herald's office, and came very frequently to see us. Some of them did us no great honor by these
claims of kindred; as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted, that as they were the same flesh and blood, they should sit with us at the same table. So that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us, for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated: and as some men gaze with admiration at the colors of a tulip, or the wings of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes a horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller or the poor dependent out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness, not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which Providence sends to enhance the value of its favors. My orchard was often robbed by schoolboys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children. The 'Squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated courtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days began to wonder how they vexed us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well formed and healthy; my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age. I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who in Henry Second's progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named George, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Grissel; but my wife, who during her pregnancy had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called
Olivia. In less than another year we had another daughter, and now I was determined that Grissel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand godmother, the girl was, by her directions, called Sophia; so that we had two romantic names in the family; but I solemnly protest I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and after an interval of twelve years we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny exultations when I saw my little ones about me, but the vanity and the satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would say, "Well, upon my word, Mrs. Primrose, you have the finest children in the whole country;"—"Ay, neighbor," she would answer, "they are as heaven made, handsome enough if they be good enough; for handsome is that handsome does." And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarcely have remembered to mention it, had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriance of beauty with which painters generally drew Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia’s features were not so striking at first, but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest and alluring. The one vanquished by a single blow, the other by efforts successfully repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features, at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers, Sophia to secure one. Olivia was often affected from too great a desire to please. Sophia even repressed excellence from her fears to offend. The one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her sense when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters, for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquette into a prude, and a new set of ribbons has given her younger sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son George was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of miscellaneous education at home. But it is needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family likeness prevailed through all, and properly speaking, they had but one character, that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.
CHAPTER II.

Family misfortunes.—The loss of fortune only serves to increase the pride of the worthy.

The temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management; as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own direction. The profits of my living, which amounted to but thirty-five pounds a year, I made over to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese: for having a fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities, and felt a secret pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance, and the bachelors to matrimony, so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield, a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and alehouses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favorite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its happiness; but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting; for I maintained with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the church of England, after the death of his first wife to take a second; or to express it in one word, I valued myself on being a strict monogamist.

I was early initiated into this important dispute, on which so many laborious volumes have been written. I published some tracts upon the subject myself, which, as they never sold I have the consolation of thinking were read only by the happy few. Some of my friends call this my weak side; but alas! they had not like me made it the subject of long contemplation. The more I reflected upon it, the more important it appeared. I even went a step beyond Whiston in displaying my principles: as he had engraven upon his wife's tomb that she was the only wife of William Whiston; so I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, though still living, in which I extolled her prudence, economy, and obedience till death; and having got it copied fair, with an elegant frame, it was placed over the chimney-piece, where it answered several very useful purposes. In admonishing my wife of her duty to me, and my fidelity to her, it inspired her
with a passion for fame, and constantly put her in mind of her end.

It was thus, perhaps, from hearing marriage so often recommended, that my eldest son, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon the daughter of a neighboring clergyman, who was a dignitary in the church, and in circumstances to give her a large fortune. But fortune was her smallest accomplishment. Miss Arabella Wilmot was allowed by all (except my two daughters) to be completely pretty. Her youth, health and innocence, were still heightened by a complexion so transparent, and such a happy sensibility of look, as even age could not gaze on with indifference. As Mr. Wilmot knew I could make a very handsome settlement on my son, he was not averse to the match: so both families lived together in all that harmony which generally precedes an expected alliance. Being convinced by experience that the days of courtship are the most happy of our lives, I was willing enough to lengthen the period; and the various amusements which the young people every day shared in each other's company seemed to increase their passion. We were generally awaked in the morning by music, and on fine days rode a hunting. The hours between breakfast and dinner the ladies devoted to dress and study: they usually read a page, and then gazed at themselves in the glass, which even philosophers might own often presented the page of greatest beauty. At dinner my wife took the lead; for as she always insisted on carving everything herself, it being her mother's way, she gave us upon these occasions the history of every dish. When we had dined, to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed; and sometimes, with the music-master's assistance, the girls would give us a very agreeable concert. Walking out, drinking tea, country dances, and forfeits, shortened the rest of the day, without the assistance of cards, as I hated all manner of gaming, except backgammon, at which my old friend and I sometimes took a twopenny hit. Nor can I here pass over an ominous circumstance that happened the last time we played together; I only wanted to fling a quatre, and yet I threw deuce ace five times running.

Some months were elapsed in this manner, till at last it was thought convenient to fix a day for the nuptials of the young couple, who seemed earnestly to desire it. During the preparations for the wedding, I need not describe the busy importance of my wife, nor the sly looks of my daughters: in fact, my attention was fixed on another object, the completing
a tract which I intended shortly to publish in defence of my favorite principle. As I looked upon this as a masterpiece, both for argument and style, I could not in the pride of my heart avoid showing it to my old friend Mr. Wilmot, as I made no doubt of receiving his approbation; but not till too late I discovered that he was most violently attached to the contrary opinion, and with good reason; for he was at that time actually courting a fourth wife. This, as may be expected, produced a dispute attended with some acrimony, which threatened to interrupt our intended alliance: but the day before that appointed for the ceremony, we agreed to discuss the subject at large.

It was managed with proper spirit on both sides: he asserted that I was heterodox, I retorted the charge; he replied and I rejoined. In the meantime, while the controversy was hottest, I was called out by one of my relations, who with a face of concern, advised me to give up the dispute, at least till my son’s wedding was over. “How!” cried I, “relinquish the cause of truth, and let him be a husband, already driven to the very verge of absurdity. You might as well advise me to give up my fortune as my argument.” “Your fortune,” returned my friend, “I am now sorry to inform you is almost nothing. The merchant in town, in whose hands your money was lodged, has gone off to avoid a statute of bankruptcy, and is thought not to have left a shilling in the pound. I was unwilling to shock you or the family with the account until after the wedding: but now it may serve to moderate your warmth in the argument; for, I suppose your own prudence will enforce the necessity of dissembling, at least till your son has the young lady’s fortune secure.” “Well,” returned I, “if what you tell me be true, and if I am to be a beggar, it shall never make me a rascal, or induce me to disavow my principles. I’ll go this moment and inform the company of my circumstances: and as for the argument, I even here retract my former concessions in the old gentleman’s favor, nor will I allow him now to be a husband in any sense of the expression.”

It would be endless to describe the different sentiments of both families when I divulged the news of our misfortune: but what others felt was slight to what the lovers appeared to endure. Mr. Wilmot, who seemed before sufficiently inclined to break off the match, was by this blow soon determined: one virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence, too often the only one that is left at seventy-two.
CHAPTER III.

A Migration.—The fortunate circumstances of our lives are generally found at last to be of our own procuring.

The only hope of our family now was, that the report of our misfortunes might be malicious or premature; but a letter from my agent in town soon came with a confirmation of every particular. The loss of fortune to myself alone would have been trifling; the only uneasiness I felt was for my family, who were to be humble without an education to render them callous to contempt.

Near a fortnight had passed before I attempted to restrain their affliction, for premature consolation is but the remembrance of sorrow. During this interval, my thoughts were employed on some future means of supporting them; and at last a small cure of fifteen pounds a year was offered me in a distant neighborhood, where I could still enjoy my principles without molestation. With this proposal I joyfully closed, having determined to increase my salary by managing a little farm.

Having taken this resolution, my next care was to get together the wrecks of my fortune: and, all debts collected and paid, out of fourteen thousand pounds we had but four hundred remaining. My chief attention, therefore, was now to bring down the pride of my family to their circumstances; for I well knew that aspiring beggary is wretchedness itself. "You cannot be ignorant, my children," cried I, "that no prudence of ours could have prevented our late misfortune; but prudence may do much in disappointing its effects. We are now poor, my fondlings, and wisdom bids us conform to our humble situation. Let us then, without repining, give up those splendors with which numbers are wretched, and seek in humbler circumstances that peace with which all may be happy. The poor live pleasantly without our help, why then should not we learn to live without theirs? No, my children, let us from this moment give up all pretensions to gentility; we have still enough left for happiness if we are wise, and let us draw upon content for the deficiencies of fortune."

As my eldest son was bred a scholar, I determined to send him to town, were his abilities might contribute to our support and his own. The separation of friends and families is, per-
haps, one of the most distressful circumstances attendant on penury. The day soon arrived on which we were to disperse for the first time. My son, after taking leave of his mother and the rest, who mingled their tears and their kisses, came to ask a blessing from me. This I gave him from my heart, and which, added to five guineas, was all the patrimony I had now to bestow. "You are going, my boy," cried I, "to London on foot, in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, travelled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good Bishop Jewel, this staff, and this book too, it will be your comfort on the way: these two lines in it are worth a million, 'I have been young, and now am old; yet never saw I the righteous man forsaken, or his seed begging their bread.' Let this be your consolation as you travel on. Go, my boy; whatever be thy fortune, let me see thee once a year; still keep a good heart, and farewell." As he was possessed of integrity and honor, I was under no apprehensions from throwing him naked into the amphitheatre of life; for I knew he would act a good part, whether vanquished or victorious.

His departure only prepared the way for our own, which arrived a few days afterwards. The leaving a neighborhood in which we had enjoyed so many hours of tranquillity, was not without a tear which scarcely fortitude itself could suppress. Besides, a journey of seventy miles to a family that had hitherto never been above ten from home, filled us with apprehension; and the cries of the poor, who followed us for some miles, contributed to increase it. The first day's journey brought us in safety within thirty miles of our future retreat, and we put up for the night at an obscure inn in a village by the way. When we were shown a room, I desired the landlord, in my usual way, to let us have his company, with which he complied, as what he drank would increase the bill next morning. He knew, however, the whole neighborhood to which I was removing; particularly 'Squire Thornhill, who was to be my landlord, and who lived within a few miles of the place. This gentleman he described as one who desired to know little more of the world than its pleasures, being particularly remarkable for his attachment to the fair sex. He observed that no virtue was able to resist his arts and assiduity, and that scarcely a farmer's daughter within ten miles round, but what had found him successful and faithless. Though this account gave me some pain, it had a very different effect upon my daughters, whose features seemed to brighten with the expectation of an approaching triumph; nor was my wife less pleased and con-
fident of their allurements and virtue. While our thoughts were thus employed the hostess entered the room to inform her husband, that the strange gentleman, who had been two days in the house, wanted money, and could not satisfy them for his reckoning. "Want money!" replied the host, "that must be impossible, for it was no later than yesterday he paid three guineas to our beadle to spare an old broken soldier that was to be whipped through the town for dog-stealing." The hostess, however, still persisting in her first assertion, he was preparing to leave the room, swearing that he would be satisfied one way or another, when I begged the landlord would introduce me to a stranger of so much charity as he described. With this he complied, showing in a gentleman who seemed to be about thirty, dressed in clothes that once were laced. His person was well formed, and his face marked with the lines of thinking.

He had something short and dry in his address, and seemed not to understand ceremony, or to despise it. Upon the landlord's leaving the room, I could not avoid expressing my concern to the stranger at seeing a gentleman in such circumstances, and offered him my purse to satisfy the present demand. "I take it with all my heart, sir," replied he, "and am glad that a late oversight, in giving what money I had about me, has shown me that there are still some men like you. I must however, previously entreat being informed of the name and residence of my benefactor, in order to repay him as soon as possible." In this I satisfied him fully, not only mentioning my name and late misfortunes, but the place to which I was going to remove. "This," cried he, "happens still more luckily than I had hoped for, as I am going the same way myself, and having been detained here two days by the floods, which I hope to-morrow will be found passable." I testified the pleasure I should have in his company, and my wife and daughters joining in entreaty, he was prevailed upon to stay to supper. The stranger's conversation, which was at once pleasing and instructive, induced me to wish for a continuance of it; but it was now high time to retire and take refreshment against the fatigues of the following day.

The next morning we all set forward together: my family on horseback, while Mr. BURCHELL, our new companion, walked along the foot-path by the road-side, observing with a smile, that as we were ill mounted, he would be too generous to attempt leaving us behind. As the floods were not yet subsided, we were obliged to hire a guide, who trotted on before, Mr,
Burchell and I bringing up the rear. We lightened the fatigues of the road with philosophical disputes, which he seemed to understand perfectly. But what surprised me most was that though he was a money-borrower, he defended his opinions with as much obstinacy as if he had been my patron. He now and then also informed me to whom the different seats belonged that lay in our view as we travelled the road. "That," cried he, pointing to a very magnificent house which stood at some distance, "belongs to Mr. Thornhill, a young gentleman who enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependent on the will of his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, a gentleman who, content with a little himself, permits his nephew to enjoy the rest, and chiefly resides in town." "What!" cried I, "is my young landlord then the nephew of a man, whose virtues, generosity, and singularities are so universally known? I have heard Sir William Thornhill represented as one of the most generous yet whimsical men in the kingdom; a man of consummate benevolence." "Something, perhaps, too much so," replied Mr. Burchell, "at least he carried benevolence to an excess when young; for his passions were then strong, and as they were all upon the side of virtue, they led it up to a romantic extreme. He early began to aim at the qualifications of the soldier and scholar; was soon distinguished in the army, and had some reputation among men of learning. Adulation ever follows the ambitious; for such alone receive most pleasure from flattery. He was surrounded with crowds, who showed him only one side of their character: so that he began to lose a regard for private interest in universal sympathy. He loved all mankind; for fortune prevented him from knowing that there were rascals. Physicians tell us of a disorder, in which the whole body is so exquisitely sensible that the slightest touch gives pain: what some have thus suffered in their persons, this gentleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress, whether real or fictitious, touched him to the quick, and his soul labored under a sickly sensibility to the miseries of others. Thus disposed to relieve, it will be easily conjectured he found numbers disposed to solicit; his profusions began to impair his fortune, but not his good-nature; that, indeed, was seen to increase as the other seemed to decay: he grew improvident as he grew poor; and though he talked like a man of sense, his actions were those of a fool. Still, however being surrounded with importunity, and no longer able to satisfy every request that was made him, instead of money he gave promises. They were all he had to bestow, and he had not resolution enough to give
any man pain by a denial. By this he drew around him crowds of dependents, whom he was sure to disappoint, yet he wished to relieve. These hung upon him for a time, and left him with merited reproaches and contempt. But in proportion as he became contemptible to others, he became despicable to himself. His mind had leaned upon their adulation, and that support taken away, he could find no pleasure in the applause of his heart, which he had never learned to reverence. The world now began to wear a different aspect; the flattery of his friends began to dwindle into simple approbation. Approbation soon took the more friendly form of advice, and advice, when rejected, produced their reproaches. He now therefore found, that such friends as benefits had gathered round him, were little estimable: he now found that a man's own heart must be ever given to gain that of another. I now found, that—that—I forget what I was going to observe; in short, sir, he resolved to respect himself, and laid down a plan of restoring his fallen fortune. For this purpose, in his own whimsical manner, he travelled through Europe on foot, and now, though he has scarcely attained the age of thirty, his circumstances are more affluent than ever. At present, his bounties are more rational and moderate than before; but still he preserves the character of a humorist, and finds most pleasure in eccentric virtues."

My attention was so much taken up by Mr. Burchell's account, that I scarcely looked forward as we went along, till we were alarmed by the cries of my family, when turning, I perceived my youngest daughter in the midst of a rapid stream, thrown from her horse, and struggling with the torrent. She had sunk twice, nor was it in my power to disengage myself in time to bring her relief. My sensations were even too violent to permit my attempting her rescue: she must have certainly perished had not my companion, perceiving her danger, instantly plunged in to her relief, and, with some difficulty, brought her in safety to the opposite shore. By taking the current a little further up, the rest of the family got safely over, where we had an opportunity of joining our acknowledgments to her's. Her gratitude may be more readily imagined than described: she thanked her deliverer more with looks than words, and continued to lean upon his arm, as if still willing to receive assistance. My wife also hoped one day to have the pleasure of returning his kindness at her own house. Thus, after we were refreshed at the next inn, and had dined together, as Mr. Burchell was going to a different part of the
country, he took leave; and we pursued our journey; my wife observing as he went, that she liked him extremely, and protesting, that if he had birth and fortune to entitle him to match into such a family as ours, she knew no man she would sooner fix upon. I could not but smile to hear her talk in this lofty strain: but I never was much displeased with those harmless delusions that tend to make us more happy.

CHAPTER IV.

A proof that even the humblest fortune may grant happiness, which depends not on circumstances but constitution.

The place of our retreat was in a little neighborhood, consisting of farmers, who tilled their own grounds, and were equal strangers to opulence and poverty. As they had almost all the conveniences of life within themselves, they seldom visited towns or cities in search of superfluity. Remote from the polite, they still retained the primeval simplicity of manners: and frugal by habit, they scarcely knew that temperance was a virtue. They wrought with cheerfulness on days of labor; but observed festivals as intervals of idleness and pleasure. They kept up the Christmas Carol, sent true love-knots on Valentine morning, ate pancakes on Shrove-tide, showed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on Michaelmas eve. Being apprised of our approach, the whole neighborhood came out to meet their minister, dressed in their finest clothes, and preceded by pipe and tabor. A feast also was provided for our reception, at which we sat cheerfully down: and what the conversation wanted in wit was made up in laughter.

Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered with a beautiful underwood behind, and a prattling river before; on one side a meadow, on the other a green. My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given a hundred pounds for my predecessor's good-will. Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little enclosures; the elms and hedge-rows appearing with inexpressible beauty. My house consisted of but one story, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely white-washed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same
room served us for parlor and kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the utmost neatness, the dishes, plates, and coppers being well scoured, and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves, the eye was agreeably relieved, and did not want richer furniture. There were three other apartments, one for my wife and me, another for our two daughters, within our own, and the third, with two beds, for the rest of the children.

The little republic to which I gave laws, was regulated in the following manner: by sunrise we all assembled in our common apartment; the fire being previously kindled by the servant. After we had saluted each other with proper ceremony, for I always thought fit to keep up some mechanical forms of good-breeding, without which freedom ever destroys friendship, we all bent in gratitude to that Being who gave us another day. This duty being performed, my son and I went to pursue our usual industry abroad, while my wife and daughters employed themselves in providing breakfast, which was always ready at a certain time. I allowed half an hour for this meal, and an hour for dinner; which time was taken up in innocent mirth between my wife and daughters, and in philosophical arguments between my son and me.

As we rose with the sun, so we never pursued our labors after it was gone down, but returned home to the expectant family; where smiling looks, a neat hearth, and pleasant fire, were prepared for our reception. Nor were we without guests; sometimes Farmer Flamborough, our talkative neighbor, and often the blind piper would pay us a visit, and taste our gooseberry-wine; for the making of which we had lost neither the receipt nor the reputation. These harmless people had several ways of being good company; while one played, the other would sing some soothing ballad, Johnny Armstrong's last good night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allen. The night was concluded in the manner we began the morning, my youngest boys being appointed to read the lessons of the day; and he that read loudest, distinctest, and best, was to have a halfpenny on Sunday to put in the poor's box.

When Sunday came, it was indeed a day of finery, which all my sumptuary edicts could not restrain. How well soever I fancied my lectures against pride had conquered the vanity of my daughters; yet I found them still secretly attached to all their former finery: they still loved laces, ribbons, bugles, and catgut; my wife herself retained a passion for her crimson pedu-

асоy, because I formerly happened to say it became her.
The first Sunday in particular their behavior served to mortify me: I had desired my girls the preceding night to be dressed early the next day; for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions; but when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down came my wife and daughters dressed out in all their former splendor: their hair plastered up with pomatum, their faces patched to taste, their trains bundled up in a heap behind, and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity, particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command; but I repeated it with more solemnity than before—"Surely, my dear, you jest," cried my wife, "we can walk it perfectly well: we want no coach to carry us now." "You mistake, child," returned I, "we do want a coach; for if we walk to church in this trim, the very children in the parish will hoot after us." "Indeed," replied my wife, "I always imagined that my Charles was fond of seeing his children neat and handsome about him." "You may be as neat as you please," interrupted I, "and I shall love you the better for it; but all this is not neatness, but frippery. These rufflings, and pinkings, and patchings, will only make us hated by all the wives of all our neighbors. No, my children," continued I, more gravely "those gowns may be altered into something of a plainer cut; for finery is very unbecoming in us, who want the means of decency. I do not know whether such flouncing and shedding is becoming even in the rich, if we consider, upon a moderate calculation, that the nakedness of the indigent world might be clothed from the trimmings of the vain."

This remonstrance had the proper effect; they went with great composure, that very instant, to change their dress; and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waistcoats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones, and, what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by this curtailing.
CHAPTER V.

A new and great acquaintance introduced.—What we place most hopes upon, generally proves most fatal.

At a small distance from the house, my predecessor had made a seat, overshadowed by a hedge of hawthorn and honeysuckle. Here, when the weather was fine and our labor soon finished, we usually sat together, to enjoy an extensive landscape in the calm of the evening. Here too we drank tea which was now become an occasional banquet; and as we had it but seldom, it diffused a new joy, the preparations for it being made with no small share of bustle and ceremony. On these occasions our two little ones always read to us, and they were regularly served after we had done. Sometimes, to give a variety to our amusement, the girls sang to the guitar; and while they thus formed a little concert, my wife and I would stroll down the sloping field, that was embellished with blue-bells and centaury, talk of our children with rapture, and enjoy the breeze that wafted both health and harmony.

In this manner we began to find that every situation in life might bring its own peculiar pleasures: every morning awakened us to a repetition of toil; but the evening repaid it with vacant hilarity.

It was about the beginning of autumn, on a holiday, for I kept such as intervals of relaxation from labor, that I had drawn out my family to our usual place of amusement, and our young musicians began their usual concert. As we were thus engaged, we saw a stag bound nimbly by, within about twenty paces of where we were sitting, and by its panting seemed pressed by the hunters. We had not much time to reflect upon the poor animal’s distress, when we perceived the dogs and horsemen come sweeping along at some distance behind, and making the very path it had taken. I was instantly for returning with my family; but either curiosity, or surprise, or some more hidden motive, held my wife and daughters to their seats. The huntsman, who rode foremost, passed us with great swiftness, followed by four or five persons more who seemed in equal haste. At last a young gentleman of a more genteel appearance than the rest came forward, and for a while regarding us, instead of pursuing the chase, stopped short, and giving his horse to a
servant who attended, approached us with a careless superior air. He seemed to want no introduction, but was going to salute my daughters, as one certain of a kind reception; but they had early learned the lesson of looking presumption out of countenance. Upon which he let us know his name was Thornhill, and that he was owner of the estate that lay for some extent around us. He again therefore offered to salute the female part of the family, and such was the power of fortune and fine clothes, that he found no second repulse. As his address, though confident, was easy, we soon became more familiar; and perceiving musical instruments lying near, he begged to be favored with a song. As I did not approve of such disproportioned acquaintances, I winked upon my daughters in order to prevent their compliance; but my hint was counteracted by one from their mother; so that, with a cheerful air, they gave us a favorite song of Dryden's. Mr. Thornhill seemed highly delighted with their performance and choice, and then took up the guitar himself. He played but very indifferently; however, my eldest daughter repaid his former applause with interest, and assured him that his tones were louder than even those of her master. At this compliment he bowed, which she returned with a curtsey. He praised her taste, and she commended his understanding: an age could not have made them better acquainted, while the fond mother, too, equally happy, insisted upon her landlord stepping in, and tasting a glass of her gooseberry. The whole family seemed earnest to please him; my girls attempted to entertain him with topics they thought most modern, while Moses, on the contrary, gave him a question or two from the ancients, for which he had the satisfaction of being laughed at: my little ones were no less busy, and fondly stuck close to the stranger. All my endeavors could scarcely keep their dirty fingers from handling and tarnishing the lace on his clothes, and lifting up the flaps of his pocket-holes, to see what was there. At the approach of evening he took leave; but not till he had requested permission to renew his visit, which, as he was our landlord, we most readily agreed to.

As soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day. She was of opinion, that it was a most fortunate hit; for that she had known even stranger things at last brought to bear. She hoped again to see the day in which we might hold up our heads with the best of them; and concluded, she protested she could see no reason why the two Miss Wrinkles should marry great fortunes, and her children
get none. As this last argument was directed to me, I protested I could see no reason for it neither, nor why Mr. Simkins got the ten thousand pound prize in the lottery, and we sat down with a blank. "I protest, Charles," cried my wife, "this is the way you always damp my girls and me when we are in spirits. Tell me, Sophy, my dear, what do you think of our new visitor? Don't you think he seemed to be good-natured?" "Immensely so indeed, mamma," replied she, "I think he has a great deal to say upon everything, and is never at a loss; and the more trifling the subject, the more he has to say." "Yes," cried Olivia, "he is well enough for a man, but for my part, I don't much like him, he is so extremely impudent and familiar; but on the guitar he is shocking." These two last speeches I interpreted by contraries. I found by this, that Sophia internally despised, as much as Olivia secretly admired him. "Whatever may be your opinions of him, my children," cried I, "to confess the truth he has not prepossessed me in his favor. Disproportioned friendships ever terminate in disgust; and I thought, notwithstanding all his ease, that he seemed perfectly sensible of the distance between us. Let us keep to companions of our own rank. There is no character more contemptible than a man that is a fortune-hunter; and I can see no reason why fortune-hunting women should not be contemptible too. Thus, at best, we shall be contemptible if his views be honorable; but if they be otherwise! I should shudder to think of that. It is true I have no apprehensions from the conduct of my children, but I think there are some from his character." I would have proceeded, but for the interruption of a servant from the Squire, who with his compliments, sent us a side of venison, and a promise to dine with us some days after. This well-timed present pleaded more powerfully in his favor, than anything I had to say could obviate. I therefore continued silent, satisfied with just having pointed out danger, and leaving it to their own discretion to avoid it. That virtue which requires to be ever guarded is scarcely worth the sentinel.
CHAPTER VI.

The Happiness of a Country Fireside.

As we carried on the former dispute with some degree of warmth, in order to accommodate matters, it was universally agreed, that we should have a part of the venison for supper; and the girls undertook the task with alacrity. "I am sorry," cried I, "that we have no neighbor or stranger to take a part in this good cheer: feasts of this kind acquire a double relish from hospitality." "Bless me," cried my wife, "here comes our good friend Mr. Burchell, that saved our Sophia, and that run you down fairly in the argument." "Confute me in argument, child!" cried I. "You mistake there, my dear: I believe there are abilities at making a goose-pie, and I beg you'll leave argument to me." As I spoke, poor Mr. Burchell entered the house, and was welcomed by the family, who shook him heartily by the hand, while little Dick officiously reached him a chair.

I was pleased with the poor man's friendship for two reasons; because I knew that he wanted mine, and I knew him to be friendly as far as he was able. He was known in our neighborhood by the character of the poor gentleman that would do no good when he was young, though he was not yet thirty. He would at intervals talk with great good sense; but in general he was fondest of the company of children, whom he used to call harmless little men. He was famous, I found, for singing them ballads, and telling them stories; and seldom went out without something in his pockets for them; a piece of gingerbread, or a halfpenny whistle. He generally came for a few days into our neighborhood once a year, and lived upon the neighbors' hospitality. He sat down to supper among us, and my wife was not sparing of her gooseberry-wine. The tale went round; he sang us old songs, and gave the children the story of the Buck of Beverland, with the history of Patient Grissel, the adventures of Catskin, and then Fair Rosamond's Bower. Our cock, which always crew at eleven, now told us it was time for repose; but an unforeseen difficulty started about lodging the stranger—all our beds were already taken up, and it was too late to send him to the next alehouse. In this dilemma little Dick offered him his part of
the bed, if his brother Moses would let him lie with him: "And I," cried Bill, "will give Mr. Burchell my part, if my sisters will take me to theirs." "Well done, my good children," cried I, "hospitality is one of the first Christian duties. The beast retires to its shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but helpless man can only find refuge from his fellow-creature. The greatest stranger in this world, was he that came to save it. He never had a house, as if willing to see what hospitality was left remaining amongst us. Deborah, my dear," cried I to my wife, "give those boys a lump of sugar each, and let Dick's be the largest, because he spoke first."

In the morning early I called out my whole family to help at saving an after-growth of hay, and our guest offering his assistance, he was accepted amongst the number. Our labors went on lightly, we turned the swath to the wind. I went foremost, and the rest followed in due succession. I could not avoid, however, observing the assiduity of Mr. Burchell in assisting my daughter Sophia in her part of the task. When he had finished his own, he would join in her's, and enter into a close conversation: but I had too good an opinion of Sophia's understanding, and was too well convinced of her ambition, to be under any uneasiness from a man of broken fortune. When we were finished for the day, Mr. Burchell was invited as on the night before; but he refused, as he was to lie that night at a neighbor's to whose child he was carrying a whistle. When gone, our conversation at supper turned upon our late unfortunate guest.

"What a strong instance," said I, "is that poor man of the miseries attending a youth of levity and extravagance. He by no means wants sense, which only serves to aggravate his former folly. Poor forlorn creature, where are now the revelers, the flatterers, that he could once inspire and command! Gone, perhaps, to attend the bagnio pander, grown rich by his extravagance. They once praised him, and now they applaud the pander: their former raptures at his wit are now converted into sarcasms at his folly: he is poor, and perhaps deserves poverty; for he has neither the ambition to be independent, nor the skill to be useful. Prompted perhaps by some secret reasons, I delivered this observation with too much acrimony, which my Sophia gently reproved. "Whatsoever his former conduct may have been, papa, his circumstances should exempt him from censure now. His present indigence is a sufficient punishment for former folly; and I have heard my papa himself say, that we should never strike an unneces-
sary blow at a victim over whom Providence holds the scourge of its resentment." "You are right, Sophy," cried my son Moses, "and one of the ancients finely represents so malicious a conduct, by the attempts of a rustic to flay Marsyas, whose skin, the fable tells us, had been wholly stripped off by another. Besides, I don't know if this poor man's situation is so bad as my father would represent it. We are not to judge of the feelings of others by what we might feel if in their place. However dark the habitation of the mole to our eyes, yet the animal itself finds the apartment sufficiently lightsome. And to confess a truth, this man's mind seems fitted to his station: for I never heard any one more sprightly than he was to-day, when he conversed with you." This was said without the least design; however, it excited a blush, which she strove to cover by an affected laugh, assuring him, that she scarcely took any notice of what he said to her; but that she believed he might once have been a very fine gentleman. The readiness with which she undertook to vindicate herself, and her blushing, were symptoms I did not internally approve; but I repressed my suspicions.

As we expected our landlord next day, my wife went to make the venison pastry. Moses sat reading, while I taught the little ones: my daughter seemed equally busy with the rest; and I observed them for a good while cooking something over the fire. I at first supposed that they were assisting their mother; but little Dick informed me in a whisper, that they were making a wash for the face. Washes of all kinds I had a natural antipathy to; for I knew that instead of mending the complexion they spoiled it. I therefore approached my chair by slow degrees to the fire, and grasping the poker, as if it wanted mending, seemingly by accident overturned the whole composition, and it was too late to begin another.

CHAPTER VII.

A Town-wit described—The dullest fellows may learn to be comical for a night or two.

When the morning arrived on which we were to entertain our young landlord, it may be easily supposed what provisions were exhausted to make an appearance. It may also be conjectured that my wife and daughters expanded their gayest
plumage upon this occasion. Mr. Thornhill came with a couple of his friends, his chaplain and feeder. The servants, who were numerous, he politely ordered to the next alehouse, but my wife, in the triumph of her heart, insisted on entertaining them all; for which by the by, our family was pinched for three weeks after. As Mr. Burchell had hinted to us the day before, that he was making some proposals of marriage to Miss Wilmot, my son George's former mistress, this a good deal damped the heartiness of his reception; but accident in some measure relieved our embarrassment; for one of the company happening to mention her name, Mr. Thornhill observed with an oath, that he never knew anything more absurd than calling such a fright a beauty: "For strike me ugly," continued he, "if I should not find as much pleasure in choosing my mistress by the information of a lamp under the clock at St. Dunstan's." At this he laughed, and so did we:—the jests of the rich are ever successful. Olivia, too, could not avoid whispering loud enough to be heard, that he had an infinite fund of humor.

After dinner, I began with my usual toast, the Church; for this I was thanked by the chaplain, as he said the Church was the only mistress of his affections. "Come, tell us honestly, Frank," said the 'Squire, with his usual archness, "suppose the Church, your present mistress, dressed in lawn sleeves, on one hand, and Miss Sophia, with no lawn about her, on the other, which would you be for?" "For both, to be sure," cried the chaplain. "Right, Frank," cried the 'Squire, "for may this glass suffocate me, but a fine girl is worth all the priestcraft in the creation. For what are tithes and tricks but an imposition, all a confounded imposture, and I can prove it." "I wish you would," cried my son Moses; "and I think," continued he, "that I should be able to answer you." "Very well, sir," cried the 'Squire, who immediately smoked him, and winking on the rest of the company to prepare us for the sport, "if you are for a cool argument upon that subject, I am ready to accept the challenge. And first, whether are you for managing it analytically or dialogically?" "I am for managing it rationally," cried Moses, quite happy at being permitted to dispute. "Good again," cried the 'Squire, "and firstly, of the first: I hope you'll not deny, that whatever is, is. If you don't grant me that, I can go no farther." "Why," returned Moses, "I think I may grant that, and make the best of it." "I hope too," returned the other, "you'll grant that a part is less than the whole." "I grant that too," cried Moses, "it is but just and reasonable." "I hope," cried the 'Squire, "you'll not deny that the two angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones."
“Nothing can be plainer,” returned t’other, and looked round with his usual importance. “Very well,” cried the 'Squire, speaking very quick, the premises being thus settled, I proceed to observe, that the concatenation of self-existence, proceeding in a reciprocal duplicate ratio, naturally produce a problematicdialogism, which in some measure proves that the essence of spirituality may be referred to the second predicableness.” “Hold, hold,” cried the other, “I deny that: Do you think I can thus tamely submit to such heterodox doctrines?” “What!” replied the 'Squire, as if in a passion, “not submit! Answer me one plain question: Do you think Aristotle right when he says, that relatives are related?” “Undoubtedly,” replied the other. “If so, then,” cried the 'Squire, “answer me directly to what I propose: Whether do you judge the analytical investigation of the first part of my enthymem deficient secundum quoad, or quoad minus, and give me your reasons: give me your reasons I say, directly.” “I protest,” cried Moses, “I don’t rightly comprehend the force of your reasoning: but if it be reduced to one simple proposition, I fancy that it may then have an answer.” “O sir,” cried the Squire, “I am your most humble servant; I find you want me to furnish you with argument and intellects too. No, sir, there I protest you are too hard for me.” This effectually raised the laugh against poor Moses, who sat the only dismal figure in a group of merry faces; nor did he offer a single syllable more during the whole entertainment.

But though all this gave me no pleasure, it had a very different effect upon Olivia, who mistook it for humor, though but a mere act of the memory. She thought him therefore a very fine gentlemen; and such as consider what powerful ingredients a good figure, fine clothes, and fortune are in that character, will easily forgive her. Mr. Thornhill, notwithstanding his real ignorance, talked with ease, and could expatiate upon the common topics of conversation with fluency. It is not surprising then that such talents should win the affections of a girl, who by education was taught to value an appearance in herself, and consequently to set a value upon it in another.

Upon his departure, we again entered into a debate upon the merits of our young landlord. As he directed his looks and conversation to Olivia, it was no longer doubted but that she was the object that induced him to be our visitor; Nor did she seem to be much displeased at the innocent raillery of her brother and sister upon this occasion. Even Deborah herself seemed to share the glory of the day, and exulted in her daughter’s victory as if it were her own. “And now, my
dear," cried she to me, "I'll fairly own, that, it was I that instructed my girls to encourage our landlord's addresses. I had always some ambition, and you now see that I was right; for who knows how this may end?" "Ay, who knows that indeed!" answered I, with a groan: "For my part, I don't much like it; and I could have been better pleased with one that was poor and honest, than this fine gentleman with his fortune and infidelity; for depend on't, if he be what I suspect him, no free-thinker shall ever have a child of mine."

"Sure, father," cried Moses, "you are too severe in this for heaven will never arraign him for what he thinks, but for what he does. Every man has a thousand vicious thoughts, which arise without his power to suppress. Thinking freely of religion may be involuntary with this gentleman; so that allowing his sentiments to be wrong, yet as he is purely passive in his assent, he is no more to be blamed for his errors, than the governor of a city without walls for the shelter he is obliged to afford an invading enemy."

"True, my son," cried I; "but if the governor invites the enemy there, he is justly culpable. And such is always the case with those who embrace error. The vice does not lie in assenting to the proofs they see; but in being blind to many of the proofs that offer. So that, though our erroneous opinions be involuntary when formed, yet as we have been wilfully corrupt, or very negligent in forming them, we deserve punishment for our vice, or contempt for our folly."

My wife now kept up the conversation, though not the argument; she observed, that several very prudent men of our acquaintance were free-thinkers, and made very good husbands; and she knew some sensible girls that had skill enough to make converts of their spouses: "And who knows, my dear," continued she, "what Olivia may be able to do. The girl has a great deal to say upon every subject, and to my knowledge is very well skilled in controversy."

"Why, my dear, what controversy can she have read?" cried I "It does not occur to me that I ever put such books in her hands: you certainly overrate her merit." "Indeed papa," replied Olivia, "she does not; I have read the disputes between Thwackum and Square; the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday the savage, and am now employed in reading the controversy on Religious Courtship." "Very well," cried I, "that's a good girl; I find you are perfectly qualified for making converts; and so go help your mother to make the gooseberry pie."
CHAPTER VII

An amour which promises little good fortune, yet may be productive of much.

The next morning we were again visited by Mr. Burchell, though I began, for certain reasons, to be displeased with the frequency of his return but I could not refuse him my company and my fireside. It is true, his labor more than requited his entertainment: for he wrought among us with vigor, and either in the meadow or at the hay-rick put himself foremost. Besides, he had always something amusing to say that lessened our toil, and was at once so out of the way, and yet so sensible, that I loved, laughed at, and pitied him. My only dislike arose from an attachment he discovered to my daughter; he would, in a jesting manner, call her his little mistress, and when he bought each of the girls a set of ribbons, hers was the finest. I knew not how, but he every day seemed to become more amiable, his wit to improve, and his simplicity to assume the superior airs of wisdom.

Our family dined in the field, and we sat, or rather reclined round a temperate repast, our cloth spread upon the hay, while Mr. Burchell gave cheerfulness to the feast. To heighten our satisfaction, two blackbirds answered each other from opposite hedges, the familiar red-breast came and pecked the crumbs from our hands, and every one seemed but the echo of tranquillity. "I never sit thus," says Sophia, "but I think of the two lovers so sweetly described by Mr. Gay, who were struck dead in each other's arms. There is something so pathetic in the description, that I have read it a hundred times with new rapture."—"In my opinion," cried my son, "the finest strokes in that description are much below those in the Acis and Galatea of Ovid. The Roman poet understands the use of contrast better: and upon that figure artfully managed, all strength in the pathetic depends."—"It is remarkable," cried Mr Burchell, "that both the poets you mention have equally contributed to introduce a false taste into their respective countries, by loading all their lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them most easily imitated in their defects and English poetry, like that in the latter empire of Rome, is nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant images, without plot or connexion; a string of epithets that
improve the sound, without carrying on the sense. But perhaps, madam, while I thus reprehend others, you'll think it just that I should give them an opportunity to retaliate, and indeed I have made this remark only to have an opportunity of introducing to the company a ballad, which, whatever be its other defects, is, I think, at least free from those I have mentioned."

A BALLAD.

"Turn, gentle hermit of the dale,
And guide my lonely way,
To where yon taper cheers the vale
With hospitable ray.

"For here forlorn and lost I tread,
With fainting steps and slow;
Where wilds immeasurably spread
Seem length'ning as I go."

"Forbear, my son," the hermit cries,
"To tempt the dangerous gloom;
For yonder faithless phantom flies
To lare thee to thy doom.

"Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still;
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will.

"Then turn to-night, and freely share
Whate'er my cell bestows;
My rushy couch and frugal fare,
My blessing and repose.

"No flocks that range the valley free,
To slaughter I condemn;
Taught by that power that pities me,
I learn to pity them:

"But from the mountain's grassy side
A guiltless feast I bring;
A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring.

"Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;
All earth-born cares are wrong;
Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long."

Soft as the dew from heaven descends,
His gentle accents fell:
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.
Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay:
A refuge to the neighb'ring poor
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Required a master's care;
The wicket opening with a latch
Received the harmless pair.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheered his pensive guest:

And spread his vegetable store,
And gayly press'd, and smiled;
And, skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguiled.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries,
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's woe;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spied,
With answering care oppress'd:
"And whence, unhappy youth," he cried,
"The sorrows of thy breast?"

"From better habitations spurn'd,
Reluctant dost thou rove?
Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
Or unregarded love?"

"Alas! the joys that fortune brings,
Are trifling, and decay;
And those who prize the paltry things,
More trifling still than they.

"And what is friendship but a name
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep?

"And love is still an emptier sound
The modern fair one's jest;
On earth unseen, or only found
To warm the turtle's nest,
"For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
And spurn the sex," he said;
But while he spoke, a rising flush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

Surprised he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colors o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms.

"And ah! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn," she cried;
"Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
Where heaven and you reside.

"But let a maid thy pity share,
Whom love has taught to stray,
Who seeks for rest, but finds despair
Companion of her way.

"My father lived beside the Tyne,
A wealthy lord was he;
And all his wealth was mark'd as mine
He had but only me.

"To win me from his tender arms,
Unnumber'd suitors came;
Who praised me for imputed charms,
And felt, or feign'd a flame.

"Each hour a mercenary crowd
With richest proffers strove.
Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
But never talk'd of love.

"In humble, simplest habit clad,
No wealth nor power had he,
Wisdom and worth were all he had,
But these were all to me.

"And when beside me in the dale,
He carol'd lays of love,
His breath lent fragrance to the gale
And music to the grove.

"The blossom opening to the day,
The dews of Heaven refined,
Could naught of purity display
To emulate his mind.
"The dew, the blossom on the tree
With charms inconstant shine;
Their charms were his, but woe to me!
Their constancy was mine.

"For still I tried each fickle art,
Importunate and vain;
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain:

"Till quite dejected with my scorn,
He left me to my pride;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret, where he died.

"But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

"And there forlorn, despairing, hid,
I'll lay me down and die;
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I."

"Forbid it, Heaven!" the Hermit cried,
And clasp'd her to his breast;
The wondering fair one turn'd to chide—
'Twas Edwin's self that press'd.

"Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
My charmer, turn to see
Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
Restored to love and thee.

"Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
And every care resign;
And shall we never, never part,
My life—my all that's mine?

"No, never from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true;
The sigh that rends thy constant heart
Shall break thy Edwin's too."

While this ballad was reading, Sophia seemed to mix an air of tenderness with her approbation. But our tranquillity was soon disturbed by the report of a gun just by us, and immediately after a man was seen bursting through the hedge, to take up the game he had killed. This sportsman was the 'Squire's chaplain, who had shot one of the blackbirds that so agreeably entertained us. So loud a report and so near, startled my daughters; and I could perceive that Sophia in her fright had thrown herself into Mr. Burchell's arms for protec-
tion. The gentleman came up, and asked pardon for having disturbed us, affirming that he was ignorant of our being so near. He therefore sat down by my youngest daughter, and sportsman-like, offered her what he had killed that morning. She was going to refuse, but a private look from her mother soon induced her to correct the mistake, and accept his present, though with some reluctance. My wife, as usual, discovered her pride in a whisper, observing that Sophy had made a conquest of the chaplain, as well as her sister had of the 'Squire. I suspected, however, with more probability, that her affections were placed upon a different object. The chaplain's errand was to inform us, that Mr. Thornhill had provided music and refreshments, and intended that night giving the young ladies a ball by moon-light, on the grassplot before our door. "Nor can I deny," continued he, "that I have an interest in being first to deliver this message, as I expect for my reward to be honored with Miss Sophy's hand as a partner." To this my girl replied, that she should have no objection if she could do it with honor: "But here," continued she, "is a gentleman," looking at Mr. Burchell, "who has been my companion in the task for the day, and it is fit he should share its amusements." Mr. Burchell returned her a compliment for her intentions: but resigned her up to the chaplain, adding that he was to go that night five miles, being invited to a harvest supper. His refusal appeared to me a little extraordinary; nor could I perceive how so sensible a girl as my youngest, could thus prefer a man of broken fortunes to one whose expectations were much greater. But as men are most capable of distinguishing merit in women, so the ladies often form the truest judgment of us. The two sexes seem placed as spies upon each other, and are furnished with different abilities, adapted for mutual inspection.

CHAPTER IX.

Two ladies of great distinction introduced—Superior finery ever seems to confer superior breeding.

Mr. Burchell had scarcely taken leave, and Sophia consented to dance with the chaplain, when my little ones came running out to tell us, that the 'Squire was come with a crowd of
company. Upon our return, we found our landlord, with a couple of under gentlemen and two young ladies richly dressed, whom he introduced as women of very great distinction and fashion from town. We happened not to have chairs enough for the whole company; but Mr. Thornhill immediately proposed that every gentleman should sit in a lady's lap. This I positively objected to, notwithstanding a look of approbation from my wife. Moses was therefore despatched to borrow a couple of chairs; and as we were in want of ladies to make up a set at country dances, the two gentlemen went with him in quest of a couple of partners. Chairs and partners were soon provided. The gentlemen returned with my neighbor Flamborough's rosy daughters, flaunting with red top-knots; but an unlucky circumstance was not adverted to—though the Miss Flamboroughs were reckoned the very best dancers in the parish, and understood the jig and round-about to perfection, yet they were totally unacquainted with country dances. This at first discomposed us: however, after a little shoving and dragging, they at least went merrily on. Our music consisted of two fiddles, with a pipe and tabor. The moon shone bright. Mr. Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball, to the great delight of the spectators; for the neighbors, hearing what was going forward, came flocking about us. My girl moved with so much grace and vivacity, that my wife could not avoid discovering the pride of her heart, by assuring me that though the little chit did it so cleverly, all the steps were stolen from herself. The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy, but without success. They swam, sprawled, languished, and frisked; but all would not do: the gazers indeed owned that it was fine; but neighbor Flamborough observed, that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo. After the dance had continued about an hour, the two ladies who were apprehensive of catching cold, moved to break up the ball. One of them, I thought, expressed her sentiments upon this occasion in a very coarse manner, when she observed, that, by the living jingo she was all of a muck of sweat. Upon our return to the house, we found a very elegant cold supper, which Mr. Thornhill had ordered to be brought with him. The conversation at this time was more reserved than before. The two ladies threw my girls quite into the shade; for they would talk of nothing but high life, and high-lived company; with other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses. 'Tis true they once or twice mortified us sensibly by slipping out an oath: but that appeared to me as
the surest symptom of their distinction (though I am since informed that swearing is perfectly unfashionable). Their finery, however, threw a veil over any grossness in their conversation. My daughters seemed to regard their superior accomplishments with envy; and what appeared amiss was ascribed to tip-top quality breeding. But the condescension of the ladies was still superior to their other accomplishments. One of them observed, that had Miss Olivia seen a little more of the world, it would greatly improve her. To which the other added, that a single winter in town would make her little Sophia quite another thing. My wife warmly assented to both; adding that there was nothing she more ardently wished than to give her girls a single winter's polishing. To this I could not help replying, that their breeding was already superior to their fortune; and that greater refinement would only serve to make their poverty ridiculous, and give them a taste for pleasures they had no right to possess.—"And what pleasures," cried Mr. Thornhill, "do they not deserve to possess, who have so much in their power to bestow? As for my part," continued he, "my fortune is pretty large; love, liberty, and pleasure, are my maxims; but curse me if a settlement of half my estate could give my charming Olivia pleasure, it should be hers; and the only favor I would ask in return would be to add myself to the benefit." I was not such a stranger to the world as to be ignorant that this was the fashionable cant to disguise the insolence of the basest proposal; but I made an effort to suppress my resentment. "Sir," cried I, "the family which you now condescend to favor with your company, has been bred with as nice a sense of honor as you. Any attempts to injure that, may be attended with very dangerous consequences. Honor, sir, is our only possession at present, and of that last treasure we must be particularly careful."—I was soon sorry for the warmth with which I had spoken this, when the young gentleman, grasping my hand, swore he commended my spirit, though he disapproved my suspicions. "As to your present hint," continued he, "I protest nothing was farther from my heart than such a thought. No, by all that's tempting, the virtue that will stand a regular siege was never to my taste; for all my amours are carried by a coup-de-main."

The two ladies, who affected to be ignorant of the rest, seemed highly displeased with this last stroke of freedom, and began a very discreet and serious dialogue upon virtue; in this my wife, the chaplain, and I, soon joined; and the 'Squire himself was at last brought to confess a sense of sorrow for his
former excesses. We talked of the pleasures of temperance, and of the sunshine in the mind unpolluted with guilt. I was so well pleased, that my little ones were kept up beyond the usual time to be edified by so much good conversation. Mr. Thornhill even went beyond me, and demanded if I had any objections to giving prayers. I joyfully embraced the proposal; and in this manner the night was passed in a most comfortable way, till at last the company began to think of returning. The ladies seemed very unwilling to part with my daughters, for whom they had conceived a particular affection, and joined in a request to have the pleasure of their company home. The 'Squire seconded the proposal, and my wife added her entreaties; the girls too looked upon me as if they wished me to go. In this perplexity I made two or three excuses, which my daughters as readily removed; so that at last I was obliged to give a peremptory refusal; for which we had nothing but sullen looks and short answers the whole day ensuing.

CHAPTER X.

The family endeavors to cope with their betters.—The miseries of the poor when they attempt to appear above their circumstances.

I now began to find, that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity and contentment, where entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awaked that pride which I had laid asleep but not removed. Our windows, again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face. The sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed, that rising too early would hurt her daughter's eyes, that working after dinner would redden their noses, and she convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead, therefore, of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new-modelling their old gauses, or flourishing upon catgut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance, and the whole conversation ran upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses.
But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gipsy come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sibyl no sooner appeared, than my girls came running to me for a shilling a-piece to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I love to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling; though for the honor of the family it must be observed, that they never went without money themselves, as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each, to keep in their pockets, but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closeted up with the fortune-teller for some time, I knew by their looks, upon their returning, that they had been promised something great.—"Well my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, has the fortune-teller given thee a pennyworth?"—"I protest, papa," says the girl, "I believe she deals with somebody that's not right; for she positively declared that I am to be married to a 'squire in less than a twelvemonth!"—"Well now, Sophy, my child," said I, "and what sort of a husband are you to have?" "Sir," replied she, "I am to have a lord soon after my sister has married the 'squire."

"How!" cried I, "is that all your are to have for your two shillings? Only a lord and a 'squire for two shillings! You fools, I could have promised you a prince and a nabob for half the money."

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects; we now began to think ourselves designed by the stars to something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur.

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view, are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition. In the first case, we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we called up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted the 'squire was in love with my daughter, she was, actually so with him: for they persuaded her into the passion. In this agreeable interval, my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morning with great solemnity and exactness. It was one night a coffin and cross-bones, the sign of on approaching wedding; at another time she imagined her daughter's pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign of their being shortly stuffed with gold.
The girls themselves had their omens. They felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle, purses bounced from the fire, and true love-knots lurked in the bottom of every teacup.

Towards the end of the week we received a card from the town ladies; in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning, I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendor the next day. In the evening they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus:—"I fancy Charles, my dear, we shall have a great deal of good company at our church to-morrow."—"Perhaps we may, my dear," returned I, "though you need be under no uneasiness about that, you shall have a sermon whether there be or not."—"That is what I expect," returned she; "but I think, my dear, we ought to appear there as decently as possible, for who knows what may happen?" "Your precautions," replied I, "are highly commendable. A decent behavior and appearance in church is what charms me. We should be devout and humble, cheerful and serene." "Yes," cried she, "I know that; but I mean we should go there in as proper a manner as possible; not altogether like the scrubbs about us." "You are quite right, my dear," returned I, "and I was going to make the very same proposal. The proper manner of going is to go there as early as possible, to have time for meditation before the service begins." "Phoo, Charles," interrupted she, "all that is very true; but not what I would be at. I mean we should go there genteelly. You know the church is two miles off, and I protest I don't like to see my daughters trudging up to their pew all blowzed and red with 'walking, and looking for all the world as if they had been winners at a smock-race. Now, my dear, my proposal is this: there are two plough horses, the colt that has been in our family these nine years, and his companion Blackberry, that has scarcely done an earthly thing for this month past. They are both grown fat and lazy. Why should not they do something as well as we? And let me tell you, when Moses has trimmed them a little, they will cut a very tolerable figure."

To this proposal I objected, that walking would be twenty
times more genteel than such a paltry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed, and the colt wanted a tail; that they had never been broke to the rein, but had a hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were overruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition; but as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival; but as I found it would be a business of time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading-desk for their arrival; but not finding them come as expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I therefore walked back by the horse-way, which was five miles round, though the foot-way was but two, and when got about half way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward towards the church; my son, my wife, and the two little ones, exalted upon one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr. Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next, the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows nor entreaties could prevail with him to proceed. He was just recovering from this dismal situation when I found them; but perceiving everything safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it would give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

CHAPTER XI.

The family still resolve to hold up their heads,

Michaelmas eve happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbor Flamborough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable
we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt: however, we suffered ourselves to be happy. Our honest neighbor's goose and dumplings were fine, and the lamb's wool, even in the opinion of my wife, who was a connoisseur, was excellent. It is true, his manner of telling stories was not quite so well. They were very long, and very dull, and all about himself, and we had laughed at them ten times before: however, we were kind enough to laugh at them once more.

Mr. Burchell, who was of the party, was always fond of seeing some innocent amusement going forward, and set the boys and girls to blind man's buff. My wife too was persuaded to join in the diversion, and it gave me pleasure to think she was not yet too old. In the meantime, my neighbor and I looked on, laughed at every feat, and praised our own dexterity when we were young. Hot cockles succeeded next, questions and commands followed that, and last of all they sat down to hunt the slipper. As every person may not be acquainted with this primeval pastime, it may be necessary to observe, that the company at this play plant themselves in a ring upon the ground, all except one, who stands in the middle, whose business it is to catch a shoe, which the company shove about under their hams from one to another, something like a weaver's shuttle. As it is impossible, in this case, for the lady who is up to face all the company at once, the great beauty of the play lies in hitting her a thump with the heel of the shoe on that side least capable of making a defence. It was in this manner that my eldest daughter was hemmed in, and thumped about, all blowzed, in spirits, and bawling for fair play, with a voice that might deafen a ballad-singer, when, confusion on confusion! who should enter the room but our two great acquaintances from town, Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs? Description would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death! to be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes! Nothing better could ensue from such a vulgar play of Mr. Flamborough's proposing. We seemed struck to the ground for some time, as if actually petrified with amazement.

The two ladies had been at our house to see us, and finding us from home, came after us hither, as they were uneasy to know what accident could have kept us from church the day before. Olivia undertook to be our prolocutor, and delivered the whole in a summary way, only saying, "We were thrown from our horses." At which account the ladies were greatly
concerned; but being told the family received no hurt, they were extremely glad; but being informed that we were almost killed by the fright, they were vastly sorry; but hearing that we had a very good night, they were extremely glad again. Nothing could exceed their complaisance to my daughters; their professions the last evening were warm, but now they were ardent. They protested a desire of having a more lasting acquaintance. Lady Blarney was particularly attached to Olivia; Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs (I love to give the whole name) took a greater fancy to her sister. They supported the conversation between themselves, while my daughters sat silent, admiring their exalted breeding. But as every reader, however beggarly himself, is fond of high lived dialogues, with anecdotes of Lords, Ladies, and Knights of the Garter, I must beg leave to give him the concluding part of the present conversation.

"All that I know of the matter," cried Miss Skeggs, "is this, that it may be true, or it may not be true; but this I can assure your ladyship, that the whole rout was in amaze; his lordship turned all manner of colors, my lady fell into a sound, but Sir Tonkyn, drawing his sword, swore he was hers to the last drop of his blood."

"Well," replied our peeress, "this I can say, that the duchess never told me a syllable of the matter, and I believe her grace would keep nothing a secret from me. This you may depend upon as a fact, that the next morning my lord duke cried out three times to his valet de chambre, Jernigan. Jernigan, Jernigan, bring me my garters."

But previously I should have mentioned the very impolite behavior of Mr. Burchell, who, during this discourse, sat with his face turned to the fire, and at the conclusion of every sentence would cry out fudge! an expression which displeased us all, and in some measure damped the rising spirit of the conversation.

"Besides, my dear Skeggs," continued our peeress, "there is nothing of this in the copy of verses that Dr. Burdock made upon the occasion." Fudge!

"I am surprised at that," cried Miss Skeggs; "for he seldom leaves anything out, and he writes only for his own amusement. But can your ladyship favor me with a sight of them?" Fudge!

"My dear creature," replied our peeress, "do you think I carry such things about me? Though they are very fine, to be sure, and I think myself something of a judge; at least I
know what pleases myself. Indeed I was ever an admirer of all Dr. Burdock's little pieces: for, except what he does, and our dear countess at Hanover-square, there's nothing comes out but the most lowest stuff in nature; not a bit of high life among them." *Fudge*

"Your ladyship should except," says t'other, "your own things in the Lady's Magazine. I hope you'll say there's nothing low-lived there? But I suppose we are to have no more from that quarter?" *Fudge*

"Why, my dear," says the lady, "you know my reader and companion has left me, to be married to Captain Roach, and as my poor eyes wont suffer me to write myself, I have been for some time looking out for another. A proper person is no easy matter to find, and to be sure thirty pounds a year is a small stipend for a well-bred girl of character, that can read, write, and behave in company; as for the chits about town, there is no bearing them about one." *Fudge*

"That I know," cried Miss Skeggs, "by experience. For of the three companions I had this last half-year, one of them refused to do plain-work an hour in a day; another thought twenty-five guineas a year too small a salary, and I was obliged to send away the third, because I suspected an intrigue with the chaplain. Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price: but where is that to be found?" *Fudge*

My wife had been for a long time all attention to this discourse; but was particularly struck with the latter part of it. Thirty pounds and twenty-five guineas a year, made fifty-six pounds five shillings English money, all which was in a manner going a-begging, and might easily be secured in the family. She for a moment studied my looks for approbation; and, to own a truth, I was of opinion that two such places would fit our two daughters exactly. Besides, if the 'Squire had any real affection for my eldest daughter, this would be the way to make her every way qualified for her fortune. My wife therefore was resolved that we should not be deprived of such advantages for want of assurance, and undertook to harangue for the family. "I hope," cried she, "your ladyship will pardon my present presumption. It is true, we have no right to pretend to such favors; but yet it is natural for me to wish putting my children forward in the world. And I will be bold to say my two girls have had a pretty good education and capacity, at least the country can't show better. They can read, write, and cast accounts; they understand their needle, broadstitch, cross and change, and all manner of plain-work;
they can pink, point, and frill, and know something of music; they can do up small clothes; work upon catgut: my eldest can cut paper, and my youngest has a very pretty manner of telling fortunes upon the cards.” Fudge!

When she had delivered this pretty piece of eloquence, the two ladies looked at each other a few minutes in silence, with an air of doubt and importance. At last Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs condescended to observe, that the young ladies, from the opinion she could form of them from so slight an acquaintance, seemed very fit for such employments: “But a thing of this kind, madam,” cried she, addressing my spouse, “requires a thorough examination into characters, and a more perfect knowledge of each other. Not, madam,” continued she, “that I in the least suspect the young ladies’ virtue, prudence and discretion; but there is a form in these things, madam, there is a form.”

My wife approved her suspicions very much, observing that she was very apt to be suspicious herself; but referred her to all the neighbors for a character: but this our peeress declined as unnecessary, alleging that her cousin Thornhill’s recommendation would be sufficient; and upon this we rested our petition.

CHAPTER XII.

Fortune seems resolved to humble the family of Wakefield—Mortifications are often more painful than real calamities.

When we were returned home the night was dedicated to schemes of future conquest. Deborah exerted much sagacity in conjecturing which of the two girls was likely to have the best place, and most opportunities of seeing good company. The only obstacle to our preferment was in obtaining the ‘Squire’s recommendation; but he had already shown us too many instances of his friendship to doubt of it now. Even in bed my wife kept up the usual theme: “Well, faith, my dear Charles, between ourselves, I think we have made an excellent day’s work of it.”—“Pretty well,” cried I, not knowing what to say. “What! only pretty well!” returned she. “I think it is very well. Suppose the girls should come to make acquaintances of taste in town! This I am assured of, that London
is the only place in the world for all manner of husbands. Besides, my dear, stranger things happen every day: and as ladies of quality are so taken with my daughters, what will not men of quality be?—Entre nous, I protest I like my Lady Blarney vastly, so very obliging. However, Miss Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs has my warm heart. But when they came to talk of places in town, you saw at once how I nailed them. Tell me, my dear, don't you think I did for my children there?" "Ay," returned I, not knowing well what to think of the matter, "Heaven grant they may be both the better for it this day three months!" This was one of those observations I usually made to impress my wife with an opinion of my sagacity: for if the girls succeeded, then it was a pious wish fulfilled; but if anything unfortunate ensued, then it might be looked upon as a prophecy. All this conversation, however, was only preparatory to another scheme, and indeed I dreaded as much. This was nothing less than that, as we were now to hold up our heads a little higher in the world, it would be proper to sell the colt, which was grown old, at a neighboring fair, and buy us a horse that would carry single or double upon an occasion, and make a pretty appearance at church or upon a visit. This at first I opposed stoutly; but it was as stoutly defended. However, as I weakened, my antagonist gained strength, till at last it was resolved to part with him.

As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. "No, my dear," said she, "our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to very good advantage: you know all our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bargain."

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to entrust him with this commission; and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the fair: trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call thunder and lightning, which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of goslin green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black ribbon. We all followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him good luck, good luck, till we could see him no longer.
He was scarcely gone when Mr. Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying, that he overheard his young master mention our names with great commendation.

Good fortune seemed resolved not to come alone. Another footman from the same family followed, with a card for my daughters, importing that the two ladies had received such pleasing accounts from Mr. Thornhill of us all, that, after a few previous inquiries, they hoped to be perfectly satisfied. "Ay," cried my wife, "I now see it is no easy matter to get into the families of the great; but when one once gets in, then, as Moses says, one may go to sleep." To this piece of humor, for she intended it for wit, my daughters assented with a loud laugh of pleasure. In short, such was her satisfaction at this message that she actually put her hand in her pocket, and gave the messenger seven-pence halfpenny.

This was to be our visiting day. The next that came was Mr. Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a pennyworth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them and give them by letters at a time. He brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was usually fond of a weasel-skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by the bye. We had still a regard for Mr. Burchell, though his late rude behavior was in some measure displeasing: nor could we now avoid communicating our happiness to him, and asking his advice; although we seldom followed advice, we were all ready enough to ask it. When he read the note from the two ladies, he shook his head, and observed, that an affair of this sort demanded the utmost circumspection. This air of diffidence highly displeased my wife. "I never doubted, sir," cried she, "your readiness to be against my daughters and me. You have more circumspection than is wanted. However, I fancy when we come to ask advice, we will apply to persons who seem to have made use of it themselves."—"Whatever my own conduct may have been, madam," replied he, "is not the present question; though as I have made no use of advice myself, I should in conscience give it to those who will."—As I was apprehensive that this answer might draw on a repartee, making up by abuse what it wanted in wit, I changed the subject, by seeming to wonder what could keep our son so long at the fair, as it was now almost nightfall.—"Never mind our son," cried my wife, "depend upon it he knows what he is about. I'll warrant we'll
never see him sell his hen or a rainy day. I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one. I'll tell you a good story about that, that will make you split your sides a laughing.—

But as I live, yonder comes Moses, without a horse, and the box at his back."

As she spoke Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a pedler.—"Welcome, welcome, Moses; well, my boy, what have you brought us from the fair?"—"I have brought you myself," cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser."—"Ah, Moses, cried my wife, that we know; but where is the horse?" "I have sold him," cried Moses, "for three pounds five shillings and twopence."—"Well done, my good boy," returned she; "I knew you would touch them off. Between ourselves, three pounds five shillings and two pence is no bad day's work. Come let us have it then."—"I have brought back no money," cried Moses again. "I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is," pulling out a bundle from his breast; "here they are; a gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases."—"A gross of green spectacles!" repeated my wife in a faint voice. "And you have parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing but a gross of paltry green spectacles!" "Dear mother," cried the boy, "why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money." "A fig for the silver rims," cried my wife in a passion: "I dare say they won't sell for above half the money at the rate of broken silver, five shillings an ounce."—"You need be under no uneasiness," cried I, "about selling the rims, for they are not worth sixpence, for I perceive they are only copper varnished over." "What," cried my wife, "not silver! the rims not silver!" "No," cried I, "no more silver than your saucepan."—"And so," returned she, "we have parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of green spectacles, with copper rims and shagreen cases! A murrain take such trumpery. The blockhead has been imposed upon, and should have known his company better."—"There my dear," cried I, "you are wrong, he should not have known them at all."—"Marry, hang the idiot," returned she, "to bring me such stuff, if I had them I would throw them in the fire." "There again you are wrong, my dear," cried I; "for though they be copper, we will keep them by us, as copper spectacles, you know, are better than nothing."

By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He
now saw that he had been imposed upon by a prowling snarper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked the circumstance of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell. "Here," continued Moses, "we met another man very well dressed, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying that he wanted money, and would dispose of them for a third of the value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whispered me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me, and so at last we were persuaded to buy the two gross between us."

CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Burchell is found to be an enemy; for he has the confidence to give disagreeable advice.

Our family had now made several attempts to be fine; but some unforeseen disaster demolished each as soon as projected. I endeavored to take the advantage of every disappointment, to improve their good sense in proportion as they were frustrated in ambition. "You see, my children," cried I, "how little is to be got by attempts to impose upon the world, in coping with our betters. Such as are poor, and will associate with none but the rich, are hated by those they avoid, and despised by those they follow. Unequal combinations are always disadvantageous to the weaker side: the rich having the pleasure, and the poor the inconveniences that result from them. But come, Dick, my boy, and repeat the fable that you were reading to-day, for the good of the company."

"Once upon a time," cried the child, "a giant and a dwarf were friends, and kept together. They made a bargain that they would never forsake each other, but go seek adventures. The first battle they fought was with two Saracens, and the dwarf, who was very courageous, dealt one of the champions a most angry blow. It did the Saracen very little injury, who, lifting up his sword, fairly struck off the poor dwarf's arm. He was now in a woful plight; but the giant coming to his assist-
ance, in a short time left the Saracens dead on the plain, and the dwarf cut off the dead man's head out of spite. They then travelled on to another adventure. This was against three bloody-minded Satyrs, who were carrying away a damsel in distress. The dwarf was not quite so fierce now as before; but for all that struck the first blow, which was returned by another that knocked out his eye; but the giant was soon up with them, and had they not fled, would certainly have killed them every one. They were all very joyful for this victory, and the damsel who was relieved fell in love with the giant and married him. They now travelled far, and farther than I can tell, till they met with a company of robbers. The giant for the first time was foremost now; but the dwarf was not far behind. The battle was stout and long. Wherever the giant came, all fell before him; but the dwarf had like to have been killed more than once. At last the victory declared for the two adventurers; but the dwarf lost his leg. The dwarf was now without an arm, a leg, and an eye, while the giant was without a single wound. Upon which he cried out to his little companion, 'My little hero, this is glorious sport! let us get one victory more, and then we shall have honor forever.' 'No,' cries the dwarf, who was by this time grown wiser, 'no, I declare off; I'll fight no more: for I find in every battle that you get all the honor and rewards, but all the blows fall upon me.'

I was going to moralize this fable when our attention was called off to a warm dispute between my wife and Mr. Burchell, upon my daughter's intended expedition to town. My wife very strenuously insisted upon the advantages that would result from it; Mr. Burchell, on the contrary, dissuaded her with great ardor, and I stood neuter. His present dissuasions seemed but the second part of those which were received with so ill a grace in the morning. The dispute grew high, while poor Deborah, instead of reasoning stronger talked louder, and at last was obliged to take shelter from a defeat in clamor. The conclusion of her harangue, however, was highly displeasing to us all: "she knew," she said, "of some who had their own secret reasons for what they advised; but, for her part, she wished such to stay away from her house for the future." — "Madam," cried Burchell, with looks of great composure, which tended to inflame her the more, "as for secret reasons, you are right; I have secret reasons, which I forbear to mention, because you are not able to answer those of which I make no secret: but I find my visits here are become troublesome; I'll
take my leave therefore now, and perhaps come once more to take a final farewell when I am quitting the country." Thus saying, he took up his hat, nor could the attempts of Sophia, whose looks seemed to upbraid his precipitancy, prevent his going.

When gone we all regarded each other for some minutes with confusion. My wife, who knew herself to be the cause, strove to hide her concern with a forced smile, and an air of assurance, which I was willing to reprove: "How, woman," cried I to her, "is it thus we treat strangers? Is it thus we return their kindness? Be assured, my dear, that these were the harshest words, and to me the most unpleasing that ever escaped your lips!"—"Why would he provoke me then?" replied she; "but I know the motives of his advice perfectly well. He would prevent my girls from going to town, that he may have the pleasure of my youngest daughter's company here at home. But whatever happens, she shall choose better company than such low-lived fellows as he."—"Low-lived, my dear, do you call him?" cried I; "it is very possible we may mistake this man's character, for he seems upon some occasions the most finished gentleman I ever knew.—Tell me, Sophia, my girl, has he ever given you any secret instances of his attachment?" "His conversation with me, sir," replied my daughter, "has ever been sensible, modest, and pleasing. As to aught else, no, never. Once, indeed, I remember to have heard him say, he never knew a woman who could find merit in a man that seemed poor." "Such, my dear," cried I, "is the common cant of all the unfortunate or idle. But I hope you have been taught to judge properly of such men, and that it would be even madness to expect happiness from one who has been so very bad an economist of his own. Your mother and I have now better prospects for you. The next winter, which you will probably spend in town, will give you opportunities of making a more prudent choice."

What Sophia's reflections were upon this occasion I can't pretend to determine: but I was not displeased at the bottom, that we were rid of a guest from whom I had much to fear. Our breach of hospitality went to my conscience a little; but I quickly silenced that monitor by two or three specious reasons, which served to satisfy and reconcile me to myself. The pain which conscience gives the man who has already done wrong, is soon got over. Conscience is a coward, and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent, it seldom has justice enough to accuse.
CHAPTER XIV.

Fresh Mortifications, or a demonstration that seeming Calamities may be real Blessings.

The journey of my daughters to town was now resolved upon, Mr. Thornhill having kindly promised to inspect their conduct himself, and inform us by letter of their behavior. But it was thought indispensible necessary that their appearance should equal the greatness of their expectations, which could not be done without expense. We debated therefore in full council what were the easiest methods of raising money, or more properly speaking, what we could most conveniently sell. The deliberation was soon finished; it was found that our remaining horse was utterly useless for the plough without his companion, and equally unfit for the road, as wanting an eye; it was therefore determined that we should dispose of him for the purposes above mentioned, at the neighboring fair, and to prevent imposition that I should go with him myself. Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, yet I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation. The opinion a man forms of his own prudence is measured by that of the company he keeps; and as mine was mostly in the family way, I had conceived no unfavorable sentiments of my worldly wisdom. My wife, however, next morning, at parting, after I had got some paces from the door, called me back, to advise me in a whisper, to have all my eyes about me.

I had, in the usual forms, when I came to the fair, put my horse through all his paces; but for some time had no bidders. At last a chapman approached, and after he had for a good while examined the horse round, finding him blind of one eye, he would have nothing to say to him; a second came up, but observing he had a spavin, declared he would not take him for the driving home; a third person perceived he had a windgall, and would bid no money; a fourth knew by his eye that he had the botts; a fifth wondered what a plague I could do at the fair with a blind, spavined, galled hack, that was only fit to be cut up for a dog-kennel. By this time I began to have a most hearty contempt for the poor animal myself, and was almost ashamed at the approach of every customer; for though
I did not entirely believe all the fellows told me, yet I reflected that the number of witnesses was a strong presumption they were right; and St. Gregory upon Good Works, professes himself to be of the same opinion.

I was in this mortifying situation, when a brother clergyman, an old acquaintance, who had also business at the fair, came up, and shaking me by the hand, proposed adjourning to a public-house, and taking a glass of whatever we could get. I readily closed with the offer, and entering an alehouse we were shown into a little back room, where there was only a venerable old man, who sat wholly intent over a large book, which he was reading. I never in my life saw a figure that prepossessed me more favorably. His locks of silver gray venerably shaded his temples, and his green old age seemed to be the result of health and benevolence. However, his presence did not interrupt our conversation: my friend and I discoursed on the various turns of fortune we had met; the Whistonian controversy, my last pamphlet, the archdeacon's reply, and the hard measure that was dealt me. But our attention was in a short time taken off by the appearance of a youth, who entering the room, respectfully said something softly to the old stranger. "Make no apologies my child," said the old man, "to do good is a duty we owe to all our fellow-creatures; take this, I wish it were more; but five pounds will relieve your distress, and you are welcome." The modest youth shed tears of gratitude, and yet his gratitude was scarcely equal to mine. I could have hugged the old man in my arms, his benevolence pleased me so. He continued to read, and we resumed our conversation, until my companion, after some time, recollecting that he had business to transact in the fair, promised to be soon back, adding, that he always desired to have as much of Dr. Primrose's company as possible. The old gentleman hearing my name mentioned, seemed to look at me with attention for some time, and when my friend was gone, most respectfully demanded if I was any way related to the great Primrose, that courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the church. Never did my heart feel sincerer rapture than at that moment. "Sir," cried I, "the applause of so good a man, as I am sure you are, adds to that happiness in my breast which your benevolence has already excited. You behold before you, sir, that Dr. Primrose, the monogamist, whom you have been pleased to call great. You here see that unfortunate divine, who has so long, and it would ill become me to say successfully, fought against the deutero-
omy of the age.”—“Sir,” cried the stranger, struck with awe, “I fear I have been too familiar; but you’ll forgive my curiosity, sir: I beg pardon.”—“Sir,” cried I, grasping his hand, “you are so far from displeasing me by your familiarity, that I must beg you’ll accept my friendship, as you already have my esteem.”—“Then with gratitude I accept the offer,” cried he, squeezing me by the hand, “thou glorious pillar of unshaken orthodoxy! and do I behold—” I here interrupted what he was going to say; for though, as an author, I could digest no small share of flattery, yet now my modesty would permit no more. However, no lovers in romance ever cemented a more instantaneous friendship. We talked upon several subjects, at first I thought he seemed rather devout than learned, and began to think he despised all human doctrines as dross. Yet this no way lessened him in my esteem; for I had for some time begun privately to harbor such an opinion myself. I therefore took occasion to observe, that the world in general began to be blamably indifferent as to doctrinal matters, and followed human speculations too much—“Ay, sir,” replied he, as if he had reserved all his learning to that moment, “ay, sir, the world is in its dotage, and yet the cosmogony or creation of the world has puzzled philosophers of all ages. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words, Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan, which imply that all things have neither beginning nor end. Manetho also, who lived about the time of Nebuchadon-Asser,—Asser being a Syriac word usually applied as a surname to the kings of that country, as Teglat Phael-Asser, Nabon-Asser,—he, I say, formed a conjecture equally absurd; for as we usually say, ἐκ τοῦ βιβλίου κυβερνητῆς, which implies that books will never teach the world; so he attempted to investigate—But, sir, I ask pardon, I am straying from the question.”—That he actually was; nor could I for my life see how the creation of the world had anything to do with the business I was talking of; but it was sufficient to show me that he was a man of letters, and I now reverenced him the more. I was resolved therefore to bring him to the touchstone; but he was too mild and too gentle to contend for victory. Whenever I made an observation that looked like a challenge to controversy, he would smile, shake his head, and say nothing: by which I understood he could say much, if he thought proper. The subject therefore insensibly changed from the business of antiquity to that which
brought us both to the fair; mine, I told him, was to sell a horse, and very luckily indeed, his was to buy one for one of his tenants. My horse was soon produced, and in fine we struck a bargain. Nothing now remained but to pay me, and he accordingly pulled out a thirty pound note, and bid me change it. Not being in a capacity of complying with this demand, he ordered his footman to be called up, who made his appearance in a very genteel livery. "Here, Abraham," cried he, "go and get gold for this; you'll do it at neighbor Jackson's or anywhere." While the fellow was gone, he entertained me with a pathetic harangue on the great scarcity of silver, which I undertook to improve, by deploring also the great scarcity of gold; so that by the time Abraham returned, we had both agreed that money was never so hard to be come at as now. Abraham returned to inform us, that he had been over the whole fair, and could not get change, though he had offered half a crown for doing it. This was a very great disappointment to us all; but the old gentleman, having paused a little, asked me if I knew one Solomon Flamborough in my part of the country? Upon replying that he was my next-door neighbor; "if that be the case then," returned he, "I believe we shall deal. You shall have a draft upon him payable at sight; and let me tell you, he is as warm a man as any within five miles round him. Honest Solomon and I have been acquainted for many years together. I remember I always beat him at three jumps; but he could hop on one leg farther than I." A draft upon my neighbor was to me the same as money; for I was sufficiently convinced of his ability. The draft was signed, and put into my hands, and Mr. Jenkinson, the old gentleman, his man Abraham, and my horse, old Blackberry, trotted off very well pleased with each other.

After a short interval, being left to reflection, I began to recollect that I had done wrong in taking a draft from a stranger, and so prudently resolved upon following the purchaser, and having back my horse. But this was now too late; I therefore made directly homewards, resolving to get the draft changed into money at my friend's as fast as possible. I found my honest neighbor smoking his pipe at his own door, and informing him that I had a small bill upon him, he read it twice over. "You can read the name, I suppose," cried I, "Ephraim Jenkinson." "Yes," returned he, "the name is written plain enough, and I know the gentleman too, the greatest rascal under the canopy of heaven. This is the very same rogue who sold us the spectacles. Was he not a venerable looking
man, with gray hair, and no flaps to his pocket-holes? And did he not talk a long string of learning about Greek, and cosmogony, and the world?” To this I replied with a groan. “Ay,” continued he, “he has but that one piece of learning in the world, and he always talks it away whenever he finds a scholar in company: but I know the rogue, and will catch him yet.”

Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school, there to behold the master’s visage, than I was of going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself.

But, alas! upon entering, I found the family no way disposed to battle. My wife and girls were all in tears, Mr. Thornhill having been there that day to inform them, that their journey to town was entirely over. The two ladies having heard reports of us from some malicious person about us, were that day set out for London. He could neither discover the tendency, nor the author of these; but whatever they might be, or whoever might have broached them, he continued to assure our family of his friendship and protection. I found, therefore, that they bore my disappointment with great resignation, as it was eclipsed in the greatness of their own. But what perplexed us most, was to think who could be so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours, too humble to excite envy, and too inoffensive to create disgust.

CHAPTER XV.

All Mr. Burchell’s villany at once detected.—The folly of being over-wise.

That evening, and a part of the following day, was employed in fruitless attempts to discover our enemies; scarcely a family in the neighborhood but incurred our suspicions, and each of us had reasons for our opinion best known to ourselves. As we were in this perplexity, one of our little boys, who had been playing abroad, brought in a letter-case which he found on the green. It was quickly known to belong to Mr. Burchell, with whom it had been seen, and, upon examination, contained some hints upon different subjects; but what particularly en-
gaged our attention was a sealed note superscribed, *The copy of a letter to be sent to the two ladies at Thornhill-castle.* It instantly occurred that he was the base informer, and we deliberated whether the note should not be broken open. I was against it; but Sophia, who said she was sure that of all men he would be the last to be guilty of so much baseness, insisted upon its being read. In this she was seconded by the rest of the family, and at their solicitation I read as follows:

"Ladies,

"The bearer will sufficiently satisfy you as to the person from whom this comes: one at least the friend of innocence, and ready to prevent its being seduced. I am informed for a truth that you have some intention of bringing two young ladies to town, whom I have some knowledge of, under the character of companions. As I would neither have simplicity imposed upon, nor virtue contaminated, I must offer it as my opinion, that the impropriety of such a step will be attended with dangerous consequences. It has never been my way to treat the infamous or the lewd with severity; nor should I now have taken this method of explaining myself, or reproving folly, did it not aim at guilt. Take therefore the admonition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the consequences of introducing infamy and vice into retreats, where peace and innocence have hitherto resided."

Our doubts were now at an end. There seemed indeed something applicable to both sides in this letter, and its censures might as well be referred to those to whom it was written, as to us; but the malicious meaning was obvious, and we went no farther. My wife had scarcely patience to hear me to the end, but railed at the writer with unrestrained resentment. Olivia was equally severe, and Sophia seemed perfectly amazed at his baseness. As for my part, it appeared to me one of the vilest instances of unprovoked ingratitude I had met with; nor could I account for it in any other manner, than by imputing it to his desire of detaining my youngest daughter in the country, to have the more frequent opportunities of an interview. In this manner we all set ruminating upon schemes of vengeance, when our other little boy came running in to tell us that Mr. Burchell was approaching at the other end of the field. It is easier to conceive than describe the complicated sensations which are felt from the pain of a recent injury, and the pleasure of approaching vengeance. Though our intentions were only to upbraid him with his ingratitude, yet it
was resolved to do it in a manner that would be perfectly cutting. For this purpose we agreed to meet him with our usual smiles; to chat in the beginning with more than ordinary kindness; to amuse him a little; and then, in the midst of the flattering calm, to burst upon him like an earthquake, and overwhelm him with a sense of his own baseness. This being resolved upon, my wife undertook to manage the business herself, as she really had some talents for such an undertaking. We saw him approach; he entered, drew a chair, and sat down. —"A fine day, Mr. Burchell."—"A very fine day, doctor; though I fancy we shall have some rain by the shooting of my corns."—"The shooting of your corns!" cried my wife with a loud fit laughter, and then asked pardon for being fond of a joke.—"Dear madam," replied he, "I pardon you with all my heart, for I protest I should not have thought it a joke had you not told me."—"Perhaps not, sir," cried my wife, winking at us; "and yet I dare say you can tell us how many jokes go to an ounce." "I fancy, madam," returned Mr. Burchell, "you have been reading a jest book this morning, that ounce of jokes is so very good a conceit; and yet, madam, I had rather see half an ounce of understanding."—"I believe you might," cried my wife, still smiling at us, though the laugh was against her: "and yet I have seen some men pretend to understanding that have very little." "And no doubt," returned the antagonist, "you have known ladies set up for wit that had none." I quickly began to find that my wife was likely to gain but little at this business; so I resolved to treat him in a style of more severity myself. "Both wit and understanding," cried I, "are trifles without integrity; it is that which gives value to every character. The ignorant peasant without fault, is greater than the philosopher with many; for what is genius or courage without a heart? An honest man is the noblest work of God." "I always held that hackneyed maxim of Pope," returned Mr. Burchell, "as very unworthy a man of genius, and a base desertion of his own superiority. As the reputation of books is raised, not by their freedom from defect, but the greatness of their beauties; so should that of men be prized, not for their exemption from fault, but the size of those virtues they are possessed of. The scholar may want prudence, the statesman may have pride, and the champion ferocity; but shall we prefer to these the low mechanic, who laboriously plods through life without censure or applause? We might as well prefer the tame, correct paintings of the Flemish school to the erroneous but sublime animations of the Roman pencil,"
"Sir," replied I, "your present observation is just, when there are shining virtues and minute defects, but when it appears that great vices are opposed in the same mind to as extraordinary virtues, such a character deserves contempt."

"Perhaps," cried he, "there may be some such monsters as you describe, of great vices joined to great virtues; yet in my progress through life, I never yet found one instance of their existence; on the contrary, I have ever perceived, that where the mind was capacious, the affections were good. And indeed Providence seems kindly our friend in this particular, thus to debilitate the understanding where the heart is corrupt, and diminish the power, where there is the will to do mischief. This rule seems to extend even to other animals: the little vermin race are ever treacherous, cruel, and cowardly, whilst those endowed with strength and power are generous, brave, and gentle."

"These observations sound well," returned I, "and yet it would be easy this moment to point out a man," and I fixed my eye steadily upon him, "whose head and heart form a most detestable contrast. Ay, sir," continued I, raising my voice, "and I am glad to have this opportunity of detecting him in the midst of his fancied security. Do you know this, sir, this pocket-book?" — "Yes, sir," returned he, with a face of impenetrable assurance, "that pocket-book is mine, and I am glad you have found it." — "And do you know," cried I, "this letter? Nay, never falter, man; but look me full in the face: I say, do you know this letter?" "That letter," returned he; "yes, it was I that wrote that letter." — "And how could you," said I, "so basely, so ungratefully presume to write this letter?" — "And how came you," replied he with looks of unparalleled effrontery, "so basely to presume to break open this letter? Don't you know, now, I could hang you for all this? All that I have to do is to swear at the next justice's, that you have been guilty of breaking open the lock of my pocket-book, and so hang you all up at this door." This piece of unexpected insolence raised me to such a pitch, that I could scarce govern my passion. "Ungrateful wretch! begone, and no longer pollute my dwelling with thy baseness! begone, and never let me see thee again! Go from my door, and the only punishment I wish thee is an alarmed conscience, which will be a sufficient tormentor!" So saying, I threw him his pocket-book, which he took up with a smile, and shutting the clasps with the utmost composure, left us quite astonished at the serenity of his assurance. My wife was particularly enraged
that nothing could make him angry, or make him seem ashamed of his villanies. "My dear," cried I, willing to calm those passions that had been raised too high among us, "we are not to be surprised that bad men want shame; they only blush at being detected in doing good, but glory in their vices.

"Guilt and Shame, says the allegory, were at first companions, and in the beginning of their journey, inseparably kept together. But their union was soon found to be disagreeable and inconvenient to both; Guilt gave Shame frequent uneasiness, and Shame often betrayed the secret conspiracies of Guilt. After long disagreement, therefore, they at length consented to part forever. Guilt boldly walked forward alone to overtake Fate, that went before them in the shape of an executioner; but Shame being naturally timorous, returned back to keep company with Virtue, which in the beginning of their journey they had left behind. Thus, my children, after men have travelled through a few stages in vice, shame forsakes them, and returns back to wait upon the few virtues they have still remaining."

CHAPTER XVI.

The family use Art, which is opposed with still greater.

Whatever might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family was easily consoled for Mr. Burchell's absence by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of. He usually came in the morning, and while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sat with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted. He could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the play-houses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote, long before they made their way into the jest-books. The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet, or sometimes in setting my two little ones to box, to make them sharp, as he called it: but the hopes of
having him for a son-in-law, in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections. It must be owned, that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him; or, to speak more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea ate short and crisp, they were made by Olivia; if the gooseberry-wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering: it was her fingers which gave the pickles their peculiar green; and in the composition of a pudding, it was her judgment that mixed the ingredients. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the 'Squire, that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up to see which was the tallest. These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which everybody saw through, were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which, though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it; and his slowness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. An occurrence, however, which happened soon after, put it beyond a doubt that he designed to become one of our family; my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

My wife and daughters happening to return a visit to neighbor Flamborough's, found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limner, who travelled the country, and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us, and notwithstanding all I could say, and I said much, it was resolved that we should have pictures done too. Having, therefore, engaged the limner,—for what could I do?—our next deliberation was to show the superiority of our tastes in the attitudes. As for our neighbor's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges, a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something in a brighter style, and, after many debates, at length came to an unanimous resolution of being drawn together in one large historical family piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all, and it would be infinitely more genteel; for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, and the painter was desired not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair. Her two little ones were to be as
Cupids by her side, while I in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green Joseph, richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with a hat and white feather. Our taste so much pleased the 'Squire, that he insisted as being put in as one of the family in the character of Alexander the Great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family, nor could we refuse this request. The painter was therefore set to work, and as he wrought with assidious and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colors; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance had not occurred till the picture was finished, which now struck us with dismay. It was so very large that we had no place in the house to fix it. How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but certain it is, we had been all greatly remiss. The picture therefore instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned, in a most mortifying manner, against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbors. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle: some wondered how it could be got out, but still more were amazed how it ever got in.

But though it excited the ridicule of some, it effectually raised more malicious suggestions in many. The 'Squire's portrait being found united with ours, was an honor too great to escape envy. Scandalous whispers began to circulate at our expense, and our tranquillity was continually disturbed by persons who came as friends to tell us what was said of us by enemies. These reports we always resented with becoming spirit; but scandal ever improves by opposition.

We once again therefore entered into a consultation upon obviating the malice of our enemies, and at last came to a resolution which had too much cunning to give me entire satisfaction. It was this: as our principal object was to discover the honor of Mr. Thornhill's addresses, my wife undertook to sound him, by pretending to ask his advice in the choice of a husband
for her eldest daughter. If this was not found sufficient to induce him to a declaration, it was then resolved to terrify him with a rival. To this last step, however, I would by no means give my consent, till Olivia gave me the most solemn assurances that she would marry the person provided to rival him upon this occasion, if he did not prevent it by taking her himself. Such was the scheme laid, which though I did not strenuously oppose, I did not entirely approve.

The next time, therefore, that Mr. Thornhill came to see us, my girls took care to be out of the way, in order to give their mamma an opportunity of putting her scheme into execution; but they only retired to the next room, whence they could overhear the whole conversation. My wife artfully introduced it, by observing, that one of the Miss Flamboroughs was like to have a very good match of it in Mr. Spanker. To this the 'Squire assenting, she proceeded to remark, that they who had warm fortunes were always sure of getting good husbands; “But heaven help,” continued she, “the girls that have none. What signifies beauty, Mr. Thornhill? or what signifies all the virtue, and all the qualifications in the world, in this age of self-interest? It is not, what is she? but what has she? is all the cry.”

“Madam,” returned he, “I highly approve the justice, as well as the novelty of your remarks, and if I were a king, it should be otherwise. It should then, indeed, be fine times with the girls without fortunes: our two young ladies should be the first for whom I would provide.”

“Ah, sir,” returned my wife “you are pleased to be facetious: but I wish I were a queen, and then I know where my eldest daughter should look for a husband. But now, that you have put it into my head, seriously, Mr. Thornhill, can’t you recommend me a proper husband for her? she is now nineteen years old, well grown and well educated, and, in my humble opinion, does not want for parts.”

“Madam,” replied he, “if I were to choose, I would find out a person possessed of every accomplishment that can make an angel happy. One with prudence, fortune, taste, and sincerity; such, madam, would be, in my opinion, the proper husband.”

“Ay, sir,” said she, “but do you know of any such person?”

—“No, madam,” returned he, “It is impossible to know any person that deserves to be her husband: she’s too great a treasure for one man’s possession; she’s a goddess! Upon my soul, I speak what I think; she’s an angel.”—“Ah, Mr. Thornhill, you only flatter my poor girl; but we have been thinking of marrying her to one of your tenants whose mother
is lately dead, and who wants a manager: you know whom I mean, Farmer Williams; a warm man, Mr. Thornhill, able to give her good bread; and who has several times made her proposals (which was actually the case): but, sir," concluded she, "I should be glad to have your approbation of our choice."—"How! madam!" replied he, "my approbation! My approbation of such a choice!—Never. What! sacrifice so much beauty, and sense, and goodness, to a creature insensible of the blessing! Excuse me, I can never approve of such a piece of injustice! And I have my reasons."—"Indeed, sir," cried Deborah, "if you have your reasons, that's another affair; but I should be glad to know those reasons."—"Excuse me, madam," returned he, "they lie too deep for discovery (laying his hand upon his bosom); they remain buried, rivetted here."

After he was gone, upon a general consultation, we could not tell what to make of these fine sentiments. Olivia considered them as instances of the most exalted passion; but I was not quite so sanguine; it seemed to me pretty plain, that they had more of love than matrimony in them; yet whatever they might portend, it was resolved to prosecute the scheme of Farmer Williams, who, from my daughter's first appearance in the country, had paid her his addresses.

CHAPTER XVII.

Scarcely any Virtue found to resist the power of long and pleasing Temptation.

As I only studied my child's real happiness, the assiduity of Mr. Williams pleased me, as he was in easy circumstances, prudent, and sincere. It required but very little encouragement to revive his former passion; so that in an evening or two he and Mr. Thornhill met at our house, and surveyed each other for some time with looks of anger; but Williams owed his landlord no rent, and little regarded his indignation. Olivia on her side, acted the coquette to perfection, if that might be called acting which was her real character, pretending to lavish all her tenderness on her new lover. Mr. Thornhill appeared quite dejected at this preference, and with a pensive air took leave, though I own it puzzled me to find him so much in pain as he appeared to be, when he had it in his power so easily to remove the cause, by declaring an honorable passion. But
whatever uneasiness he seemed to endure, it could easily be perceived that Olivia's anguish was still greater. After any of these interviews between her lovers, of which there were several, she usually retired to solitude, and there indulged her grief. It was in such a situation I found her one evening, after she had been for some time supporting a fictitious gayety. "You now see, my child," said I, "that your confidence in Mr. Thornhill's passion was all a dream; he permits the rivalry of another, every way his inferior, though he knows it lies in his power to secure you to himself by a candid declaration."—"Yes, papa," returned she, "but he has his reasons for this delay, I know he has. The sincerity of his looks and words convinces me of his real esteem. A short time, I hope, will discover the generosity of his sentiments, and convince you that my opinion of him has been more just than yours."—"Olivia, my darling," returned I, "every scheme that has been hitherto pursued to compel him to a declaration, has been proposed and planned by yourself, nor can you in the least say that I have constrained you. But you must not suppose, my dear, that I will be instrumental in suffering his honest rival to be the dupe of your ill-placed passion. Whatever time you require to bring your fancied admirer to an explanation, shall be granted; but at the expiration of that term, if he is still regardless, I must absolutely insist that honest Mr. Williams shall be rewarded for his fidelity. The character which I have hitherto supported in life demands this from me, and my tenderness as a parent shall never influence my integrity as a man. Name then your day; let it be as distant as you think proper; and in the meantime take care to let Mr. Thornhill know the exact time on which I design delivering you up to another. If he really loves you, his own good sense will readily suggest that there is but one method alone to prevent his losing you forever."—This proposal, which she could not avoid considering as perfectly just, was readily agreed to. She again renewed her most positive promise of marrying Mr. Williams in case of the other's insensibility; and at the next opportunity, in Mr. Thornhill's presence, that day month was fixed upon for her nuptials with his rival.

Such vigorous proceedings seemed to redouble Mr. Thornhill's anxiety: but what Olivia really felt gave me some uneasiness. In this struggle between prudence and passion, her vivacity quite forsook her, and every opportunity of solitude was sought and spent in tears. One week passed away; but Mr. Thornhill made no effort to restrain her nuptials. The
succeeding week he was still assiduous; but not more open. On the third he discontinued his visits entirely, and instead of my daughter testifying any impatience, as I expected, she seemed to retain a pensive tranquillity, which I looked upon as resignation. For my own part, I was now sincerely pleased with thinking that my child was going to be secured in a continuance of competence and peace, and frequently applauded her resolution, in preferring happiness to ostentation.

It was within about four days of her intended nuptials, that my little family at night were gathered round a charming fire, telling stories of the past, and laying schemes for the future; busied in forming a thousand projects, and laughing at whatever folly came uppermost. "Well, Moses," cried I, "we shall soon, my boy, have a wedding in the family; what is your opinion of matters and things in general?"—"My opinion, father, is, that all things go on very well; and I was just now thinking, that when sister Livy is married to Farmer Williams, we shall then have the loan of his cider press and brewing tubs for nothing."—"That we shall, Moses," cried I, "and he will sing us Death and the Lady, to raise our spirits, into the bargain." "He has taught that song to our Dick," cried Moses, "and I think he goes through it very prettily." "Does he so?" cried I, "then let us have it: where's little Dick? let him up with it boldly."—"My brother Dick," cried Bill, my youngest, "is just gone out with sister Livy; but Mr. Williams has taught me two songs, and I'll sing them for you, papa. Which song do you choose, The Dying Swan or the Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog?" "The elegy, child, by all means," said I; "I never heard that yet; and Deborah, my life, grief, you know, is dry, let us have a bottle of the best gooseberry wine to keep up our spirits. I have wept so much at all sorts of elegies of late, that, without an enlivening glass, I am sure this will overcome me; and Sophy, love, take your guitar, and thrum in with the boy a little."

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG.

Good people all of every sort,
Give ear unto my song,
And if you find it wondrous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.
A kind and gentle heart he had,
  To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
  When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
  As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
  And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
  But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends
  Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighboring streets,
  The wondering neighbors ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
  To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad
  To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
  They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
  That showed the rogues they lied,—
The man recovered of the bite
  The dog it was that died.

"A very good boy, Bill, upon my word, and an elegy that
may truly be called tragical.  Come, my children, here's Bill's
health, and may he one day be a bishop!"

"With all my heart," cried my wife; "and if he but
preaches as well as he sings, I make no doubt of him. The
most of his family, by the mother's side, could sing a good
song: it was a common saying in our country, that the family
of the Blenkinsops could never look straight before them, nor
the Hugginsons blow out a candle; that there were none of
the Grograms but could sing a song, or of Marjorams but could
tell a story."—"However that be," cried I, "the most vulgar
ballad of them all generally pleases me better than the fine
modern odes, and things that petrify us in a single stanza;
productions that we at once detest and praise. Put the glass
to your brother, Moses. The great fault of these elegiasts is,
that they are in despair for griefs that gives the sensible part
of mankind very little pain. A lady loses her muff, her fan, or
her lap-dog, and so the silly poet runs home to versify the
disaster."

"That may be the mode," cried Moses, "in sublimer com-
positions; but the Ranelagh songs that come down to us are
perfectly familiar, and all cast in the same mould: Colin meets Dolly, and they hold a dialogue together; he gives her a fairing to put in her hair, and she presents him with a nosegay; and then they go together to church, where they give good advice to young nymphs and swains to get married as fast as they can."

"And very good advice too," cried I; "and I am told there is not a place in the world where advice can be given with so much propriety as there; for as it persuades us to marry, it also furnishes us with a wife: and surely that must be an excellent market, my boy, where we are told what we want, and supplied with it when wanting."

"Yes, sir," returned Moses, "and I know of but two such markets for wives in Europe, Ranelagh in England, and Fontarabia in Spain. The Spanish market is open once a year; but our English wives are saleable every night."

"You are right, my boy," cried his mother; "Old England is the only place in the world for husbands to get wives."—And for wives to manage their husbands," interrupted I. "It is a proverb abroad, that if a bridge were built across the sea, all the ladies of the continent would come over to take patterns from ours; for there are no such wives in Europe as our own. But let us have one bottle more, Deborah, my life; and Moses, give us a good song. What thanks do we not owe to Heaven for thus bestowing tranquillity, health, and competence. I think myself happier now than the greatest monarch upon earth. He has no such fireside, nor such pleasant faces about it. Yes, Deborah, we are now growing old; but the evening of our life is likely to be happy. We are descended from ancestors that knew no stain, and we shall leave a good and virtuous race of children behind us. While we live, they will be our support and our pleasure here; and when we die, they will transmit our honor untainted to posterity. Come, my son, we wait for a song: let us have a chorus. But where is my darling Olivia? That little cherub's voice is always sweetest in the concert."—Just as I spoke, Dick came running in, "O papa, papa, she is gone from us, she is gone from us; my sister Livy is gone from us forever."—"Gone, child!" "Yes, she is gone off with two gentlemen in a postchaise, and one of them kissed her, and said he would die for her: and she cried very much, and was for coming back; but he persuaded her again, and she went into the chaise, and said, O what will my poor papa do when he knows I am undone!" "Now then," cried I, "my children, go and be miserable; for we shall never enjoy one hour more.
And O, may Heaven's everlasting fury light upon him and his!—Thus to rob me of my child!—And sure it will, for taking back my sweet innocent that I was leading up to Heaven. Such sincerity as my child was possessed of!—But all our earthly happiness is now over! Go, my children, go and be miserable and infamous: for my heart is broken within me!"—"Father," cried my son, "is this your fortitude?"—"Fortitude, child! Yes, he shall see I have fortitude! Bring me my pistols. I'll pursue the traitor: while he is on earth I'll pursue him. Old as I am he shall find I can sting him yet. The villain! The perfidious villain!" I had by this time reached down my pistols, when my poor wife, whose passions were not so strong as mine, caught me in her arms. "My dearest, dearest husband," cried she, "the Bible is the only weapon that is fit for your old hands now. Open that, my love, and read our anguish into patience, for she has vilely deceived us."—"Indeed, sir," resumed my son, after a pause, "your rage is too violent and unbecoming. You should be my mother's comforter, and you increase her pain. It ill suited you and your reverend character, thus to curse your greatest enemy: you should not have cursed him, villain as he is."—"I did not curse him, child, did I?"—"Indeed, sir, you did; you cursed him twice."—"Then may Heaven forgive me and him if I did! And now, my son, I see it was more than human benevolence that first taught us to bless our enemies! Blessed be his holy name for all the good he hath given, and for all that he hath taken away. But it is not—it is not a small distress that can wring tears from these old eyes, that have not wept for so many years. My child!—To undo my darling!—May confusion seize—Heaven forgive me, what am I about to say!—You may remember, my love, how good she was, and how charming; till this vile moment, all her care was to make us happy. Had she but died!—But she is gone, the honor of our family contaminated, and I must look out for happiness in other worlds than here. But, my child, you saw them go off: perhaps he forced her away? If he forced her, she may yet be innocent."—"Ah no, sir," cried the child; "he only kissed her, and called her his angel, and she wept very much, and leaned upon his arm, and they drove off very fast."—"She's an ungrateful creature," cried my wife, who could scarcely speak for weeping, "to use us thus. She never had the least constraint put upon her affections. The vile strumpet has basely deserted her parents without any provocation—thus to bring your gray hairs to the grave, and I must shortly follow."
In this manner that night, the first of our real misfortunes, was spent in the bitterness of complaint, and ill-supported sallies of enthusiasm. I determined, however, to find out our betrayer, wherever he was, and reproach his baseness. The next morning we missed our wretched child at breakfast, where she used to give life and cheerfulness to us all. My wife, as before, attempted to ease her heart by reproaches. "Never," cried she, "shall that vile stain of our family again darken these harmless doors. I will never call her daughter more. No, let the strumpet live with her vile seducer: she may bring us to shame, but she shall never more deceive us."

"Wife," said I, "do not talk thus hardly: my detestation of her guilt is as great as yours; but ever shall this house and this heart be open to a poor returning repentant sinner. The sooner she returns from her transgressions, the more welcome shall she be to me. For the first time the very best may err; art may persuade, and novelty spread out its charms. The first fault is the child of simplicity, but every other the offspring of guilt. Yes, the wretched creature shall be welcome to this heart and this house, though stained with ten thousand vices. I will again hearken to the music of her voice, again will I hang fondly on her bosom, if I find but repentance there. My son, bring hither my Bible and my staff: I will pursue her, wherever she is; and though I cannot save her from shame, I may prevent the continuance of iniquity."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Pursuit of a Father to reclaim a lost Child to Virtue

Though the child could not describe the gentleman's person who handed his sister into the postchaise, yet my suspicions fell entirely upon our young landlord, whose character for such intrigues was but too well known. I therefore directed my steps towards Thornhill Castle, resolving to upbraid him, and, if possible, to bring back my daughter: but before I had reached his seat, I was met by one of my parishioners, who said he saw a young lady, resembling my daughter, in a postchaise with a gentleman, whom by the description, I could only guess to be Mr. Burchell, and that they drove very fast. This information,
however, did by no means satisfy me. I therefore went to the young 'Squire's and though it was yet early, insisted upon seeing him immediately. He soon appeared with the most open, familiar air, and seemed perfectly amazed at my daughter's elopement, protesting upon his honor that he was quite a stranger to it. I now therefore condemned my former suspicions, and could turn them only on Mr. Burchell, who I recollected had of late several private conferences with her; but the appearance of another witness left me no room to doubt his villany, who averred, that he and my daughter were actually gone towards the Wells, about thirty miles off, where there was a great deal of company. Being driven to that state of mind in which we are more ready to act precipitately than to reason right, I never debated with myself, whether these accounts might not have been given by persons purposely placed in my way to mislead me, but resolved to pursue my daughter and her fancied deluder thither. I walked along with earnestness, and inquired of several by the way; but received no accounts, till, entering the town, I was met by a person on horseback, whom I remembered to have seen at the 'Squire's, and he assured me, that if I followed them to the races, which were but thirty miles farther, I might depend upon overtaking them; for he had seen them dance there the night before, and the whole assembly seemed charmed with my daughter's performance. Early the next day, I walked forward to the races, and about four in the afternoon I came upon the course. The company made a very brilliant appearance, all earnestly employed in one pursuit, that of pleasure: how different from mine, that of reclaiming a lost child to virtue! I thought I perceived Mr. Burchell at some distance from me; but as if he dreaded an interview, upon my approaching him, he mixed among a crowd, and I saw him no more. I now reflected that it would be to no purpose to continue my pursuit farther, and resolved to return home to an innocent family, who wanted my assistance. But the agitations of my mind, and the fatigues I had undergone, threw me into a fever, the symptoms of which I perceived before I came off the course. This was another unexpected stroke, as I was more than seventy miles distant from home: however, I retired to a little alehouse by the roadside, and in this place, the usual retreat of indigence and frugality, I laid me down patiently to wait the issue of my disorder. I languished here for nearly three weeks; but at last my constitution prevailed, though I was unprovided with money to defray the expenses of my entertainment. It is possible the anxiety from this last circumstance
alone might have brought on a relapse, had I not been supplied by a traveller, who stopped to take a cursory refreshment. This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St. Paul’s Church Yard, who has written so many little books for children; he called himself their friend; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted, but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr. Thomas Tripp. I immediately recollected this good-natured man’s red pimpled face; for he had published for me against the Deuterogamists of the age, and from him I borrowed a few pieces to be paid at my return. Leaving the inn, therefore, as I was yet but weak, I resolved to return home by easy journeys of ten miles a day. My health and usual tranquillity were almost restored, and I now condemned that pride which had made me refractory to the hand of correction. Man little knows what calamities are beyond his patience to bear, till he tries them: as in ascending the heights of ambition, which look bright from below, every step we rise shows us some new and gloomy prospect of hidden disappointment; so in our descent from the summits of pleasure, though the vale of misery below may appear at first dark and gloomy, yet the busy mind, still attentive to its own amusement, finds, as we descend, something to flatter and to please. Still, as we approach, the darkest objects appear to brighten, and the mental eye becomes adapted to its gloomy situation.

I now proceeded forward, and had walked about two hours, when I perceived what appeared at a distance like a wagon, which I was resolved to overtake; but when I came up with it, found it to be a strolling company’s cart, that was carrying their scenes and other theatrical furniture to the next village, where they were to exhibit. The cart was attended only by the person who drove it, and one of the company, as the rest of the players were to follow the ensuing day. “Good company upon the road,” says the proverb, “is the shortest cut.” I therefore entered into conversation with the poor player; and as I once had some theatrical powers myself, I disserted upon such topics with my usual freedom: but as I was pretty much unacquainted with the present state of the stage, I demanded who were the present theatrical writers in vogue, who the Drydens and Otways of the day?—“I fancy, sir,” cried the player, “few of our modern dramatists would think themselves much honored by being compared to the writers you mention. Dryden’s and Rowe’s manner, sir, are quite out of fashion;
our taste has gone back a whole century; Fletcher, Ben Jonson, and all the plays of Shakspeare, are the only things that go down.‖—"How," cried I, "is it possible the present age can be pleased with that antiquated dialect, that obsolete humor, those over-charged characters, which abound in the works you mention?"—"Sir," returned my companion, "the public think nothing about dialect, or humor, or character, for that is none of their business; they only go to be amused, and find themselves happy when they can enjoy a pantomime, under the sanction of Jonson's or Shakspeare's name."—"So then, I suppose," cried I, "that our modern dramatists are rather imitators of Shakspeare than of nature."—"To say the truth," return my companion, "I don't know that they imitate anything at all; nor indeed does the public require it of them: it is not the composition of the piece, but the number of starts and attitudes that may be introduced into it, that elicits applause. I have known a piece with not one jest in the whole, shrugged into popularity, and another saved by the poet's throwing in a fit of the gripes. No, sir, the works of Congreve and Farquhar have too much wit in them for the present taste: our modern dialect is much more natural."

By this time the equipage of the strolling company was arrived at the village, which, it seems, had been apprised of our approach, and was come out to gaze at us; for my companion observed, that strollers always have more spectators without doors than within. I did not consider the impropriety of my being in such company, till I saw a mob gather about me. I therefore took shelter, as fast as possible, in the first alehouse that offered, and being shown into the common room, was accosted by a very well dressed gentleman, who demanded whether I was the real chaplain of the company, or whether it was only to be my masquerade character in the play. Upon my informing him of the truth, and that I did not belong in any sort to the company, he was condescending enough to desire me and the player to partake in a bowl of punch, over which he discussed modern politics with great earnestness and interest. I set him down in my own mind for nothing less than a parliament-man at least; but was almost confirmed in my conjectures, when upon asking what there was in the house for supper, he insisted that the player and I should sup with him at his house: with which request, after some entreaties, we were prevailed on to comply.
The description of a Person discontented with the present Government and apprehensive of the loss of our Liberties.

The house where we were to be entertained lying at a small distance from the village, our inviter observed, that as the coach was not ready, he would conduct us on foot; and we soon arrived at one of the most magnificent mansions I had seen in that part of the country. The apartment into which we were shown was perfectly elegant and modern; he went to give orders for supper, while the player, with a wink, observed that we were perfectly in luck. Our entertainer soon returned; an elegant supper was brought in, two or three ladies in dishabile were introduced, and the conversation began with some sprightliness. Politics, however, was the object on which our entertainer chiefly expatiated; for he asserted that liberty was at once his boast and his terror. After the cloth was removed, he asked me if I had seen the last Monitor? to which replying in the negative, “What, nor the Auditor, I suppose?” cried he. “Neither, sir,” returned I. “That’s strange, very strange,” replied my entertainer. “Now I read all the politics that come out. The Daily, the Public, the Ledger, the Chronicle, the London Evening, the Whitehall Evening, the seventeen Magazines and the two Reviews; and though they hate each other, I love them all. Liberty, sir, liberty, is the Briton’s boast, and by all my coal-mines in Cornwall, I reverence its guardians.”

—“Then it is to be hoped,” cried I, “you reverence the king.”

—“Yes,” returned my entertainer, “when he does what we would have him; but if he goes on as he has done of late, I’ll never trouble myself more with his matters. I say nothing. I think, only, I could have directed some things better. I don’t think there has been a sufficient number of advisers: he should advise with every person willing to give him advice, and then we should have things done in another guess manner.”

“I wish,” cried I, “that such intruding advisers were fixed in the pillory. It should be the duty of honest men to assist the weaker side of our constitution, that sacred power which has for some years been every day declining, and losing its due share of influence in the state. But these ignorants still
continue the same cry of liberty; and if they have any weight, basely throw it into the subsiding scale.”

“How,” cried one of the ladies, “do I live to see one so base, so sordid, as to be an enemy to liberty, and a defender of tyrants? Liberty, that sacred gift of Heaven, that glorious privilege of Britons?”

“Can it be possible,” cried our entertainer, “that there should be any found at present advocates for slavery? Any who are for meanly giving up the privilege of Britons? Can any, sir, be so abject?”

“No, sir,” replied I, “I am for liberty, that attribute of God! Glorious liberty! that theme of modern declamation. I would have all men kings. I would be a king myself. We have all naturally an equal right to the throne: we are all originally equal. This is my opinion, and was once the opinion of a set of honest men who were called Levellers. They tried to erect themselves into a community where all would be equally free. But, alas! it would never answer; for there were some among them stronger, and some more cunning than others, and these became masters of the rest; for as sure as your groom rides your horses, because he is a cunninger animal than they, so surely will the animal that is cunninger and stronger than he, sit upon his shoulders in turn. Since then it is entailed upon humanity to submit, and some are born to command, and others to obey, the question is, as there must be tyrants, whether it is better to have them in the same house with us, or in the same village, or still farther off, in the metropolis. Now, sir, for my own part, as I naturally hate the face of a tyrant, the farther off he is removed from me, the better pleased am I. The generality of mankind also are of my way of thinking, and have unanimously created one king, whose election at once diminishes the number of tyrants, and puts tyranny at the greatest distance from the greatest number of people. Now the great, who were tyrants themselves before the election of one tyrant, are naturally averse to a power raised over them, and whose weight must ever lean heaviest on the subordinate orders. It is the interest of the great, therefore, to diminish kingly power as much as possible; because whatever they take from that, is naturally restored to themselves; and all they have to do in the state, is to undermine the single tyrant, by which they resume their primeval authority. Now the state may be so circumstanced, or its laws may be so disposed, or its men of opulence so minded, as all to conspire in carrying on this business of undermining monarchy. For in
the first place, if the circumstances of our state be such as to favor the accumulation of wealth, and make the opulent still more rich, this will increase their ambition. An accumulation of wealth, however, must necessarily be the consequence, when as at present more riches flow in from external commerce, than arise from internal industry; for external commerce can only be managed to advantage by the rich, and they have also at the same time all the emoluments arising from internal industry; so that the rich, with us, have two sources of wealth, whereas the poor have but one. For this reason, wealth, in all commercial states, is found to accumulate, and all such have hitherto in time become aristocratical. Again, the very laws also of this country may contribute to the accumulation of wealth; as when, by their means, the natural ties that bind the rich and poor together are broken, and it is ordained, that the rich shall only marry with the rich; or when the learned are held unqualified to serve their country as counsellors, merely from a defect of opulence, and wealth is thus made the object of a wise man’s ambition; by these means, I say, and such means as these, riches will accumulate. Now, the possessor of accumulated wealth, when furnished with the necessaries and pleasures of life, has no other method to employ the superfluity of his fortune but in purchasing power. That is, differently speaking, in making dependents, by purchasing the liberty of the needy or the venal, of men who are willing to bear the mortification of contiguous tyranny for bread. Thus each very opulent man generally gathers round him a circle of the poorest of the people; and the polity abounding in accumulated wealth, may be compared to a Cartesian system, each orb with a vortex of its own. Those, however, who are willing to move in a great man’s vortex, are only such as must be slaves, the rabble of mankind, whose souls and whose education are adapted to servitude, and who know nothing of liberty except the name. But there must still be a large number of the people without the sphere of the opulent man’s influence, namely, that order of men which subsists between the very rich and the very rabble; those men who are possessed of too large fortunes to submit to the neighboring man in power, and yet are too poor to set up for tyranny themselves. In this middle order of mankind are generally to be found all the arts, wisdom, and virtues of society. This order alone is known to be the true preserver of freedom, and may be called the people. Now it may happen that this middle order of mankind may lose all its influence in a state, and its voice be in a manner
drowned in that of the rabble: for if the fortune sufficient for qualifying a person at present to give his voice in state affairs be ten times less than was judged sufficient upon forming the constitution, it is evident that greater numbers of the rabble will be thus introduced into the political system, and they ever moving in the vortex of the great, will follow where greatness shall direct. In such a state, therefore, all that the middle order has left, is to preserve the prerogatives and privileges of the one principal governor with the most sacred circumspection. For he divides the power of the rich, and calls off the great from falling with tenfold weight on the middle order placed beneath them. The middle order may be compared to a town, of which the opulent are forming the siege, and of which the governor from without is hastening the relief. While the besiegers are in dread of an enemy over them, it is but natural to offer the townsmen the most specious terms; to flatter them with sounds, and amuse them with privileges; but if they once defeat the governor from behind, the walls of the town will be but a small defence to its inhabitants. What they may then expect, may be seen by turning our eyes to Holland, Genoa, or Venice, where the laws govern the poor, and the rich govern the law. I am then for, and would die for monarchy, sacred monarchy; for if there be anything sacred amongst men, it must be the anointed SOVEREIGN of his people; and every diminution of his power in war, or in peace, is an infringement upon the real liberties of the subject. The sons of liberty, patriotism, and Britons, have already done much; it is to be hoped that the true sons of freedom will prevent their ever doing more. I have known many of these pretended champions for liberty in my time, yet do I not remember one that was not in his heart and in his family a tyrant.”

My warmth I found had lengthened this harangue beyond the rules of good breeding; but the impatience of my entertainer, who often strove to interrupt it, could be restrained no longer. “What,” cried he, “then I have been all this while entertaining a jesuit in parson’s clothes! but by all the coal-mines of Cornwall, out he shall pack, if my name be Wilkin-son.” I now found I had gone too far, and asked pardon for the warmth with which I had spoken. “Pardon!” returned he, in a fury: “I think such principles demand ten thousand pardons. What? give up liberty, property, and, the Gazetteer says, lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes! sir, I insist upon your marching out of this house immediately, to prevent worse consequences: sir, I insist upon it.” I was going to re-
peat my remonstrance; but just then we heard a footman's rap at the door, and the two ladies cried out, "As sure as death there is our master and mistress come home." It seems my enter- tainer was all this while only the butler, who, in his master's absence, had a mind to cut a figure, and be for a while the gentleman himself: and to say the truth, he talked politics as well as most country gentlemen do. But nothing could now exceed my confusion upon seeing the gentleman and his lady enter; nor was their surprise at finding such company and good cheer less than ours. "Gentlemen," cried the real mas- ter of the house to me and my companion, "my wife and I are your most humble servants; but I protest this is so unexpected a favor, that we almost sink under the obligation." However unexpected our company might be to them, theirs, I am sure, was still more so to us, and I was struck dumb with the appre- hensions of my own absurdity, whom whom should I next see enter the room but my dear Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was formerly designed to be married to my son George, but whose match was broken off as already related. As soon as she saw me, she flew to my arms with the utmost joy.—"My dear sir," cried she, "to what happy accident is it that we owe so unexpected a visit? I am sure my uncle and aunt will be in raptures when they find they have the good Dr. Primrose for their guest." Upon hearing my name, the old gentleman and lady very politely stepped up, and welcomed me with the most cor- dial hospitality. Nor could they forbear smiling, upon being informed of the nature of my present visit; but the unfortunate butler, whom they at first seemed disposed to turn away, was at my intercession forgiven.

Mr. Arnold and his lady, to whom the house belonged, now insisted upon having the pleasure of my stay for some days; and as their niece, my charming pupil, whose mind in some measure had been formed under my own instructions, joined in their entreaties, I complied. That night I was shown to a magnificent chamber, and the next morning early Miss Wilmot desired to walk with me in the garden, which was decorated in the modern manner. After some time spent in pointing out the beauties of the place, she inquired with seeming unconcern, when last I was heard from my son George? "Alas, madam," cried I, "he has now been nearly three years absent, without ever writing to his friends or me. Where he is I know not; perhaps I shall never see him or happiness more. No, my dear madam, we shall never more see such pleasing hours as were once spent by our fireside at Wakefield. My little family are
now dispersing very fast, and poverty has brought not only want but infamy upon us.” The good-natured girl let fall a tear at this account; but as I saw her possessed of too much sensibility, I forbore a more minute detail of our sufferings. It was, however, some consolation to me to find that time had made no alteration in her affections, and that she had rejected several offers that had been made her since our leaving her part of the country. She led me round all the extensive improvements of the place, pointing to the several walks and arbors, and at the same time catching from every object a hint for some new questions relative to my son. In this manner we spent the forenoon, till the bell summoned us in to dinner, where we found the manager of the strolling company that I mentioned before, who was come to dispose of tickets for the Fair Penitent, which was to be acted that evening, the part of Horatio, by a young gentleman who had never appeared on any stage. He seemed to be very warm in the praises of the new performer, and averred that he never saw any who bid so fair for excellence. Acting, he observed, was not learned in a day; “but this gentleman,” continued he, “seems born to tread the stage. His voice, his figure, and attitudes, are all admirable. We caught him up accidentally in our journey down.” This account, in some measure, excited our curiosity, and, at the entreaty of the ladies, I was prevailed upon to accompany them to the playhouse, which was no other than a barn. As the company with which I went was incontestably the chief of the place, we were received with the greatest respect, and placed in the front seat of the theatre; where we sat for some time with no small impatience to see Horatio make his appearance. The new performer advanced at last; and let parents think of my sensations by their own, when I found it was my unfortunate son. He was going to begin, when turning his eyes upon the audience, he perceived Miss Wilmot and me, and stood at once speechless and immovable. The actors behind the scene, who ascribed this cause to his natural timidity, attempted to encourage him; but instead of going on he burst in a flood of tears, and retired off the stage. I don’t know what were my feelings on this occasion, for they succeeded with too much rapidity for description; but I was soon awakened from this disagreeable reverie by Miss Wilmot, who, pale, and with a trembling voice, desired me to conduct her back to her uncle’s. When got home, Mr, Arnold, who was as yet a stranger to our extraordinary behavior, being informed that the new performer was my son, sent his coach and an invitation for
him: and as he persisted in his refusal to appear again upon the stage, the players put another in his place, and we soon had him with us. Mr. Arnold gave him the kindest reception, and I received him with my usual transport; for I could never counterfeit false resentment. Miss Wilmot's reception was mixed with seeming neglect, and yet I could perceive she acted a studied part. The tumult in her mind seemed not yet abated: she said twenty giddy things that looked like joy, and then laughed loud at her own want of meaning. At intervals she would take a sly peep at the glass, as if happy in the consciousness of irresistible beauty, and often would ask questions without giving any manner of attention to the answers.

CHAPTER XX.

The History of a Philosophic Vagabond, pursuing Novelty, but losing Contentment.

AFTER we had supped, Mrs. Arnold politely offered to send a couple of her footmen for my son's baggage, which he at first seemed to decline; but upon her pressing the request, he was obliged to inform her, that a stick and a wallet were all the movable things upon this earth that he could boast of. "Why, ay, my son," cried I, "you left me but poor, and poor I find you are come back; and yet I make no doubt you have seen a great deal of the world."—"Yes, sir," replied my son, "but travelling after fortune is not the way to secure her; and, indeed, of late I have desisted from the pursuit."—"I fancy, sir," cried Mrs. Arnold, "that the account of your adventures would be amusing: the first part of them I have often heard from my niece, but could the company prevail for the rest, it would be an additional obligation."—"Madam," replied my son, "I promise you the pleasure you have in hearing will not be half so great as my vanity in repeating them; and yet in the whole narrative I can scarcely promise you one adventure, as my account is rather of what I saw than what I did. The first misfortune of my life, which you all know, was great; but though it distressed, it could not sink me. No person ever had a better knack of hoping than I. The less kind I found Fortune at one time, the more I expected from her another, and being now at the bottom of her wheel, every new revolu-
tion might lift, but could not depress me. I proceeded, therefore, towards London, in a fine morning, no way uneasy about to-morrow, but cheerful as the birds that caroled by the road, and comforted myself with reflecting, that London was the mart where abilities of every kind were sure of meeting distinction and reward.

"Upon my arrival in town, sir, my first care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than I. My first scheme, you know, sir, was to be usher at an academy, and I asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin received the proposal with a true Sardonic grin. Ay, cried he, this is indeed a very pretty career that has been chalked out for you. I have been an usher at a boarding-school myself; and may I die by an anodyne necklace, but I had rather be an under turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late: I was browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by the mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to meet civility abroad. But are you sure you are fit for a school? Let me examine you a little. Have you been bred apprentice to the business? No. Then you won't do for a school. Can you dress the boy's hair? No. Then you won't do for a school. Have you had the small-pox? No. Then you won't do for a school. Can you lie three in a bed? No. Then you will never do for a school. Have you got a good stomach? Yes. Then you will by no means do for a school. No, sir, if you are for a genteel easy profession, bind yourself seven years as an apprentice to turn a cutler's wheel; but avoid a school by any means. Yet come, continued he, I see you are a lad of spirit and some learning, what do you think of commencing author, like me? You have read in books, no doubt, of men of genius starving at the trade. At present I'll show you forty very dull fellows about town that live by it in opulence; all honest jog-trot men, who go on smoothly and dully, and write history and politics, and are praised: men, sir, who, had they been bred cobblers, would all their lives have only mended shoes, but never made them.

"Finding that there was no great degree of gentility affixed to the character of an usher, I resolved to accept his proposal; and having the highest respect for literature, hailed the antiqua mater of Grub Street with reverence. I thought it my glory to pursue a track which Dryden and Otway trod before me. I considered the goddess of this region as the parent of excellence; and however an intercourse with the world might give
us good sense, the poverty she entailed I suppose to be the
nurse of genius! Big with these reflections, I sat down, and
finding that the best things remained to be said on the wrong
side, I resolved to write a book that should be wholly new. I
therefore dressed up three paradoxes with some ingenuity.
They were false indeed, but they were new. The jewels of
truth have been so often imported by others, that nothing was
left for me to import but some splendid things that at a distance
looked every bit as well. Witness, you powers, what fancied
importance sat perched upon my quill while I was writing! The
whole learned world, I made no doubt, would rise to op-
pose my systems; but then I was prepared to oppose the whole
learned world. Like the porcupine, I sat self-collected, with a
quill pointed against every opposer.

"Well said, my boy," cried I, "and what subject did you
treat upon? I hope you did not pass over the importance of
monogamy. But I interrupt; go on: you published your
paradoxes; well, and what did the learned world say to your
paradoxes?"

"Sir," replied my son, "the learned world said nothing to
my paradoxes; nothing at all, sir. Every man of them was
employed in praising his friends and himself, or condemning
his enemies: and unfortunately, as I had neither, I suffered
the cruelest mortification, neglect.

"As I was meditating one day in a coffee-house on the fate
of my paradoxes, a little man happening to enter the room,
placed himself in the box before me, and after some prelim-
inary discourse, finding me to be a scholar, drew out a bundle
of proposals, begging me to subscribe to a new edition he was
going to give the world of Propertius with notes. This demand
necessarily produced a reply that I had no money; and that con-
cession led him to inquire into the nature of my expectations.
Finding that my expectations were just as good as my purse, I
see, cried he, you are unacquainted with the town; I'll teach you
a part of it. Look at these proposals,—upon these very pro-
posals I have subsisted very comfortably for twelve years. The
moment a nobleman returns from his travels, a Creolean arrives
from Jamaica, or a dowager from her country seat, I strike for a
subscription. I first besiege their hearts with flattery, and then
pour in my proposals at the breach. If they subscribe readily
the first time, I renew my request to beg a dedication fee. If
they let me have that, I smite them once more for engraving
their coat of arms at the top. Thus, continued he, I live by
vanity, and laugh at it. But between ourselves, I am now too
well known: I should be glad to borrow your face a bit: a nobleman of distinction has just returned from Italy; my face is familiar to his porter; but if you bring this copy of verses, my life for it you succeed, and we divide the spoil."

"Bless us, George," cried I, "and is this the employment of poets now! Do men of their exalted talents thus stoop to beggary! Can they so far disgrace their calling as to make a vile traffic of praise for bread?"

"O no, sir," returned he, "a true poet can never be so base; for wherever there is genius, there is pride. The creatures I now describe are only beggars in rhyme. The real poet, as he braves every hardship for fame, so he is equally a coward to contempt; and none but those who are unworthy protection, condescend to solicit it.

"Having a mind too proud to stoop to such indignities, and yet a fortune too humble to hazard a second attempt for fame, I was now obliged to take a middle course, and write for bread. But I was unqualified for a profession where mere industry alone was to insure success. I could not suppress my lurking passion for applause; but usually consumed that time in efforts after excellence which takes up but little room, when it should have been more advantageously employed in the diffusive productions of fruitful mediocrity. My little piece would therefore come forth in the midst of periodical publications, unnoticed and unknown. The public were more importantly employed than to observe the easy simplicity of my style, or the harmony of my periods. Sheet after sheet was thrown off to oblivion. My essays were buried among the essays upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures for the bite of a mad dog; while Philautos, Philalethes, Philelutheros, and Philanthropos all wrote better, because they wrote faster than I.

"Now, therefore, I began to associate with none but disappointed authors, like myself, who praised, deplored, and despised each other. The satisfaction we found in every celebrated writer's attempts, was inversely as their merits. I found that no genius in another could please me. My unfortunate paradoxes had entirely dried up that source of comfort. I could neither read nor write with satisfaction; for excellence in another was my aversion, and writing was my trade.

"In the midst of these gloomy reflections, as I was one day sitting on a bench in St. James's Park, a young gentleman of distinction, who had been my intimate acquaintance at the university, approached me. We saluted each other with some hesitation: he almost ashamed of being known to one who
made so shabby an appearance, and I afraid of a repulse. But my suspicions soon vanished; for Ned Thornhill was at the bottom a very good-natured fellow."

"What did you say, George?" interrupted I.—"Thornhill, was not that his name? It can certainly be no other than my landlord."—"Bless me," cried Mrs. Arnold, "is Mr. Thornhill so near a neighbor of yours? He has long been a friend in our family, and we expect a visit from him shortly."

"My friend's first care," continued my son, "was to alter my appearance by a very fine suit of his own clothes, and then I was admitted to his table, upon the footing of half-friend, half-underling. My business was to attend him at auctions, to put him in spirits when he sat for his picture, to take the left hand in his chariot when not filled by another, and to assist at tattling a kip, as the phrase was, when we had a mind for a frolic. Besides this, I had twenty other little employments in the family. I was to do many small things without bidding: to carry the corkscrew; to stand godfather to all the butler's children; to sing when I was bid; to be never out of humor; always to be humble; and, if I could, to be very happy.

"In this honorable post, however, I was not without a rival. A captain of marines, who was formed for the place by nature, opposed me in my patron's affections. His mother had been laundress to a man of quality, and thus he early acquired a taste for pimping and pedigree. As this gentleman made it the study of his life to be acquainted with lords, though he was dismissed from several for his stupidity, yet he found many of them who were as dull as himself, that permitted his assiduities. As flattery was his trade, he practiced it with the easiest address imaginable; but it came awkward and stiff from me: and as every day my patron's desire for flattery increased, so every hour being better acquainted with his defects, I became more unwilling to give it. Thus I was once more fairly going to give up the field to the captain, when my friend found occasion for my assistance. This was nothing less than to fight a duel for him, with a gentleman whose sister it was pretended he had used ill. I readily complied with his request, and though I see you are displeased with my conduct, yet it was a debt indispensably due to friendship I could not refuse. I undertook the affair, disarmed my antagonist, and soon after had the pleasure of finding that the lady was only a woman of the town, and the fellow her bully and a sharper. This piece of service was repaid with the warmest professions of gratitude; but as my friend was to leave town in a few days,
he knew no other method of serving me, but by recommending me to his uncle Sir William Thornhill, and another nobleman of great distinction who enjoyed a post under the government. When he was gone, my first care was to carry his recommendatory letter to his uncle, a man whose character for every virtue was universal, yet just. I was received by his servants with the most hospitable smiles; for the looks of the domestic ever transmit their master's benevolence. Being shown into a grand apartment, where Sir William soon came to me, I delivered my message and letter, which he read, and after pausing some minutes, 'Pray, sir,' cried he, 'inform me what you have done for my kinsman to deserve this warm recommendation: but I suppose, sir, I guess your merits: you have fought for him; and so you would expect a reward from me for being the instrument of his vices. I wish, sincerely wish, that my present refusal may be some punishment for your guilt, but still more that it may be some inducement to your repentance.'—The severity of this rebuke I bore patiently, because I knew it was just. My whole expectations now, therefore, lay in my letter to the great man. As the doors of the nobility are almost ever beset with beggars, all ready to thrust in some sly petition, I found it no easy matter to gain admittance. However, after bribing the servants with half my worldly fortune, I was at last shown into a spacious apartment, my letter being previously sent up for his lordship's inspection. During this anxious interval I had full time to look around me. Every thing was grand and of happy contrivance; the paintings, the furniture, the gildings petrified me with awe, and raised my idea of the owner. Ah, thought I to myself, how very great must the possessor of these things be, who carries in his head the business of the state, and whose house displays half the wealth of a kingdom: sure his genius must be unfathomable!—During these awful reflections, I heard a step coming heavily forward. Ah, this is the great man himself! No, it was only a chamber-maid. Another foot was heard soon after. This must be he! No, it was only the great man's valet de chambre. At last his lordship actually made his appearance. Are you, cried he, the bearer of this here letter? I answered with a bow. I learn by this, continued he, as how that—But just at that instant a servant delivered him a card, and without taking further notice, he went out of the room, and left me to digest my own happiness at leisure: I saw no more of him, till told by a footman that his lordship was going to his coach at the door. Down I immediately followed and joined my voice to
that of three or four more, who came, like me, to petition for favors. His lordship, however, went too fast for us, and was gaining his chariot door with large strides, when I halloed out to know if I was to have any reply. He was by this time got in, and muttered an answer, half of which only I heard, the other half was lost in the rattling of his chariot wheels. I stood for some time with my neck stretched out, in the posture of one that was listening to catch the glorious sounds, till looking round me, I found myself alone at his lordship's gate.

"My patience," continued my son, "was now quite exhausted: stung with the thousand indignities I had met with, I was willing to cast myself away, and only wanted the gulf to receive me. I regarded myself as one of those vile things that nature designed should be thrown by into her lumber-room, there to perish in obscurity. I had still, however, half a guinea left, and of that I thought fortune herself should not deprive me; but in order to be sure of this, I was resolved to go instantly and spend it while I had it, and then trust to occurrences for the rest. As I was going along with this resolution it happened that Mr. Crispe's office seemed invitingly open to give me a welcome reception. In this office, Mr. Crispe kind'y offers all his majesty's subjects a generous promise of 32l. a year, for which promise all they give in return is their liberty for life, and permission to let him transport them to America as slaves. I was happy at finding a place where I could lose my fears in desperation, and entered this cell (for it had the appearance of one) with the devotion of a monastic. Here I found a number of poor creatures, all in circumstances like myself, expecting the arrival of Mr. Crispe, presenting a true epitome of English impatience. Each untractable soul at variance with Fortune, wreaked her injuries on their own hearts: but Mr. Crispe at last came down, and all our murmurs were hushed. He deigned to regard me with an air of peculiar approbation, and indeed he was the first man who for a month past had talked to me with smiles. After a few questions, he paused awhile upon the properest means of providing for me, and slapping his forehead as if he had found it, assured me, that there was at that time an embassy talked of from the Synod of Pennsylvania to the Chickasaw Indians, and that he would use his interest to get me made secretary. I knew in my own heart that the fellow lied, and yet his promise gave me pleasure, there was something so magnificent in the sound. I fairly therefore divided my half-guinea, one-half of which went to be added to his thirty pounds, and with
the other half I resolved to go to the next tavern, to be there more happy than he.

"As I was going out with that resolution, I was met at the door by the captain of a ship, with whom I had formerly some little acquaintance, and he agreed to be my companion over a bowl of punch. As I never chose to make a secret of my circumstances, he assured me that I was upon the very point of rain, in listening to the office keeper's promises: for that he only designed to sell me to the plantations. But, continued he, I fancy you might, by a much shorter voyage, be very easily put into a genteel way of bread. Take my advice. My ship sails tomorrow for Amsterdam. What if you go in her as passenger? The moment you land, all you have to do is to teach the Dutchmen English, and I'll warrant you'll get pupils and money enough. I suppose you understand English, added he, by this time, or the deuce is in it. I confidently assured him of that; but expressed a doubt whether the Dutch would be willing to learn English. He affirmed with an oath that they were fond of it to distraction; and upon that affirmation I agreed with his proposal, and embarked the next day to teach the Dutch English in Holland. The wind was fair, our voyage short, and after having paid my passage with half my movables, I found myself, fallen as from the skies, a stranger in one of the principal streets of Amsterdam. In this situation I was unwilling to let any time pass unemployed in teaching. I addressed myself, therefore, to two or three I met, whose appearance seemed most promising; but it was impossible to make ourselves mutually understood. It was not till this very moment I recollected, that in order to teach the Dutchmen English, it was necessary that they should first teach me Dutch. How I came to overlook so obvious an objection is to me amazing; but certain it is I overlooked it.

"This scheme, thus blown up, I had some thoughts of fairly shipping back to England again; but falling into company with an Irish student who was returning from Louvain, our subject turning upon topics of literature (for by the way it may be observed, that I always forgot the meanness of my circumstances when I could converse upon such subjects,) from him I learned that there were not two men in his whole university who understood Greek. This amazed me. I instantly resolved to travel to Louvain, and there live by teaching Greek; and in this design I was heartened by my brother student, who threw out some hints that a fortune might be got by it.

"I set boldly forward the next morning. Every day les-
sened the burden of my movables, like Æsop and his basket of bread; for I paid them for my lodgings to the Dutch as I travelled on. When I came to Louvain, I was resolved not to go sneaking to the lower professors, but openly tendered my talents to the principal himself. I went, had admittance, and offered him my service as a master of the Greek language, which I had been told was a desideratum in his university. The principal seemed at first to doubt my abilities; but of these I offered to convince him by turning a part of any Greek author he should fix upon into Latin. Finding me perfectly earnest in my proposal, he addressed me thus: You see me, young man; I never learned Greek, and I don't find that I have ever missed it, I have had a doctor's cap and gown without Greek; I have ten thousand florins a year without Greek; I eat heartily without Greek; and in short, continued he, as I don't know Greek, I do not believe there is any good in it.

"I was now too far from home to think of returning; so I resolved to go forward. I had some knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice, and now turned what was my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry, for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion; but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me even with a trifle. This was to me the more extraordinary, as whenever I used in better days to play for company, when playing was my amusement, my music never failed to throw them into raptures, and the ladies especially; but as it was now my only means, it was received with contempt—a proof how ready the world is to underrate those talents by which a man is supported.

"In this manner I proceeded to Paris, with no design but just to look about me, and then to go forward. The people of Paris are much fonder of strangers that have money than of those that have wit. As I could not boast much of either, I was no great favorite. After walking about the town four or five days and seeing the outsides of the best houses, I was preparing to leave this retreat of venal hospitality, when passing through one of the principal streets, whom should I meet but our cousin, to whom you first recommended me. This meeting
was very agreeable to me, and I believe not displeasing to him. He inquired into the nature of my journey to Paris, and informed me of his own business there, which was to collect pictures, medals, intaglios, and antiques of all kinds for a gentleman in London, who had just stepped into taste and a large fortune. I was the more surprised at seeing our cousin pitched upon for this office, as he himself had often assured me he knew nothing of the matter. Upon asking how he had been taught the art of a cognoscente so very suddenly, he assured me that nothing was more easy. The whole secret consisted in a strict adherence to two rules; the one, always to observe the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains; and the other, to praise the works of Pietro Perugino. But, says he, as I once taught you how to be an author in London, I'll now undertake to instruct you in the art of picture-buying at Paris.

"With this proposal I very readily closed, as it was living, and now all my ambition was to live. I went therefore to his lodgings, improved my dress by his assistance, and after some time accompanied him to auctions of pictures, where the English gentry were expected to be purchasers. I was not a little surprised at his intimacy with people of the best fashion, who referred themselves to his judgment upon every picture or medal, as to an unerring standard of taste. He made very good use of my assistance upon these occasions; for when asked his opinion, he would gravely take me aside and ask mine, shrug, look wise, return, and assure the company that he could give no opinion upon an affair of so much importance. Yet there was sometimes an occasion for a more supported assurance. I remember to have seen him, after giving his opinion that the coloring of a picture was not mellow enough, very deliberately take a brush with brown varnish, that was accidentally lying by, and rub it over the piece with great composure before all the company and then ask if he had not improved the tints.

"When he had finished his commission in Paris, he left me strongly recommended to several men of distinction, as a person very proper for a travelling tutor; and after some time I was employed in that capacity by a gentleman who brought his ward to Paris, in order to set him forward on his tour through Europe. I was to be the young gentleman's governor, but with a proviso that he should always be permitted to govern himself. My pupil in fact understood the art of guiding in money concerns much better than I. He was heir to a fortune of about two hundred thousand pounds, left him by an uncle in
the West Indies: and his guardians, to qualify him for the management of it, had bound him apprentice to an attorney. Thus avarice was his prevailing passion; all his questions on the road were, how money might be saved; which was the least expensive course to travel; whether anything could be bought that would turn to account when disposed of again in London? Such curiosities on the way as could be seen for nothing, he was ready enough to look at; but if the sight of them was to be paid for, he usually asserted that he had been told they were not worth seeing. He never paid a bill that he would not observe how amazingly expensive travelling was, and all this though he was not yet twenty-one. When arrived at Leghorn, as we took a walk to look at the port and shipping, he inquired the expense of the passage by sea home to England. This he was informed was but a trifle compared to his returning by land; he was therefore unable to withstand the temptation; so paying me the small part of my salary that was due, he took leave, and embarked with only one attendant for London.

"I now therefore was left once more upon the world at large; but then it was a thing that I was used to. However, my skill in music could avail me nothing in a country where every peasant was a better musician than I; but by this time I had acquired another talent which answered my purpose as well, and this was a skill in disputation. In all the foreign universities and convents there are, upon certain days, philosophical theses maintained against every adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with any dexterity, he can claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for one night. In this manner, therefore, I fought my way towards England, walked along from city to city, examined mankind more nearly, and, if I may so express it, saw both sides of the picture. My remarks, however, are but few; I found that monarchy was the best government for the poor to live in, and commonwealths for the rich. I found that riches in general were in every country another name for freedom; and that no man is so fond of liberty himself, as not to be desirous of subjecting the will of some individuals in society to his own.

"Upon my arrival in England I resolved to pay my respects first to you, and then to enlist as a volunteer in the first expedition that was going forward; but on my journey down my resolutions were changed, by meeting an old acquaintance, who I found belonged to a company of comedians that were going to make a summer campaign in the country. The company
seemed not much to disapprove of me for an associate. They all, however, apprised me of the importance of the task at which I aimed; that the public was a many-headed monster, and that only such as had very good heads could please it; that acting was not to be learned in a day, and that without some traditional shrugs, which had been on the stage, and only on the stage, these hundred years, I could never pretend to please. The next difficulty was in fitting me with parts, as almost every character was in keeping; that the public was a many-headed monster, and that only such as had very good heads could please it; that acting was not to be learned in a day, and that without some traditional shrugs, which had been on the stage, and only on the stage, these hundred years, I could never pretend to please. The next difficulty was in fitting me with parts, as almost every character was in keeping.—I was driven for some time from one character to another, till at last Horatio was fixed upon, which the presence of the present company has happily hindered me from acting.”

CHAPTER XXI.

The short continuance of Friendship amongst the Vicious, which is coeval only with mutual Satisfaction.

My son's account was too long to be delivered at once; the first part of it was begun that night, and he was concluding the rest after dinner the next day, when the appearance of Mr. Thornhill's equipage at the door seemed to make a pause in the general satisfaction. The butler, who was now become my friend in the family, informed me with a whisper, that the 'Squire had already made some overtures to Miss Wilmot, and that her aunt and uncle seemed highly to approve the match. Upon Mr. Thornhill's entering, he seemed, at seeing my son and me, to start back; but I readily imputed that to surprise, and not displeasure. However, upon our advancing to salute him, he returned our greeting with the most apparent candor; and after a short time his presence served only to increase the general good humor.

After tea he called me aside to inquire after my daughter; but upon my informing him that my inquiry was unsuccessful, he seemed greatly surprised; adding, that he had been since frequently at my house in order to comfort the rest of my family, whom he left perfectly well. He then asked if I had communicated her misfortune to Miss Wilmot or my son; and upon my replying that I had not told them as yet, he greatly approved my prudence and precaution, desiring me by all means to keep
it a secret: "For at best," cried he, "it is but divulging one's own infamy; and perhaps Miss Livy may not be so guilty as we all imagine." We were here interrupted by a servant, who came to ask the 'Squire in, to stand up at country dances, so that he left me quite pleased with the interest he seemed to take in my concerns. His addresses, however, to Miss Wilmot, were too obvious to be mistaken: and yet she seemed not perfectly pleased, but bore them rather in compliance to the will of her aunt than from real inclination. I had even the satisfaction to see her lavish some kind looks upon my unfortunate son, which the other could neither extort by his fortune nor assiduity. Mr. Thornhill's seeming composure, however, not a little surprised me: we had now continued here a week at the pressing instances of Mr. Arnold: but each day the more tenderness Miss Wilmot showed my son, Mr. Thornhill's friendship seemed proportionally to increase for him.

He had formerly made us the most kind assurances of using his interest to serve the family: but now his generosity was not confined to promises alone. The morning I designed for my departure, Mr. Thornhill came to me with looks of real pleasure, to inform me of a piece of service he had done for his friend George. This was nothing less than his having procured him an ensign's commission in one of the regiments that was going to the West Indies, for which he had promised but one hundred pounds, his interest having been sufficient to get an abatement of the other two. "As for this trifling piece of service," continued the young gentleman, "I desire no other reward but the pleasure of having served my friend; and as for the hundred pounds to be paid, if you are unable to raise it yourselves, I will advance it, and you shall repay me at your leisure." This was a favor we wanted words to express our sense of: I readily therefore gave my bond for the money, and testified as much gratitude as if I never intended to pay.

George was to depart for town the next day to secure his commission, in pursuance of his generous patron's directions, who judged it highly expedient to use dispatch, lest in the meantime another should step in with more advantageous proposals. The next morning therefore our young soldier was early prepared for his departure, and seemed the only person among us that was not affected by it. Neither the fatigues and dangers he was going to encounter, nor the friends and mistress—for Miss Wilmot actually loved him—he was leaving behind, any way damped his spirits. After he had taken leave of the rest of the company, I gave him all I had, my blessing. "And
now, my boy," cried I, "thou art going to fight for thy country, remember how thy brave grandfather fought for his sacred king, when loyalty among Britons was a virtue. Go, my boy, and imitate him in all but his misfortunes, if it was a misfortune to die with Lord Falkland. Go, my boy, and if you fall, though distant, exposed, and unwept by those that love you, the most precious tears are those with which Heaven bedews the unburied head of a soldier."

The next morning I took leave of the good family, that had been kind enough to entertain me so long, not without several expressions of gratitude to Mr. Thornhill for his late bounty. I left them in the enjoyment of all that happiness which affluence and good breeding procure, and returned towards home, despairing of ever finding my daughter more, but sending a sigh to Heaven to spare and to forgive her. I was now come within about twenty miles of home, having hired a horse to carry me, as I was yet but weak, and comforted myself with the hopes of soon seeing all I held dearest upon earth. But the night coming on I put up at a little public-house by the road side, and asked for the landlord's company over a pint of wine. We sat beside his kitchen fire, which was the best room in the house, and chatted on politics and the news of the country. We happened, among other topics, to talk of young 'Squire Thornhill, who, the host assured me, was hated as much as his uncle Sir William, who sometimes came down to the country, was loved. He went on to observe that he made it his whole study to betray the daughters of such as received him to their houses, and after a fortnight or three week's possession, turned them out unrewarded and abandoned to the world. As we continued our discourse in this manner, his wife, who had been out to get change, returned, and perceiving that her husband was enjoying a pleasure in which she was not a sharer, she asked him in an angry tone, what he did there? to which he only replied in an ironical way, by drinking her health. "Mr. Symmonds," cried she, "you use me very ill, and I'll bear it no longer. Here three parts of the business is left for me to do, and the fourth left unfinished; while you do nothing but soak with the guests all day long: whereas if a spoonful of liquor were to cure me of a fever, I never touch a drop." I now found what she would be at, and immediately poured her out a glass, which she received with a curtsey, and drinking towards my good health, "Sir," resumed she, "it is not so much for the value of the liquor I am angry, but one cannot help it when the house is going out of the windows. If the customers or
guests are to be dunned, all the burden lies upon my back; he'd as lief eat that glass as budge after them himself. There, now, above stairs, we have a young woman who has come to take up her lodgings here, and I don't believe she has got any money by her over civility. I am certain she is very slow of payment, and I wish she were put in mind of it."—"What signifies minding her," cried the host, "if she be slow she is sure."—"I don't know that," replied the wife; "but I know that I am sure she has been here a fortnight, and we have not yet seen the cross of her money."—"I suppose, my dear," said he, "we shall have it all in a lump."—"In a lump!" cried the other, "I hope we may get it any way; and that I am resolved we will this very night, or out she tramps, bag and baggage."—"Consider, my dear," said the husband, "she is a gentlewoman, and deserves more respect."—"As for the matter of that," returned the hostess, "gentle or simple, out she shall pack with a sassarara. Gentry may be good things where they take; but for my part, I never saw much good of them at the sign of the Harrow."—Thus saying, she ran up a narrow flight of stairs that went from the kitchen to a room overhead: and I soon perceived, by the loudness of her voice, and the bitterness of her reproaches, that no money was to be had from her lodger. I could hear her remonstrances very distinctly; "Out I say; pack out this moment! tramp, thou infamous strumpet, or I'll give thee a mark thou won't be the better for these three months. What! you trumpery, to come and take up an honest house without cross or coin to bless yourself with; come along, I say."—"O, dear madam," cried the stranger, "pity me, pity a poor abandoned creature for one night, and death will soon do the rest."—I instantly knew the voice of my poor ruined child Olivia; I flew to her rescue, while the woman was dragging her along by the hair, and I caught the dear forlorn wretch in my arms.

"Welcome, any way welcome, my dearest lost one, my treasure, to your poor old father's bosom! Though the vicious forsake thee, there is yet one in the world that will never forsake thee; though thou hadst ten thousand crimes to answer for, he will forget them all."—"O my own dear"—for minutes she could say no more—"my own dearest, good papa! could angels be kinder! how do I deserve so much!—The villain, I hate him and myself, to be a reproach to such goodness. You can't forgive me, I know you cannot."—"Yes, my child, from my heart I do forgive thee! Only repent, and we both shall yet be happy. We shall see many pleasant days yet, my Olivia?"

"Ah! never, sir, never. The rest of my wretched life must
be infamy abroad, and shame at home. But, alas! papa, you 
look much paler than you used to do. Could such a thing as 
I am give you so much uneasiness? Surely you have too much 
wisdom to take the miseries of my guilt upon yourself.”—
“Our wisdom, young woman,” replied I.—“Ah, why so cold a 
name, papa?” cried she. “This is the first time you ever 
called me by so cold a name.” “I ask pardon, my darling,” re-
turned I; “but I was going to observe, that wisdom makes but 
a slow defence against trouble, though at last a sure one.” The 
landlady now returned to know if we did not choose a more 
genteel apartment; to which assenting, we were shown into a 
room where we could converse more freely. After we had 
talked ourselves into some degree of tranquillity, I could not 
avoid desiring some account of the gradations that led to her 
present wretched situation. “That villain, sir,” said she, 
“from the first day of our meeting made me honorable though 
private proposals.”

“Villain, indeed!” cried I: “and yet it in some measure 
surprises me, how a person of Mr. Burchell’s good sense and 
seeming honor could be guilty of such deliberate baseness, and 
thus step into a family to undo it.”

“My dear papa,” returned my daughter, “you labor under a 
strange mistake. Mr. Burchell never attempted to deceive me; 
instead of that, he took every opportunity of privately admonish-
ing me against the artifices of Mr. Thornhill, who I now find 
was even worse than he represented him.” “Mr. Thornhill,” 
interrupted I, “can it be?”—“Yes, sir,” returned she; “it was 
Mr. Thornhill who seduced me; who employed the two ladies, 
as he called them, but who in fact were abandoned women of 
the town, without breeding or pity, to decoy us up to London. 
Their artifices, you may remember, would have certainly 
succeeded, but for Mr. Burchell’s letter, who directed those re-
proaches at them, which we all applied to ourselves. How he 
came to have so much influence as to defeat their intentions, 
still remains a secret to me; but I am convinced he was ever 
our warmest, sincerest friend.”

“You amaze me, my dear,” cried I; “but now I find my 
first suspicions of Mr. Thornhill’s baseness were too well 
grounded: but he can triumph in security, for he is rich and 
we are poor. But tell me, my child, sure it was no small tempt-
ation that could thus obliterate all the impressions of such an 
education and so virtuous a disposition as thine.”

“Indeed, sir,” replied she, “he owes all his triumph to the 
desire I had of making him, and not myself, happy. I knew
that the ceremony of our marriage, which was privately per-
formed by a popish priest, was no way binding, and that I had
nothing to trust to but his honor."—"What!" interrupted I,
"and were you indeed married by a priest, and in orders?"—
"Indeed, sir, we were," replied she, "though we were both
sworn to conceal his name."—"Why, then, my child, come to
my arms again; and now you are a thousand times more wel-
come than before; for you are now his wife to all intents and
purposes; nor can all the laws of man, though written upon
tables of adamant, lessen the force of that sacred connection."

"Alas, papa," replied she, "you are but little acquainted
with his villainies; he has been married already by the same
priest to six or eight wives more, whom, like me, he has
deceived and abandoned."

"Has he so?" cried I, "then we must hang the priest, and
you shall inform against him to-morrow." "But, sir," re-
turned she, "will that be right, when I am sworn to secrecy?"
—"My dear," I replied, "if you have made such a promise I
cannot, nor will I tempt you to break it. Even though it may
benefit the public, you must not inform against him. In all
human institutions a smaller evil is allowed to procure a greater
good; as in politics, a province may be given away to secure
a kingdom; in medicine, a limb may be lopped off to preserve
the body; but in religion, the law is written, and inflexible,
never to do evil. And this law, my child is right; for other-
wise, if we commit a smaller evil to procure a greater good,
certain guilt would be thus incurred, in expectation of contin-
gent advantage. And though the advantage should certainly
follow, yet the interval between commission and advantage, which
is allowed to be guilty, may be that in which we are called
away to answer for the things we have done, and the volume
of human actions is closed forever. But I interrupt you, my
dear; go on."

"The very next morning," continued she, "I found what
little expectation I was to have from his sincerity. That very
morning he introduced me to two unhappy women more, whom,
like me, he had deceived, but who lived in contented prostitu-
tion. I loved him too tenderly to bear such rivals in his affec-
tions, and strove to forget my infamy in a tumult of pleasures.
With this view I danced, dressed, and talked; but was still un-
happy. The gentlemen who visited there told me every moment
of the power of my charms, and this only contributed to increase
my melancholy as I had thrown all their power quite away.
Thus each day I grew more pensive, and he more insolent, till at
last the monster had the assurance to offer me to a young baronet of his acquaintance. Need I describe, sir, how his ingratitude stung me? My answer to this proposal was almost madness. I desired to part. As I was going he offered me a purse; but I flung it at him with indignation, and burst from him in a rage, that for awhile kept me insensible of the miseries of my situation. But I soon looked around me, and saw myself a vile, abject, guilty thing, without one friend in the world to apply to. Just in that interval a stage-coach happening to pass by, I took a place, it being my aim to be driven at a distance from a wretch I despised and detested. I was set down here, where, since my arrival, my own anxiety, and this woman’s unkindness have been my only companions. The hours of pleasure that I have passed with my mamma and sister are now grown painful to me. Their sorrows are much; but mine are greater than theirs, for mine are mixed with guilt and infamy.”

“Have patience, my child,” cried I, “and I hope things will yet be better. Take some repose to-night, and to-morrow I’ll carry you home to your mother and the rest of the family, from whom you will receive a kind reception.—Poor woman, this has gone to her heart: but she loves you still, Olivia, and will forget it.”

CHAPTER XXII.

Offences are easily pardoned where there is Love at bottom.

The next morning I took my daughter behind me, and set out on my return home. As we travelled along, I strove by every persuasion to calm her sorrows and fears, and to arm her with resolution to bear the presence of her offended mother. I took every opportunity from the prospect of a fine country, through which we passed, to observe how much kinder heaven was to us than we to each other, and that the misfortunes of nature’s making were very few. I assured her, that she should never perceive any change in my affections, and that during my life, which yet might be long, she might depend upon a guardian and an instructor. I armed her against the censures of the world, showed her that books were sweet unreproaching companions to the miserable, and that if they could not bring us to enjoy life, they would at least teach us to endure it.
The hired horse that we rode was to be put up that night at an inn by the way, within about five miles from my house; and as I was willing to prepare my family for my daughter's reception, I determined to leave her that night at the inn, and to return for her, accompanied by my daughter Sophia, early the next morning. It was night before we reached our appointed stage: however, after seeing her provided with a decent apartment, and having ordered the hostess to prepare proper refreshments, I kissed her, and proceeded towards home. And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion. As a bird that has been frightened from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered around my little fireside with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace. The laborers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog at hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure, and before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

It was now near midnight that I came to knock at my door;—all was still and silent;—my heart dilated with unutterable happiness, when, to my amazement, I saw the house bursting out into a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration! I gave a loud convulsive outcry, and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who had till this been asleep, and he perceiving the flames, instantly waked my wife and daughter; and all running out, naked, and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish. But it was only to objects of new terror; for the flames had by this time caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood with silent agony looking on as if they enjoyed the blaze. I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. O misery! "Where," cried I, "where are my little ones?" "They are burnt to death in the flames," says my wife, calmly, "and I will die with them."—That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. "Where, where are my children?" cried I, rushing through the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined; "where are my little ones?"—"Here, dear.
papa here we are," cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatched them through the fire as fast as possible, while, just as I was got out, the roof sunk in. "Now," cried I, holding up my children, "now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish. Here they are; I have saved my treasure. Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy." We kissed our little darlings a thousand times; they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

I now stood a calm spectator of the flames, and after some time began to perceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner. It was therefore out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time the neighbors were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand, like us, spectators of the calamity. My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved for my daughters' fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box with some papers that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence, which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbors contributed, however, what they could to lighten out distress. They brought us clothes, and furnished one of our out-houses with kitchen utensils; so that by daylight we had another, though a wretched dwelling to retire to. My honest next neighbor and his children were not the least assiduous in providing us with every thing necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest.

When the fears of my family had subsided, curiosity to know the cause of my long stay began to take place: having therefore informed them of every particular, I proceeded to prepare them for the reception of our lost one, and though we had nothing but wretchedness now to impart, I was willing to procure her a welcome to what we had. This task would have been more difficult but for our recent calamity, which had humbled my wife's pride, and blunted it by more poignant afflictions. Being unable to go for my poor child myself, as my arm grew very painful, I sent my son and daughter, who soon returned, supporting the wretched delinquent, who had not the courage to look up at her mother, whom no instruction of mine could persuade to a perfect reconciliation: for women have a much stronger sense of female error than men. "Ah, madam," cried her mother, "this is but a poor place you have come to
after so much finery. My daughter Sophy and I can afford but little entertainment to persons who have kept company only with people of distinction. Yes, Miss Livy, your poor father and I have suffered very much of late: but I hope Heaven will forgive you.” During this reception, the unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or reply: but I could not continue a silent spectator of her distress; wherefore, assuming a degree of severity in my voice and manner, which was ever followed with instant submission, “I entreat, woman, that my words may be now marked once for all: I have here brought you back a poor deluded wanderer; her return to duty demands the revival of our tenderness. The real hardships of life are now coming fast upon us; let us not, therefore, increase them by dissension among each other! If we live harmoniously together we may yet be contented, as there are enough of us to shut out the censuring world, and keep each other in countenance. The kindness of Heaven is promised to the penitent, and let ours be directed by the example. Heaven, we are assured, is much more pleased to view a repentant sinner, than ninety-nine persons who have supported a course of undeviating rectitude. And this is right; for that single effort by which we stop short in the down-hill path to perdition, is itself a greater exertion of virtue than a hundred acts of justice.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

None but the guilty can be long and completely miserable.

Some assiduity was now required to make our present abode as convenient as possible, and we were soon again qualified to enjoy our former serenity. Being disabled myself from assisting my son in our usual occupations, I read to my family from the few books that were saved, and particularly from such as, by amusing the imagination, contributed to ease the heart. Our good neighbors, too, came every day with the kindest condolence, and fixed a time in which they were all to assist in repairing my former dwelling. Honest Farmer Williams was not the last among these visitors; but heartily offered his friendship. He would even have renewed his addresses to my daughter; but she rejected him in such a manner as totally repressed his future solicitations.—Her grief seemed formed
for continuing, and she was the only person of our little society that a week did not restore to cheerfulness. She now lost that unblushing innocence which once taught her to respect herself, and to seek pleasure by pleasing.—Anxiety now had taken possession of her mind; her beauty began to be impaired with her constitution, and neglect still more contributed to diminish it. Every tender epithet bestowed on her sister brought a pang to her heart and a tear to her eye; and as one vice, though cured, ever plants others where it has been, so her former guilt, though driven out by repentance, left jealousy and envy behind. I strove a thousand ways to lessen her care, and even forgot my own pains in a concern for hers, collecting such amusing passages of history as a strong memory and some reading could suggest.—"Our happiness, my dear," I would say, "is in the power of one who can bring it about a thousand unforeseen ways that mock our foresight. If example be necessary to prove this, I'll give you a story, my child, told us by a grave, though sometimes a romancing, historian.

"Matilda was married very young to a Neapolitan nobleman of the first quality, and found herself a widow and a mother at the age of fifteen. As she stood one day caressing her infant son in the open window of an apartment which hung over the river Volturna, the child with a sudden spring leaped from her arms into the flood below, and disappeared in a moment. The mother, struck with instant surprise, and making an effort to save him, plunged in after; but far from being able to assist the infant, she herself with great difficulty escaped to the opposite shore, just when some French soldiers were plundering the country on that side, who immediately made her their prisoner.

"As the war was then carried on between the French and Italians with the utmost inhumanity, they were going at once to perpetrate those two extremes suggested by appetite and cruelty. This base resolution, however, was opposed by a young officer, who, though their retreat required the utmost expedition, placed her behind him, and brought her in safety to his native city. Her beauty at first caught his eye, her merit soon after his heart. They were married; he rose to the highest posts; they lived long together, and were happy. But the felicity of a soldier can never be called permanent: after an interval of several years, the troops which he commanded having met with a repulse, he was obliged to take shelter in the city where he had lived with his wife. Here they suffered a siege, and the city at length was taken. Few histories can produce more various instances of cruelty than those which
the French and Italians at that time exercised upon each other. It was resolved by the victors, upon this occasion, to put all the French prisoners to death; but particularly the husband of the unfortunate Matilda, as he was principally instrumental in protracting the siege. Their determinations were in general executed almost as soon as resolved upon. The captive soldier was led forth, and the executioner with his sword stood ready, while the spectators in gloomy silence awaited the fatal blow, which was only suspended till the general, who presided as judge, should give the signal. It was in this interval of anguish and expectation that Matilda came to take a last farewell of her husband and deliverer, deploiring her wretched situation, and the cruelty of fate, that had saved her from perishing by a premature death in the river Volturna, to be the spectator of still greater calamities. The general, who was a young man, was struck with surprise at her beauty, and pity at her distress; but with still stronger emotions when he heard her mention her former dangers. He was her son, the infant for whom she had encountered so much danger. He acknowledged her at once as his mother, and fell at her feet. The rest may be easily supposed; the captive was set free, and all the happiness that love, friendship, and duty could confer on each, were united."

In this manner I would attempt to amuse my daughter, but she listened with divided attention; for her own misfortunes engrossed all the pity she once had for those of another, and nothing gave her ease. In company she dreaded contempt; and in solitude she only found anxiety. Such was the color of her wretchedness, when we received certain information that Mr. Thornhill was going to be married to Miss Wilmot, for whom I always suspected he had a real passion, though he took every opportunity before me to express his contempt both of her person and fortune. This news only served to increase poor Olivia's affliction: such a flagrant breach of fidelity was more than her courage could support. I was resolved, however, to get more certain information, and to defeat if possible the completion of his designs, by sending my son to old Mr. Wilmot's with instructions to know the truth of the report, and to deliver Miss Wilmot a letter, intimating Mr. Thornhill's conduct in my family. My son went in pursuance of my directions, and in three days returned, assuring us of the truth of the account; but that he had found it impossible to deliver the letter, which he was therefore obliged to leave, as Mr. Thornhill and Miss Wilmot were visiting round the country. They were to be married, he said, in a few days, having appeared
together at church the Sunday before he was there, in great splendor, the bride attended by six young ladies, and he by as many gentlemen. Their approaching nuptials filled the whole country with rejoicing, and they usually rode out together in the grandest equipage that had been seen in the country for many years. All the friends of both families, he said, were there, particularly the 'Squire’s uncle, Sir William Thornhill, who bore so good a character. He added that nothing but mirth and feasting were going forward; that all the country praised the young bride’s beauty, and the bridegroom’s fine person, and that they were immensely fond of each other; concluding that he could not help thinking Mr. Thornhill one of the most happy men in the world.

"Why, let him, if he can," returned I: "but, my son, observe this bed of straw, and unsheltering roof; those mouldering walls, and humid floor; my wretched body thus disabled by fire, and my children weeping around me for bread;—you have come home, my child, to all this; yet here, even here, you see a man that would not for a thousand worlds exchange situations. O, my children, if you could but learn to commune with your own hearts, and know what noble company you can make them, you would little regard the elegance and splendor of the worthless. Almost all men have been taught to call life a passage, and themselves the travellers. The similitude still may be improved, when we observe that the good are joyful and serene, like travellers that are going towards home; the wicked but by intervals happy, like travellers that are going into exile."

My compassion for my poor daughter, overpowered by this new disaster, interrupted what I had further to observe. I bade her mother support her, and after a short time she recovered. She appeared from that time more calm, and I imagined had gained a new degree of resolution: but appearances deceived me; for her tranquillity was the languor of over-wrought resentment. A supply of provisions, charitably sent us by my kind parishioners, seemed to diffuse new cheerfulness among the rest of the family, nor was I displeased at seeing them once more sprightly and at ease. It would have been unjust to damp their satisfactions, merely to condole with resolute melancholy, or to burden them with a sadness they did not feel. Thus once more the tale went round, and the song was demanded, and cheerfulness condescended to hover round our little habitation.
CHAPTER XXIV.

Fresh Calamities.

The next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season, so that we agreed to breakfast together on the honey-suckle bank; where, while we sat, my youngest daughter at my request joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was in this place my poor Olivia first met her seducer, and every object served to recall her sadness. But that melancholy which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother, too, upon this occasion felt a pleasing distress, and wept, and loved her daughter as before. “Do, my pretty Olivia,” cried she, “let us have that little melancholy air your papa was so fond of; your sister Sophy has already obliged us. Do, child, it will please your old father.” She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic as moved me.

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charms can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom—is to die.

As she was concluding the last stanza, to which an interruption in her voice from sorrow gave a peculiar softness, the appearance of Mr. Thornhill’s equipage at a distance alarmed us all, but particularly increased the uneasiness of my eldest daughter, who, desirous of shunning her betrayer, returned to the house with her sister. In a few minutes he was alighted from his chariot, and making up to the place where I was still sitting, inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity. “Sir,” replied I, “your present assurance only serves to aggravate the baseness of your character; and there was a time when I would have chastised your insolence for presuming thus to appear before me. But now you are safe; for age has cooled my passions, and my calling restrains them.”

“I vow, my dear sir,” returned he, “I am amazed at all this; nor can I understand what it means! I hope you don’t think
your daughter's late excursion with me had anything criminal in it?"

"Go," cried I, "thou art a wretch, a poor pitiful wretch, and every way a liar: but your meanness secures you from my anger! Yet, sir, I am descended from a family that would not have borne this!—And so, thou vile thing, to gratify a momentary passion, thou hast made one poor creature wretched for life, and polluted a family that had nothing but honor for their portion!"

"If she or you," returned he, "are resolved to be miserable, I cannot help it. But you may still be happy; and whatever opinion you may have formed of me, you shall ever find me ready to contribute to it. We can marry her to another in a short time, and what is more, she may keep her lover beside; for I protest I shall ever continue to have a true regard for her."

I found all my passions alarmed at this new degrading proposal; for though the mind may often be calm under great injuries, little villany can at any time get within the soul, and sting it into rage. "Avoid my sight, thou reptile!" cried I, "nor continue to insult me with thy presence. Were my brave son at home he would not suffer this; but I am old and disabled, and every way undone."

"I find," cried he, "you are bent upon obliging me to talk in a harsher manner than I intended. But as I have shown you what may be hoped from my friendship, it may not be improper to represent what may be the consequences of my resentment. My attorney, to whom your late bond has been transferred, threatens hard, nor do I know how to prevent the course of justice, except by paying the money myself, which, as I have been at some expenses lately, previous to my intended marriage, is not so easy to be done. And then my steward talks of driving for the rent: it is certain he knows his duty; for I never trouble myself with affairs of that nature. Yet still I could wish to serve you, and even to have you and your daughter present at my marriage, which is shortly to be solemnized with Miss Wilmot; it is even the request of my charming Arabella herself, whom I hope you will not refuse."

"Mr. Thornhill," replied I, "hear me once for all: As to your marriage with any but my daughter, that I never will consent to; and though your friendship could raise me to a throne, or your resentment sink me to the grave, yet would I despise both. Thou hast once wofully, irreparably deceived me. I reposed my heart upon thine honor, and have found its
baseness. Never more therefore expect friendship from me. Go, and possess what fortune has given thee, beauty, riches, health, and pleasure. Go, and leave me to want, infamy, disease and sorrow. Yet, humbled as I am, shall my heart still vindicate its dignity; and though thou hast my forgiveness, thou shalt ever have my contempt."

"If so," returned he, "depend upon it you shall feel the effects of this insolence! and we shall shortly see which is the fittest object of scorn, you or me."—Upon which he departed abruptly.

My wife and son, who were present at this interview, seemed terrified with apprehension. My daughters, also, finding that he was gone, came out to be informed of the result of our conference, which, when known, alarmed them not less than the rest. But as to myself, I disregarded the utmost stretch of his malevolence: he had already struck the blow, and now I stood prepared to repel every new effort; like one of those instruments used in the art of war, which, however thrown, still presents a point to receive the enemy.

We soon however found that he had not threatened in vain; for the very next morning his steward came to demand my annual rent, which by the train of accidents already related, I was unable to pay. The consequence of my incapacity was his driving my cattle that evening, and their being appraised and sold the next day for less than half their value.—My wife and children now therefore entreated me to comply upon any terms, rather than incur certain destruction. They even begged of me to admit his visits once more, and used all their little eloquence to paint the calamities I was going to endure;—the terrors of a prison in so rigorous a season as the present, with the danger that threatened my health from the late accident that happened by the fire. But I continued inflexible.

"Why, my treasures," cried I, "why will you thus attempt to persuade me to the thing that is not right! My duty has taught me to forgive him, but my conscience will not permit me to approve. Would you have me applaud to the world what my heart must internally condemn? Would you have me tamely sit down and flatter our infamous betrayer; and, to avoid a prison, continually suffer the more galling bonds of mental confinement? No, never. If we are to be taken from this abode, only let us hold to the right; and wherever we are thrown, we can still retire to a charming apartment, when we can look round our own hearts with intrepidity and pleasure!"

In this manner we spent that evening. Early the next
morning, as the snow had fallen in great abundance in the night, my son was employed in clearing it away, and opening a passage before the door. He had not been thus engaged long, when he came running in, with looks all pale, to tell us that two strangers, whom he knew to be officers of the justice, were making towards the house.

Just as he spoke they came in, and approaching the bed where I lay, after previously informing me of their employment and business, made me their prisoner, bidding me prepare to go with them to the county jail, which was eleven miles off.

"My friend," said I, "this is severe weather in which you have come to take me to a prison; and it is particularly unfortunate at this time, as one of my arms has lately been burnt in a terrible manner, and it has thrown me into a slight fever, and I want clothes to cover me; and I am now too weak and old to walk far in such deep snow; but if it must be so——"

I then turned to my wife and children, and directed them to get together what few things were left us, and prepare immediately for leaving this place. I entreated them to be expeditious, and desired my son to assist his eldest sister, who from a consciousness that she was the cause of all our calamities, was fallen, and had lost anguish in insensibility. I encouraged my wife, who, pale and trembling, clasped our affrighted little ones in her arms, that clung to her bosom in silence, dreading to look round at the strangers. In the meantime my youngest daughter prepared for our departure, and as she received several hints to use dispatch, in about an hour we were ready to depart.

CHAPTER XXV.

No situation, however wretched it seems, but has some sort of comfort attending it.

We set forward from this peaceful neighborhood, and walked on slowly. My eldest daughter being enfeebled by a slow fever, which had begun for some days to undermine her constitution, one of the officers, who had a horse, kindly took her behind him; for even these men cannot entirely divest themselves of humanity. My son led one of the little ones by the hand, and my wife the other, while I leaned upon my youngest girl, whose tears fell not for her own but my distresses.

We were now got from my late dwelling about two miles,
when we saw a crowd running and shouting behind us, consisting of about fifty of my poorest parishioners. These, with dreadful imprecations, soon seized upon the two officers of justice, and swearing they would never see their minister go to jail while they had a drop of blood to shed in his defence, were going to use them with great severity. The consequence might have been fatal had I not immediately interposed, and with some difficulty rescued the officers from the hands of the enraged multitude. My children, who looked upon my delivery now as certain, appeared transported with joy, and were incapable of containing their raptures. But they were soon undeceived, upon hearing me address the poor deluded people, who came as they imagined to do me service.

"What! my friends," cried I, "and is this the way you love me? Is this the manner you obey the instructions I have given you from the pulpit? Thus to fly in the face of justice, and bring down ruin on yourselves and me! Which is your ring-leader? Show me the man that has thus seduced you. As sure as he lives he shall feel my resentment.—Alas! my dear deluded flock, return back to the duty you owe to God, to your country, and to me. I shall yet perhaps one day see you in greater felicity here, and contribute to make your lives more happy. But let it at least be my comfort when I pen my fold for immortality, that not one here shall be wanting."

They now seemed all repentance, and melting into tears, came one after the other to bid me farewell. I shook each tenderly by the hand, and leaving them my blessing, proceeded forward without meeting any further interruption. Some hours before night we reached the town, or rather village, for it consisted but of a few mean houses, having lost all its former opulence, and retaining no marks of its ancient superiority but the jail.

Upon entering we put up at the inn, where we had such refreshments as could most readily be procured, and I supped with my family with my usual cheerfulness. After seeing them properly accommodated for that night, I next attended the sheriff's officers to the prison, which had formerly been built for the purpose of war, and consisted of one large apartment, strongly grated and paved with stone, common to both felons and debtors at certain hours in the four-and-twenty. Besides this, every prisoner had a separate cell, where he was locked in for the night.

I expected upon my entrance to find nothing but lamentations and various sounds of misery: but it was very different.
The prisoners seemed all employed in one common design, that of forgetting thought in merriment or clamor. I was apprized of the usual perquisite required upon these occasions, and immediately complied with the demand, though the little money I had was very near being all exhausted. This was immediately sent away for liquor, and the whole prison soon was filled with riot, laughter, and profaneness.

"How," cried I to myself, "shall men so very wicked be cheerful, and shall I be melancholy? I feel only the same confinement with them, and I think I have more reason to be happy."

With such reflections I labored to become cheerful, but cheerfulness was never yet produced by effort, which is itself painful. As I was sitting, therefore, in a corner of the jail in a pensive posture, one of my fellow-prisoners came up, and sitting by me, entered into conversation. It was my constant rule in life never to avoid the conversation of any man who seemed to desire it: for, if good, I might profit by his instruction; if bad he might be assisted by mine. I found this to be a knowing man, of strong unlettered sense, but a thorough knowledge of the world, as it is called, or more properly speaking, of human nature on the wrong side. He asked me if I had taken care to provide myself with a bed, which was a circumstance I had never attended to.

"That's unfortunate," cried he, "as you are allowed here nothing but straw, and your apartment is very large and cold. However, you seem to be something of a gentleman, and as I have been one myself in my time, part of my bed-clothes are heartily at your service."

I thanked him, professing my surprise at finding such humanity in a jail in misfortunes; adding to let him see that I was a scholar, "That the sage ancient seemed to understand the value of company in affliction, when he said, Ton kosmon aire, ei dos ton etairon; and in fact," continued I, "what is the world if it affords only solitude?"

"You talk of the world, sir," returned my fellow-prisoner; "the world is in its dotage; and yet the cosmogony or creation of the world has puzzled the philosophers of every age. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words, Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan, which imply—" "I ask pardon, sir," cried I, "for interrupting so much learning; but I think I have heard all this before. Have I not had the
pleasure of once seeing you at Welbridge fair, and is not your name Ephraim Jenkinson?" At this demand he only sighed. "I suppose you must recollect," resumed I, "one Doctor Primrose, from whom you bought a horse?"

He now at once recollected me; for the gloominess of the place and the approaching night had prevented his distinguishing my features before.—"Yes, sir," returned Mr. Jenkinson, "I remember you perfectly well; I bought a horse, but forgot to pay for him. Your neighbor Flamborough is the only prosecutor I am in any way afraid of at the next assizes; for he intends to swear positively against me as a coiner. I am heartily sorry, sir, I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you see," continued he, showing his shackles, "what my tricks have brought me to."

"Well, sir," replied I, "your kindness in offering me assistance when you could expect no return, shall be repaid with my endeavors to soften or totally suppress Mr. Flamborough's evidence, and I will send my son to him for that purpose the first opportunity; nor do I in the least doubt but he will comply with my request; and as to my own evidence, you need be under no uneasiness about that."

"Well, sir," cried he, "all the return I can make shall be yours. You shall have more than half my bed-clothes to-night, and I'll take care to stand your friend in the prison, where I think I have some influence."

I thanked him, and could not avoid being surprised at the present youthful change in his aspect, for at the time I had seen him before, he appeared at least sixty.—"Sir," answered he, "you are little acquainted with the world; I had at that time false hair, and have learned the art of counterfeiting every age from seventeen to seventy. Ah! sir, had I but bestowed half the pains in learning a trade that I have in learning to be a scoundrel, I might have been a rich man at this day. But rogue as I am, still I may be your friend, and that perhaps when you least expect it."

We were now prevented from further conversation by the arrival of the jailer's servants, who came to call over the prisoner's names and lock up for the night. A fellow also with a bundle of straw for my bed attended, who led me along a dark narrow passage into a room paved like the common prison, and in one corner of this I spread my bed, and the clothes given me by my fellow-prisoner; which done, my conductor, who was civil enough, bade me a good-night. After my usual meditations, and having praised my Heavenly Corrector, I laid myself down, and slept with the utmost tranquillity till morning.
CHAPTER XXVI.

A Reformation in the Jail.—To make laws complete, they should Reward as well as Punish.

The next morning early I was awakened by my family, whom I found in tears at my bedside. The gloomy strength of everything about us, it seems, had daunted them. I gently rebuked their sorrow, assuring them I had never slept with greater tranquillity, and next inquired after my eldest daughter, who was not among them. They informed me that yesterday's uneasiness and fatigue had increased her fever, and it was judged proper to leave her behind. My next care was to send my son to procure a room or two to lodge the family in, as near the prison as conveniently could be found. He obeyed; but could only find one apartment, which was hired at a small expense for his mother and sisters, the jailer with humanity consenting to let him and his two little brothers lie in the prison with me. A bed was therefore prepared for them in a corner of the room, which I thought answered very conveniently. I was willing, however, previously to know whether my children chose to lie in a place which seemed to fright them upon entrance.

"Well," cried I, "my good boys, how do you like your bed? I hope you are not afraid to lie in this room, dark as it appears?"

"No, papa," says Dick, "I am not afraid to lie anywhere where you are."

"And I," says Bill, who was yet but four years old, "love every place best that my papa is in."

After this I allotted to each of the family what they were to do. My daughter was particularly directed to watch her declining sister's health; my wife was to attend me; my little boys were to read to me. "And as for you, my son," continued I, "it is by the labor of your hands we must all hope to be supported. Your wages as a day-laborer will be fully sufficient, with proper frugality, to maintain us all, and comfortably too. Thou art now sixteen years old, and hast strength; and it was given thee, my son, for very useful purposes; for it must save from famine your helpless parents and family. Prepare then this evening to look out for work against to-morrow, and bring home every night what money you can earn for our support,"
Having thus instructed him, and settled the rest, I walked down to the common prison, where I could enjoy more air and room. But I was not long there when the execrations, lewdness and brutality that invaded me on every side, drove me back to my apartment again. Here I sat for some time pondering upon the strange infatuation of wretches, who, finding all mankind in open arms against them, were laboring to make themselves a future and a tremendous enemy.

Their insensibility excited my highest compassion, and blotted my own uneasiness from my mind. It even appeared a duty incumbent upon me to attempt to reclaim them. I resolved therefore once more to return, and, in spite of their contempt, to give them my advice, and conquer them by my perseverance. Going therefore among them again, I informed Mr. Jenkinson of my design, at which he laughed heartily, but communicated it to the rest. The proposal was received with the greatest good-humor, as it promised to afford a new fund of entertainment to persons who had now no other resource for mirth, but what could be derived from ridicule or debauchery.

I therefore read them a portion of the service with a loud unaffected voice, and found my audience perfectly merry upon the occasion. Lewd whispers, groans of contrition burlesqued, winking and coughing, alternately excited laughter. However I continued with my natural solemnity to read on, sensible that what I did might mend some, but could itself receive no contamination from any.

After reading I entered upon my exhortation, which was rather calculated at first to amuse them than to reprove. I previously observed, that no other motive but their welfare could induce me to this; that I was their fellow-prisoner, and now got nothing by preaching. I was, sorry, I said, to hear them so very profane; because they got nothing by it, but might lose a great deal: "For be assured, my friends," cried I, "for you are my friends, however the world may disclaim your friendship, though you swore twelve thousand oaths in a day, it would not put one penny in your purse. Then what signifies calling every moment upon the devil, and courting his friendship, since you find how curvily he uses you? He has given you nothing here, you find, but a mouthful of oaths and an empty belly, and by the best accounts I have of him, he will give you nothing that's good hereafter.

"If used ill in our dealings with one man, we naturally go elsewhere. Were it not worth your while, then, just to try how you may like the usage of another master, who gives you
fair promises at least to come to him? Surely, my friends, of all stupidity in the world, his must be the greatest, who after robbing a house, runs to the thief-takers for protection. And yet how are you more wise? You are all seeking comfort from one that has already betrayed you, applying to a more malicious being than any thief-taker of them all: for they only decoy and then hang you: but he decoys and hangs, and what is worst of all, will not let you loose after the hangman has done."

When I had concluded, I received the compliments of my audience, some of whom came and shook me by the hand, swearing that I was a very honest fellow, and that they desired my further acquaintance. I therefore promised to repeat my lecture next day, and actually conceived some hopes of making a reformation here; for it had ever been my opinion, that no man was past the hour of amendment, every heart lying open to the shafts of reproof, if the archer could but take a proper aim. When I had thus satisfied my mind, I went back to my apartment, where my wife prepared a frugal meal, while Mr. Jenkinson begged leave to add his dinner to ours, and partake of the pleasure, as he was kind enough to express it, of my conversations. He had not yet seen my family; for as they came to my apartment by a door in the narrow passage already described, by this means they avoided the common prison. Jenkinson at the first interview, therefore, seemed not a little struck with the beauty of my youngest daughter, which her pensive air contributed to heighten; and my little ones did not pass unnoticed.

"Alas, doctor," cried he, "these children are too handsome and too good for such a place as this!"

"Why, Mr. Jenkinson!" replied I, "thank Heaven my children are pretty tolerable in morals; and if they be good, it matters little for the rest."

"I fancy, sir," returned my fellow-prisoner, "that it must give you great comfort to have all this little family about you."

"A comfort, Mr. Jenkinson!" replied I; "yes, it is indeed a comfort, and I would not be without them for all the world; for they can make a dungeon seem a palace. There is but one way in this life of wounding my happiness, and that is by injuring them.

"I am afraid then, sir," cried he, "that I am in some measure culpable; for I think I see here (looking at my son Moses), one that I have injured, and by whom I wish to be forgiven."

My son immediately recollected his voice and features,
though he had before seen him in disguise, and taking him by the hand, with a smile forgave him. "Yet," continued he, "I can't help wondering at what you could see in my face, to think me a proper mark for deception."

"My dear sir," returned the other, "it was not your face, but your white stockings, and the black ribbon in your hair, that allured me. But no disparagement to your parts, I have deceived wiser men than you in my time; and yet, with all my tricks, the blockheads have been too many for me at last."

"I suppose," cried my son, "that the narrative of such a life as yours must be extremely instructive and amusing."

"Not much of either," returned Mr. Jenkinson. "Those relations which describe the tricks and vices only of mankind, by increasing our suspicion in life, retard our success. The traveller that distrusts every person he meets, and turns back upon the appearance of every man that looks like a robber, seldom arrives in time at his journey's end.

"Indeed I think, from my own experience, that the knowing one is the silliest fellow under the sun. I was thought cunning from my very childhood: when but seven years old, the ladies would say that I was a perfect little man; at fourteen I knew the world, cocked my hat, and loved the ladies; at twenty, though I was perfectly honest, yet every one thought me so cunning that not one would trust me. Thus I was at last obliged to turn sharper in my own defence, and have lived ever since, my head throbbing with schemes to deceive, and my heart palpitating with fears of detection. I used often to laugh at your honest, simple neighbor Flamborough, and one way or another generally cheated him once a year. Yet still the honest man went forward without suspicion and grew rich, while I still continued tricksy and cunning, and was poor, without the consolation of being honest. However," continued he, "let me know your case, and what has brought you here; perhaps, though I have not skill to avoid a jail myself, I may extricate my friends."

In compliance with his curiosity, I informed him of the whole train of accidents and follies that had plunged me into my present troubles, and my utter inability to get free.

After hearing my story, and pausing some minutes, he slapped his forehead, as if he had hit upon something material, and took his leave, saying he would try what could be done.
The next morning I communicated to my wife and children the scheme I had planned of reforming the prisoners, which they received with universal disapprobation, alleging the impossibility and impropriety of it, adding, that my endeavors would no way contribute to their amendment, but might probably disgrace my calling.

"Excuse me," returned I, "these people, however fallen, are still men; and that is a very good title to my affections. Good counsel rejected, returns to enrich the giver's bosom; and though the instruction I communicate may not mend them, yet it will assuredly mend myself. If these wretches, my children, were princes, there would be thousands ready to offer their ministry; but in my opinion, the heart that is buried in a dungeon is as precious as that seated upon a throne. Yes, my treasures, if I can mend them, I will; perhaps they will not all despise me. Perhaps I may catch up even one from the gulf, and that will be a great gain; for is there upon earth a gem so precious as the human soul?"

Thus saying, I left them, and descended to the common prison, where I found the prisoners very merry, expecting my arrival; and each prepared with some jail trick to play upon the doctor. Thus, as I was going to begin, one turned my wig awry, as if by accident, and then asked my pardon. A second who stood at some distance, had a knack of spitting through his teeth, which fell in showers upon my book. A third would cry amen in such an affected tone, as gave the rest great delight. A fourth had slyly picked my pocket of my spectacles. But there was one whose trick gave more universal pleasure than all the rest; for observing the manner in which I had disposed my books on the table before me, he very dexterously displaced one of them and put an obscene jest-book of his own in the place. However, I took no notice of all that this mischievous group of little beings could do, but went on perfectly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent. My design succeeded, and in less than six days some were penitent, and all attentive.
It was now that I applauded my perseverance and address, at thus giving sensibility to wretches divested of every moral feeling; and now began to think of doing them temporal services also by rendering their situation somewhat more comfortable. Their time had hitherto been divided between famine and excess, tumultuous riot and bitter repining. Their only employment was in quarelling among each other, playing at cribbage, and cutting tobacco-stoppers. From this last mode of idle industry I took the hint of setting such as chose to work at cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers, the proper wood being bought by a general subscription, and when manufactured, sold by my appointment, so that each earned something every day—a trifle indeed, but sufficient to maintain him.

I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus in less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.

And it were highly to be wished, that legislative power would thus direct the law rather to reformation than severity; that it would seem convinced, that the work of eradicating crimes is not by making punishments familiar, but formidable. Then, instead of our present prisons, which find or make men guilty, which enclose wretches for the commission of one crime, and return them, if returned alive, fitted for the perpetration of thousands; we should see, as in other parts of Europe, places of penitence and solitude, where the accused might be attended by such as could give them repentance if guilty, or new motives to virtue if innocent. And this, but not the increasing punishments, is the way to mend a state. Nor can I avoid even questioning the validity of that right which social combinations have assumed, of capital punishings offences of a slight nature. In cases of murder their right is obvious, as it is the duty of us all, from the law of self-defence, to cut off that man who has shown a disregard for the life of another. Against such, all nature rises in arms; but it is not so against him who steals my property. Natural law gives me no right to take away his life, as, by that, the horse he steals is as much his property as mine. If then I have any right, it must be from a compact made between us, that he who deprives the other of his horse shall die. But this is a false compact; because no man has a right to barter his life any more than to take it away, as it is not his own. And beside, the compact is inadequate, and would
be set aside even in a court of modern equity, as there is a great penalty for a very trifling convenience, since it is far better that two men should live than that one man should ride. But a compact that is false between two men, is equally so between a hundred or a hundred thousand; for as ten million of circles can never make a square, so the united voice of myriads cannot lend the smallest foundation to falsehood. It is thus that reason speaks, and untutored nature says the same thing. Savages that are directed by natural law alone, are very tender of the lives of each other; they seldom shed blood but to retaliate former cruelty.

Our Saxon ancestors, fierce as they were in war, had but few executions in time of peace; and in all commencing governments that have the print of nature still strong upon them, scarcely any crime is held capital.

It is among the citizens of a refined community that penal laws, which are in the hands of the rich, are laid upon the poor. Government, while it grows older, seems to acquire the moroseness of age; and as if our property were become dearer in proportion as it increased; as if the more enormous our wealth the more extensive our fears, all our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader.

I cannot tell whether it is from the number of our penal laws, or the licentiousness of our people, that this country should show more convicts in a year than half the dominions of Europe united. Perhaps it is owing to both; for they mutually produce each other. When by indiscriminate penal laws, a nation beholds the same punishment affixed to dissimilar degrees of guilt, from perceiving no distinction in the penalty, the people are led to lose all sense of distinction in the crime, and this distinction is the bulwark of all morality; thus the multitude of laws produce new vices, and new vices call for fresh restraints.

It were to be wished then, that power, instead of contriving new laws to punish vice: instead of drawing hard the cords of society till a convulsion comes to burst them; instead of cutting away wretches as useless before we had tried their utility; instead of converting correction into vengeance,—it were to be wished that we tried the restrictive arts of government, and made law the protector, but not the tyrant of the people. We should then find that creatures, whose souls are held as dross, only wanted the hand of a refiner: we should then find that creatures, now stuck up for long tortures, lest luxury should
feel a momentary pang, might, if properly treated, serve to sinew the state in times of danger; that as their faces are like ours, their hearts are so too; that few minds are so base that perseverance cannot amend; that a man may see his last crime without dying for it; and that very little blood will serve to cement our security.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Happiness and Misery rather the result of prudence than of virtue in this life; temporal evils or felicities being regarded by Heaven as things merely in themselves trifling, and unworthy its care in the distribution.

I had now been confined more than a fortnight, but had not since my arrival been visited by my dear Olivia, and I greatly longed to see her. Having communicated my wishes to my wife the next morning the poor girl entered my apartment leaning on her sister's arm. The change which I saw in her countenance struck me. The numberless graces that once resided there were now fled, and the hand of death seemed to have moulded every feature to alarm me. Her temples were sunk, her forehead was tense, and a fatal paleness sat upon her cheek.

"I am glad to see thee, my dear," cried I, "but why this dejection, Livy? I hope, my love, you have too great a regard for me to permit disappointment thus to undermine a life which I prize as my own. Be cheerful, child, and we yet may see happier days."

"You have ever, sir," replied she, "been kind to me, and it adds to my pain that I shall never have an opportunity of sharing that happiness you promise. Happiness, I fear, is no longer reserved for me here; and I long to be rid of this place where I only have found distress. Indeed, sir, I wish you would make a proper submission to Mr. Thornhill, it may in measure induce him to pity you, and it will give me relief in dying."

"Never, child," replied I; "never will I be brought to acknowledge my daughter a prostitute; for though the world may look upon your offence with scorn, let it be mine to regard it as a mark of credulity, not of guilt.—My dear, I am no way miserable in this place, however dismal it may seem; and be
assured, that while you continue to bless me by living, he shall never have my consent to make you more wretched by marrying another."

After the departure of my daughter, my fellow-prisoner, who was by at this interview, sensibly enough expostulated upon my obstinacy in refusing a submission which promised to give me freedom. He observed, that the rest of my family were not to be sacrificed to the peace of one child alone, and she the only one who had offended me. "Beside," added he, "I don't know if it be just thus to obstruct the union of man and wife, which you do at present, by refusing to consent to a match you cannot hinder, but may render unhappy."

"Sir," replied I, "you are unacquainted with the man that oppresses us. I am very sensible that no submission I can make would procure me liberty even for an hour. I am told that even in this very room a debtor of his, no later than last year, died for want. But though my submission and approbation could transfer me from hence to the most beautiful apartment he is possessed of, yet I would grant neither, as something whispers me it would be giving a sanction to adultery. While my daughter lives, no other marriage of his shall ever be legal in my eye. Were she removed, indeed, I should be the basest of men, from any resentment of my own, to attempt putting asunder those who wish for a union. No, villain as he is, I should then wish him married, to prevent the consequences of his future debaucheries. But now, should I not be the most cruel of all fathers to sign an instrument which must send my child to the grave, merely to avoid a prison myself; and thus to escape one pang, break my child's heart with a thousand?"

He acquiesced in the justice of this answer, but could not avoid observing, that he feared my daughter's life was already too much wasted to keep me long a prisoner. "However," continued he, "though you refuse to submit to the nephew, I hope you have no objections to laying your case before the uncle, who has the first character in the kingdom for every thing that is just and good. I would advise you to send him a letter by the post, intimating all his nephew's ill usage, and my life for it, that in three days you shall have an answer." I thanked him for the hint, and instantly set about complying; but I wanted paper, and unluckily all our money had been laid out that morning in provisions; however, he supplied me.

For the three ensuing days I was in a state of anxiety to know what reception my letter might meet with; but in the meantime was frequently solicited by my wife to submit to any
conditions rather than remain here, and every hour received repeated accounts of the decline of my daughter's health. The third day and the fourth arrived, but I received no answer to my letter: the complaints of a stranger against a favorite nephew were no way likely to succeed; so that these hopes soon vanished like all my former. My mind, however, still supported itself, though confinement and bad air began to make a visible alteration in my health, and my arm that had suffered in the fire grew worse. My children, however, sat by me, and while I was stretched on the straw, read to me by turns, or listened and wept at my instructions. But my daughter's health declined faster than mine: every message from her contributed to increase my apprehensions and pain. The fifth morning after I had written the letter which was sent to Sir William Thornhill, I was alarmed with an account that she was speechless. Now it was that confinement was truly painful to me; my soul was bursting from its prison to be near the pillow of my child, to comfort, to strengthen her, and to receive her last wishes, and teach her soul the way to heaven! Another account came; she was expiring, and yet I was debared the small comfort of weeping by her. My fellow-prisoner some time after came with the last account. He bade me be patient; she was dead! The next morning he returned, and found me with my two little ones, now my only companions, who were using all their innocent efforts to comfort me. They entreated to read to me, and bade me not to cry, for I was too old to weep. "And is not my sister an angel now, papa?" cried the eldest; "and why then are you sorry for her? I wish I were an angel out of this frightful place, if my papa were with me." "Yes," added my youngest darling, "Heaven, where my sister is, is a finer place than this, and there are none but good people there, and the people here are very bad."

Mr. Jenkinson interrupted their harmless prattle by observing, that, now my daughter was no more, I should seriously think of the rest of my family, and attempt to save my own life, which was every day declining for want of necessaries and wholesome air. He added, that it was now incumbent on me to sacrifice any pride or resentment of my own to the welfare of those who depended on me for support; and that I was now, both by reason and justice, obliged to try to reconcile my landlord.

"Heaven be praised," replied I, "there is no pride left me now; I should detest my own heart if I saw either pride or resentment lurking there. On the contrary, as my oppressor
has been once my parishioner, I hope one day to present him up an unpolluted soul at the eternal tribunal. No, sir, I have no resentment now, and though he has taken from me what I held dearer than all his treasures, though he has wrung my heart,—for I am sick almost to fainting, very sick, my fellow-prisoner,—yet that shall never inspire me with vengeance. I am now willing to approve his marriage; and if this submission can do him any pleasure, let him know, that if I have done him any injury I am sorry for it.”

Mr. Jenkinson took pen and ink, and wrote down my submission nearly as I have expressed it, to which I signed my name. My son was employed to carry the letter to Mr. Thornhill, who was then at his seat in the country. He went, and in about six hours returned with a verbal answer. He had some difficulty, he said, to get a sight of his landlord, as the servants were insolent and suspicious; but he accidentally saw him as he was going out upon business, preparing for his marriage, which was to be in three days. He continued to inform us, that he stepped up in the humblest manner and delivered the letter, which, when Mr. Thornhill had read, he said that all submission was now too late and unnecessary; that he had heard of our application to his uncle, which met with the contempt it had deserved; and as for the rest, that all future applications should be directed to his attorney, not to him. He observed, however, that as he had a very good opinion of the discretion of the two young ladies they might have been the most agreeable intercessors.

“Well, sir,” said I to my fellow-prisoner, “you now discover the temper of the man that oppresses me. He can at once be facetious and cruel; but let him use me as he will, I shall soon be free, in spite of all his bolts to restrain me. I am now drawing towards an abode that looks brighter as I approach it; this expectation cheers my afflictions, and though I leave a helpless family of orphans behind me, yet they will not be utterly forsaken, some friend perhaps will be found to assist them for the sake of their poor father, and some may charitably relieve them for the sake of their Heavenly Father.”

Just as I spoke, my wife, whom I had not seen that day before, appeared with looks of terror, and making efforts, but unable to speak. “Why, my love,” cried I, “why will you thus increase my afflictions by your own? What though no submission can turn our severe master, though he has doomed me to die in this place of wretchedness, and though we have lost a darling child, yet still you will find comfort in your other
children when I shall be no more." "We have indeed lost," returned she, "a darling child. My Sophia, my dearest, is gone; snatched from us, carried off by ruffians!" "How, madam," cried my fellow-prisoner, "Miss Sophia carried off by villains! sure it cannot be."

She could only answer with a fixed look and a flood of tears. But one of the prisoner's wives who was present, and came in with her, gave us a more distinct account: she informed us, that as my wife, my daughter, and herself were taking a walk together on the great road, a little way out of the village, a post-chaise and a pair drove up to them, and instantly stopped. Upon which a well-dressed man, but not Mr. Thornhill, stepping out, clasped my daughter round the waist, and forcing her in, bid the postilion drive on, so that they were out of sight in a moment.

"Now," cried I, "the sum of my miseries is made up, nor is it in the power of anything on earth to give me another pang. What! not one left! not to leave me one!—The monster!—The child that was next my heart! she had the beauty of an angel, and almost the wisdom of an angel. But support that woman, nor let her fall.—Not to leave me one!"

"Alas! my husband," said my wife, "you seem to want comfort even more than I. Our distresses are great; but I could bear this and more, if I saw you but easy. They may take away my children and all the world, if they leave me but you."

My son, who was present, endeavored to moderate her grief; he bade us take comfort, for he hoped that we might still have reason to be thankful.—"My child," cried I, "look round the world, and see if there be any happiness left me now. Is not every ray of comfort shut out, while all our bright prospects only lie beyond the grave?"—"My dear father," returned he, "I hope there is still something that will give you an interval of satisfaction; for I have a letter from my brother George."—"What of him, child?" interrupted I, "does he know our misery? I hope my boy is exempt from any part of what his wretched family suffers?"—"Yes, sir," returned he, "he is perfectly gay, cheerful, and happy. His letter brings nothing but good news; he is the favorite of his colonel, who promises to procure him the very next lieutenancy that becomes vacant."

"And are you sure of all this?" cried my wife: "are you sure that nothing ill has befallen my boy?"—"Nothing indeed, madam," returned my son; "you shall see the letter, which will give you the highest pleasure; and if
anything can procure you comfort, I am sure that will."—
"But are you sure," still repeated she, "that the letter is
from himself, and that he is really so happy?"—"Yes,
madam," replied he, "it is certainly his, and he will one
day be the credit and support of our family."—"Then I
thank Providence," cried she "that my last letter to him has
miscarried.—Yes, my dear," continued she, turning to me,
"I will now confess, that though the hand of Heaven is
sore upon us in other instances, it has been favorable here.
By the last letter I wrote my son, which was in the bitterness
of anger, I desired him, upon his mother's blessing, and if he
had the heart of a man, to see justice done his father and sis-
ter, and avenge our cause. But thanks be to Him that directs
all things, it has miscarried, and I am at rest." "Woman,"
cried I, "thou hast done very ill, and at another time my re-
proaches might have been more severe. Oh! what a tremen-
dous gulf hast thou escaped, that would have buried both thee
and him in endless ruin. Providence indeed has here been
kinder to us than we to ourselves. It has reserved that son to
be the father and protector of my children when I shall be
away. How unjustly did I complain of being stripped of every
comfort, when still I hear that he is happy, and insensible of
our afflictions; still kept in reserve to support his widowed
mother, and to protect his brothers and sisters. But what
sisters has he left? he has no sisters now; they are all gone,
robbed from me, and I am undone."—"Father," interrupted
my son, "I beg you will give me leave to read this letter, I
know it will please you." Upon which, with my permission, he
read as follows:—

"HONORED SIR,

I have called off my imagination a few moments from the
pleasures that surround me, to fix it upon objects that are
still more pleasing, the dear little fireside at home. My fancy
draws that harmless group listening to every line of this with
great composure. I view those faces with delight which never
felt the deforming hand of ambition or distress! But what-
ever your happiness may be at home, I am sure it will be some
addition to it to hear, that I am perfectly pleased with my
situation, and every way happy here.

"Our regiment is countermanded, and is not to leave the
kingdom: the colonel, who professes himself my friend, takes
me with him to all companies where he is acquainted, and after
my first visit, I generally find myself received with increased
respect upon repeating it. I danced last night with Lady G——, and could I forget you know whom, I might be perhaps successful. But it is my fate still to remember others, while I am myself forgotten by most of my absent friends; and in this number, I fear, sir, that I must consider you; for I have long expected the pleasure of a letter from home, to no purpose. Olivia and Sophia too promised to write, but seem to have forgotten me. Tell them they are two arrant little baggages, and that I am this moment in a most violent passion with them: yet still I know not how, though I want to bluster a little, my heart is respondent only to softer emotions. Then tell them, sir, that after all I love them affectionately, and be assured of my ever remaining

Your dutiful son.

"In all our miseries," cried I, "what thanks have we not to return, that one at least of our family is exempted from what we suffer. Heaven be his guard, and keep my boy thus happy, to be the supporter of his widowed mother, and the father of these two babes, which is all the patrimony I can now bequeath him. May he keep their innocence from the temptations of want, and be their conductor in the paths of honor!" I had scarcely said these words, when a noise like that of a tumult seemed to proceed from the prison below; it died away soon after, and a clanking of fetters was heard along the passage that led to my apartment. The keeper of the prison entered, holding a man all bloody, wounded, and fettered with the heaviest irons. I looked with compassion on the wretch as he approached me, but with horror when I found it was my own son.—"My George! my George! and do I behold thee thus? wounded—fettered! Is this thy happiness? is this the manner you return to me? O that this sight could break my heart at once, and let me die!"

"Where, sir, is your fortitude?" returned my son with an intrepid voice. "I must suffer; my life is forfeited, and let them take it."

I tried to restrain my passions for a few minutes in silence, but I thought I should have died with the effort.—"O my boy, my heart weeps to behold thee thus; and I cannot, cannot help it. In the moment that I thought thee blessed, and prayed for thy safety, to behold thee thus again! Chained, wounded! And yet the death of the youthful is happy. But I am old, a very old man, and have lived to see this day! To see my children all untimely falling about me, while I continue a wretched survivor in the midst of ruin! May all the curses
that ever sunk a soul fall heavy upon the murderer of my children!  May he live, like me, to see—"

"Hold, sir," replied my son, "or I shall blush for thee. How, sir, forgetful of your age, your holy calling, thus to arrogate the justice of Heaven, and fling those curses upward that must soon descend to crush thy own gray head with destruction! No, sir, let it be your care now to fit me for that vile death I must shortly suffer; to arm me with hope and resolution; to give me courage to drink of that bitterness which must shortly be my portion."

"My child, you must not die: I am sure no offence of thine can deserve so vile a punishment. My George could never be guilty of any crime to make his ancestors ashamed of him."

"Mine, sir," returned my son, "is, I fear, an unpardonable one. When I received my mother's letter from home, I immediately came down, determined to punish the betrayer of our honor, and sent him an order to meet me, which he answered, not in person, but by despatching four of his domestics to seize me. I wounded one who first assaulted me, and I fear desperately; but the rest made me their prisoner. The coward is determined to put the law in execution against me; the proofs are undeniable: I have sent a challenge, and as I am the first transgressor upon the statute, I see no hopes of pardon. But you have often charmed me with your lessons of fortitude; let me now, sir, find them in your example."

"And, my son, you shall find them. I am now raised above this world, and all the pleasures it can produce. From this moment I break from my heart all the ties that held it down to earth, and will prepare to fit us both for eternity. Yes, my son, I will point out the way, and my soul shall guide yours in the ascent, for we will take our flight together. I now see and am convinced you can expect no pardon here; and I can only exhort you to seek it at that greatest tribunal where we both shall shortly answer. But let us not be niggardly in our exhortation, but let all our fellow-prisoners have a share. Good jailer, let them be permitted to stand here while I attempt to improve them."—Thus saying, I made an effort to rise from my straw, but wanted strength, and was able only to recline against the wall. The prisoners assembled themselves according to my directions, for they loved to hear my counsel; my son and his mother supported me on either side; I looked and saw that none were wanting, and then addresed them with the following exhortation.
CHAPTER XXIX.

The equal dealings of Providence demonstrated with regard to the happy and the miserable here below.—That from the nature of pleasure and pain, the wretched must be repaid the balance of their sufferings in the life hereafter.

My friends, my children, and my fellow-sufferers, when I reflect on the distribution of good and evil here below, I find that much has been given man to enjoy, yet still more to suffer. Though we should examine the whole world, we shall not find one man so happy as to have nothing left to wish for; but we daily see thousands, who, by suicide, show us they have nothing left to hope. In this life, then, it appears that we cannot be entirely blessed, but yet we may be completely miserable.

Why man should thus feel pain; why our wretchedness should be requisite in the formation of universal felicity; why, when all other systems are made perfect by the perfection of their subordinate parts, the great system should require for its perfection parts that are not only subordinate to others, but imperfect in themselves; these are questions that never can be explained, and might be useless if known. On this subject, Providence has thought fit to elude our curiosity, satisfied with granting us motives to consolation.

In this situation man has called in the friendly assistance of philosophy, and Heaven, seeing the incapacity of that to console him, has given him the aid of religion. The consolations of philosophy are very amusing, but often fallacious. It tells us that life is filled with comforts, if we will but enjoy them: and on the other hand, that though we unavoidably have miseries here, life is short, and they will soon be over. Thus do these consolations destroy each other: for, if life is a place of comfort its shortness must be misery, and if it be long, our griefs are protracted. Thus philosophy is weak; but religion comforts in a higher strain. Man is here, it tells us, fitting up his mind, and preparing it for another abode. When the good man leaves the body and is all a glorious mind, he will find he has been making himself a heaven of happiness here: while the wretch that has been maimed and contaminated by his vices, shrinks from his body with terror, and finds that he has anticipated the vengeance of Heaven. To religion
then we must hold in every circumstance of life for our truest comfort; for if already we are happy, it is a pleasure to think we can make that happiness unending; and if we are miserable, it is very consoling to think that there is a place of rest. Thus, to the fortunate, religion holds out a continuance of bliss; to the wretched a change from pain.

But though religion is very kind to all men, it has promised peculiar rewards to the unhappy: the sick, the naked, the houseless, the heavy-laden, and the prisoner, have ever most frequent promises in our sacred law. The author of our religion everywhere professes himself the wretch's friend, and, unlike the false ones of this world, bestows all his caresses upon the forlorn. The unthinking have censured this as partiality, as a preference without merit to deserve it. But they never reflect, that it is not in the power even of Heaven itself to make the offer of unceasing felicity as great a gift to the happy as to the miserable. To the first, eternity is but a single blessing, since at most it but increases what they already possess. To the latter, it is but a double advantage; for it diminishes their pain here, and rewards them with heavenly bliss hereafter.

But Providence is in another respect kinder to the poor than the rich; for as it thus makes the life after death more desirable, so it smooths the passage there. The wretched have had a long familiarity with every face of terror. The man of sorrows lays himself quietly down, without possessions to regret, and but few ties to stop his departure: he feels only nature's pang in the final separation, and this is no way greater than he has often faintly under before; for after a certain degree of pain, every new breach that death opens in the constitution, nature kindly covers with insensibility.

Thus Providence has given the wretched two advantages over the happy in this life—greater felicity in dying, and in heaven all that superiority of pleasure which arises from contrasted enjoyment. And this superiority, my friends, is no small advantage, and seems to be one of the pleasures of the poor man in the parable; for though he was already in Heaven, and felt all the raptures it could give, yet it was mentioned as an addition to his happiness, that he had once been wretched, and now was comforted; that he had known what it was to be miserable, and now felt what it was to be happy.

Thus, my friends, you see religion does what philosophy could never do: it shows the equal dealings of Heaven to the happy and the unhappy, and levels all human enjoyments to
nearly the same standard. It gives to both the rich and poor the same happiness hereafter, and equal hopes to aspire after it; but if the rich have the advantage of enjoying pleasure here, the poor have the endless satisfaction of knowing what it was once to be miserable, when crowned with endless felicity hereafter; and even though this should be called a small advantage, yet being an eternal one, it must make up by duration what the temporal happiness of the great may have exceeded by intenseness.

These are, therefore, the consolations which the wretched have peculiar to themselves, and in which they are above the rest of mankind; in other respects, they are below them. They who would know the miseries of the poor, must see life and endure it. To declaim on the temporal advantages they enjoy, is only repeating what none either believe or practice. The men who have the necessaries of living are not poor, and they who want them must be miserable. Yes, my friends, we must be miserable. No vain efforts of a refined imagination can soothe the wants of nature, can give elastic sweetness to the dark vapor of a dungeon, or ease the throbbings of a broken heart. Let the philosopher from his couch of softness tell us that we can resist all these: alas! the effort by which we resist them is still the greatest pain. Death is slight, and any man may sustain it; but torments are dreadful, and these no man can endure.

To us then, my friends, the promises of happiness in heaven should be peculiarly dear; for if our reward be in this life alone, we are then indeed of all men the most miserable. When I look round these gloomy walls, made to terrify as well as to confine us; this light, that only serves to show the horrors of the place; those shackles, that tyranny has imposed or crime made necessary; when I survey these emaciated looks, and hear those groans, O! my friends, what a glorious exchange would heaven be for these. To fly through regions unconfined as air, to bask in the sunshine of eternal bliss, to carol over-endless hymns of praise, to have no master to threaten or insult us, but the form of Goodness himself forever in our eyes! when I think of these things, Death becomes the messenger of very glad tidings; when I think of these things, his sharpest arrow becomes the staff of my support; when I think of these things, what is there in life worth having? when I think of these things, what is there that should not be spurned away? Kings in their palaces should groan for such advantages; but we, humbled as we are, should yearn for them.
And shall these things be ours? Ours they will certainly be if we but try for them; and what is a comfort, we are shut out from many temptations that would retard our pursuit. Only let us try for them, and they will certainly be ours; and what is still a comfort, shortly too; for if we look back on a past life, it appears but a very short span, and whatever we may think of the rest of life, it will yet be found of less duration; as we grow older, the days seem to grow shorter, and our intimacy with time ever lessens the perception of his stay. Then let us try for them, and they will certainly be ours; and what is still a comfort, shortly too; for if we look back on a past life, it appears but a very short span, and whatever we may think of the rest of life, it will yet be found of less duration; as we grow older, the days seem to grow shorter, and our intimacy with time ever lessens the perception of his stay. Then let us take comfort now, for we shall soon be at our journey's end; we shall soon lay down the heavy burden laid by Heaven upon us; and though Death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and like his horizon still flies before him, yet the time will certainly and shortly come, when we shall cease from our toil; when the luxurious great ones of the world shall no more tread us to the earth; when we shall think with pleasure of our sufferings below; when we shall be surrounded with all our friends, or such as deserved our friendship; when our bliss shall be unutterable, and still, to crown all, unending.

CHAPTER XXX.

Happier prospects begin to appear.—Let us be inflexible, and fortune will at last change in our favor.

When I had thus finished, and my audience was retired, the jailer, who was one of the most humane of his profession, hoped I would not be displeased, as what he did was but his duty, observing, that he must be obliged to remove my son into a stronger cell, but that he should be permitted to revisit me every morning. I thanked him for his clemency, and grasping my boy's hand, bade him farewell, and be mindful of the great duty that was before him.

I again therefore laid me down, and one of my little ones sat by my bedside reading, when Mr. Jenkinson entering, informed me that there was news of my daughter; for that she was seen by a person about two hours before in a strange gentleman's company, and that they had stopped at a neighboring village for refreshment, and seemed as if returning to town.
He had scarcely delivered this news when the jailer came with looks of haste and pleasure to inform me, that my daughter was found. Moses came running in a moment after, crying out that his sister Sophy was below, and coming up with our old friend Mr. Burchell.

Just as he delivered this news, my dearest girl entered, and with looks almost wild with pleasure, ran to kiss me in a transport of affection. Her mother's tears and silence also showed her pleasure—"Here, papa," cried the charming girl, "here is the brave man to whom I owe my delivery; to this gentleman's intrepidity I am indebted for my happiness and safety—" A kiss from Mr. Burchell, whose pleasure seemed even greater than hers, interrupted what she was going to add.

"Ah, Mr. Burchell," cried I, "this is but a wretched habitation you now find us in; and we are now very different from what you last saw us. You were ever our friend: we have long discovered our errors with regard to you, and repent of our ingratitude. After the vile usage you then received at my hands, I am almost ashamed to behold your face; yet I hope you'll forgive me, as I was deceived by a base, ungenerous wretch, who under the mask of friendship has undone me."

"It is impossible," replied Mr. Burchell, "that I should forgive you, as you never deserved my resentment. I partly saw your delusion then, and as it was out of my power to restrain, I could only pity it."

"It was ever my conjecture," cried I, "that your mind was noble, but now I find it so. But tell me, my dear child, how thou hast been relieved, or who the ruffians were who carried thee away."

"Indeed, sir," replied she, "as to the villain who carried me off, I am yet ignorant. For, as my mamma and I were walking out, he came up behind us, and almost before I could call for help, forced me into the post-chaise, and in an instant the horses drove away. I met several on the road to whom I cried out for assistance but they disregarded my entreaties. In the meantime the ruffian himself used every art to hinder me from crying out: he flattered and threatened by turns, and swore that if I continued but silent he intended no harm. In the meantime I had broken the canvas that he had drawn up, and whom should I perceive at some distance but your old friend Mr. Burchell, walking along with his usual swiftness, with the great stick for which we so much used to ridicule him. As soon as he came within hearing, I called out to him by name, and entreated his help. I repeated my exclamation sev-
eral times, upon which, with a very loud voice, he bid the postilion stop; but the boy took no notice, but drove on with still greater speed. I now thought he could never overtake us, when, in less than a minute, I saw Mr. Burchell come running up by the side of the horses, and with one blow knock the postilion to the ground. The horses, when he was fallen, soon stopped of themselves, and the ruffian stepping out, with oaths and menaces drew his sword, and ordered him at his peril to retire; but Mr. Burchell running up shivered his sword to pieces, and then pursued him for near a quarter of a mile; but he made his escape. I was at this time come out myself, willing to assist my deliverer; but he soon returned to me in triumph. The postilion, who was recovered, was going to make his escape too; but Mr. Burchell ordered him at his peril to mount again and drive back to town. Finding it impossible to resist he reluctantly complied, though the wound he had received seemed to me at least to be dangerous. He continued to complain of the pain as we drove along, so that he at last excited Mr. Burchell’s compassion, who at my request exchanged him for another, at an inn where we called on our return.”

“Welcome, then,” cried I, “my child! and thou, her gallant deliverer, a thousand welcomes! Though our cheer is but wretched, yet our hearts are ready to receive you. And now, Mr. Burchell, as you have delivered my girl, if you think she is a recompense, she is yours; if you can stoop to an alliance with a family so poor as mine, take her; obtain her consent, as I know you have her heart, and you have mine. And let me tell you, sir, that I give you no small treasure: she has been celebrated for beauty, it is true, but that is not my meaning; I give you up a treasure in her mind.”

“But I suppose, sir,” cried Mr. Burchell, “that you are apprized of my circumstances, and of my incapacity to support her as she deserves.”

“If your present objection,” replied I, “be meant as an evasion to my offer, I desist: but I know no man so worthy to deserve her as you; and if I could give her thousands, and thousands sought her from me, yet my honest brave Burchell should be my dearest choice.”

To all this his silence alone seemed to give a mortifying refusal, and without the least reply to my offer, he demanded if we could not be furnished with refreshments from the next inn; to which being answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to send in the best dinner that could be provided upon such short notice. He bespoke also a dozen of their best wine
and some cordials for me: adding with a smile, that he would stretch a little for once, and though in a prison, asserted he was never better disposed to be merry. The waiter soon made his appearance with preparations for dinner; a table was lent us by the jailer, who seemed remarkably assiduous; the wine was disposed in order, and two very well-dressed dishes were brought in.

My daughter had not yet heard of her poor brother’s melancholy situation, and we all seemed unwilling to damp her cheerfulness by the relation. But it was in vain that I attempted to appear cheerful, the circumstances of my unfortunate son broke through all efforts to dissemble; so that I was at last obliged to damp our mirth, by relating his misfortunes, and wishing that he might be permitted to share with us in this little interval of satisfaction. After my guests were recovered from the consternation my account had produced, I requested also that Mr. Jenkinson, a fellow-prisoner, might be admitted, and the jailer granted my request with an air of unusual submission. The clanking of my son’s irons were no sooner heard along the passage, than his sister ran impatiently to meet him; while Mr. Burchell in the meantime asked me, if my son’s name was George; to which replying in the affirmative, he still continued silent. As soon as my boy entered the room, I could perceive he regarded Mr. Burchell with a look of astonishment and reverence. “Come on,” cried I, “my son; though we are fallen very low, yet Providence has been pleased to grant us some small relaxation from pain. Thy sister is restored to us, and there is her deliverer: to that brave man it is that I am indebted for yet having a daughter; give him, my boy, the hand of friendship; he deserves our warmest gratitude.”

My son seemed all this while regardless of what I said, and still continued fixed at respectful distance—“My dear brother,” cried his sister, “why don’t you thank my good deliverer? the brave should ever love each other.”

He still continued in silence and astonishment till our guest at last perceived himself to be known, and, assuming all his native dignity, desired my son to come forward. Never before had I seen any thing so truly majestic as the air he assumed upon this occasion. The greatest object in the universe, says a certain philosopher, is a good man struggling with adversity; yet there is still a greater, which is the good man that comes to relieve it. After he had regarded my son for some time with a superior air, “I again find,” said he, “unthinking boy, that the same crime”—But here he was interrupted by one of the
jailer's servants, who came to inform us that a person of distinction, who had driven into town with a chariot and several attendants, sent his respects to the gentleman that was with us, and begged to know when he should think proper to be waited upon. — "Bid the fellow wait," cried our guest, "till I shall have leisure to receive him;" and then turning to my son, "I again find, sir," proceeded he, "that you are guilty of the same offence, for which you once had my reproof, and for which the law is now preparing its justest punishments. You imagine, perhaps, that a contempt for your own life gives you a right to take that of another; but where, sir, is the difference between a duellist who hazards a life of no value, and the murderer who acts with greater security? Is it any diminution of the gamester's fraud, when he alleges that he has staked a counter?"

"Alas, sir," cried I, "whoever you are, pity the poor misguided creature; for what he has done was in obedience to a deluded mother, who, in the bitterness of her resentment, required him, upon her blessing, to avenge her quarrel. Here, sir, is the letter, which will serve to convince you of her impiety, and diminish his guilt;"

He took the letter and hastily read it over. "This," says he, "though not a perfect excuse, is such a palliation of his fault as induces me to forgive him. And, now, sir," continued he, kindly taking my son by the hand, "I see you are surprised at finding me here; but I have often visited prisons upon occasions less interesting. I am now come to see justice done a worthy man, for whom I have the most sincere esteem. I have long been a disguised spectator of thy father's benevolence. I have at his little dwelling enjoyed respect uncontaminated by flattery; and have received that happiness that courts could not give from the amusing simplicity round his fireside. My nephew has been apprized of my intentions of coming here, and I find is arrived. It would be wronging him and you to condemn him without an examination; if there be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may say, without boasting, that none have ever taxed the injustice of Sir William Thornhill."

We now found the personage whom we had so long entertained as a harmless amusing companion, was no other than the celebrated Sir William Thornhill, to whose virtues and singularities scarcely any were strangers. The poor Mr. Burchell was in reality a man of large fortune and great interest, to whom senates listened with applause, and whom party heard with conviction; who was the friend of his country, but loyal
to his king. My poor wife, recalling her former familiarity, seemed to shrink with apprehension; but Sophia, who a few moments before thought him her own, now perceiving the immense distance to which he was removed by fortune, was unable to conceal her tears.

"Ah, sir," cried my wife with a piteous aspect, "how is it possible that I can ever have your forgiveness? The slights you received from me the last time I had the honor of seeing you at our house, and the jokes which I audaciously threw out—these, sir, I fear, can never be forgiven."

"My dear good lady," returned he with a smile, "if you had your joke, I had my answer: I'll leave it to all the company if mine were not as good as yours. To say the truth, I know nobody whom I am disposed to be angry with at present, but the fellow who so frightened my little girl here. I had not even time to examine the rascal's person so as to describe him in an advertisement. Can you tell me, Sophy, my dear, whether you should know him again?"

"Indeed, sir," replied she, "I can't be positive; yet now I recollect he had a large mark over one of his eyebrows."—"I ask pardon, madam," interrupted Jenkinson, who was by, "be so good as to inform me if the fellow wore his own red hair?"—"Yes, I think so," cried Sophia. "And did your honor," continued he, turning to Sir William, "observe the length of his legs?"—"I can't be sure of their length," cried the baronet, "but I am convinced of their swiftness; for he outran me, which is what I thought few men in the kingdom could have done."—"Please your honor," cried Jenkinson, "I know the man: it is certainly the same; the best runner in England; he has beaten Pinwire of Newcastle; Timothy Baxter is his name. I know him perfectly, and the very place of his retreat at this moment. If your honor will bid Mr. Jailer let two of his men go with me, I'll engage to produce him to you in an hour at the furthest." Upon this the jailer was called, who instantly appearing, Sir William demanded if he knew him. "Yes, please your honor," replied the jailer, "I know Sir William Thornhill well, and everybody that knows anything of him will desire to know more of him."—"Well, then," said the baronet, "my request is, that you permit this man and two of your servants to go upon a message by my authority; and as I am in the commission of the peace, I undertake to secure you."—"Your promise is sufficient," replied the other, "and you may at a minute's warning send them over England whenever your honor thinks fit."
In pursuance of the jailer's compliance Jenkinson was dispatched in search of Timothy Baxter, while we were amused with the assiduity of our youngest boy Bill, who had just come in, and climbed up Sir William's neck in order to kiss him. His mother was immediately going to chastise his familiarity, but the worthy man prevented her; and taking the child, all ragged as he was, upon his knee, "What, Bill, you chubby rogue," cried he, "do you remember your old friend Burchell? and Dick too, my honest veteran, are you here? you shall find I have not forgot you." So saying, he gave each a large piece of gingerbread, which the poor fellows ate heartily, as they had got that morning but a very scanty breakfast.

We now sat down to dinner, which was almost cold, but previously, my arm still continuing painful, Sir William wrote a prescription, for he had made the study of physic his amusement, and was more than moderately skilled in the profession: this being sent to an apothecary who lived in the place, my arm was dressed, and I found almost instantaneous relief. We were waited upon at dinner by the jailer himself, who was willing to do our guest all the honor in his power. But before we had well dined, another message was brought from his nephew, desiring permission to appear in order to vindicate his innocence and honor; with which request the baronet complied, and desired Mr. Thornhill to be introduced.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Former benevolence now repaid with unexpected interest.

Mr. Thornhill made his appearance with a smile, which he seldom wanted, and was going to embrace his uncle, which the other repulsed with an air of disdain. "No fawning, sir, at present," cried the baronet, with a look of severity: "the only way to my heart is by the road of honor; but here I only see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, and oppression. How is it, sir, that this poor man, for whom I know you professed a friendship, is used thus hardly? His daughter vilely seduced as a recompense for his hospitality, and he himself thrown into prison, perhaps but for resenting the insult? His son, too, whom you feared to face as a man——"
"Is it possible, sir," interrupted his nephew, "that my uncle could object that as a crime, which his repeated instructions alone have persuaded me to avoid?"

"Your rebuke," cried Sir William, "is just; you have acted in this instance prudently and well, though not quite as your father would have done: my brother, indeed, was the soul of honor; but thou—Yes, you have acted in this instance perfectly right, and it has my warmest approbation."

"And I hope," said his nephew, "that the rest of my conduct will not be found to deserve censure. I appeared, sir, with this gentleman's daughter at some places of public amusement: thus, what was levity, scandal called by a harsher name, and it was reported that I had debauched her. I waited on her father in person, willing to clear the thing to his satisfaction, and he received me only with insult and abuse. As for the rest, with regard to his being here, my attorney and steward can best inform you, as I commit the management of business entirely to them. If he has contracted debts, and is unwilling, or even unable to pay them, it is their business to proceed in this manner; and I see no hardship or injustice in pursuing the most legal means of redress."

"If this," cried Sir William, "be as you have stated it, there is nothing unpardonable in your offence; and though your conduct might have been more generous in not suffering this gentleman to be oppressed by subordinate tyranny, yet it has been at least equitable."

"He cannot contradict a single particular," replied the 'Squire; "I defy him to do so; and several of my servants are ready to attest what I say. Thus, sir," continued he, finding that I was silent, for in fact I could not contradict him; "thus, sir, my own innocence is vindicated: but though at your entreaty, I am ready to forgive this gentleman every other offence, yet his attempts to lessen me in your esteem excite a resentment that I cannot govern; and this, too, at a time when his son was actually preparing to take away my life;—this, I say, was such guilt, that I am determined to let the law take its course. I have here the challenge that was sent me, and two witnesses to prove it: one of my servants has been wounded dangerously; and even though my uncle himself should dissuade me, which I know he will not, yet I will see public justice done, and he shall suffer for it."

"Thou monster," cried my wife, "hast thou not had vengeance enough already, but must my poor boy feel thy cruelty? I hope that good Sir William will protect us; for my son is as
innocent as a child: I am sure he is, and never did harm to man."

"Madam," replied the good man, "your wishes for his safety are not greater than mine; but I am sorry to find his guilt too plain; and if my nephew persists—" But the appearance of Jenkinson and the jailer's two servants now called off our attention, who entered, hauling in a tall man, very genteelty dressed, and answering the description already given of the ruffian who had carried off my daughter:—"Here," cried Jenkinson, pulling him in, "here we have him; and if ever there was a candidate for Tyburn, this is one."

The moment Mr. Thornhill perceived the prisoner, and Jenkinson who had him in custody, he seemed to shrink back with terror. His face became pale with conscious guilt, and he would have withdrawn; but Jenkinson, who perceived his design, stopped him.—"What, 'Squire," cried he, "are you ashamed of your two old acquaintances, Jenkinson and Baxter? but this is the way all great men forget their friends, though I am resolved we will not forget you. Our prisoner, please your honor," continued he, turning to Sir William, "has already confessed all. This is the gentleman reported to be so dangerously wounded. He declares that it was Mr. Thornhill who first put him upon this affair; that he gave him the clothes he now wears, to appear like a gentleman; and furnished him with the post-chaise. The plan was laid between them, that he should carry off the young lady to a place of safety; and that there he should threaten and terrify her; but Mr. Thornhill was to come in the meantime, as if by accident, to her rescue; and that they should fight awhile, and then he was to run off,—by which Mr. Thornhill would have the better opportunity of gaining her affections himself, under the character of her defender."

Sir William remembered the coat to have been worn by his nephew, and all the rest the prisoner himself confirmed by a more circumstantial account, concluding that Mr. Thornhill had often declared to him that he was in love with both sisters at the same time.

"Heavens!" cried Sir William, "what a viper have I been fostering in my bosom? And so fond of public justice, too, as he seemed to be! But he shall have it; secure him, Mr. Jailer:—yet, hold, I fear there is no legal evidence to detain him."

Upon this Mr. Thornhill, with the utmost humility, entertained that two such abandoned wretches might not be admitted as evidences against him, but that his servants should
be examined. — "Your servants!" replied Sir William; "wretch! call them yours no longer; but come let us hear what these fellows have to say; let his butler be called."

When the butler was introduced, he soon perceived by his former master's looks that all his power was now over. "Tell me," cried Sir William sternly, "have you ever seen your master and that fellow dressed up in his clothes in company together?" —"Yes, please your honor," cried the butler, "a thousand times: he was the man that always brought him his ladies."—"How," interrupted young Mr. Thornhill, "this to my face!" —"Yes," replied the butler, "or to any man's face. To tell you a truth, Master Thornhill, I never either loved or liked you, and I don't care if I tell you now a piece of my mind." —"Now, then," cried Jenkinson, "tell his honor whether you know anything of me."—"I can't say," replied the butler, "that I know much good of you. The night that gentleman's daughter was deluded to our house, you were one of them."—"So, then," cried Sir William, "I find you have brought a very fine witness to prove your innocence: thou stain to humanity! to associate with such wretches! But," continuing his examination, "you tell me, Mr. Butler, that this was the person who brought him this old gentleman's daughter."—"No, please your honor," replied the butler, he did not bring her, for the Squire himself undertook that business: but he brought the priest that pretended to marry them."—"It is but too true," cried Jenkinson, "I cannot deny it; that was the employment assigned me, and I confess it to my confusion."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the baronet, "how every new discovery of his villany alarms me. All his guilt is now too plain, and I find his prosecution was dictated by tyranny, cowardice, and revenge. At my request, Mr. Jailer, set this young officer, now your prisoner, free, and trust to me for the consequences, I'll make it my business to set the affair in a proper light to my friend the magistrate who has committed him.—But where is the unfortunate young lady herself? Let her appear to confront this wretch: I long to know by what arts he has seduced her. Entreat her to come in. Where is she?"

"Ah, sir," said I, "that question stings me to the heart; I was once indeed happy in a daughter, but her miseries—" Another interruption here prevented me; for who should make her appearance but Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was next day to have been married to Mr. Thornhill. Nothing could equal her surprise at seeing Sir William and his nephew here before
her; for her arrival was quite accidental. It happened that she and the old gentleman, her father, were passing through the town on her way to her aunt's, who insisted that her nuptials with Mr. Thornhill should be consummated at her house; but stopping for refreshment, they put up at an inn at the other end of the town. It was there, from the window, that the young lady happened to observe one of my little boys, playing in the street, and instantly sending a footman to bring the child to her, she learned from him some account of our misfortunes; but was still kept ignorant of young Mr. Thornhill's being the cause. Though her father made several remonstrances on the impropriety of going to a prison to visit us, yet they were ineffectual; she desired the child to conduct her, which he did, and it was thus she surprised us at a juncture so unexpected.

Nor can I go on without a reflection on those accidental meetings, which, though they happen every day, seldom excite our surprise but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous concurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives! How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed! The peasant must be disposed to labor, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail, or numbers must want the usual supply.

We all continued silent for some moments, while my charming pupil, which was the name I generally gave this young lady, united in her looks compassion and astonishment, which gave new finishing to her beauty. "Indeed, my dear Mr. Thornhill," cried she to the 'Squire, who she supposed was come here to succor, and not to oppress us, "I take it a little unkindly that you should come here without me, or never inform me of the situation of a family so dear to us both; you know I should take as much pleasure in contributing to the relief of my reverend old master here, whom I shall ever esteem, as you can. But I find that, like your uncle, you take a pleasure in doing good in secret."

"He find pleasure in doing good!" cried Sir William, interrupting her. "No, my dear, his pleasures are as base as he is. You see in him, madam, as complete a villain as ever disgraced humanity. A wretch, who, after having deluded this poor man's daughter, after plotting against the innocence of her sister, has thrown the father into prison, and the eldest son into fetters because he had the courage to face her betrayer. And give me leave, madam, now to congratulate you upon an escape from the embraces of such a monster."
"O goodness," cried the lovely girl, "how have I been deceived! Mr. Thornhill informed me for certain that this gentleman's eldest son, Captain Primrose, was gone off to America with his new-married lady."

"My sweetest miss," cried my wife, "he has told you nothing but falsehoods. My son George never left the kingdom, nor ever was married.—Though you have forsaken him, he has always loved you too well to think of anybody else; and I have heard him say, he would die a bachelor for your sake." She then proceeded to expatiate upon the sincerity of her son's passion. She set his duel with Mr. Thornhill in a proper light; from thence she made a rapid digression to the 'Squire's debaucheries, his pretended marriages, and ended with a most insulting picture of his cowardice.

"Good Heaven!" cried Miss Wilmot, "how very near have I been to the brink of ruin! Ten thousand falsehoods has this gentleman told me: he had at last art enough to persuade me, that my promise to the only man I esteemed was no longer binding, since he had been unfaithful. By his falsehoods I was taught to detest one equally brave and generous."

But by this time my son was freed from the incumbrances of justice, as the person supposed to be wounded was detected to be an imposter. Mr. Jenkinson also, who had acted as his valet de chambre, had dressed up his hair, and furnished him with whatever was necessary to make a genteel appearance. He now therefore entered, handsomely dressed in his regimentals; and without vanity (for I am above it), he appeared as handsome a fellow as ever wore a military dress. As he entered, he made Miss Wilmot a modest and distant bow, for he was not as yet acquainted with the change which the eloquence of his mother had wrought in his favor. But no decorums could restrain the impatience of his blushing mistress to be forgiven. Her tears, her looks, all contributed to discover the real sensations of her heart, for having forgotten her former promise, and having suffered herself to be deluded by an imposter. My son appeared amazed at her condescension, and could scarcely believe it real.—"Sure, madam," cried he, "this is but delusion! I can never have merited this! To be blessed thus is to be too happy."—"No, sir," replied she: "I have been deceived, basely deceived, else nothing could have ever made me unjust to my promise. You know my friendship, you have long known it; but forget what I have done, and as you once had my warmest vows of constancy, you shall now have them repeated: and be assured, that if your
Arabella cannot be yours, she shall never be another's." "And no other's you shall be," cried Sir William, "if I have any influence with your father."

This hint was sufficient for my son Moses, who immediately flew to the inn where the old gentleman was, to inform him of every circumstance that had happened. But in the mean-time the Squire, perceiving that he was on every side undone, now finding that no hopes were left from flattery and dissimulation, concluded that his wisest way would be to turn and face his pursuers. Thus, laying aside all shame, he appeared the open hardy villain. "I find, then," cried he, "that I am to expect no justice here; but I am resolved it shall be done me. You shall know, sir," turning to Sir William, "I am no longer a poor dependent upon your favors. I scorn them. Nothing can keep Miss Wilmot's fortune from me, which, I thank her father's assiduity, is pretty large. The articles and a bond for her fortune are signed, and safe in my possession. It was her fortune, not her person, that induced me to wish for this match; and possessed of the one, let who will take the other."

This was an alarming blow. Sir William was sensible of the justice of his claims, for he had been instrumental in drawing up the marriage articles himself. Miss Wilmot, therefore, perceiving that her fortune was irretrievably lost, turning to my son, she asked if the loss of her fortune could lessen her value to him? "Though fortune," said she, "is out of my power, at least I have my heart to give."

"And that, madam," cried her real lover, "was indeed all that you ever had to give; at least all that I ever thought worth the acceptance. And I now protest, my Arabella, by all that's happy, your want of fortune this moment increases my pleasure, as it serves to convince my sweet girl of my sincerity."

Mr. Wilmot now entering, he seemed not a little pleased at the danger his daughter had just escaped, and readily consented to a dissolution of the match. But finding that her fortune, which was secured to Mr. Thornhill by bond, would not be given up, nothing could exceed his disappointment. He now saw that his money must all go to enrich one who had no fortune of his own. He could bear his being a rascal, but to want an equivalent to his daughter's fortune was wormwood. He sat therefore for some minutes employed in the most mortifying speculations, till Sir William attempted to lessen his anxiety. —"I must confess, sir," cried he, "that your present disappointment does not entirely displease me. Your immoderate passion for wealth is now justly punished. But though the
young lady cannot be rich, she has still a competence sufficient to give content. Here you see an honest young soldier, who is willing to take her without fortune: they have long loved each other; and for the friendship I bear his father, my interest shall not be wanting in his promotion. Leave then that ambition which disappoints you, and for once admit that happiness which courts your acceptance."

"Sir William," replied the old gentleman, "be assured I never yet forced her inclinations, nor will I now. If she still continues to love this young gentleman, let her have him with all my heart. There is still, thank Heaven, some fortune left, and your promise will make it something more. Only let my old friend here (meaning me) give me a promise of settling six thousand pounds upon my girl if ever he should come to his fortune, and I am ready this night to be the first to join them together."

As it now remained with me to make the young couple happy, I readily gave a promise of making the settlement he required, which from one who had such little expectations as I, was no great favor. We had now, therefore, the satisfaction of seeing them fly into each other's arms in a transport.—"After all my misfortunes," cried my son George, "to be thus rewarded! Sure this is more than I could have presumed to hope for. To be possessed of all that's good, and after such an interval of pain! My warmest wishes could never rise so high!"

"Yes, my George," returned his lovely bride, "now let the wretch take my fortune: since you are happy without it, so am I. O what an exchange have I made from the basest of men to the dearest, best!—Let him enjoy our fortune, I now can be happy even in indigence."—"And I promise you," cried the 'Squire, with a malicious grin, "that I shall be very happy with what you despise."—"Hold, hold, sir," cried Jenkinson, "there are two words to that bargain. As for that lady's fortune, sir, you shall never touch a single stiver of it. Pray, your honor," continued he to Sir William, "can the 'Squire have the lady's fortune if he be married to another?"—"How can you make such a simple demand?" replied the baronet: "undoubtedly he cannot."—"I am sorry for that," cried Jenkinson; "for as this gentleman and I have been old fellow-sporters, I have a friendship for him. But I must declare, well as I love him, that his contract is not worth a tobacco-stopper, for he is married already."—"You lie, like a rascal," returned the 'Squire, who seemed roused by this insult; "I never was legally married to any woman."
“Indeed, begging your honor's pardon,” replied the other, “you were; and I hope you will show a proper return of friendship to your own honest Jenkinson, who brings you a wife; and if the company restrain their curiosity a few minutes, they shall see her.” So saying he went off with his usual celerity, and left us all unable to form any probable conjecture as to his design. “Ay, let him go,” cried the 'Squire; “whatever else I may have done, I defy him there. I am too old now to be frightened with squibs.”

“I am surprised,” said the baronet, “what the fellow can intend by this. Some low piece of humor, I suppose.”—“Perhaps, sir,” replied I, “he may have a more serious meaning. For when we reflect on the various schemes this gentleman has laid to seduce innocence, perhaps some one, more artful than the rest, has been found able to deceive him. When we consider what numbers he has ruined, how many parents now feel with anguish the infamy and the contamination which he has brought into their families, it would not surprise me if some one of them—Amazement! Do I see my lost daughter? Do I hold her? It is, it is my life, my happiness. I thought thee lost, my Olivia, yet still I hold thee—and still thou shalt live to bless me.” The warmest transports of the fondest lover were not greater than mine, when I saw him introduce my child, and held my daughter in my arms, whose silence only spoke her raptures.

“And art thou returned to me, my darling,” cried I, “to be my comfort in age!”—“That she is,” cried Jenkinson, “and make much of her, for she is your own honorable child, and as honest a woman as any in the whole room, let the other be who she will. And as for you, 'Squire, as sure as you stand there, this young lady is your lawful wedded wife. And to convince you that I speak nothing but the truth, here is the license by which you were married together.”—So saying, he put the license into the baronet’s hands, who read it, and found it perfect in every respect. “And now, gentlemen,” continued he, “I find you are surprised at all this; but a few words will explain the difficulty. That there 'Squire of renown, for whom I have a great friendship (but that’s between ourselves), has often employed me in doing odd little things for him. Among the rest he commissioned me to procure him a false license and a false priest, in order to deceive this young lady. But as I was very much his friend, what did I do, but went and got a true license and a true priest, and married them both as fast as the cloth could make them. Perhaps you’ll think it was generosity that made
me do all this: to my shame I confess it, my only design was to keep the license, and let the 'Squire know that I could prove it upon him whenever I thought proper, and so make him come down whenever I wanted money." A burst of pleasure now seemed to fill the whole apartment; our joy reached even to the common room, where the prisoners themselves sympathized,

And shook their chains
In transport and rude harmony.

Happiness was expanded upon every face, and even Olivia's cheek seemed flushed with pleasure. To be thus restored to reputation, to friends and fortune at once, was a rapture sufficient to stop the progress of decay, and restore former health and vivacity. But perhaps among all there was not one who felt sincerer pleasure than I. Still holding the dear loved child in my arms, I asked my heart if these transports were not delusion. "How could you," cried I, turning to Mr. Jenkinson, "how could you add to my miseries by the story of her death? But it matters not; my pleasure at finding her again is more than a recompense for the pain."

"As to your question," replied Jenkinson, "that is easily answered. I thought the only probable means of freeing you from prison, was by submitting to the 'Squire, and consenting to his marriage with the other young lady. But these you had vowed never to grant while your daughter was living; there was therefore no other method to bring things to bear, but by persuading you that she was dead. I prevailed on your wife to join in the deceit, and we have not had a fit opportunity of undeceiving you till now."

In the whole assembly there now appeared only two faces that did not glow with transport. Mr. Thornhill's assurance had entirely forsaken him; he now saw the gulf of infamy and want before him, and trembled to take the plunge. He therefore fell on his knees before his uncle, and in a voice of piercing misery implored compassion. Sir William was going to spurn him away, but at my request he raised him, and, after pausing a few moments, "Thy vices, crimes, and ingratitude," cried he, "deserve no tenderness; yet thou shalt not be entirely forsaken—a bare competence shall be supplied to support the wants of life, but not its follies. This young lady, thy wife, shall be put in possession of a third part of that fortune which once was thine, and from her tenderness alone thou art to expect any extraordinary supplies for the future." He was going to express his gratitude for such kindness in a set speech;
but the baronet prevented him, by bidding him not aggravate his meanness, which was already but too apparent. He ordered him at the same time to begone, and from all his former domestics to choose one, such as he should think proper, which was all that should be granted to attend him.

As soon as he left us, Sir William very politely stepped up to his new niece with a smile, and wished her joy. His example was followed by Miss Wilmot and her father. My wife too kissed her daughter with much affection, as, to use her own expression, she was now made an honest woman of. Sophia and Moses followed in turn, and even our benefactor Jenkinson desired to be admitted to that honor. Our satisfaction seemed scarcely capable of increase. Sir William, whose greatest pleasure was in doing good, now looked round with a countenance open as the sun, and saw nothing but joy in the looks of all except that of my daughter Sophia, who, for some reasons we could not comprehend, did not seem perfectly satisfied. "I think, now," cried he, with a smile, "that all the company except one or two seem perfectly happy. There only remains an act of justice for me to do. You are sensible, sir," continued he, turning to me, "of the obligations we both owe Mr. Jenkinson, and it is but just we should both reward him for it. Miss Sophia will, I am sure, make him very happy, and he shall have from me five hundred pounds as her fortune: and upon this I am sure they can live very comfortably together. Come, Miss Sophia, what say you to this match of my making? Will you have him?"—My poor girl seemed almost sinking into her mother's arms at this hideous proposal.—"Have him, sir!" cried she faintly: "No, sir, never."—"What!" cried he again, "not have Mr. Jenkinson, your benefactor, a handsome young fellow, with five hundred pounds, and good expectations?"—"I beg, sir," returned she, scarcely able to speak, "that you'll desist, and not make me so very wretched." "Was ever such obstinacy known?" cried he again, "to refuse a man whom the family has such infinite obligations to, who has preserved your sister, and who has five hundred pounds! What, not have him?"—"No, sir, never," replied she angrily: "I'd sooner die first."—"If that be the case, then," cried he, "if you will not have him—I think I must have you myself." And so saying, he caught her to his breast with ardor. "My loveliest, my most sensible of girls," cried he, "how could you ever think your own Burchell could deceive you, or that Sir William Thornhill could ever cease to admire a mistress that loved him for himself alone? I have for some years
sought for a woman, who, a stranger to my fortune, could think that I had merit as a man. After having tried in vain, even amongst the pert and the ugly, how great at last must be my rapture to have made a conquest over such sense and such heavenly beauty!" Then turning to Jenkinson; "As I cannot, sir, part with this young lady myself, for she has taken a fancy to the cut of my face, all the recompense I can make is to give you her fortune; and you may call upon my steward to-morrow for five hundred pounds." Thus, we had all our compliments to repeat, and Lady Thornhill underwent the same round of ceremony that her sister had done before. In the mean-time, Sir William's gentleman appeared to tell us that the equipages were ready to carry us to the inn, where everything was prepared for our reception. My wife and I led the van, and left those gloomy mansions of sorrow. The generous baronet ordered forty pounds to be distributed among the prisoners, and Mr. Wilmot, induced by his example, gave half that sum. We were received below by the shouts of the villagers, and I saw and shook by the hand two or three of my honest parishioners, who were among the number. They attended us to our inn, where a sumptuous entertainment was provided, and coarser provisions were distributed in great quantities among the populace.

After supper, as my spirits were exhausted by the alternation of pleasure and pain which they had sustained during the day, I asked permission to withdraw; and leaving the company in the midst of their mirth, as soon as I found myself alone, I poured out my heart in gratitude to the Giver of joy as well as of sorrow, and then slept undisturbed till morning.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Conclusion.

The next morning as soon as I awaked I found my eldes son sitting by my bedside, who came to increase my joy with another turn of fortune in my favor. First having released me from the settlement that I had made the day before in hist favor, he let me know that my merchant who had failed in town
was arrested at Antwerp, and there had given up effects to a much greater amount than what was due to his creditors. My boy's generosity pleased me almost as much as this unlooked-for good fortune; but I had some doubts whether I ought in justice to accept his offer. While I was pondering upon this, Sir William entered the room, to whom I communicated my doubts. His opinion was, that as my son was already possessed of a very affluent fortune by his marriage, I might accept his offer without any hesitation. His business, however, was to inform me, that as he had the night before sent for the licenses, and expected them every hour, he hoped that I would not refuse my assistance in making all the company happy that morning. A footman entered while we were speaking, to tell us that the messenger was returned; and as I was by this time ready, I went down, where I found the whole company as merry as affluence and innocence could make them. However, as they were now preparing for a very solemn ceremony, their laughter entirely displeased me. I told them of the grave, becoming and sublime deportment they should assume upon this mystical occasion, and read them two homilies, and a thesis of my own composing, in order to prepare them. Yet they still seemed perfectly refractory and ungovernable. Even as we were going along to church, to which I led the way, all gravity had quite forsaken them, and I was often tempted to turn back in indignation. In church a new dilemma arose which promised no easy solution. This was, which couple should be married first. My son's bride warmly insisted that Lady Thornhill (that was to be) should take the lead: but this the other refused with equal ardor, protesting she would not be guilty of such rudeness for the world. The argument was supported for some time between both with equal obstinacy and good-breeding. But as I stood all this time with my book ready, I was at last quite tired of the contest; and shutting it, "I perceive," cried I, "that none of you have a mind to be married, and I think we had as good go back again; for I suppose there will be no business done here to-day." This at once reduced them to reason. The baronet and his lady were first married, and then my son and his lovely partner.

I had previously that morning given orders that a coach should be sent for my honest neighbor Flamborough and his family; by which means, upon our return to the inn, we had the pleasure of finding the two Miss Flamboroughs alighted before us. Mr. Jenkinson gave his hand to the eldest, and my son Moses led up the other (and I have since found that he has
taken a real liking to the girl, and my consent and bounty he shall have, whenever he thinks proper to demand them.) We were no sooner returned to the inn, but numbers of my parishioners, hearing of my success, came to congratulate me; but among the rest were those who rose to rescue me, and whom I formerly rebuked with such sharpness. I told the story to Sir William, my son-in-law, who went out and reproved them with great severity; but finding them quite disheartened by his harsh reproof, he gave them half a guinea a-piece to drink his health, and raise their dejected spirits.

Soon after this we were called to a very genteel entertainment, which was dressed by Mr. Thornhill’s cook. And it may not be improper to observe with respect to that gentleman, that he now resides, in quality of companion, at a relation’s house, being very well liked, and seldom sitting at the side table, except when there is no room at the other; for they make no stranger of him. His time is pretty much taken up in keeping his relation, who is a little melancholy, in spirits, and in learning to blow the French horn. My eldest daughter, however, still remembers him with regret; and she has even told me, though I make a secret of it, that when he reforms she may be brought to relent. But to return, for I am not apt to digest thus; when we were to sit down to dinner our ceremonies were going to be renewed. The question was, whether my eldest daughter, as being a matron, should not sit above the two young brides; but the debate was cut short by my son George, who proposed that the company should sit indiscriminately, every gentleman by his lady. This was received with great approbation by all, excepting my wife, who, I could perceive, was not perfectly satisfied, as she expected to have had the pleasure of sitting at the head of the table, and carving the meat for all the company. But, notwithstanding this, it is impossible to describe our good-humor. I can’t say whether we had more wit among us now then usual; but I am certain we had more laughing, which answered the end as well. One jest I particularly remember: old Mr. Wilmot winking to Moses, whose head was turned another way, my son replied, “Madam, I thank you.” Upon which the old gentleman, drinking upon the rest of the company, observed, that he was thinking of his mistress: at which jest I thought the two Miss Flamboroughs would have died with laughing. As soon as dinner was over, according to my old custom, I requested that the table might be taken away, to have the pleasure of seeing all my family assembled once more by a cheerful fireside. My two little ones sat upon
each knee, the rest of the company by their partners. I had nothing now on this side of the grave to wish for; all my cares were over; my pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained, that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity.