



CLASSIC TALES.

SERIOUS AND LIVELY :

WITH CRITICAL ESSAYS
ON THE MERITS
AND REPUTATION
OF THE AUTHORS.

du grave au doux du plaisant au severe. Boileau
From grave to gay, from lively to severe. Pope.

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CLASSIC TALES.

MARMONTEL.

ANNETE AND LUBIN.

A TRUE STORY.

IF it be dangerous to tell every thing to children, it is more dangerous still to leave them in ignorance of every thing. There are grievous crimes according to the laws, which are not so in the eyes of Nature; and we are now going to see into what an abyss the latter leads innocence when she has a fillet over the eyes.

Annete and Lubin were the children of two sisters. These strict ties of blood ought to be incompatible with those of marriage: but Annete and Lubin had no suspicion that there were in the world other laws than the simple laws of nature. From the age of eight years they kept sheep together on the smiling banks of the Seine. They now touched on their sixteenth; but their youth differed not from infancy but by a warmer sentiment and mutual friendship.

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Annete, beneath a plain country coif, bound back negligently her ebon hair. Two large blue eyes sparkled beneath her long eye-lashes, and expressed most innocently every thing which the dull eyes of our old coquettes endeavour to express. Her rosy lips seemed to solicit to be kissed. Her complexion, tanned by the sun, was enlivened by that light shade of purple which colours the down of the peach. Every part of her which the veil of modesty concealed from the rays of noon, effaced the whiteness of the lily: we thought we saw the head of a lively Brunette on the shoulders of a beautiful Blonde.

Lubin had that decisive, open, and joyous air, which proclaims a free and contented mind. His look was that of desire, his laugh the laugh of joy. When he burst out, he displayed teeth whiter than ivory. The freshness of his round cheeks invited the hand to pat them. Add to this a nose in the air, a dimple in the chin, white silver locks curled by the hand of Nature, a genteel make, a deliberate pace, the frankness of the golden age, which suspects and blushes at nothing. This was the portrait of Annete's cousin.

Philosophy brings man back nearer to Nature; and it is for this reason that instinct sometimes resembles it. I should not be surprized then, if my shepherds should be imagined to be somewhat philosophical; but I forewarn my readers that it is without their knowing it.

As they both went frequently to sell fruits and milk in the city, and as people were glad to see them, they had an opportunity of observing what passed in the world, and of giving an account to

each other of their little reflections. They compared their lot to that of the most opulent citizens, and found themselves happier and wiser. "The senseless creatures!" said Lubin; "during the finest part of the year they shut themselves up in quarries! Is it not true, Annete, that our hut is preferable to those magnificent prisons which they call palaces? When the thatch that covers us is burnt up by the sun, I go to the neighbouring forest, and in less than an hour make you a new house, more cheerful than the former. The air and the light are ours. A branch less gives us the freshness of the east or the north; a branch more defends us from the heats of the south, and the rains of the west: that is not very dear, Annete?"

"No, truly," said she: "and I cannot think why, in the fine weather, they do not come all, two and two, to live in a pretty hut. Have you seen, Lubin, those tapestries of which they are so vain? What comparison between them and our beds of verdure? How we sleep on them! how we wake!"—"And you, Annete, have you remarked what trouble they take to give a rural air to the walls which shut them up? Those landscapes which they endeavour to imitate, Nature has made for us: it is for us that the sun shines; it is for us that the seasons delight to vary themselves."—"Right," said Annete; "I carried the other day some strawberries to a lady of quality; they were entertaining her with music. Ah, Lubin? 'what a terrible noise!' I said to myself: 'why does she not come some morning and hear our nightingales!'" The unhappy woman was

laid down upon cushions ; and she yawned in such a manner as to move pity. I asked what ailed her ladyship : they told me that she had the vapours. Do you know, Lubin, what the vapours are ?”—

“ No, not I : but I am afraid they are one of those distempers which one gets in the city, and which take away from persons of quality the use of their legs. That is very sad ; is it not, Annete ? And if they were to hinder you from running upon the grass, you would be very sorry, I believe !”—
“ O, very sorry ; for I love to run ; especially, Lubin, when I run after you.”

Such was pretty nearly the philosophy of Lubin and Annete. Free from envy and ambition, their state had nothing humiliating to them, nothing painful. They passed the fine weather in that green hut, the master-piece of Lubin’s art. In the evening they were obliged to lead back their flocks to the village ; but the fatigue and pleasures of the day prepared them a tranquil repose. The morning recalled them to the fields, more earnest to see each other again. Sleep effaced in their lives nothing but the moment of absence : it preserved them from dullness. Nevertheless, a happiness so pure was not unalterable. The slender waist of Annete insensibly became rounder. She knew not the cause of it ; Lubin himself did not suspect it.

The bailiff of the village was the first who perceived it. “ God defend you, Annete,” said he to her one day, “ you seem to be very round !”—
“ True,” said she, dropping a curtesy.—“ But, Annete, what has happened to this handsome shape ? Have you had any love affair ?”—“ Any

love affair! Not that I know.”—“ Ah, child! nothing is more certain; you have listened to some of your young fellows.”—“ Yes, truly, I do listen to them: does that spoil the shape?”—“ No, not that, but some of them have a kindness for you.”—“ Kindness for me! Aye, Lubin and I are kind to each other all the day long.”—“ And you have granted him every thing, is it not so?”—“ Oh, lord, yes: Lubin and I have nothing to refuse one another.”—“ How, nothing to refuse one another!”—“ Oh, nothing at all! I should be very sorry if he kept any thing to himself, and more sorry still to have him believe that I have any thing which is not his. Are we not cousins?”—“ Cousins!”—“ Cousins-german, I tell you,”—“ O Heaven!” cried the bailiff, “ there is an adventure!”—“ Aye, or else do you think we should have been every day together? that we should have had but one and the same hut? I have heard it said, indeed, that the shepherds are to be dreaded; but a cousin is not dangerous.”—The judge continued to interrogate; Annete continued to reply; insomuch that it was clearer than the day that she would shortly be a mother. Become a mother before marriage! that was a riddle to Annete.—The bailiff explained it to her.—“ What,” said he to her, “ the first time that this misfortune happened, did not the sun hide himself? did not the heavens thunder upon you?”—“ No,” replied Annete; “ I remember it was the finest weather in the world.”—“ Did not the earth shake? did it not open itself?”—“ Alas, no!” said Annete again, “ I saw it covered with flowers,”—“ And do you know what a

crime you have committed ?”—“ I know not what a crime is ; but all that we have done, I swear to you, was in good friendship, and without any ill design. You think that I am big with child ; I should never have thought it ; but if it be so, I am very glad of it ; I shall have a little Lubin, perhaps.”—“ No,” replied the man of law, “ you will bring into the world a child, which will own neither its father nor mother, which will be ashamed of its birth, and will reproach you for it. What have you done, unhappy girl ! what have you done ! How I pity you, and how I pity that innocent !” These last words made Annete grow pale and tremble. Lubin found her all in tears. “ Here !” said she to him with terror, “ do you know what has happened ? I am big with child.”—“ With child ! and by whom ?”—“ By you.”—“ You joke. And how has that happened ?”—“ The bailiff has just explained it to me.”—“ Well !” when we thought we were only shewing kindnesses to each other, we were making love.”—“ That is droll !” said Lubin : “ only see how we come into the world. But you are in tears, my dear Annete ! Is it this that makes you uneasy ?”—“ Yes, the bailiff has made me tremble : my child, he said, will own neither its father nor mother ; he will reproach us with its birth.”—“ Why ?”—“ Because we are cousins, and have committed a crime. Do you know, Lubin, what a crime is ?”—“ Yes, it is a wicked thing. For example, it is a crime to take away life from any one ; but it is not to give it. The bailiff does not know what he says.”—“ Ah, my dear Lubin, go and find him out, I beseech thee : I am all of a

tremble. He has put I know not what into my soul, which imbitters all the pleasure I had in loving thee."

Lubin ran to the bailiff. "A word, if you please, Mr. Judge," said he, accosting him; "you will have it that I am not to be the father of my own child, and that Annete is not to be its mother?"—"Ah, wretch! dare you shew yourself," said the bailiff, "after ruining this young innocent?"—"You are a wretch yourself," replied Lubin. "I have not ruined Annete; she waits me now in our hut. But it is you, wicked man, that (she says) have put I know not what into her soul, that grieves her; and it is very ill done to afflict Annete."—"You young villain! it is you that have stolen from her her chief good."—"And what is that?"—"Innocence and honour."—"I love her more than my life," said the shepherd, "and if I have done her any injury, I am here to repair it. Marry us; who hinders you? We ask no better."—"That is impossible."—"Impossible! And why? The most difficult part, in my opinion, is over, seeing we are now father and mother."—"And there is the crime," cried the judge; "you must separate, you must fly each other."—"Fly each other! And have you the heart to propose it to me, Mr. Bailiff? And who is to take care of Annete, and my child? Quit them! I would sooner die."—"The law obliges thee to it," said the bailiff.—"There is no law that holds good there," replied Lubin, clapping on his hat: "we have a child without you; and if it please Heaven we will have more, and we will love for ever."—"Ah, the audacious young knave; what, rebel against the law!"—"Ah, the wicked man, the

bad heart, that wants me to abandon Annete ! Let me go and find out our parson," said he to himself ; " he is a good man and will have pity on us." The priest was severer than the judge ; and Lubin retired, confounded at having offended Heaven without knowing it. " For, after all," said he still, " we have done nobody any harm."

" My dear Annete," cried Lubin, on seeing her again, " every body condemns us ; but no matter : I will never leave you."—" I am big with child," said Annete, reclining her face on her two hands, which she bathed with tears ; " and I cannot be your wife ! Leave me, I am distressed ; I have no longer any pleasure in seeing you. Alas ! I am ashamed of myself, and I reproach myself for all the moments that I have passed with you."—" Ah, the cursed bailiff," said Lubin : " but for him we were so happy !"

From that moment Annete, a prey to grief, could not endure the light. If Lubin wanted to console her, he saw her tears stream afresh : she replied to his caresses only by pushing him off with horror. " What, my dear Annete," said he to her, " am I no longer the Lubin you loved so much ?"—" Alas ! no ; you are no longer the same. I tremble the moment you come near me ; my child, who moves in my womb, and whom I should have had so much joy in feeling, seems already to complain that I have given him my cousin for a father."—" You will hate my child, then ?" said Lubin to her, sobbing.—" Oh, no, no ; I shall love it with all my soul !" said she. " At least they will not forbid me to love my child, to give him my milk and my life. But that child will hate its mother : the judge has foretold

it to me.”—“ Do not mention that old devil,” said Lubin, clasping her in his arms, and bathing her with tears ; “ your child shall love you, my dear Annete ; he will love you, for I am his father.”

Lubin, in despair, employed all the eloquence of nature and love to dissipate Annete’s fear and grief. “ Let us see,” said he, “ what have we done to anger Heaven ? We have led out our flocks to feed in the same meadows ; there is no harm in that. I have built a hut, you have taken pleasure in reposing in it ; there is no harm in that. You slept upon my knees : I drew in your breath, and that I might not lose one gasp, I drew gently near you ; there was no harm yet. It is true, that sometimes, awakened by my caresses——.”——“ Alas !” said she, sighing, “ there was no harm in that.”

It was in vain that they recalled to memory all that had passed in the hut ; they saw nothing but what was natural and innocent, nothing of which any body had any right to complain, nothing at which Heaven could be incensed. “ Yet that is all,” said the shepherd ; “ where then is the crime ? We are cousins, so much the worse ; but if that does not hinder our loving, why ought it to hinder our marrying ? Am I on that account less the father of my child, and you less its mother ? Mark me, Annete ! let them talk on : you depend on nobody ; I am my own master ; let us dispose of ourselves ; every one does what he pleases with his own property. We shall have a child : so much the better. If it be a daughter, she will be genteel and amiable, like yourself ; if it be a boy, he will be alert and joyous, like his father,

It will be a treasure to us both. We will try who can love him best ; and say what they will, he will know his father and mother by the tender care we shall take of him." It was in vain that Lubin talked sense and reason ; Annete was not at ease, and her uneasiness redoubled every day. She did not comprehend the discourse of the bailiff, and this very obscurity rendered his reproaches and menaces more terrible.

Lubin, who saw her consuming herself with sorrow, said to her one morning, " My dear Annete, your grief will kill me ; return to yourself, I beseech you. I have this night thought of an expedient which may relieve us. The parson told me, that if we were rich, the evil would be but half so great, and that by means of a good deal of money cousins drew themselves out of trouble ! let us go and find out the lord of the manor : he is rich, and not proud ; he is a father to us all ; with him a shepherd is a man ; and I have heard it said in the village, that he likes that they should get children. We will relate our adventure to him, and beg him to assist us in repairing the evil, if there be any."—" What would you dare ?" said the shepherdess.—" Why not ?" replied Lubin : " my lord is goodness itself, and we should be the first unfortunate creatures whom he would have left without succour."

Behold, then, Annete and Lubin directing their way towards the castle. They ask to speak with his lordship, and are permitted to appear. Annete, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and her hands placed one in another over her round little waist, makes a modest curtesy. Lubin makes a leg, and pulls off his hat, with the simple grace of nature.

“My lord,” said he, “here is Annete, big with child, saving your presence, and it is I alone who have done her that injury. Our judge says that we ought to be married, in order to get children; I desire him to marry us, he says that is impossible, because we are cousins; but I think the thing may be done, seeing that Annete is big with child, and that it is not more difficult to be a husband than a father. The bailiff sends us to the devil, and we recommend ourselves to you.” The good man had much ado to withhold laughing at Lubin’s harangue. “Children,” said he, “the bailiff is right. But take courage, and tell me how the affair happened.” Annete, who had not thought Lubin’s manner sufficiently touching; (for Nature teaches women the art of softening and gaining upon men, and Cicero is but a novice to a young female petitioner) Annete then spoke: “Alas, my lord,” said she, “nothing is more plain or more natural than all that has happened to us. Lubin and I from our infancy kept sheep together: we caressed one another while infants; and when we see one another continually, we grow up without perceiving it. Our parents are dead; we were alone in the world. ‘If we love not one another,’ said I, ‘who will love us?’ Lubin said the same. Leisure, curiosity, and I know not what besides, made us try every method of testifying that we loved one another; and you see what has befallen us. If I have done ill, I shall die with sorrow. All that I desire is, to bring my child into the world, in order to console him when I shall be no more.”—“Ah, my lord,” said Lubin, bursting into tears, “prevent Annete from dying. I should die too, and that would be a pity. If you knew

how we lived together—you should have seen us before this old bailiff struck terror into our souls ! it was then who should be gayest. See, now, how pale and sorrowful she is ; she whose complexion could have defied all the flowers of the spring. What disheartens her most is, that they threaten her that her child will reproach her with its birth.” At these last words, Annete was not able to contain her sobs. “ He will come, then,” said she, “ to reproach me in my grave. I only ask of Heaven to live long enough to give him suck ; and may I die the instant he has no need of his mother !” At these words she covered her face with her apron, to hide the tears which overflowed it.

The wise and virtuous mortal, whose succour they implored, had too much sensibility not to be touched with this affecting scene. “ Go, children,” said he, “ your innocence and love are equally respectable. If you were rich, you would obtain the permission of loving one another, and of being united. It is not just that your misfortune should be deemed a crime.” He disdained not to write to Rome in their favour, and Benedict XIV. consented with pleasure that these lovers should be made man and wife.



Painted by Marsh.

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THE MISANTHROPE CORRECTED.

THERE is no correcting the natural disposition, they will tell me, and I agree to it; but among a thousand combined accidents which compose a character, what eye is sufficiently fine to distinguish that indelible characteristic? How many vices and irregularities are attributed to Nature, which she never occasioned? Such is, in man, the hatred of mankind: it is a factitious character; a part which we take up out of whim, and maintain through habit; but in acting which, the soul is under restraint, from which she struggles to be delivered. What happened to the misanthrope, whom Moliere has painted, is an instance of it; and we are now going to see how he was brought to himself again.

Alcestes, dissatisfied as you know with his mistress and his judges, detesting the city and the court, and resolved to fly mankind, retired very far from Paris, into the Voges, near Laval, on the banks of the Vologne. This river, whose shells contain the pearl, is still more valuable, on account of the fertility which it communicates to its borders. The valley which it waters is a beautiful meadow. On one side arise smiling hills, interspersed with woods and hamlets; on the other extend in a plain, vast fields covered with corn. Thither Alcestes retired, to live forgotten by all

nature. Free from all cares and duties, wholly resigned to himself, and at length delivered from the hateful sight of the world, he praised heaven for having broken all his connections. A little study, much exercise, the less lively but tranquil pleasures of a gentle vegetation; in one word, a life peaceably active, preserved him from the dullness of solitude: he desired, he regretted nothing.

One of the pleasures of his retreat was to see around him the earth, cultivated and fertile, nourish a people who seemed to be happy. A misanthrope, who is such from virtue, thinks that he hates men, only because he loves them. Alcestes felt an emotion mingled with joy, at the sight of his fellow creatures rich by the labour of their own hands. "These people," said he, "are very happy in being yet half savages; they would soon be corrupted if they were more civilized."

Walking in the fields, he accosts a labourer, ploughing and singing. "God preserve you, good man," said he to him; "you are very merry!"—"According to custom," replied the villager.—"I am very glad of it: it proves that you are content with your condition."—"And well I may."—"Are you married?"—"Yes, thank heaven."—"Have you any children?"—"I had five: I have lost one; but that loss may be repaired."—"Is your wife young?"—"Twenty five."—"Is she handsome?"—"She is so to me; but she is better than handsome, she is good."—"And you love her!"—"Love her! who would not love her?"—"She loves you too, without doubt?"—"O, as to that, most heartily, and as

well as before marriage?"—" You loved one another then before marriage?"—" Or else should we have taken each other?"—" And your children, do they come on well?"—" Ah, that is a pleasure! The eldest is but five; he has more wit than his father already. And my two girls! they are charming. It would be a very great pity if they should want husbands! The youngest boy sucks still; but the little rogue will be a sturdy fellow. Would you believe it; he beats his sisters when they go to kiss their mother. He is afraid that they are coming to take the breast from him."—" All this is very happy?"—" Happy! I think so. You should see our joy when I return from work. You would think they had not seen me for a year: I know not which to listen to. My wife hangs upon my neck, my daughters jump into my arms, my eldest boy seizes me by the legs; not one of them neglects me, even to little Jackey himself, who, rolling on his mother's bed, stretches out his little hands to me; while I laugh, and cry, and kiss them; for all this moves me."—" I believe it."—" You ought to feel it, for to be sure you are a father."—" I have not that happiness."—" So much the worse: there is no other joy."—" And how do you live?"—" Very well; upon excellent bread, good milk, and the fruits of our orchard. My wife, with a little bacon, makes a supper of cabbage, of which the king himself might eat. Then we have the eggs of our fowls, and on Sundays we regale ourselves, and drink a cup of wine."—" Yes, but when the year turns out bad?"—" We are prepared for it, and live comfortably on what we have saved in a good

one.”—“ Aye, but the rigour of the weather, the cold, the rain, the heats?”—“ We are accustomed to them; and if you knew what pleasures we have in coming in the evening to breathe the fresh air after a summer’s day; or, in winter to unnumb one’s hands at a fire of good brush wood, between one’s wife and one’s children! And then we sup heartily, and go to sleep; and do you think that we ever bestow a thought upon the bad weather? Sometimes my wife says to me, ‘ My good man, do you hear the wind and the storm? Ah, if you were now in the fields!’—“ I am not there, I am with thee,” I tell her; and in order to assure her of it, I press her against my bosom. Ah, Sir! there are a great many of the fine people who do not live so happy as we.”——“ And the taxes?”——“ We pay them cheerfully: it must be so. All the country cannot be noble. The lord of the manor and the judge cannot come to labour, They supply our wants, we supply their’s: and every state of life, as it is said, has its troubles.”——“ What equity?” said the misanthrope. “ There, now, in two words, is the whole economy of primitive society. O Nature! there is nothing just but thee: it is in thy uncultivated simplicity that we find sound reason!—But in paying the tribute so well, do not you give room to be charged more heavily?”——“ We used to fear it formerly; but, thank God! the lord of the manor has freed us from that uneasiness. He performs the duty of our good king; he imposes, he receives himself, and in cases of necessity he makes the advances. He takes care of us, as if we were his children.”——“ And who is this gallant man?”——“ The Vis-

count De Laval. He is well enough known: the whole country respects him.”—“ Does he reside in his castle?”—“ He passes eight months of the year there.”—“ And the rest?”—“ At Paris, I believe.”—“ Does he see company?”—“ The townsmen of Bruyères, and sometimes our old folks: who go to eat his soup, and to chatter with him.”—“ And does he bring any body from Paris?”—“ Nobody but his daughter.”—“ He is very much in the right!—And how does he employ himself?”—“ In judging us, reconciling us, marrying our children, maintaining peace in our families, and assisting them when the seasons are bad.”—“ I will go,” said Alcestes, “ to see his village: it must be moving.”

He was surprised to find the roads, even the cross roads, bordered with hedges, and kept with care; but having met people busied in keeping them even; “ Ah,” said he, “ there are the statute-labourers.”—“ Statute-labourers!” replied an old man, who presided over these works; “ we know none such here: these people are paid; nobody is constrained. Only if there come to the village a vagabond, an idle fellow, I am sent to him; and if he wants bread he earns it, or he goes to seek it elsewhere.”—“ And who has established this happy policy?”—“ Our good lord, the father to us all.”—“ And the funds for this expence, who provides them?”—“ The community; and as she imposes them herself, it comes not to pass, as is seen elsewhere, that the rich are exempted at the charge of the poor.”

Alcestes redoubled his esteem for the wise and beneficent man who governed this little people.

“How powerful would a king be,” said he, “and a state how happy, if all the great proprietors of lands would follow the example of this nobleman! But Paris absorbs both the wealth and the men: it strips, it carries away every thing.”

The first glance of the village presented him with the image of ease and health. He enters into a plain and large building, which was to appearance a public edifice, and there he finds a multitude of children, women, and old men, employed in useful labours. Idleness was not permitted, excepting to the last weakness. Infancy, almost at its issuing from the cradle, acquired the habit and relish of labour; and old age, at the brink of the grave, still exercised its trembling hands. The season in which the earth rests, assembled to the workhouse the vigorous men; and then the shuttle, the saw, and the hatchet, gave a new value to the productions of Nature. “I am not surprised,” said Alcestes, “that these people should be exempt from vice and want. They are laborious, and perpetually employed.” He enquired how the workhouse had been established. “Our good lord,” said they to him, “advanced the money. It was but a small matter at first; and all was done at his risk, at his expence, and his profit; but after being well assured that it was advantageous, he gave up the undertaking to us: he interferences no longer, except in protecting it; and every year he gives to the village the tools of some one of our arts: it is the present he makes at the first wedding that is celebrated in the year.”—“I must see this man,” said Alcestes: “his character pleases me.”

He advances into the village, and he observes a house into which the people are going and coming with uneasiness. He demands the cause of these movements; they tell him that the head of the family is at the point of death. He enters, and sees an old man, who with an expiring, but serene eye, seems to bid adieu to his children, who melt into tears around him. He distinguishes, in the midst of the crowd, a person moved, but less afflicted, who encourages and consoles them. By his plain and grave dress, he takes him for the physician of the village. "Sir," said he to him, "be not surprized at seeing here a stranger. It is not an idle curiosity that brings me hither. These good people may have need of assistance at so melancholy a juncture; and I come ——" "Sir," said the viscount to him, "my peasants thank you: I hope as long as I live, they will have need of nobody: and if money could prolong the days of a good man, this worthy father of a family should be restored to his children."—"Ah, Sir," said Alcestes, on discovering Monsieur De Laval by his talk, "pardon an uneasiness which I ought not to have had."—"I am not offended," replied M. De Laval, "that a good deed should be disputed with me; but may I know who you are, and what brings you here?" At the name of Alcestes, he recollected that censor of human nature, whose rigour was so well known; but without being intimidated, "Sir," said he, "I am very glad to have you in my neighbourhood, and if I can be of service to you in any thing, I beg you to command me."

Alcestes went to visit M. De Laval, and was received by him with that plain and serious gentility

which proclaims neither the want nor the desire of being connected. "There, now," said he, "is a man of some reserve. I like him the better for it." He felicitated M. De Laval on the pleasures of his solitude. "You come to live here," said he, "far from mankind, and you are very much in the right to fly from them!"—"I, Sir! I do not fly from mankind. I have neither the weakness to fear them, the pride to despise them, nor the misfortune to hate them." This answer came so home, that Alcestes was disconcerted at it. But he would support what he set out with, and he began the satire of the world. "I have lived in the world, as well as others," said M. De Laval, "and I have not found it so wicked. There are vices and virtues in it, good and evil, I confess; but nature is so compounded, we must know how to accommodate ourselves to it."—"Aye, but," said Alcestes, "in that compound, the good is so very small, and the evil so predominant, that the latter choaks up the former."—"Ah, Sir," replied the viscount, "if we were as strongly fired with the good as with the evil, if we used the same warmth in publishing it, and good examples were posted up as bad ones are, can you doubt but that the good ones would carry it on the balance? But gratitude speaks so low, and complaint declaims so loud, that we only hear the latter. Esteem and friendship are commonly moderate in their commendations: they imitate the modesty of the virtuous in praising them; whereas resentment and injury exaggerate every thing to excess. Thus we see not the good but through a medium which lessens it, and we view the evil through a vapour which magnifies it."

“ Sir,” said Alcestes to the viscount, “ you make me wish to think like you, and though I might have on my side the melancholy truth, your mistake would be preferable.”—“ Why, yes, without doubt fretfulness is of no service. A fine part for a man to play, to be out of humour like a child, and get into a corner to pout at all the world! and why? For the bickerings of the circle in which we live; as if all nature were an accomplice and responsible for the injuries at which we are hurt!”—“ You are right,” said Alcestes, “ it would be unjust to render man a solitary animal; but how many griefs have we not to reproach them with in common? Believe me, Sir, my prejudice has serious and weighty motives. You will do me justice when you know me. Permit me to see you often.”—“ Often, that is difficult,” said the viscount: “ my time is very much taken up; and my daughter and I have our studies, which leave us little leisure; but sometimes, if you please, we will enjoy our neighbourhood at our ease, and without laying any constraint on each other; for the privilege of the country is to have it in our power to be alone when we have a mind.”

“ This man is rare in his species,” said Alcestes on going away. “ And his daughter, who listened to us with the air of so tender a veneration for her father; this daughter, brought up under his eye, accustomed to a plain life, pure manners, and pleasures that are innocent, will be an estimable woman, or I am very much mistaken—at least, resumed he, “ unless they lead her astray in that Paris, where every thing is ruined.”

If we were to represent to ourselves delicacy

and sentiment personified, we should have the idea of Ursula's beauty. (It was thus that *Maiselle De Lavâl* was called.) Her figure was such as imagination gives to the youngest of the Graces. She was eighteen years complete; and by the freshness and regularity of her charms, one might see that Nature had just put the last hand to her. When unmoved, the lilies of her complexion prevailed over the roses; but on the slightest emotion of her soul, the roses effaced the lilies. It was little to have the colouring of flowers, her skin had also that fineness, and that down so soft, so velvet-like, which nothing has yet tarnished. But it was in the features of Ursula's countenance, that a thousand charms varied perpetually, displayed themselves successively. In her eyes, sometimes a modest languor, a timid sensibility seemed to issue from her soul, and to express itself by her looks; sometimes a noble severity, and commanding with sweetness, moderated the touching lustre of it; and we saw there reigning by turns, severe decency, fearful modesty, and lively and tender voluptuousness. Her voice and mouth were of that kind which embellish every thing; her lips could not move without discovering new attractions; and when she condescended to smile, her very silence was ingenuous. Nothing more simple than her attire, and nothing more elegant. In the country she let grow her hair, which was of a pale white, of the softest tint; and ringlets which art could not hold captive, floated around her ivory neck, and waved down upon her beautiful bosom. The misanthrope had found in her the genteelest air, and the most decent conversation. "It would be

a pity," said he, "that she should fall into bad hands; she might make an accomplished woman. Indeed, the more I think of it, the more I congratulate myself in having her father for a neighbour; he is an upright man, a gallant man: I do not believe that he has a very right way of thinking, but he has an excellent heart."

Some days after, M. De Laval in walking out returned his visit; and Alcestes talked to him of the pleasure which he must have in making people happy. "It is a fine example," added he, "and to the shame of mankind a pretty rare one! How many folks, richer and more powerful than you, are only a burden to the people!"—"I neither excuse them, nor blame them," replied M. De Laval. "To do good, there must be the power; and when we can, we ought to know how to seize it. But think not that it is so easy to effect it. It is not sufficient to be dexterous enough; we must be also happy enough; we must know how to treat just, sensible, docile minds; and frequently a great deal of address and patience is necessary to lead on a people, naturally diffident and fearful, to what is advantageous to them."—"Truly," said Alcestes, "it is the excuse which they make; but do you think it a very solid one? And the obstacles which you have overcome, cannot they also conquer them?"—"I have been," said M. De Laval, "solicited by opportunity, and seconded by circumstances. This people, newly conquered, thought themselves undone without resource, and the moment that I held open my arms to them, their despair made them rush into them. At the mercy of an arbitrary impost, they had conceived so much terror, that they

chose rather to endure their vexation than to shew a little ease. The expences of the levy aggravated the impost; these good people were over-rated; and poverty was the asylum into which discouragement had thrown them. On my arrival here I found established this distressing and destructive maxim to the country: *The more we labour the more we shall be trampled upon.* The men durst not be laborious, the women trembled at becoming fruitful. I went back to the source of the evil: I addressed myself to the man appointed to collect the tribute—‘Sir,’ said I to him, ‘my vassals groan under the burdens of constraint: I would wish to hear no more of it. Let us see what they owe yet of the year’s impost; I am come to acquit them.’—‘Sir,’ replied the receiver to me, ‘that cannot be.’—‘Why so?’ said I. ‘It is not the rule.’—‘How! not the rule to pay the king the tribute which he demands? to pay it him with the least expence possible, and with the least delay?’—‘Yes,’ said he, ‘that is the king’s interest but not mine. What would become of me, if it were to be paid down? The expences are the perquisites of my office.’—To so good a reason I had no reply; and without insisting farther, went to see the intendant.—‘I beg two favours of you,’ said I to him: ‘one, that I may be permitted every year to pay the tribute for my vassals: the other, that their district may experience only the variations of the public tax.’ I obtained what I asked.

‘Friends,’ said I to my peasants, whom I assembled at my arrival, ‘I now give you notice, that it is in my hands you are to deposit for the future the just tribute which you owe to the

king. No more vexations, no more expence. Every Sunday, at the parish bank, your wife shall bring their savings, and you will be insensibly cleared. Labour, cultivate your estates, increase their value to an hundred fold; may the ground enrich you: you shall not be charged the more for it; I, your father, will be answerable to you for it. Those who shall be deficient, I will assist; and a few days of the dead season of the year employed on my works will reimburse me what I advance.'

'This plan was approved, and we have followed it. Our farmers wives never fail to bring me their little offering. On receiving it, I encourage them; I tell them of our good king; they go away with tears in their eyes: thus I make an act of love of what they looked upon, before my time, as an act of servitude.

'The statute-works had their turn, and the intendant, who detested them, but knew not how to remedy them, was enchanted at the method which I had taken to exempt my village from them.

'Lastly, as there was here a great deal of superfluous time, and useless hands, I established the workhouse, which you may have seen. It is the property of the community: they administer it under their own eyes; every one works there; but that labour is not sufficiently paid to divert them from working in the fields. The husbandman employs in it only the time which would otherwise be lost. The profit which they draw from it, forms a fund which is employed in contributing to the militia, and to the expences of public works. But an advantage more precious

still, from this establishment, is to have increased the human race. When children are a charge, we get no more than we are able to maintain; but from the moment that, at their issue from the cradle, they are able to provide for their own subsistence, Nature delivers herself up to her attraction, without reserve or uneasiness. We seek the means of population; there is but one; the subsistence, the employment of mankind. As they are born only to live we must insure them a livelihood at their birth."

"Nothing wiser than your principles, nothing more virtuous than your cares; but confess," replied the misanthrope, "that this good, important as it is, is not so difficult as to discourage those who love it; and that if they were men like you—" "Say, rather, if they were so situated. I have had circumstances in my favour, and every thing depends upon that. We see what is right; we love it; we wish to effect it; but obstacles arise on every step we take. There needs but one to prevent it; and instead of one, there arise a thousand. I was here very much at my ease: not a man of credit had an interest in the evil which I meant to destroy; and how little would have been sufficient to prevent my being able to remedy it? Suppose, instead of a tractable intendant, I had been under the necessity of seeing, persuading, prevailing on an absolute man, jealous of his power, entirely led by his own opinions, or swayed by the counsels of his subaltern officers. Nothing of all this scheme could have taken place: they would have told me not to busy myself, but to let things of this kind alone. Thus it is that

good-will remains often useless on the part of the rich. I know that you do not suspect it; but there is in your prejudices more caprice than you imagine."

Alcestes, touched to the quick by this reproach, from a man whose esteem was to him of so great value, endeavoured to justify himself. He told him of the law-suit he had lost, of the coquette who had deceived him, and of all his subjects of complaint against human nature.

"Truly," said the viscount to him, "this was a mighty matter to make one uneasy! You go to choose among a thousand women a giddy creature, who amuses herself, and makes a fool of you, as it were with reason; you take most seriously that love of which she makes a mere diversion: who is to blame? But granting her wrong, are all women like her? What! because there are knaves among the men, are you and I the less honest on that account? In the individual, who hurts you, you hate the species! There is caprice, neighbour; there is caprice in this, you must agree.

"You have lost a cause which you thought just; but does not a suitor, who is a person of integrity, always think that he has a good cause? Are you alone more disinterested, more infallible, than your judges? And if they have wanted lights, are they criminal for that? I, Sir, when I see men devote themselves to a state of life which has many troubles in it, and very few pleasures, which imposes on their manners all the constraint of the most severe decorum, which requires an unremitting application, a steady recollection, a labour without any salary, where virtue herself is al-

most without lustre; when I see them, environed with the luxury and pleasures of an opulent city, live retired, solitary, in the frugality, simplicity, and modesty of the first ages; I consider as a sacrilege the reproach of their equity. Now, such is the life of the greater part of the judges whom you accuse upon such slight foundations. It is not some giddy persons, whom you see fluttering in the world, that hold the balance of the laws. Till such time as they become more prudent, they have at least the modesty to be silent before consummate judges. The latter are sometimes mistaken, without doubt, because they are not angels; but they are less of men than you and I; and I will never be persuaded, that a venerable old man, who at the break of day drags himself to the hall with a tottering pace, goes there to commit injustice.

“With regard to the court, there are so many interests in it, so complicated, and so powerful, which thwart and oppose each other, that it is natural that men should there be more delivered up to their passions, and more wicked than elsewhere. But neither you nor I have passed through these great trials of ambition and envy; and it has depended, perhaps, on but a trifle, that we have not been, as well as others, false friends and base flatterers. Believe me, Sir, few people have a right to settle the police of the world.”

“All honest people have that right,” said Alcestes, “and if they would league themselves together, the wicked would not have so much audaciousness and credit in the world.”—“When that league is formed,” said M. De Laval, going away,

“we will both enrol ourselves in it. Till then, neighbour, I advise you to do without noise, in your little corner, the utmost good you can, by taking for a rule the love of mankind, and in reserving your hatred for a few sad exceptions.”

“It is a very great pity,” said Alcestes, when M. De Laval was gone, “that goodness should be always accompanied with weakness, while wickedness has so much strength and vigour!”—

“It is a very great pity,” said M. De Laval, “that this honest man has taken a bias, which renders him useless to himself and others! He has uprightness, he loves virtue; but virtue is but a chimera without the love of human nature.” Thus both, judging each other, were displeased with one another.

An incident, pretty singular, rendered Alcestes still less at his ease with M. De Laval. The Baron of Blonzac, a right Gascon, a man of honour, but haughty, and a misanthrope in his manner, had married the Canoness of Remiremont, a relation of the viscount. His garrison was in Lorraine. He came to see M. De Laval; and whether it was to amuse himself, or to correct two misanthropes by means of each other, M. De Laval wanted to set them by the ears. He sent to invite Alcestes to dinner.

Among men, table-talk turns pretty often upon politics; and the Gascon from the moment they had dined, began laying on, and drinking at a great rate. “I make no point of concealing it,” said he, “I have taken an aversion to the world. I would be two thousand leagues out of my own country, and two thousand years re-

moved from my own age. It is the country of whores and knaves; it is the age of favourites; intrigue and favour have done their parts, and have forgot nothing but merit. He that pays his court obtains every thing, and he that does his duty has nothing. Myself, for example, who have never known but to march where honour calls, and to fight as becomes a soldier, I am known by the enemy; but may the devil take me if either the ministry, or the court, know that I exist! If they were to hear any mention of me, they would take me for one of my grandfathers; and if they should be told that a cannon-ball had taken off my head, I will lay a wager they would ask, if there were any more Blonzacs.”—“Why do you not shew yourself?” said M. De Laval to him. “There is no necessity to let one’s self be forgot.”—“Why, my lord, I shew myself in the day of battle. Is it at Paris that the colours are flying?”

In the midst of this talk, letters were brought M. De Laval from Paris. He asks leave to read them, “In order to know,” said he, “if there be any thing new:” and one of his letters informs him, that the command of the citadel, which he solicited for M. De Blonzac, without his knowledge, had just been granted him. “Hold,” said he to him, “there now is one who regards you.” Blonzac read, leaped with joy, and ran to embrace the viscount; but after the sally he had made, he durst not mention what had happened to him. Alcestes believing he had found in him a second, did not fail in urging him. “There,” said he, “there now is an example of those acts of injustice which shock me: a man of birth, a good sol-

dier, after having served the state, remains forgotten, unrewarded; and let them tell me, now, that all goes well.”—“Why,” replied Blonzac, “we must be just: every thing goes not so ill as is said. Rewards are to be waited for a little; but they come in time. It is not the fault of the ministry, if more services are performed than there are rewards to be bestowed; and, in fact, they do what they can.” Alcestes was a little surprised at this change of language, and the apologetical tone which Blonzac assumed during the rest of the entertainment. “Come,” said the viscount, “in order to reconcile you, let us drink the commandant’s health:” and he published what he had just learned. “I ask the gentleman’s pardon,” said Alcestes, “for having dwelt on his complaints: I did not know the reasons which he had to retract them.”—“I!” said Blonzac, “I have no animosity, and I come to, like a child.”—“You see,” resumed M. De Laval, “that a misanthrope is to be brought back to reason.”—“Yes,” replied Alcestes, “when he regulates his sentiments on his own personal interest.”—“Ah, Sir!” said Blonzac, “do you know any one who is warm for what touches him neither nearly nor at a distance?”—“Every thing that concerns humanity,” replied Alcestes, “touches a good man nearly; and doubt not but there are friends enough of the order, to hate the evil as evil, without any respect to themselves.”—“I will believe it,” replied the Gascon, “when I see any one uneasy at what passes in China; but as long as people are afflicted only at the hurt which they feel themselves, or which they may feel, I shall believe that they think only of themselves, while they

have the air of being taken up with the thought of others. As for me, I am sincere: I never gave myself up as an advocate for the discontented. Let every one plead his own cause. I complained while I had reason to complain; I now make my peace with the world, as soon as I have reason to be satisfied with it."

As much as the scene with Blonzac disturbed Alcestes, so much did it rejoice M. De Laval and his daughter. "There," said they, "has our misanthrope received a good lesson."

Whether it was shame or policy, he was some days without seeing them. He came again, however, one afternoon. The viscount was gone to the village: Mademoiselle De Laval received him; and on seeing himself alone with her, a transport seized him, which he had some difficulty to conceal.

"We have not had the honour of seeing you," said she to him, "since M. De-Blonzac's visit; what say you to that gentleman?"—"Why, he is a man like the rest."—"Not so much like the rest: he speaks with an open heart; he says what others conceal; and that frankness makes him in my opinion, a pretty singular character."—"Yes, Mademoiselle, frankness is rare; and I am very glad to see that at your age you are convinced of it. You will often have occasion to recollect it, I promise you. Ah, in what a world you are going to fall! My lord excuses it in the best manner he is able: his own beautiful soul does the rest of mankind the honour to judge of them according to itself; but if you knew how dangerous and hateful the greater part are!"—"You, for example," said Ursula, smiling, "you have very great rea-

son to complain of it, is it not true?"—"Spare me, I pray you, and attribute not to me the personalities of M. De Blonzac. I think as he does in certain respects; but our motives are not the same."—"I believe it; but explain to me what I am not able to conceive. Vice and virtue, I have been told, are nothing more than relative terms. The one is vice, because it hurts mankind; the other virtue, on account of the good which it occasions."—"Exactly so."—"To hate vice, to love virtue, is therefore only to interest ourselves in the welfare of mankind; and in order to interest ourselves we must love them. For how can you at once interest yourself, and hate them?"—"I interest myself in the welfare of the good whom I love, and I detest the wicked who hurt them; but the good are so very few in number, and the world is so full of bad people."—"See there, now. Your hatred at least extends not to all mankind. But do you think that those whom you love are every where so few in number? Let us make a voyage together in idea. Do you agree to it?"—"With all my heart."—"First, in the country, are you not persuaded that there are morals; and if not virtues, at least simplicity, goodness, innocence?"—"There is also commonly distrust and craft."—"Alas! I can easily conceive what my father has said more than once: craft and distrust are the consequence of weakness. We find them in the villagers, as in women and children. They have every thing to fear; they escape, they defend themselves as well as they can; and we observe the same instinct in most animals."—"Yes," said Alcestes, "and that very circumstance forms the satyr of the cruel and

rapacious animals which they have to guard against.”—“ I understand you; but we are now speaking only of the country people, and you will agree with me, that they are more worthy of pity than of hatred.”—“ Oh, I agree.”—“ Let us pass to the cities, and take Paris for example.”—“ My God! what an example you choose.”—“ Very well; even in that same Paris, the common people are good: my father frequents them; he goes often into those obscure recesses, where poor families, crowded together, groan in want; he says that he finds there a modesty, patience, an honesty, and sometimes even a nobleness of thinking which moves and astonishes him.”—“ And this it is which ought to set us against an un pitying world, which forsakes suffering virtue, and pays respect to successful and insolent vice.” “ Not so fast: we are at the common people. Agree that, in general, they are good, docile, courteous, honest, and that their own sincerity gives them a confidence which is very often abused.”—“ Oh, very often!”—“ You love the common people, then! And in all places the common people form the greater number.”—“ Not every where.”—“ We are speaking only of our own country: it is with that which I would reconcile you at present. Now let us come to the great folks; and tell me, first, if my father has imposed on me in it, when he has painted the manners of the women. ‘ As their duties,’ said he, ‘ are included in the interior of a private life, their virtues have nothing dazzling: it is only their vices that are conspicuous; and the folly of one woman makes more noise than the discretion of a thousand. Thus the evil rises in evidence, and the good remains

buried.' My father adds, that one moment of weakness, one imprudence, ruins a woman, and that this blemish has sometimes tarnished a thousand excellent qualities. He confesses, in short, that the vice which we most reproach women with, and which does them the most injury, hurts only themselves, and that there is no reason for hating them. For the rest, what is it you reproach us with? A little falsehood? But that is all by agreement. Instructed from our infancy to endeavour to please you, we have no other care but to conceal what will not please you. If we disguise ourselves, it is only under those charms which you love better than our own. And do you know that nothing is more humiliating to us? I am young; but I can easily perceive, that the most beautiful act of our freedom is, to shew ourselves such as we are; but to disguise one's soul, and to disavow one's self, is of all the acts of servitude the most degrading; and we must do to self-love the most painful violence, to debase one's self to a lye, and to dissimulation. This is what I find woman a slave in; and it is a yoke which has been imposed on us."—"If all women thought as nobly as you do, beautiful Ursula, they would not so lightly, and in gaiety of heart, make a mere pastime of deceiving us."—"If they deceive you, it is your own fault. You are our kings: convince us that you love nothing so much as truth, that truth alone pleases and touches you, and we will tell it you always. What is the ambition of a woman? To be lovely, and to be loved. Very well, write on the apple, *To the most sincere*; they will all dispute it with each other in unaffected simplicity. But you have written, *To the most seducing*; and

each tries, who shall seduce you the best. As for our jealousies, our little animosities, our tatlings, our bickerings; all these things are only amusing to you, and you will agree that your wars are of very different consequence. Nothing remains, then, but the frivolousness of our tastes and humours; but whenever you please, we shall be more solid; and, perhaps, there are many women who have seized, as it were by stealth, lights and principles which custom envied them.”—“ You are a proof of it,” said Alcestes to her, “ you, whose soul is so much above your sex and your age.”—“ I am young,” replied Ursula, “ and I have a right to your indulgence; but the question is not concerning me; it is the world which you fly, which you abandon, without well knowing why. I have attempted the defence of the women; I leave to my father the care of accomplishing that of the men; but I tell you before-hand, that in giving me the picture of their society, he has often told me, that there were almost as few perverse minds as there are heroic souls, and that the majority was composed of weak, harmless people, who required nothing but peace and quiet.”—“ Yes, peace and quiet, every one for himself, and at the expence of the person to whom it belongs. The world, Mademoiselle, is composed only of dupes and knaves: now, nobody would be a dupe; and to speak only what concerns yourself, I must tell you, that all the idle people there are at Paris of an age to please, are employed morning and evening in nothing else but in laying snares for the women.”—“ Good!” said Ursula, “ they know it; and my father is persuaded that his contest of gallantry on the one side, and co-

quetry on the other, is nothing but a diversion, in which both are agreed. Let who will be of the party : those who like not the sport, have only to keep themselves in their own corners ; and nothing, he says, is in less danger than virtue, when it is real.”—“ You think so ? ”—“ I am so thoroughly persuaded of it, that if ever I commit an indiscretion, I declare to you before-hand, it will be because I shall have liked it.”—“ Without doubt they like it ; but they like it when seduced by an enchanter who makes you like it.”—“ That also is an excuse which at present I renounce : I have no faith in enchantments.”

They were got so far when Monsieur De Laval arrived from his walk. “ What say you to Alcestes ? ” continued Ursula. “ He would have me tremble at being exposed in the world to the seduction of the men.—“ Why,” said the father, “ we must not be too confident ; I do not think thee infallible.”—“ No, but you shall be my guard ; and if you lose sight of me, you know what you have promised me.”—“ I will endeavour to keep my word.”—“ May I be in the secret ? ” demanded Alcestes, with a timid air.—“ There is no secret in it,” replied Ursula : “ my father has had the goodness to instruct me in my duties ? and if he could guide me perpetually, I should be very sure of not going astray. If I forgot myself, he would not forget me ; accustomed to read my soul, he would regulate all its motions ; but as he will not always have his eyes upon me, he has promised me another guide, a husband, which may be his friend and mine, and who shall supply the place of a father.”—“ Add also, and of a lover ;

for a young woman must have love. I would have you be discreet, but I would likewise have you be happy ; and if I had the imprudence to give you a husband who did not love you, or knew not how to please you, I should no longer have the right of taking it ill, that the desire of enjoying the greatest of felicities, that of loving and being loved, should make you forget my lessons."

Alcestes went away, charmed at the wisdom of so good a father, and more still with the candour and honesty of the daughter. "A distinction has been made," said he, "between the age of innocence and of reason ; but in her happy disposition, innocence and reason unite. Her soul purifies, at the same time that it enlightens itself. Ah ! if there were a man worthy of cultivating gifts so precious, what a source of delicious enjoyments to him ! There is nothing but this world, filled with shoals, from which it is necessary to keep her at a distance. But if she loved, what would it be to her ? A virtuous and tender husband would suffice her, would be to her instead of every thing. I dare believe, that at twenty-five I was the man who suited her——At twenty-five ! and what did I know then ? To amuse myself, and run into dissipations ! Was I capable of filling the place of a wise and vigilant father ? I should have loved her to distraction ; but what confidence should I have inspired into her ? It is not, perhaps, too much yet to have fifteen years more experience. But from eighteen to forty, the interval must be frightful to her. There is no thinking of it."

He thought of it, however, all night long ; the

next day he did nothing else ; and the day following, the first idea which presented itself to him was that of his amiable Ursula. “ Ah, what a pity,” said he, “ what a pity, if she were to take to the vices of the world ! her soul is pure as her beauty. What sweetness in her temper ! what touching simplicity in her manners and language ! They talk of eloquence ; is there any truer ! It was impossible for her to convince me ; but she has persuaded me. I have desired to think like her : I could have wished that the illusion, which she spread before me, were never dissipated. Why have I not over her, or rather over her father, that soft empire which she has over me ? I would engage them to live here in the simplicity of nature. And what need should we have of the world ? Ah ! three hearts, thoroughly united, two lovers and a father, have they not, in the intimacy of a mutual tenderness, sufficient to render themselves fully happy ? ”

In the evening when walking out, his steps turned, as it were of themselves, towards M. De Laval’s gardens. He found him there with the pruning-knife in his hand, amidst his espaliers. “ Confess,” said he to him, “ that these tranquil pleasures are well worth those noisy ones which people like, or think they like, at Paris.” — “ Every thing has its season,” replied the viscount. “ I love the country while it is alive : I am useless at Paris, and my village has need of me ; I enjoy myself there, and the good which I do ; my daughter is pleased and amused there ; this is what attracts and retains me. But think not that I live there alone. Our little town of Bruyeres is full of

honest people, who love and cultivate letters. There is no part of the world where the inhabitants have gentler manners. They are polite with freedom; plain, yet informed. Candour, uprightness, and gaiety are the character of that amiable people: they are social, humane, beneficent. Hospitality is a virtue which the father transmits to his son. The women are sprightly and virtuous; and society, embellished by them, unites the charms of decency to the pleasures of liberty. But in enjoying so sweet a commerce, I cease not still to love Paris; and if friendship, the love of letters, connections which I hold dear, did not recal me there, the attraction of variety alone would carry me back every year. The most lively pleasures languish at last, and the sweetest become insipid to him who knows not how to vary them.” —“I can conceive, however,” said the misanthrope, “that a society, not numerous, intimately connected with ease and truth, might supply every thing to itself; and if an offer, agreeable to Mademoiselle De Laval, had no other inconvenience in it than that of fixing her in the country, I am persuaded that you yourself——.” —“Why, truly,” said M. De Laval, “if my daughter could be happy there, I should make her happiness mine: that is most certain. It is now fifty years since I have lived for myself; it is high time now that I should live for her. But we are not come to that. My daughter loves Paris, and I am rich enough to settle her there decently.”

This was enough for Alcestes; and for fear of discovering himself, he turned the conversation to gardening, by asking M. De Laval if he did not

cultivate flowers? “They pass away too soon,” replied the viscount. “The pleasure and regret of them border so nearly on each other, and the idea of destruction intermingles I know not what of melancholy in the sentiment of enjoyment. In a word, I feel more chagrin in seeing a rose-bush stripped, than joy on seeing it flourish. The culture of kitchen herbs has an interest more gradual, more supported, and to say the truth, more satisfactory; for it terminates in the useful. While art exercises and fatigues itself in varying the scenes of a flower-garden, nature herself changes the decorations of the kitchen-garden. How many metamorphoses, for example, have these peach-trees experienced, from the very budding of their leaves to the full maturity of their fruits! Talk to me, neighbour, of lasting pleasures; those which, like flowers, endure but a day, cost too much to renew.”

Master of the father's temper, Alcestes wanted to inform himself of that of the daughter, and it was easy for him to have a private conversation with her. “The more I penetrate,” said he to her, “into your father's heart, the more I admire and love him.”—“So much the better,” said Ursula; “his examples will soften your manners; he will reconcile you with those like him.”—“Like him! Ah, how few are there of them! It is to him, without doubt, a favour from Heaven to have a daughter like you, beautiful Ursula; but it is a happiness as rare to have a father like him. May the husband which the Almighty destines you, be worthy both of one and the other!”—“Pray to Heaven,” said she, smiling, “that he be not a

misanthrope ! Men of that cast are too difficult to correct.”—“ Would you like better,” said Alcestes, “ one of those cold and trifling men, whom every thing amuses, and nothing interests ; one of those weak and easy men, whom the mode bends and fashions to her own taste ; who are wax, with respect to the manners of the time, and to whom custom is the supreme law ? A misanthrope loves but few ; but when he loves, he loves truly.”—“ Yes, I perceive that such a conquest is flattering to vanity ; but I am plain, and not vain. I would not find in a heart devoted to me asperity or moroseness ; I would wish to be able to communicate to it the softness of my own temper, and that sentiment of universal benevolence, which makes me see men and things on the most comfortable side. I could not spend my life in loving a man, who would pass his in hatred.”—“ That is not civil, for they accuse me of being a misanthrope.”—“ Why, it is from you, and you alone, that I have taken the idea of that character : for M. De Blonzac’s humour was nothing but a fit of the pouts ; and you have seen how small a matter could bring him to himself again ; but a hatred of mankind, arising from reflection and founded on principles, is horrible ; and this is what you profess. I am persuaded that your aversion for the world is nothing but whim, an excess of virtue : you are not wicked, you are only rigid ; and I believe you as little indulgent to yourself as to another ; but this too severe and impatient probity renders you unsociable ; and you must confess, that a husband of that temper would not be entertaining.”—“ You would have a husband entertain

you, then?"—"And entertain himself," replied she; "with the same things as me; for if marriage be a participation of cares, it ought, in return, to be a society of pleasures."

"Nothing clearer," said Alcestes to himself, after their conversation: "she could not have told me her thoughts more plainly, though she had divined mine. This is for me and my comrades a discharge before-hand. And what am I thinking of? I am forty years, free and easy; it depends on myself only to be happy. Happy! And can I be so alone, with a soul so sensible? I fly the men! Ah! it was the women, the handsome women, whom I ought to have flown. I thought I knew them sufficiently to have no more to fear from them; but who could have expected what has happened to me? I must, to my misfortune, in the corner of a province, find beauty, youth, graces, wisdom, virtue herself, united in one and the same object. It seems as if Love pursued me, and that he had purposely made this dear girl to confound and distress me. And what a way she takes to trouble my repose? I detest airs; nothing more simple than she. I despise coquetry; she thinks not even of pleasing. I love, I adore candour! her soul shews itself quite naked. She tells me to my face the most cruel truths: what would she do more, if she had resolved to turn my brain? She is very young; she will change: launched into the world which she loves, she will soon assume the manners of it; and it is to be believed that she will at last be a woman like the rest.—To be believed! Ah, I do not believe it; and if I believed it, I should be too unjust. She will be the happiness and glory of her husband, if he be

worthy of her. And I, I shall live alone detached from every thing, in a state of solitude and annihilation; for it must be confessed, the soul is annihilated as soon as it loves nothing any longer. What do I say? Alas! if I loved no longer, would that repose, that sleep of the soul, be frightful to me? Flattering idea of a greater happiness! It is thou, thou that makest me perceive the void and dulness of myself. Ah, to cherish my solitude for ever, I should never have gone out of it!"

These reflections, and these struggles, plunged him into a melancholy, which he thought it his duty to bury. Eight days having rolled away, the viscount, surprized at not seeing him again, sent to know if he was sick. Alcestes returned for answer, that in fact he had not been well for some time past. The sensible soul of Ursula was affected at this answer. She had entertained, since his absence, some suspicion of the truth; she was now the more persuaded of it, and reproached herself for having afflicted him. "Let us go and see him," said the viscount; "his condition moves my pity. Ah, daughter, what a gloomy and painful resolution is that of living alone, and of being sufficient to one's self? Man is too weak to support it."

When Alcestes saw, for the first time, Mademoiselle De Laval enter his house, it seemed as if his habitation had transformed itself into a temple. He was seized with joy and respect; but the impression of melancholy still made an alteration on his features. "What is the matter, Alcestes?" said M. de Laval to him. "I find you afflicted; and you lay hold of that moment to fly

me. Do you think us some of those people who do not love sorrowful countenances, and who must always be accosted with a laugh? When you are easy and happy, keep at home; very well: but when you have any grief, come to me, either to pity or console you." Alcestes listened, and admired in silence. "Yes," said he, "I am struck with a thought which pursues and afflicts me: I would not, and I ought not, to conceal it from you. Heaven is my witness, that after having renounced the world, I regretted nothing when I knew you. Since I perceive that I deliver myself up to the pleasure of your company; that my soul is attached to you by all the ties of esteem and friendship; and that when they must be broken, alas! perhaps for ever, this retreat, which I should have cherished, will be my grave. My resolution, therefore, is taken, not to wait till the charms of so sweet a connection render the solitude in which I am to live completely odious; and in revering you, in loving both the one and the other, as two beings by which Nature is to procure honour to herself, and of which the world is not worthy, I beg you to permit me to bid you an eternal farewell." Then taking the viscount's hands, and kissing them respectfully, he watered them with his tears. "I will see you no more, Sir," added he, "but I will hold you dear for ever."

"Nonsense," said M. de Laval to him: "and who hinders us to live together, if you like my acquaintance? You have taken an aversion to the world: a mere whim: but no matter; I know you have a good heart; and though our tempers may not be the same, I see nothing incompatible in them; and perhaps they resemble each other

more than you imagine. Why then take a resolution which afflicts you, and which would afflict me? You think with sorrow on the moment of our separation: it depends only on yourself to follow us. Nothing more easy than to live at Paris, free, solitary, and detached from the world. My company is not tumultuous: it shall be yours; and I promise you, I will not force you to see any but such as you shall esteem.”—“Your goodness penetrates me,” said Alcestes; “and I know what I owe to such kindness.”—“Nothing in it,” replied the viscount; “such as you are, you suit me. I esteem you, I pity you; and if I deliver you up to your own melancholy, you are a lost man: that would be a pity; and the condition which you are in, permits me not to abandon you. In a month I quit the country; I have room for you; and whether under the title of friendship or gratitude, I insist on your accepting it.”—“Ah!” said Alcestes, “that it were possible!”—“Have you,” demanded the viscount, “any obstacle? If your fortune were out of order, I flatter myself that you are not the man to blush at confessing it.”—“No,” said Alcestes, “I am richer than a single person had need to be. I have ten thousand crowns a year, and owe nothing. But a more serious motive retains me here: you shall judge of it.”—“Come and sup with us, then, and I will disperse all these clouds if I can. You make a hydra,” said he to Alcestes on the road, “of the vice and wickedness you have seen in the world. Would you try now, to what a small number this class of men who terrify you are reduced, make out a list of them with me this evening: and I defy you to name a hundred persons whom you have a

right to hate.”—“ O Heaven! I could name a thousand.”—“ We’ll see. Remember only to be just, and to establish your complaints well.”—
—“ Nay, it is not on particular facts that I judge them, but by the gross of their manners. For example; it is pride which I condemn in some, meanness in others. I object to them the abuse of riches, of credit, of authority, an exclusive love of themselves, a cruel insensibility to the misfortunes and wants of others: and although these vices, in every stage of life, have not features sufficiently marked, formally to exclude a man from the number of honest people, yet they authorise me to banish him from the number of those whom I esteem and love.”—“ From the instant that we talk in general,” said the viscount, “ we declaim as much as we please; but we render ourselves liable to be unjust. Our esteem is a possession of which we are but the depositaries, and which appertains of right to him who deserves it. Our contempt is a punishment, which it depends on us to inflict, but not according to our own caprice: and every one of us, in judging of his fellow, owes him the examination which he would require, if it were himself to be judged; for, in regard to manners, public censure is a tribunal where we all sit, but to which we are also all cited. Now, who of us consents that we should be accused there on vague presumptions, and to be condemned without proofs? Consult your own heart, and see in yourself whether you duly observe the first of all laws?”

Alcestes walked with his eyes cast down, and sighed deeply. “ You have in your mind,” said the viscount, “ some deep wound which I do not

probe. I only combat your opinions; and it is, perhaps, to your sensations that I ought to apply the remedy."

On these words, they arrive at the castle of Laval; and, whether through penetration or delicacy, Ursula steals away, and leaves them together.

"Sir," said Alcestes to the viscount, "I am now going to talk to you as to a friend of twenty years: your goodness engages me, and my duty obliges me to it. It is but too true that I must renounce what formed the consolation and the charm of my life, the pleasure of seeing you, and living with you. Another man would make use of circumlocution, and blush to break silence; but I see nothing in my misfortune which I ought to dissemble. I have not been able to see with indifference, what Nature has formed the most accomplished in its kind: I confess it to Ursula's father; and I beseech him to forget it after I have taken my leave."—"How," said the viscount, "is this the great secret? Very well, now we have it; you are in love: is there any thing in that to make you unhappy?"—"Ah! I would fain be so yet; and far from being ashamed, I should glory in it."—"Come, we must endeavour to please, to be very tender, very complaisant: we are still amiable at your age; perhaps you will be beloved."—"Ah, Sir, you do not understand me."—"Pardon me; I believe I do. You are in love with Ursula?"—"Alas! yes, Sir."—"Very well; who hinders you from trying, at least, if so good a heart will be touched with the feelings of yours?"—"What, Sir, do you authorise me!"—"Why not? Sure you think me very difficult! you have by inheritance a handsome fortune; and if

my daughter consents, I do not see what can happen better." Alcestes fell, in amaze, at the viscount's knees. "Your goodness, Sir, overpowers me!" said he; "but it is of no service to me. Mademoiselle De Laval has declared to me, that a misanthrope was her aversion; and this is the idea she has formed of my character."—"That does not signify: you will change."—"I cannot dissemble."—"You shall not; you shall reconcile yourself to mankind in good earnest. You will not be the first bear that has been tamed by the women."

Supper being served up, they seated themselves at table; and never before was M. De Laval in so sprightly an humour. "Come, neighbour," said he, "cheer up: nothing sets us off like spirits." Alcestes, thus encouraged, took heart. He made the most touching eulogy on the intimate commerce of souls whom the relish of virtue, the love of truth, the sentiment of what is just and honest, unites. "What an attraction," said he, "have they for each other! With what effusion they communicate! What agreement, and what harmony they form in uniting! I find here but two that are like me; and they are a whole world to me. My soul is full; I could wish to be able to fix my existence in this delicious state, or that my life were a chain of incidents resembling this."—"I would lay a wager," replied the viscount, "that if Heaven were to take you at your word, you would be very sorry not to have asked more."—"I confess it, and if I were worthy of forming yet one wish——"—"Did not I say so? Such is man. He has always somewhat to wish for. We are but

three ; and yet there is not one of us who does not wish for something. What say you, daughter ? For my part, I confess I ask of Heaven, with ardour, a husband whom you may love, and who may render you happy.”—“ I ask also,” said she, “ a husband, who may assist me in making you happy.”—“ And you, Alcestes ? ”—“ And I, if I durst, would ask to be that husband.”—“ There are now three wishes,” said M. De Laval, “ which might easily be made one.”

I have already given some intimation, that Ursula had conceived for Alcestes an esteem and good will : the trouble she had taken to soften his temper, proclaimed it ; but it was only in this instant that she perceived how sensibly that disposition, which we must either love or hate, had touched her.

“ Hey ! ” said her father, after a long silence, “ we are all three struck dumb ! That Alcestes, at forty, should be confused at having made a declaration to a lady of eighteen, is natural enough ; that Ursula should blush, look down, and observe a modest silence, is quite natural too ; but I, who am but a mere confident, why should I be grave ? The scene is amusing.”—“ Sir,” said Ursula, “ spare me, I beseech you. Alcestes gives me a mark of esteem, of which I am very sensible : and he would be angry that we should make a jest of it.”—“ Would you have me believe that he is in earnest ? ”—“ I am sure of it, and I am obliged to him.”—“ You do not think so. Forty ! A man of his temper.”—“ His temper should estrange him from all sorts of engagements, and he knows very well what I think of it.”—“ And his age ! ”

—“ That is another thing ; and I beg you to forget age, when you choose me a husband.”—
“ Ah, child, but you are so young ! ”—“ For that reason, I have need of a husband who is not so.”—
—“ There is nothing, then, but this unfortunate misanthropy, which you have to object to him ; and I own that it is incompatible with your temper.”—“ And more still with the plan which I have formed to myself.”—“ And what is that plan ? ”—That of nature : to live happily with my husband ; to sacrifice my taste to him, if unluckily I have not his ; to renounce all society, rather than to deprive me of his, and not to take one step in the world without his counsel and consent. Judge, therefore, of what concern it is to me, that his wisdom should have nothing savage in it, and that he should be pleased with that world in which I hope to live with him.”—“ Whoever he be, Mademoiselle,” replied Alcestes, “ I dare answer, that he will be pleased wherever you are.”—“ My father,” continued Ursula, “ takes a pleasure in bringing together to his suppers a circle of genteel people, both of the city and court ; I would wish my husband to be of all these suppers, I would have him in particular be agreeable.”—
“ Animated with the desire of pleasing you, he will certainly do his best.”—“ I propose to myself to frequent the plays, the public walks.”—“ Alas ! these were my only pleasures ; there are none more innocent.”—“ Balls, too, are my passion ; and I would have my husband carry me there.”—
“ In mask ; nothing is more easy.”—“ In a mask, or without a mask, just as I like.”—“ Right : that is a matter of indifference, as long as one is there

with one's wife."—"Nay, more, I would have him dance there."—"Very well, Mademoiselle, I will dance there," said Alcestes with transport, throwing himself at her feet.—"Nay," cried the viscount, "there is no resisting that; and since he consents to dance at a ball, he will do impossibilities for you."—"My lord thinks me ridiculous, and he has reason, but I must complete my being so. Yes, Mademoiselle, you see at your feet a friend, a lover, and since you will have it so, a second father; a man, in short, who renounces life, if he is not to live for you." Ursula enjoyed her triumph; but it was not the triumph of vanity. She restored to the world, and to himself, a virtuous man, an useful citizen, who but for her had been lost. Such was the conquest with which she was pleased; but her silence was her only consent. Her eyes timidly cast on the ground, dared not raise themselves to those of Alcestes: one of her hands only was suffered to drop into his, and the crimson of her beautiful cheeks expressed the transport and emotion of her heart. "Hey!" said the father, "you are motionless and dumb! What will you say to him?"—"Whatever you please."—"What I please, is to see him happy, provided he make my daughter so."—"It is in his power: he is virtuous, he reveres you, and you love him."—"Let us embrace, then, my children. This has been a happy evening, and I forebode well of a marriage, which is concluded as in the good old times. Take my advice, my friend," continued he; "be a man, and live with mankind. It is the intention of Nature. She has given faults to us all, that nobody may be dispensed with being indulgent to the faults of others."

THE CONNOISSEUR.

CELICOUR, from the age of fifteen, had been in the country what is called a little prodigy. He made the most gallant verses in the world. There was not one handsome woman in the neighbourhood whom he had not celebrated, and who had not discovered that his eyes had still more spirit than his verses. It was pity to suffer such great talents to lie buried in a little country town: Paris ought to be their theatre, and he managed so well that his father resolved to send him there. This father was an honest man, who loved wit, without having any himself, and who admired without knowing why, every thing that came from the capital; he had even some literary relations there, and in the number of his correspondents was a Connoisseur, called M. de Fintac. It was particularly to him that Celicour was recommended.

Fintac received the son of his friend with the kindness of one who takes persons under his protection. "Sir," said he, "I have heard of you: I know that you have had success in the country; but in the country, believe me, arts and sciences are yet in their infancy. Without taste, wit and genius produce nothing but what is deformed, and there is no taste but at Paris. Begin, then, by persuading yourself that you are but just born, and by forgetting all that you have learned."—

“What would I not forget?” said Celicour, casting his eyes on a niece of eighteen, whom the Connoisseur had with him: “Yes, Sir, it is to-day that I begin to live. I know not what charm breathes in these places; but it unfolds in me faculties unknown to me before: I seem to myself to have acquired new senses, a new soul.”—“Good,” cried Fintac; “there now is enthusiasm: he is born a poet, and from this single stroke I warrant him one.”—“There is no poetry in that,” replied Celicour; “it is plain and simple nature.”—“So much the better, there is the true talent. And at what age did you feel yourself animated with this divine fire?”—“Alas, Sir! I have had some sparks of it in the country, but I never experienced there this lively and sudden heat which penetrates me at this instant.”—“It is the air of Paris,” said Fintac.—“It is the air of your house,” said Celicour: “I am in the temple of the Muses.” The Connoisseur found that this young man had happy dispositions.

Agathe, the most beautiful little wag that love ever formed, lost not one word of this conversation; and certain sly looks, a certain smile which played on her lips, gave Celicour to understand, that she did not mistake the double meaning of his replies. “I am greatly pleased with your father,” added the Connoisseur, “for having sent you hither at an age when the mind is docile enough to receive right impressions; but guard yourself against bad. You will find at Paris more false connoisseurs than good judges. Do not go and consult every body, but stick close to the instruction of a man who has never been mistaken in any thing.” Celicour,

who did not imagine that one might praise one's self with so much openness, had the simplicity to ask who that infallible man was. "It is I, Sir," replied Fintac, with a tone of confidence; "I, who have passed myself with all the artists and *litterati* of greatest consideration: I, who, for these forty years have exercised myself in distinguishing in things both of fancy and of taste, the real and permanent beauties, the beauties of mode and of convention. I say it, because it is well known; and there is no vanity in agreeing to a known fact."

Extraordinary as this language was, Celicour hardly paid any attention to it, he was engaged by an object more interesting. Agathe had sometimes deigned to lift up her eyes upon him, and those eyes seemed to tell him the most obliging things in the world; but was it their natural vivacity, or the pleasure of seeing their triumph, that animated them? That was a point to be cleared up. Celicour therefore begged the Connoisseur to allow him the honour of visiting him often, and Fintac himself pressed him to it.

On his second visit, the young man was obliged to wait till the Connoisseur was visible, and to pass a quarter of an hour *tête-a-tête* with the lovely niece. She made him many excuses; and he replied, that there was no occasion for them. "Sir," said Agathe to him, "my uncle is charmed with you."—"That is a very pleasing piece of success to me; but, Madam, there is one which would touch me still more."—"My uncle says you are formed to succeed in every thing."—"Ah! why do not you think the same?"—"I am pretty often of my uncle's opinion."—"Assist me, then, to

merit his kindness.”—“ You seem to me to want no assistance.”—“ Pardon me ! I know that great men have, almost all of them, their singularities, sometimes even weaknesses. To flatter their tastes, their opinions, their temper, one must know them ; to know them, one must study them ; and, if you please, beautiful Agathe, you can abridge that study for me. After all, what is the point ? To gain the good-will of your uncle ! Nothing in the world is more innocent.”—“ Is it the custom, then, in the country, to come to an understanding with the nieces, in order to succeed with the uncles ? That is very dextrous indeed ! ”—“ Nothing in it but what is very natural.”—“ But if my uncle had, as you say, singularities and foibles, must I tell you of them ? ”—“ Why not ? would you suspect me of wanting to make an ill use of them ? ”—“ No ; but his niece—— ”—“ Very well, his niece ought to wish that one should endeavour to please him. He is past the time of life in which we correct ourselves ; nothing remains then but to manage him.”—“ An admirable remover of scruples ! ”—“ Ah ! you would not have any if you knew me better ; but no, you have dissembled.”—“ Truly, I see the gentleman for the second time ; how can I have any secrets from him ? ”—“ I am indiscreet, I confess, and I ask your pardon.”—“ No, it is I who have been wrong, to let you fancy the thing more serious than it is. The fact is this ; my uncle is a good man, and would never have pretended to any thing more, if they had not put it into his head to know every thing, to judge of arts and letters, to be the guide, estimator, and arbiter of talents. That hurts nobody ; but it draws a crowd of blockheads to our house, whom my uncle pro-

fects, and with whom he shares the ridicule of being a wit. It were much to be wished, for his own ease, that he would abandon this chimera ; for the public seem to have made it their business never to be of his opinion, and we have every day some new scene.”—“ You afflict me.”—“ You are now in possession of all the secrets of the family, and we have nothing more to conceal from you. Just as she finished, word was brought to Celicour that the Connoisseur was visible.

The study, into which he was introduced, announced the multiplicity of his studies and the variety of his knowledge : the floor was covered with folios, piled up on one another in the utmost confusion : rolls of prints, maps lying open, and manuscripts jumbled together ; on a table, a Tacitus open near a sepulchral lamp surrounded by antique medals ; farther off, a telescope on its carriage, the sketch of a picture on the easel, a model of bas-relief in wax, scraps of natural history ; and in the fret-work of the ceiling, a representation of books picturesquely overturned. The young man knew not where to set his foot, and his embarrassment gave the Connoisseur infinite pleasure.—“ Forgive,” said he to him, “ the confusion in which you find me : this is my study ; I have occasion for all these things at hand ; but do not imagine that the same disorder reigns in my head ; every thing there is in its place ; the variety, nay, the number itself causes no confusion there.”—“ Wonderful !” said Celicour, who knew not what he said, for his thoughts were still on Agathe. “ Oh, very wonderful !” replied Fintac, “ and I am often surprized myself when I reflect on the mechanism of the memory, and the manner in

which the ideas class and arrange themselves as fast as they arise : it seems as if there were drawers for every different kind of knowledge. For example, across that multitude of things which had passed through my imagination, who will explain to me how I came to retrace in my memory, to a given point, what I had read formerly on the return of the comet? for you are to know, that it was I who gave the watch-word to our astronomers.”—“ You, Sir?”—“ They never thought of it ; and but for me, the comet had passed incognito over our horizon. I have not boasted of it, as you may plainly see : I tell it you in confidence.”—“ And why suffer yourself to be deprived of the glory of so important a piece of intelligence?”—“ Good ! I should never have done if I were to lay claim to all that they steal from me. In general, my lad, take it for granted, that a solution, a discovery, a piece of poetry, of painting, or of eloquence, belong not, so much as it is imagined, to the person who takes the credit of it to himself. But what is the object of a Connoisseur ? To encourage talents at the same time that he enlightens them. Whether the thought of this bas-relief, the disposition of this picture, the beauties of the parts, or the whole of this play, be the artist’s or mine, is matter of indifference to the progress of the art ; now that is all my concern. They come, I tell them my thought : they listen to me, they make their advantage of it. It is excellent. I am recompensed when they have succeeded.”—“ Nothing finer,” said Celicour : “ the arts ought to regard you as their Apollo. And does Mademoiselle Agathe condescend to be also their muse?”—“ No, my niece is a madcap, whom I wanted to

bring up with care ; but she has no taste for study. I had engaged her to cast her eye over history ; she returned me my books, saying that it was not worth while to read, for the sake of seeing in all ages illustrious madmen and rogues sporting with a crowd of fools. I wanted to try if she had a greater taste for eloquence : she pretended that Cicero, Demosthenes, &c. were only dexterous jugglers ; and when one had good reasons, there was no need of so many words. For morality, she maintains that she knows it all by heart, and that Lucas, her foster-father, is as wise as Socrates. There is nothing, therefore, but poetry that amuses her sometimes ; and then she prefers fables to the more sublime poems, and tells you plainly that she had rather hear Fontaine's animals speak, than the heroes of Virgil and Homer. In a word, she is at eighteen as much a child as at twelve : and in the midst of the most serious, the most interesting conversations, you would be surprized to see her amusing herself with a trifle, or growing dull the moment one would captivate her attention." Celicour, laughing within himself, took leave of M. de Fintac, who did him the favour to invite him to dine with him the next day.

The young man was so transported, that he slept not that night. To dine with Agathe ! it was the happiest day of his life. He arrives, and by his beauty, by his youth, by the air of serenity diffused over his countenance, one might have imagined they saw Apollo, if Fintac's Parnassus had been better composed ; but as he wanted none but dependents and flatterers, he drew to his house only such persons as were fit to be so.

He introduced Celicour to them as a young poet

of the greatest expectation, and made him take his place at table at his right hand. From that moment, behold all the eyes of envy fixed upon him. Each of the guests thought he saw his own place usurped, and swore in the bottom of their souls to take revenge on him by decrying the first work he should publish. In the mean time Celicour was generously received, caressed by all these gentlemen, and took them from that instant for the most honest people in the world. A new comer excited emulation: wit hoisted all her sails: they judged the republic of letters; and as it is just to mingle commendation with criticism, they praised generously all the dead, and tore in pieces the living; the present company always excepted. All the new works which had succeeded without passing under the inspection of Fintac, could but have their day, and that a short one; all those to which he had given the seal of his approbation, were to attain to immortality; whatever the present age thought of them. They ran through all kinds of literature: and in order to give more scope to erudition and criticism, they brought on the carpet this entirely new question, viz. "which merited the preference, Corneille or Racine?" They said also on the subject the finest things in the world; when the little niece, who had not spoken a word, took it into her head to ask simply which of the two fruits, the orange or the peach, had the most exquisite taste, and merited the most commendation. Her uncle blushed at her simplicity, and the guests all looked down, without deigning to reply to this idle foolery. "Niece," said Fintac, "at your age one should hear and hold one's tongue." Agathe, with an imperceptible

half-smile, looked at Celicour, who had understood her perfectly well, and whose glance consoled her for the contempt of the company. I forgot to mention that he was placed opposite to her, and you may easily imagine that he listened very little to what was said around him. But the Connoisseur, who examined his countenance, perceived in it a very extraordinary fire. "See," said he to his geniuses, "see how talent pierces."—"Yes," replied one of them, "we see it transpire like water through the pores of an eolipile." Fintac, taking Celicour by the hand, said to him, "There is a comparison now! Poetry and philosophy blended together! It is thus that the talents border on each other, and that the Muses join hands. Confess, continued he, "that such dinners are not found in your country-towns, where you see nothing: there are days, when these gentlemen have even a hundred times more wit."—"It would be hard not to have it," said one of them; "we are at the fountain head, *et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.*"—"Ah! *purpureo!*" replied Fintac modestly, "you do me a great deal of honour."—"Hark, young man, learn to quote." The young man was all the while very attentive to catch Agathe's looks, who on her side thought him very handsome.

On rising from table they went to walk in the garden, where the Connoisseur had taken care to get together the rare plants from all quarters. He had, among other wonders, a parti-coloured cabbage, which drew the admiration of naturalists. Its folds, its festoon, the mixture of its colours, was the most astonishing thing in the world. "Let

them shew," said Fintac, " a foreign plant, which Nature has taken the trouble to form with more labour and delicacy. It is for the sake of avenging Europe on the prejudice of certain *virtuosi*, in favour of every thing that comes from the Indies and the new world, that I have preserved this fine cabbage."

While they were admiring this prodigy, Agathe and Celicour had joined each other, as it were, without intending it, in a neighbouring walk. " Beautiful Agathe!" said the young man, shewing her a rose, " would you let this flower die on the stalk?"—" Where then would you have it die?"—" Where I would die myself." Agathe blushed at this answer; and in that instant her uncle, with two wits, came and seated themselves in an adjacent arbour, from whence, without being perceived, he could over-hear them. " If it is true," continued Celicour, " that souls pass from one body into another, I wish after my death to be such a rose as that. If any profane hand advances to gather me, I will conceal myself amid the prickles; but if some charming nymph deign to cast her eyes on me, I will lean towards her, expand my bosom, exhale my perfumes, mingle them with her breath; and the desire of pleasing her shall animate my colours."—" Very well; you will do so much that you will be plucked off your stalk, and the moment after you will be no more."—" Ah, Madam! do you consider as nothing the happiness of being one moment——." His eyes finished saying what his mouth had began. " And I," said Agathe, disguising her confusion, " if I had my choice, would wish to be changed into a

dove, which is gentleness and innocence itself.”—
“Add to these, tenderness and fidelity: yes, beautiful Agathe, the choice is worthy of you. The dove is the bird of Venus; Venus would distinguish you among your fellows; you would be the ornament of her car; Love would repose himself on your wings, or rather, he would cherish you in his bosom. It would be from his divine mouth that your bill would take ambrosia.” Agathe, interrupted him, saying, that he carried his fictions too far. “One word more,” said Celicour: “a dove has a mate; if it depended on you to chuse yours, what kind of a soul would you give him?”—“That of a female friend,” replied she. At these words Celicour looked on her with two eyes, in which were painted love, reproach, and grief.

“Very well!” said the uncle, getting up: “very well! there, now, is fine and good poetry for you. The image of this rose is of a freshness worthy Vanhuysum; that of the dove is a little picture of Boucher, the freshest, the most gallant in the world, *ut pictura poesis*. Courage, my lad, courage! the allegory is extremely well supported: we shall make something of you. Agathe, I have been pretty well pleased with your dialogue, and here is M. de Lexergue, who is as much surprised at it as I.”—“It is certain,” said M. de Lexergue, “that there is in Miss’s language something Anacreontic: it is the impression of her uncle’s taste; he says nothing which is not stamped with the mark of sound antiquity.” M. Lucide found in Celicour’s fictions the *molle atque fucetum*. “We must conclude this little scene,” said Fintac; “we

must put it into verse ; it will be one of the prettiest things we have ever seen." Celicour said, that in order to complete it, he stood in need of Agathe's assistance ; and, that the dialogue might have more ease and freedom in it, they thought it right to leave them alone. " To the dove, your mate, *the soul of a female friend !*" resumed Celicour. " Ah, beautiful Agathe ! is your heart made only for friendship ? Is it for that Love has delighted to assemble in you so many charms ?"—" There, now," said Agathe, smiling, " is the dialogue excellently renewed. I have but to take the reply : there is matter enough to carry us a great way."—" If you please," said Celicour, " it is easy to abridge it."—" Let us talk of something else," interrupted she. " Did the dinner amuse you ?"—" I heard there but one single word full of sense and refinement, which they had the folly to take for a simple question ; all the rest escaped me. My soul was not at my ear."—" It was very happy."—" Ah, very happy ! for it was in my eyes."—" If I pleased, I might pretend not to hear, or not to understand you ; but I never put on disguise. I think it very natural, then, under favour of our wits, for you to take more pleasure in looking at me than in listening to them ; and I confess to you, in my turn, that I am not sorry at having one to speak to me, though it were only by his eyes, in order to save me from the spleen that they give me. Now, then, we are come to a right understanding, and we shall amuse ourselves, for we have originals entertaining enough in their kind. For example, this M. Lucide thinks he always sees in things what nobody else

has perceived in them. He seems as if Nature had told her secret in his ear; but every body is not worthy to know what he thinks. He chuses in a circle a privileged confident. This is commonly the most distinguished person; he leans mysteriously towards that person, and whispers his opinion. As for M. de Lexergue, he is a scholar of the first class: full of contempt for every thing modern, he esteems things by the number of ages. He would chuse even that a young woman should have the air of antiquity, and he honours me with his attention, because he thinks I have the profile of the empress Poppæa. In the groupe which you see below there, is an upright starch man, who makes pretty little nothings, but does not know what he means by them. He demands a day for reading; he names his auditory himself; he requires that the gate should be shut against every profane person; he arrives on his tiptoes, places himself before a table between two flambeaus; draws mysteriously out of his pocket a rose-coloured portfolio; throws around him a gracious look, which demands silence; announces a little romance of his own making which has had the good fortune to please some persons of consideration; reads it deliberately, in order to be the better tasted; and goes quite to the end without perceiving that every body yawns at him. That little fidgeting man near him, so full of gesticulation, excites a pity in me which I am not able to express. Wit is to him like those sneezings which are going to come but which never do come. We see him dying with the desire of saying fine things: he has them at his tongue's end; but they seem to

escape him the moment he is going to catch them. Ah, he is much to be pitied! That dry and tall man, who walks alone apart from them, is the most thoughtful and most empty person I know: because he has a bob-wig, and the vapours, he thinks himself an English philosopher; he grows heavy on the wing of a fly, and is so obscure in his ideas, that one is sometimes tempted to think him profound."

While Agathe's wit was exercising itself on these characters, Celicour had his eyes fixed on her's. "Ah!" said he, "that your uncle, who knows so many things, should know so little of his niece's understanding! he represents you as a child!"—"Oh, to be sure! and all these gentlemen consider me as such. Accordingly they put no restraint upon themselves, and the absurdity of wit is with me quite at its ease. Do not go and betray me now."—"Never fear; but we must, beautiful Agathe, cement our understanding by stricter ties than those of friendship."—"You do injustice to friendship," replied Agathe; "there is something sweeter, perhaps; but there is nothing more solid."

At these words they came to interrupt them, and the Connoisseur walking along with Celicour, asked him if the dialogue with his niece had been cleverly resumed. "It is not precisely what I wanted," said the young man: "but I will endeavour to supply it."—"I am sorry," says Fin-tac, "that we interrupted you. Nothing is so difficult as to recover the natural thread when once we let it escape. This giddy girl has not caught your idea. She has sometimes lights; but

all on a sudden they vanish. I hope at least that marriage will form her.”—“You think, then, of marrying her?” demanded Celicour, with a faltering voice. “Yes,” replied Fintac, “and I depend upon you for the worthy celebration of that festival. You have seen M. de Lexergue; he is a man of great sense and profound erudition. It is to him that I give my niece.” If Fintac had observed Celicour’s countenance, he would have seen it grow pale at this news. “A man so serious, and so full of application, has need,” continued he, “of something to dissipate him. He is rich; he has taken a liking to this girl, and in a week’s time he is to marry her; but he exacts the greatest secrecy, and my niece herself knows nothing of it yet. As for you, it is highly necessary that you should be initiated into the mystery of an union which you are to celebrate. *O Hymen! O Hymenæ!* you understand me. It is an epithalamium that I ask of you; and here, now, is an opportunity to signalize yourself.”—“Ah, Sir!—”—“No modesty; it smothers all talents.”—“Excuse me.”—“You shall execute it: it is a piece in your own way, and which will do you a great deal of honour. My niece is young and handsome, and with an imagination and soul, one is not exhausted on such a subject. With respect to the husband, I have already told you he is an extraordinary man. Nobody so knowing in antiques. He has a cabinet of medals which he values at forty thousand crowns. He was even going to see the ruins of Herculaneum, and was very near making a voyage to Palmyra. You see how many images all this presents to poetry. But you are ruminating upon it already; yes I see on

your countenance that profound meditation which hatches the buds of genius, and disposes them to fruitfulness. Go, then; go, and profit of such precious moments. I am going also to bury myself in study."

Seized with consternation at what he had just heard, Celicour burned with impatience to see Agathe again. The next day he made a pretence to go and consult the Connoisseur; and before he went into his study, he asked if she was to be seen. "Ah, Mademoiselle!" said he to her, "you see a man driven to despair."—"What ails you?"—"I am undone; you are to marry M. de Lexergue."—"Who has told you that story?"—"Who! M. de Fintac himself."—"Seriously?"—"He has charged me to write your epithalamium."—"Very well, will it be a pretty one?"—"You laugh! you think it charming to have M. De Lexergue for a husband!"—"Oh, very charming!"—"Ah! at least, cruel maid, in pity to me who adore you, and who am to lose you!"—Agathe interrupted him as he fell on his knees. "Confess," said she to him, "that these moments of distraction are convenient for a declaration: as the person that makes it is not himself, so she who hears him dares not complain; and, by favour of this disorder, love thinks it may risk every thing. But, softly, moderate yourself, and let us see what distracts you."—"Your tranquillity, cruel as you are."—"You would have me afflict myself, then, at a misfortune which I am not afraid of?"—"I tell you that it is determined that you shall marry M. de Lexergue."—"How! would you have them determine, without me, on that which, without me, cannot be put into execu-

tion?"—"But if your uncle has given his word?"—"If he has given it, he shall retract it."—"How, would you have the courage!"—"The courage of not saying *Yes!* a fine effort of resolution!"—"Ah, I am at the summit of joy!"—"And your joy is a folly as well as your grief."—"You will not be M. de Lexergue's!"—"Very well; what then?"—"You will be mine."—"O, to be sure! there is no medium; and every woman who will not be his wife will be yours, that is clear! Indeed you argue like a country poet. Go, go see my uncle; and take care that he has no suspicion of the information that you have given me."

"Well, is the epithalamium in forwardness?" said the Connoisseur to him, as soon as he came into his presence. "I have the plan in my head."—"Let us see!"—"I have taken the allegory of Time espousing Truth."—"The thought is beautiful; but it is gloomy; and, besides, Time is very old."—"M. de Lexergue is an antiquary."—"True; but we do not love to be told that we are as old as Time."—"Would you like the nuptials of Venus and Vulcan?"—"Vulcan! on account of bronzes and medals. No: the adventure of Mars is too disagreeable. You will find out, on consideration, some thought still more happy—But *à propos* of Vulcan, will you come this evening with us to see the essay of an artificer whom I protect? It is some Chinese rockets, of which I have given him the composition: I have even added something to it; for I must always put in something of my own." Celicour doubted not but Agathe would be of the party, and repaired thither with eagerness.

The spectators were seated; Fintac and his niece took up one window, and there remained on Agathe's side a small space, which she had contrived to leave vacant. Celicour stole timorously into it, and leaped with joy on seeing himself so near Agathe. The uncle's eyes were attentive to follow the flight of the rockets; Celicour's were fixed upon the niece. The stars might have fallen from the heavens, and not have disturbed him. His hand met on the side of the window a hand softer than the down of flowers; a trembling seized him, which Agathe must have perceived. The hand he touched scarce made a motion to withdraw itself; his made one to retain it: Agathe's eyes turned upon him, and met his, which asked for pardon. She perceived that she should afflict him by withdrawing that dear hand, and whether through weakness or pity, she thought proper to leave it immoveable. This was a great deal, but not quite enough; Agathe's hand was shut, and Celicour's could not clasp it. Love inspired him with the courage to open it. Gods! what was his surprise and joy, when he found her yield insensibly to this soft violence! He holds Agathe's hand open in his—he presses it amorously—conceive his felicity! It is not yet perfect! the hand he presses replies not to his; he draws it towards him, inclines towards her, and dares to rest it on his heart, which advances to meet it. It wants to get from him, he stops it, he holds it captive; and love knows with what rapidity his heart beats under this timid hand. This was a loadstone to her. O triumph! O rapture! It is no longer Celicour that presses it; it is the hand itself that answers the beatings of Celicour's heart. Those

who have never loved have never known this emotion; and even those who have loved have never tasted it but once. Their looks were mingled with that touching languor which is the sweetest of all declarations, when the branch of the fireworks displayed itself in the air. Then Agathe's hand made a new effort to impress itself on the heart of Celicour; and while around them they applauded the glittering beauty of the rockets, our lovers, taken up with themselves, expressed by burning sighs the regret of separation. Such was this dumb scene, worthy to be cited among the examples of eloquent silence.

From this moment their hearts understanding each other, there was no longer any secret between them; both tasted, for the first time, the pleasure of loving; and this blossom of sensibility is the purest essence of the soul. But love, which takes the complexion of characters, was timid and serious in Celicour; lively, joyous, and waggish, in Agathe.

However, the day appointed for informing her of her marriage with M. de Lexergue arrives. The antiquary comes to see her, finds her alone, and makes her a declaration of his love, founded on the consent of her uncle. "I know," said she, rallying, "that you love me in profile; but for me, I should like a husband that I could love in front; and to speak frankly, you are not the thing for me. You have, you say, my uncle's consent, but you shall not marry me without my own; and I believe I may assure you that you will not have it as long as I live." In vain did Lexergue protest to her that she united in her eyes more charms than the Venus de Medicis: Agathe

wished him antique Venuses, and assured him that she was not one. “You have your choice,” said she to him, “to expose me to displease my uncle, or to spare me that chagrin. You will afflict me in charging me with the rupture, you will oblige me by taking it upon yourself; and the best thing we can do when we are not loved, is to endeavour not to be hated. And so your very humble servant.”

The antiquary was mortally offended at Agathe’s refusal; but out of pride he would have concealed it, if the reproach cast upon him of failing in his word had not extorted the confession from him. Fintac, whose authority and consideration were now brought into question, was enraged at the opposition of his niece, and did all that was possible to conquer it; but he never could draw from her any other answer but that she was no medal, and he concluded by telling her in a passion, that she should never have any other husband. This was not the only obstacle to the happiness of our lovers. Celicour could hope for only part of a small inheritance; and Agathe was entirely dependent on her uncle, who was now less than ever disposed to strip himself of his wealth for her. In happier times he might have taken upon him their little family affairs; but after this refusal of Agathe’s, it required a little miracle to engage him to it; and it was love himself that wrought it.

“Flatter my uncle,” said Agathe to Celicour; “intoxicate him with encomiums, and carefully conceal from him our love. For that purpose let us diligently avoid being found together, and content yourself with informing me of your conduct

en passant.’ Fintac dissembled not to Celicour his resentment against his niece. “Can she have,” said he, “any secret inclination? If I knew it—But, no! she is a little fool, who loves nothing, and feels nothing. Ah! if she reckons upon my inheritance, she is mistaken: I know better how to dispose of my favours.” The young man, terrified at the menaces of the uncle, took the first opportunity to inform the niece of it. She only rallied upon the occasion. “He is raving mad against you, my dear Agathe.”—“That is quite indifferent to me.”—“He says he will disinherit you.”—“Say as he says, gain his confidence, and leave the rest to love and time.” Celicour followed Agathe’s advice, and at every commendation that he bestowed on Fintac, Fintac thought he discovered in him a new degree of merit. “The justness of understanding, the penetration of this young man, is without example at his age,” said he to his friends. At last, the confidence he placed in him was such, that he thought he could trust to him what he called the secret of his life; this was a dramatic piece which he had composed, and which he had not had the resolution to read to any one, for fear of risking his reputation. After demanding an inviolable secrecy, he appointed the time for reading it. At this news, Agathe was transported with joy. “That is well,” said she; “Courage! redouble the dose of incense; good or bad, in your eyes, this piece has no equal.”

Fintac, *tête á tête* with the young man, after double locking his study door, drew out of a casket this precious manuscript, and read with enthusiasm the coldest, the most insipid comedy that

ever was written. It cost the young man a deal of mortification to applaud such flat stuff; but Agathe had recommended it to him. He applauded it therefore, and the Connoisseur was transported. “Confess,” said he to him, after reading it, “confess, that this is fine.”—“Oh, very fine!”—“Very well, it is time to tell you, then, why I have chosen you for my only confident. I have burned with desire this great while to see this piece on the stage, but I would not have it go under my name.” Celicour trembled at these words. “I was unwilling to trust any body; but, in short, I think you worthy of this mark of my friendship: you shall present my work as your own; I will have nothing but the pleasure of success, and I leave the glory of it to you.” The thought of imposing upon the public would alone have terrified the young man, but that of seeing appear and being damned under his name so contemptible a work, shocked him still more. Confounded at the proposal he withstood it a long time; but his opposition was to no purpose. “My secret being confided,” said Fintac, “engages you in honour to grant me what I ask. It is indifferent to the public whether the piece be yours or mine, and this friendly imposition can hurt nobody. My piece is my treasure; I make you a present of it: the very remotest posterity will know nothing of it. Here, then, your delicacy is spared every way: if, after this, you refuse to present this work as your own, I shall think that you do not like it, that you only deceive me in praising it, and that you are equally unworthy of my friendship and esteem. What

would not Agathe's lover resolve upon rather than incur the hatred of her uncle? He assured him that he was only restrained by laudable motives, and asked twenty-four hours to determine. "He has read it to me," said he to Agathe. "Well?"—"Well, it is execrable."—"I thought so."—"He wants me to bring it on the stage in my name."—"What?"—"To have it pass for mine."—"Ah, Celicour, Heaven be praised! have you accepted it?"—"Not yet, but I shall be forced to it."—"So much the better."—"I tell you it is detestable."—"So much the better."—"It will be damned."—"So much the better, I tell you; we must submit to every thing." Celicour did not sleep that night, for vexation, and the next day went to the uncle, and told him, that there was nothing which he would not sooner resolve upon than to displease him. "I would not expose you rashly," said the Connoisseur; "copy out the piece with your own hand; you shall read it to our friends, who are excellent judges, and if they do not think the success infallible, you shall not be bound to any thing. I require only one thing of you; and that is to study it in order to read it well." This precaution gave the young man some hope. "I am," said he to Agathe, "to read the piece to his friends; if they think it bad, he excuses me from bringing it out."—"They will think it good, and so much the better: we should be undone if they were to dislike it."—"Explain yourself."—"Get thee gone! they must not see us together." What she had foreseen came to pass. The judges being assembled, the Connoisseur announced this piece as a prodigy, and especially in a young poet. The young poet

read his best, and, after Fintac's example, they were in extasies at every line, and applauded every scene. At the conclusion they clapped and huzzaed; they discovered in it the delicacy of Aristophanes, the elegance of Plautus, the comic force of Terence, and they knew no piece of Moliere fit to be set in competition with this. After this trial, there was no room to hesitate. The players were not of the same opinion with the wits; for they knew before-hand that these good people had no taste, but there was an order to perform the piece. Agathe, who had assisted at the reading, had applauded with all her might, they were even pathetic passages at which she appeared to be moved, and her enthusiasm for the work had a little reconciled her with the author. "Could it be possible," said Celicour to her, "that you should have thought that good!"—"Excellent!" said she: "excellent for us! and at these words she left him. While the piece was in rehearsal, Fintac ran from house to house to dispose the wits in favour of a young poet of such great expectation. At last the great day arrives, and the Connoisseur assembles his friends to dinner. "Let us go, gentlemen," said he, "to support your own performance. You have judged the piece admirable, you have warranted the success, and your honour is concerned. As to me you know how great my weakness is: I have the bowels of a father for all rising geniuses, and I feel in as lively a manner as themselves the uneasinesses they suffer in those terrible moments."

After dinner, the good friends of the Connoisseur tenderly embraced Celicour; and told him that they were going into the pit to be the wit-

nesses rather than instruments of his triumph. They repaired thither; the piece was played; it did not go through, and the first mark of impatience was given by these good friends.

Fintac was in the house, trembling and pale as death: but all the time that the play lasted, this unhappy and tender father made incredible efforts to encourage the spectators to succour his child. In short, he saw it expire, and then sinking beneath his grief, dragged himself to his coach, confounded, dejected, and murmuring against Heaven for having been born in so barbarous an age. And where was poor Celicour? Alas! they had granted him the honours of a latticed box, where, sitting on thorns, he had seen what they called his piece, tottering in the first act, stumbling in the second, and tumbling in the third. Fintac had promised to go and take him up, but had forgot it. What was now to become of him! How escape through that multitude who would not fail to know him again, and to point him out with the finger? At last, seeing the front of the house empty, he took courage and descended; but the stove-rooms, the galleries, the stairs, were yet full; his consternation made him be taken notice of, and he heard on all sides, “It is he without doubt! yes, there he is; that is he! Poor wretch! It is a pity! he will do better another time.” He perceived in a corner a groupe of damned authors cracking jests on their companions. He saw also the good friends of Fintac, who triumphed in his fall, and on seeing him, turned their backs upon him. Overwhelmed with confusion and grief, he repaired to the true author’s, and his first care was

to ask for Agathe : he had entire liberty of seeing her, for her uncle had shut himself up in his closet. “ I forewarned you of it : it is fallen, and fallen shamefully,” said Celicour, throwing himself into a chair. “ So much the better,” said Agathe. “ What, so much the better ! when your lover is covered with shame, and makes himself, in order to please you, the talk and ridicule of all Paris ? Ah ! it is too much. No, Mademoiselle, it is no longer time to jest. I love you more than my life ; but in the state of humiliation in which you now see me, I am capable of renouncing both life and yourself. I do not know how it has happened that the secret has not escaped me. It is but little to expose myself to the contempt of the public ; your cruel uncle will abandon me ! I know him, he will be the first to blush at seeing me again ; and what I have done to obtain you, perhaps, cuts off my hope for ever. Let him prepare, however, to resume his piece, or to give me your hand. There is but one way to console me, and to oblige me to silence. Heaven is my witness, that if through an impossibility, his work had succeeded, I should have given to him the honour of it ; it is fallen, and I bear the shame ; but it is an effort of love, for which you alone can be the recompence.” —“ It must be confessed,” said the wicked Agathe, in order to irritate him still more, “ that it is a cruel thing to see one’s self hissed for another.” —“ Cruel to such a degree, that I would not play such a part for my own father.” —“ With what an air of contempt they see a wretch pass along whose play is damned !” —“ The contempt is unjust, that is one comfort ; but insolent pity, there

is the mortification!"—I suppose you were greatly confused in coming down stairs! Did you salute the ladies?"—"I could have wished to annihilate myself."—"Poor boy! and how will you dare to appear in the world again?"—"I will never appear again, I swear to you, but with the name of your husband, or till after I have retorted on M. de Fintac the humiliation of this failure."—"You are resolved then to drive him to the wall?"—"Fully resolved, do not doubt it." Let him determine this very evening. If he refuses me your hand, all the newspapers shall publish that he is the author of the damned piece."—"And that is what I wanted," said Agathe with triumph; "there is the object of all those *so much the better*s which put you so much out of patience. Go to my uncle; hold firm, and be assured that we shall be happy."

"Well, Sir, and what say you to it?" demanded Celicour of the Connoisseur. "I say, my friend, that the public is a stupid animal, and that we must renounce all labour for it. But console yourself; your work does you honour in the opinion of men of taste."—"My work! it is all yours."—"Talk lower, I beseech you, my dear lad: talk lower!"—"It is very easy for you to moderate yourself, Sir? you, who have prudently saved yourself from the fall of your piece; but I whom it crushes——"—"Ah do not think that such a fall does you any injury? The more enlightened persons have discerned in this work strokes that proclaim genius."—"No, Sir, I do not flatter myself; the piece is bad: I have purchased the right of speaking of it with freedom, and all the world are of the same opinion. If it had succeeded, I

should have declared that it was yours ; if it had been but partly condemned, I should have taken it upon myself ; but so thorough a damnation is above my strength, and I beg of you to take the burden upon yourself.”—“ I, child ! I, on my decline, incur this ridicule ! To lose in one day a respect which is the work of forty years, and which forms the hope of my old age ! would you have the cruelty to require it ? ”—“ Have not you the cruelty to render me the victim of my complaisance ? You know how much it has cost me.”—“ I know all that I owe to you ; but, my dear Celicour, you are young, you have time enough to take your revenge, and there needs but one instance of success to make you forget this misfortune : in the name of friendship, support it with constancy ; I conjure you, with tears in my eyes ! ”—“ I consent, Sir ; but I perceive too well the consequences of this first essay, to expose myself to the prejudice which it leaves behind it : I renounce the theatre, poetry, the belles lettres——” “ Well, you are in the right : for a young man of your age there are many other objects of ambition.”—“ There is but one for me, Sir, and that depends on you.”—“ Speak ; there is no service which I would not do you : what do you require ? ”—“ Your niece’s hand.”—“ Agathe’s hand ! ”—“ Yes, I adore her, and it was she, who to please you, made me consent to every thing that you desired.”—“ My niece in the secret ? ”—“ Yes, Sir.”—“ Ah ! her giddiness will, perhaps——Hola ! somebody : run to my niece, and bid her come here.”—“ Compose yourself : Agathe is less a child, less giddy, than she appears.”—“ Ah ! you make me tremble.——My dear Agathe, you

know what has passed, and the misfortune which has just happened.”—“ Yes, uncle.”—“ Have you revealed this fatal secret to any one ? ”—“ To nobody in the world ”—“ Can I thoroughly depend upon it ? ”—“ Yes, I swear to you ! ”—“ Well, then, my children, let it die with us three : I ask it of you as I would ask my life. Agathe, Celicour loves you ; he renounces, out of friendship to me, the theatre, poetry, letters, and I owe him your hand as the price of so great a sacrifice.”—“ He is too well paid,” cried Celicour, seizing Agathe’s hand.—“ I marry an unsuccessful author ! ” said she smiling, “ but I engage to console him for his misfortune. The worst of the matter is, that they deny him wit, and so many honest people are content without it ! And now, my dear uncle, while Celicour renounces the glory of being a poet, had not you as well renounce that of being a Connoisseur ? You will be a great deal the easier.” Agathe was interrupted by the arrival of Clement, the faithful valet of her uncle. “ Ah, Sir ! ” said he, quite out of breath, “ your friends ! your good friends ! ”—“ Well, Clement ? ”—“ I was in the pit, they were all there.”—“ I know it. Did they applaud ? ”—“ Applaud ! the traitors ! If you had seen with what fury they mangled this unfortunate young man. I beg, Sir, you will discharge me, if such people are ever to enter your house again.”—“ Ah ! the rascals ! scoundrels ! ” said Fintac. “ Yes, it is done, I will burn my books, and break off all commerce with these men of letters.”—“ Keep your books for your amusement,” said Agathe, embracing her uncle ; “ and with respect to men of letters, wish to have none but your friends, and you will find some worthy of esteem.”

THE GOOD MOTHER.

THE care of a mother for her children is of all duties the most religiously observed. This universal sentiment governs all the passions; it prevails even over the love of life. It renders the fiercest of animals sensible and gentle, the most sluggish indefatigable, the most timid courageous to excess: not one of them loses sight of its little ones, till the moment that their care becomes useless. We see only among mankind the odious examples of a too early desertion.

In the midst of a world, where vice, ingenious to disguise itself, takes a thousand seducing forms; it is there, above all, that the most happy disposition requires to be enlightened without ceasing. The more shelves there are, and the more they are hidden, the more need has the frail bark of innocence and happiness of a prudent pilot. What would have been, for example, the fate of Miss Troëne, if Heaven had not made expressly for her a mother, who was one of ten thousand.

This respectable widow had devoted to the education of an only daughter the most agreeable years of her life. These were her reflections at the age of five and twenty.

“I have lost my husband,” said she, “I have nothing but my daughter and myself: shall I live for myself, or shall I live for her? The world smiles upon me, and pleases me still: but if I give

myself up to it, I abandon my daughter, and hazard her happiness and my own. Suppose that a life of noise and dissipation has all the charms that are attributed to it, how long may I be able to taste them? How few of my years, which are rolling on, have I to pass in the world? how many in solitude and the bosom of my child? The world which invites me now, will dismiss me soon without pity; and if my daughter should forget herself, according to my example; if she is unhappy through my negligence, what will be my comfort? Let me in good time add grace to my retreat; let me render it as agreeable as it is honourable; and let me sacrifice to my daughter, who is every thing to me, that alien multitude, to whom in a short time I shall be nothing."

From that moment this prudent mother became the friend and companion of her daughter. But to obtain her confidence was not the work of a day.

Emily (that was the young lady's name) had received from Nature a soul susceptible of the most lively impressions; and her mother, who studied it incessantly, experienced an uneasy joy on perceiving this sensibility, which does so much harm and so much good. "Happy," said she sometimes, "happy the husband whom she will love, if he is deserving of her tenderness; if by esteem and friendship he knows how to render dear to her the cares she shall take to please him; but woe to him, if he humbles and shocks her: her wounded delicacy will be the torment of them both. I see that if a reproach escapes even me, a slight complaint which she has not merited, tears of grief trickle from her eyes; her drooping heart is

dispirited. Nothing is easier than to soothe her, nothing easier than to frighten her."

Temperate as was the life of Madam Du Troëne, it was however conformable to her condition, and relative to the design she had of instructing herself at leisure in the choice of a husband worthy of Emily. A crowd of admirers, caught with the charms of the daughter, paid, according to custom, assiduous court to the mother. Of this number was the Marquis de Verglan, who, to his own misfortune, was endowed with a very handsome figure. His glass and the ladies had so often told him so, that he could not but believe it. He listened to them with pleasure, contemplated himself with delight, smiled upon himself, and was eternally singing his own praises. Nothing could be objected to his politeness; but it was so cold, and so slight, in comparison to the attentions with which he honoured himself, that one might clearly perceive that he possessed the first place in his own esteem. He would have had, without thinking on them, all the graces of Nature: he spoiled them all by affecting them. In regard to understanding, he wanted only justness, or rather reflection. Nobody would have talked better than he, if he had known what he was going to say; but it was his first care to be of an opinion contrary to that of another. Right or wrong was all one to him; he was sure of dazzling, of seducing, of persuading to whatever he would. He knew by heart all that little toilet chit-chat, all those pretty things which mean nothing. He was thoroughly versed in all the love anecdotes of the city and court: who was the gallant of yesterday, who of to-day, who of the morrow, and how many

times in the year such and such a lady had changed her admirers. He even knew a certain person who had refused to be upon the list, and who would have supplanted all his rivals, if he had chosen to give himself the trouble.

This young coxcomb was the son of an old friend of M. Du Troëne, and the widow spoke of him to her daughter with a kind of compassion. "It is a pity," said she, "that they spoil this young man! He is of a good family, and might have succeeded." He had already succeeded but too well in the heart of Emily. That which is ridiculous in the eyes of a mother, is not always so in the eyes of a daughter. Youth is indulgent to youth; and there are such things as beautiful defects.

Verglan, on his side, thought Emily tolerably handsome, only a little too plain and simple; but that might be corrected. He took but very little care to please her; but when the first impression is made, every thing contributes to sink it deeper. The very dissipation of this young fop was a new attraction to Emily, as it threatened her with the danger of losing him; and nothing hastens, so much as jealousy, the progress of a growing love.

In giving an account of his life to Madam Du Troëne, Verglan represented himself (as to be sure he ought) the most desirable man in the world.

Madam Du Troëne dropped a hint concerning modesty: but he protested that nobody was less vain than himself! that he knew perfectly well that it was not for his own sake that they sought him; that his birth did a great deal, and that he

owed the rest to his wit and figure, qualities which he had not given himself, and which he was far from being proud of.

The more pleasure Emily felt in seeing and hearing him, the more care she took to conceal it. A reproach from her mother would have touched her to the heart; and this delicate sensibility rendered her fearful to excess.

In the mean time, Emily's charms, with which Verglan was so faintly touched, had inspired the discreet and modest Belzors with the tenderest passion. A just way of thinking, and an upright heart, formed the basis of his character. His agreeable and open figure was still more ennobled by the high idea that was conceived of his soul; for we are naturally disposed to seek, and believe that we discover, in the feature of a man, what we know to be in his heart.

Belzors, in whom nature had been directed to virtue from his infancy, enjoyed the inestimable advantage of being able to give himself up to it without precaution and constraint. Decency, honesty, candour, a frankness which gains confidence, together with a severity of manners which creates respect, had in him the free ease of habit. An enemy to vice, without pride; indulgent to follies, without contracting any; complying with innocent customs; incorruptible by bad examples; he swam upon the torrent of the world; beloved, respected, even by those to whom his life was a reproach, and to whom the public esteem delighted to oppose it, in order to humble their pride.

Madam Du Troëne, charmed with the character of this young man, had secretly pitched upon

him as the most deserving husband she could give her daughter. She was inexhaustible in his commendations; and while Emily applauded with the modesty of her age, Madam Du Troëne mistook the ingenuous and agreeable air which her daughter assumed towards him: for, as the esteem with which Belzors inspired her was not mingled with any sentiment that she needed to conceal, Emily was quite at her ease.

It were to be wished, that she had been as free and as tranquil with the dangerous Verglan; though the painful situation in which his presence cast her, had in a good measure the appearance of spleen. If Madam Du Troëne spoke in commendation of him, Emily looked down, and kept silence. “You do not seem to me, daughter,” said Madam Du Troëne, “to relish those light and shining graces, on which the world lays so much stress.”—“I know nothing at all of them!” said Emily, blushing. The good mother concealed her joy: she thought she saw the plain and modest virtues of Belzor’s triumphing in Emily’s heart over the little brilliant vices of Verglan, and those of his character; till an accident, slight in appearance, but striking to an attentive and discerning mother, drew her out of this illusion.

One of Emily’s accomplishments was drawing. She had chosen the delineation of flowers, as the most suitable to her age: for what can be more natural than to see a rose blow beneath the hand of beauty? Verglan, by a taste somewhat resembling hers, was passionately fond of flowers; and he never appeared without a nosegay, the prettiest in the world.

One day Madam Du Troëne's eyes were thrown casually on Verglan's nosegay. The day after, she perceived that Emily, perhaps without thinking of it, was drawing the flowers of it. It was natural enough, that the flowers she had seen the evening before should be still present to her imagination, and come, as it were, of their own accord, to offer themselves to her pencil; but that which was not quite so natural, was the air of enthusiasm which she betrayed in drawing them. Her eyes sparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth smiled amorously at every stroke of the pencil, and a colour more animated than that of the flowers which she was endeavouring to delineate, diffused itself over her cheeks. "Are you pleased with your execution?" said the mother to her carelessly. "It is impossible," replied Emily, "to represent nature well, when we have her not before our eyes." It was certain, however, that she had never copied her more faithfully.

Some few days after, Verglan came again with new flowers. Madam Du Troëne, without any particularity observed them, one after another; and, in Emily's next lesson, Verglan's nosegay was drawn again. The good mother continued her observations, and every trial confirming her suspicions, redoubled her uneasiness. "After all," said she, "I am alarmed, perhaps, at somewhat very innocent. Let me see, however, if she has any meaning in all this."

The studies and accomplishments of Emily were a secret to her mother's acquaintance. As she had only intended to make her relish solitude, and preserve her imagination from the dangers of me-

ditation, and the tediousness of idleness, Madam Du Troëne derived neither to herself nor daughter the least vanity from those talents which she had cultivated with so much care. But one day when they were alone with Belzors, and the conversation turned on the great advantage of employing and amusing one's self; "My daughter," said Madam Du Troëne, "has created herself an amusement, which she relishes more and more. I want to have you see some of her designs." Emily opened her port-folio; and Belzors, charmed, was never weary of admiration of her performances. "How soft and pure," said he, "are the pleasures of innocence! In vain does vice torment itself, it will never taste the like. Is it not true, Madam, that the hour of labour passes away quick? And yet you have fixed it: see it here retraced and produced anew to your eyes. Time is never lost but to the idle." Madam Du Troëne listened with a secret complacency, Emily thought his observations very sensible, but was not in the least touched by them.

Some days after, Verglan came to see them. "Do you know, Sir," says Madam Du Troëne, "that my daughter has received the highest encomiums from Belzors on her talent for drawing? I want your opinion of it." Emily, in confusion, blushed, hesitated, said that she had nothing finished by her, and beseeched her mother to wait till she should have some piece fit to be seen. She did not doubt but her mother was laying a snare for her. "Since there is a mystery in this, there is also a design," said this discerning mother within herself: "She is afraid that Verglan may know his own flowers, and penetrate into the se-

cret motive of the pleasure she has taken in drawing them. My daughter loves this young fop; my fears were but too well founded."

Madam Du Troëne, solicited on all sides, excused herself still on account of Emily's youth, and the resolution she had taken not to constrain her in her choice. However, this choice alarmed her. "My daughter," said she, "is going to prefer Verglan; there is, at least, room to think so: and this young man has every quality that can render a woman unhappy. If I declare my will to Emily, if I only suffer her to have the slightest perception of it, she will make it a law to subscribe to it without murmuring; she will marry a man whom she does not love, and the remembrance of the man she loves will haunt her even in the arms of another. I know her soul; she will become the victim of her duty. But shall I ordain this grievous sacrifice? God forbid! No: let her own inclination decide it; but I may direct her inclination by enlightening it, and that is the only lawful use of the authority that is given me. I am certain of the goodness of heart, of the justness of my daughter's sentiments; let me supply, by the light natural to my years, the inexperience of her's; let her see by her mother's eyes, and fancy, if possible, that she consults only her own inclination."

Every time that Verglan and Belzors met together at Madam Du Troëne's, she turned the conversation on the manners, customs, and maxims of the world. She encouraged contradiction; and without taking any side, gave their dispositions room to display themselves. Those little adventures with which society abounds, and which

entertain the idle curiosity of the circles at Paris, most commonly furnished matter for their reflections. Verglan, light, decisive, and lively, was constantly on the side of the fashion. Belzors, in a modester tone, constantly defended the cause of morality with a noble freedom.

The arrangement of Count D'Auberive with his lady was at that time the town-talk. It was said, that after a pretty brisk quarrel, and bitter complaints on both sides, on the subject of their mutual infidelity, they agreed, that they owed each other nothing; that they had concluded by laughing at the folly of being jealous without loving; that D'Auberive had consented to see the Chevalier De Clange make love to his wife; and that she had promised, on her side, to receive with the greatest politeness the Marchioness De Talbe, to whom D'Auberive paid his court; that the peace had been ratified by a supper, and that two couple of lovers never maintained a better understanding with each other.

At this recital, Verglan cried out, that nothing was wiser. "They talk of the good old times," said he; "let them produce an instance of the manners of our forefathers comparable to this. Formerly an instance of infidelity set a family in flames; they shut up, they beat their wives. If the husband made use of the liberty that was reserved to him, his sad and faithful half was obliged to put up with the injury, and vent her moans at home, as in an obscure prison. If she imitated her wandering husband, it was with terrible risks. Nothing less than her lover's and her own life were at stake. They had the folly to attach the honour of the man to the virtue of his

wife ; and the husband, who was not the less a fine gentleman for intriguing elsewhere himself, became the ridiculous object of public contempt on the first false step of his lady. Upon honour, I do not conceive how, in these barbarous ages, they had the courage to marry. The bands of Hymen were then downright chains. Now-a-days, complaisance, freedom, peace, reign in the bosom of families. If the married pair love one another, so much the better ; they live together, they are happy. If they cease to love, they tell it like well-bred persons, and dispense with each other's promise of fidelity. They give over being lovers, and become friends. These are what I call social manners, free and easy. This makes one long to be married."—" You find it then quite easy," said Madam Du Troëne, " for the wife to be the confidante of her husband, and for him to be the complaisant friend of his wife ?"—" To be sure ; provided it be mutual. Is it not just to grant our confidence to those who honour us with theirs, and to render each other by turns the offices of friendship ? Can a man have a better friend than his wife, or the wife a surer and more intimate friend than her husband ? With whom shall we be free, if not with the person, who, from situation is one with us ? And when unfortunately we no longer find any pleasure at home, what can be better than to seek it abroad, to return each at their own time, without jealousy and restraint ?"

" Nothing is more pleasant," said Belzors, " than this new method ; but you and I have a great deal of ground to go over before we can relish it. In the first place, we must give up all love for ourselves, wife, and children ; we must be able

to accustom ourselves to consider, without repugnance, as being one half of one's self, somebody whom we despise sufficiently, to deliver up——”

“ Well,” replied Verglan, “ what but mere prejudices are all these scruples! what hinders us from esteeming one another, if it be settled that there is no longer any scandal in it?”—“ When that is settled,” said Belzors, “ all the ties of society are broken. The inviolable sanctity of the marriage-tie forms the sanctity of all the ties of nature. Remember, my friend, that if there are no longer any sacred duties for the parents, there will no longer be any for the children. All these conditions depend on each other. Family quarrels were violent in the days of our fathers; but the mass of morals was sound, and the wound soon closed up again. At present it is a languishing body, wasting by a slow poison. On the other side, my dear Verglan, we have not now the idea of those pure and intimate pleasures which the married pair felt amidst their family; nor of that union which formed the delight of their youth, and the consolation of their advanced years. Now-a-days, when a mother is afflicted at the dissipations of her son, or a father overwhelmed with any reverse of fortune, are they a refuge or support to each other? They are obliged to unbosom their grief abroad; and the consolation of strangers is very weak in deed.”

“ You talk like an oracle, my sage Belzors,” said Verglan; “ but who has told you that two married persons would not do best to love, and to be faithful to each other all their lives? I am only, if unfortunately this mutual liking should cease, for their consoling each other, and settling matters

amicably, without forbidding those who may have loved reciprocally from the times of our fathers, to love on still, if their hearts incline them to it.”—“Aye,” said Madam Du Troëne, “what is there to hinder them, Madam?”——“What is there to hinder them, Madam?” replied Belzors. “Custom, example, the *bon ton*, the facility of living without shame according to their liking. Verglan will agree, that the life led in the world is agreeable! and change is naturally pleasing: our very weakness invites us to it. Who, then, will resist this inclination, if they take off the curb of morality?”——“I! I take off nothing,” said Verglan, “but I am for every body’s living according to their liking; and I very much approve of the course that D’Auberive and his lady have taken to overlook on both sides what are called injuries. If they are satisfied, every body else ought to be so too.”

As he finished these last words, a servant announced the Marquis D’Auberive. “Ah, Marquis! you come very opportunely,” said Verglan: “tell us, pry’thee, if your story be true. They say that your lady forgives you your rhubarb, and that you pass by her senna.”——“Psha! what stuff!” said D’Auberive to him carelessly.—“I have maintained that nothing was more reasonable: but Belzors there condemns you without appeal.”——“Why so, pray? Would he not have done as much? My wife is young and handsome: a coquette; that is quite evident. At the bottom, however, I believe her to be very virtuous; but though she should err a little, justice ought to take place. I conceive, however, that a person more jealous than myself may condemn me; but what

astonishes me is, that Belzors should be the first. I have hitherto received nothing but commendations. Nothing is more natural than my proceeding; and all the world felicitate me upon it as on something marvellous. It looks as if they did not think I had understanding enough to take a reasonable step. Upon honour, I am quite confounded at the compliments I receive on it. As to the rigid gentlemen, I honour them sufficiently; but I live for myself. Let every one do as much, and the happiest will always be the wisest.”—“Well, how is the marchioness?” said Madam Du Troëne to him, with a design of changing the subject. “Wonderfully well, Madam; we supped together last night, and I never saw her in such good humour.”—“I will lay a wager,” says Verglan, “that you will take her again some day.”—“Faith, very possible: for but yesterday when we got up from table, I caught myself saying tender things to her.”

This first experiment made the most lively impression on Emily’s understanding. Her mother, who perceived it, gave free course to her reflections; but in order to put her into the way, “It is wonderful,” said she, “how much opinions depend upon tempers. Here, now, these two young men, educated with the same care, both endued with the same principles of honesty and virtue; observe, however, how they differ from one another! and each of them believes he is in the right.” Emily’s heart did its best to excuse in Verglan the fault of having defended the manners of the age. “With what levity,” said she, “do they treat modesty and fidelity! how they sport with what is most sacred in nature! and Verglan

gives into these irregularities! Why has he not the soul of Belzors!”

Some time after, Emily and her mother being at the play, Belzors and Verglan presented themselves at their box, and Madam Du Troëne invited them both to take their seats there. The play was *Ines**. The scene of the children gave Verglan an opportunity of uttering some *bon mots*, which he put off as excellent criticisms. Belzors, without listening to him, melted into tears, and took no pains to conceal it. His rival rallied him on his weakness. “What,” said he to him, “do children make you cry?”—“And what would you have me be affected by?” said Belzors. “Yes, I confess, I never hear, without much emotion, the tender names of father and mother; the pathos of nature penetrates me; even the most touching love interests me, moves me much less.” *Ines* was followed by *Nanine*†: and when they came to the catastrophe, “Oh,” said Verglan, “that is carrying the jest too far: let Dolban love this little wench, with all my heart; but to marry her, I think, is rather too much.”—“It is a folly, perhaps,” replied Belzors; “but I feel myself capable of it: when virtue and beauty are united, I cannot answer for my discretion.” Not one of their observations escaped Madam Du Troëne; Emily, still more attentive, blushed at the advantage which Belzors had over his rival. After the play, they saw the Chevalier D’Olcet pass by in weepers. “What is the meaning of this, Chevalier?” said

* *Ines de Castro*, from which Mallet’s *Elvira* is taken.

† A petit piece of Voltaire, the story somewhat like *Pamela*.

Verglan to him with an air of gaiety. "An old uncle," replies D'Olcet, "who has been so kind as to leave me ten thousand crowns a year."—"Ten thousand crowns! I give you joy. This uncle was a brave old fellow. Ten thousand crowns! charming." Belzors, embracing him in his turn, said to him, "Chevalier, I condole with you on his death: I know that you think too justly to conceive any unnatural joy on the occasion."—"He has long been as a father to me," said the Chevalier, confounded at the pleasant air he had assumed; "but he was so old you know!"—"That is a cause for patience," replied Belzors mildly, "but not for consolation. A good relation is the best of friends; and the riches he has left you are not equal to such a one."—"An old uncle is but a dull kind of friend," said Verglan, "and it is a rule that every one must live in his turn. Young folks would be much to be pitied if old fellows were immortal." Belzors changed the discourse, in order to spare Verglan an humiliating reply. At every stroke of this contrast, Emily's heart was cruelly torn. Madam Du Troëne saw with joy the respectful and sensible air she assumed towards Belzors, and the cold and chagrined air with which she replied to Verglan's compliments; but, in order to bring about another trial, she invited them both to supper.

They played at cards. Verglan and Belzors had a *tête à tête* at trictrac. Verglan liked nothing but high play; Belzors would play for as little as you please. The party was interesting. Mademoiselle Du Troëne was of the number of lookers-on; and the Good Mother, in making her own party,

kept an eye upon her daughter, to read in her countenance what passed in her heart. Fortune favoured Belzors; Emily, displeased as she was with Verglan, had too good a heart not to suffer, on seeing him engaged in a serious loss. The young coxcomb could no longer contain himself; he grew angry, he doubled the game, and before supper, he was on the point of playing upon honour. Ill-humour had seized him: he did his utmost to be merry; but the alteration of his countenance banished all joy. He perceived himself that they pitied him, and that they did not laugh at some pleasantries he endeavoured to throw out; he was humbled, and indignation would have taken place, if they had not quitted the table. Belzors, whom neither his own good luck, nor the chagrin of his rival had moved, was easy and modest, according to custom. They sat down again to play. Madam Du Troëne, who had finished her own party, came to be present at this, extremely uneasy at the issue it might have, but desirous that it might make its impression on the soul of Emily. The success exceeded her expectation: Verglan lost more than he had to pay; his trembling hand and pale countenance expressed the trouble he wanted to conceal. Belzors, with an unbounded complaisance, gave him as many opportunities of revenging himself as he thought proper; and when, by doubling the game, he had suffered Verglan to get off for a reasonable sum, "If you please," said he, "we will stop here: I think I may fairly win as much as I was resolved to lose." So much moderation and discretion excited a murmur of applause in the company. Verglan alone

appeared insensible to it, and said, on getting up with an air of disdain, "It was not worth the trouble of playing so long for."

Emily did not sleep that night, so violently was her soul agitated with what she had just seen and heard. "What a difference!" said she, "and by what caprice is it that I must sigh at having been enlightened? Ought not the seduction to cease, as soon as we perceive that we are seduced? I admire one, and love the other. What is this misunderstanding between the heart and the reason, which makes us still hold dear that which we cease to esteem?"

In the morning she appeared according to custom, at her mother's levee. "You seem strangely altered," said Madam Du Troëne. "Yes, Madam, I am very much so."—"What, have not you slept well!"—"Very little," said she with a sigh. "You must endeavour, however, to look handsome; for I am going to take you this morning to the Thuilleries, where all Paris is to be assembled. I used to lament that the finest garden in the world was abandoned: I am very glad it is come into fashion again."

Verglan failed not to repair there, and Madam Du Troëne retained him about her. The view of this walk had the air of enchantment. A thousand beauties, in all the gaiety of dress, were seated round the bason, whose sides are decorated by sculpture. The superb walk which this bason crowns, was filled with young nymphs; who, by their charms and accomplishments, attracted the desires after their steps. Verglan knew them all, and smiled upon them, following them with his

eyes. "This here," said he, "is Fatimé. Nothing is more tender and sensible; she lives like an angel with Cleon: he has given her twenty thousand crowns in six months! they love like two turtles. That is the celebrated Corinna: her house is the temple of luxury; her suppers the most brilliant in Paris; she does the honours of them with a grace that enchants us. Do you see that fair beauty who looks so modest, and whose glances wander languishingly on every side? She has three lovers, each of whom flatters himself, that he alone is the happy man. It is a pleasure to see her amidst her adorers, distributing slight favours to each, and persuading each in their turn that she jilts their rivals. She is a model of coquetry, and nobody deceives a set of lovers with so much address and sprightliness. She will go a great way, on my word, and I have told her so."—"You are in her confidence, then?" said Madam Du Troëne. "Oh, yes; they do not dissemble with me; they know me; they know very well that they cannot impose upon me."—"And you, Belzors," said Madam Du Troëne to the sensible and virtuous young man, who had joined, "are you initiated in these mysteries?"—"No, Madam: I can believe that all this is very amusing; but the charm makes the danger." Madam Du Troëne observed that the modest women received, with a cold and reserved air, the smiling and familiar salute of Verglan, while they returned with an air of esteem and friendship the respectful situation of Belzors. She rallied Verglan on this distinction, in order to make Emily perceive it. "It is true," said he, "Madam, that they behave rigidly to me

in public, but, *tête-à-tête*, they make me amends for it."

On her return home with them, she received a visit from Eleonora, a young widow of uncommon beauty. Eleonora spoke of the misfortune she had sustained in losing a deserving husband; she spoke of it with so much sensibility, candour, and grace, that Madam Du Troëne, Emily, and Belzors, listened to her with tears in their eyes. "To a young handsome woman," said Verglan, in a gay tone, "a husband is a trifling loss, and easy to be repaired."—"Not to me, Sir," replied the tender and modest Eleonora: "a husband who honoured a wife of my age with his esteem and confidence, and whose delicate love never was tainted either by fears or jealousy, or the negligences of habitude, is not one of those whom we can easily replace."—"He had, I take it for granted, a fine person:" said Verglan.—"No, Sir, but his soul was beautiful."—"A beautiful soul!" replied Verglan with a disdainful air: "a beautiful soul! He was young at least?"—"Not at all; he was of an age wherein we are affected when we have any occasion to be so."—"But if he was neither young nor handsome, I do not see why you should afflict yourself. Confidence, esteem, handsome treatment, attend of course an amiable woman: nothing of that kind could have been wanting to you. Believe me, Madam, the essential point is to suit yourself, as to age and figure; to unite the Graces with the Loves; in one word, to marry a handsome man, or to preserve your liberty."—"Your advice is very gallant," replied Eleonora; "but unfortunately it is misplaced."—"There is

a pretty prude!" said Verglan, as soon as she was gone. "Prudery, Sir," replied Madam Du Troëne, "is an exaggerated copy of prudence and reason; and I see nothing in Eleonora but what is plain and natural."—"For my part," said Belzors, "I think her as respectable as she is handsome."—"Respect her, Sir! respect her!" resumed Verglan, with vivacity, "who hinders you? She is the only person can take it ill."—"Do you know," interrupted Madam Du Troëne, "who could console Eleonora? Such a man as Belzors; and if I were the confidante that he consulted to his choice, I would persuade him to think of her."—"You do me great honour, Madam," said Belzors, colouring, "but Eleonora deserves a heart that is disengaged, and unhappily mine is not so." At these words he took his leave, quite confounded with the dismissal which he thought he had received. "For, in short," said he, "to invite me herself to pay my addresses to Eleonora, is not that giving me notice to renounce Emily? Alas! how little my heart is known to her!" Verglan, who took it in the same sense, affected to pity his rival. He spoke of him as one of the honestest men in the world. "It is a pity he is so gloomy," said he, with a tone of compassion; "that is all they get by their virtue; they grow tiresome, and are dismissed." Madam Du Troëne, without explaining herself, assured him, that she had not intended saying any thing disobliging to a man for whom she had a most particular esteem and regard. In the mean time Emily sat with downcast eyes, and her blushes betrayed the agitation of her soul. Verglan, not doubting but this confusion was an

emotion of joy, retired in triumph, and the day following wrote her a billet conceived in these terms:—

“ You must have thought me very romantic, beautiful Emily, in having so long spoke to you only by my eyes ! Do not accuse me of an unjust diffidence ; I have read your heart, and if I had only that to consult, I should be very sure of its answer. But you depend on a mother, and mothers have their caprices. Happily your mother loves you, and her affection has enlightened her choice. The dismissal of Belzors apprises me that she has determined ; but your consent ought to precede hers : I wait it with the most tender impatience, and the most violent love.”

Emily opened this billet without knowing whence it came : she was as much offended as surprised at it, and without hesitation communicated it to her mother. “ I take very kindly of you,” said Madam Troène, “ this mark of your friendship ; but I owe you in my turn confidence for confidence. Belzors has writ to me ; read his letter.” Emily obeyed and read:—

“ MADAM,

“ I honour the virtue, I admire the beauty, I do justice to Eleonora ; but has Heaven favoured only her ? And after having adored in your image every thing that Heaven has made most affecting, do you think me in a condition to follow the counsel which you have given me ? I will not say to you how cruel it is ; my respect stifles my complaints. If I have not the name, I have at least the sentiments of your son, and that character cannot be effaced.”

Emily could not finish without the most lively emotion. Her mother pretended not to perceive it, and said to her, “ There now, child, *I* indeed must answer these two rivals ; but *you* must dic-

tate my answers.”—“ I, Madam ! ”—“ Who else ? Is it I whom they demand in marriage ? Is it my heart that I am to consult ? ”—“ Ah, Madam ! is not your will mine ? Have not you the right to dispose of me ? ”—“ You are very good, my dear ; but as your own happiness is concerned, it is just that you should decide on it. These young men are both well born ; their conditions and fortunes nearly the same ; see which comes up nearest to the idea you have formed of a good husband. Let us keep him, and dismiss the other.” Emily, struck, kissed her mother’s hands, and bathed them with her tears. “ Complete your goodness,” said she to her, “ by enlightening me in my choice : the more important it is, the more need have I for your advice to determine it. The husband whom my mother shall chuse for me shall be dear to me ; my heart dares promise that.”—“ No, my dear, there is no loving out of mere duty, and you know better than myself the man who is likely to make you happy. If you are not so, I will console you : I would readily share your sorrows, but I would not be the cause of them. Come, I take pen in hand ; I am going to write, you need but to dictate.” Imagine the trouble, the confusion, the moving situation of Emily. Trembling by the side of this tender mother, one hand on her eyes and the other on her heart, she essayed in vain to obey her ; her voice expired on her lips.—“ Well,” said the good mother, “ to which of the two are we to return an answer ? Make an end, or I shall grow impatient.”—“ To Verglan,” said Emily, with a feeble and faltering voice. “ To Verglan ; be it so : what shall I say to him ? ”

“ It is impossible, Sir, that a man, so necessary to society as yourself, should renounce it to live in the bosom of his family. My Emily has not qualities sufficient to indemnify you for the sacrifices which she would require. Continue to embellish the world; for it is for that you are made.”

—“ Is this all ? ” — “ Yes, Madam. ” — “ And to Belzors ; what shall we say to him ? ” Emily continued to dictate with somewhat more confidence.

“ To deem you worthy of a woman as virtuous as handsome, was not, Sir, to forbid you to make a choice which interests me as much as it does me honour ; it was even to encourage you. Your modesty has reversed things, and you have been unjust both to yourself and to me. Come, and learn to judge better of the intentions of a Good Mother. I dispose of the heart of my daughter, and I esteem none in the world more than yourself.”

“ Come hither, my child, that I may embrace you,” cried Madam Du Troëne ; “ you fulfil the wishes of your mother, and you could not have said better, though you had consulted my heart.”

Belzors hastened to them, quite beside himself with joy. Never was marriage more applauded, more fortunate. Belzor’s affection was divided between Emily and her mother ; and it was a moot point among the world, which of the two he loved most.

THE BAD MOTHER.

AMONG the monstrous productions of nature may be reckoned the heart of a mother who loves one of her children to the exclusion of all the rest. I do not mean an enlightened tenderness, which distinguishes among the young plants which it cultivates, that which yields the best returns to its early care; I speak of a blind fondness, frequently exclusive, sometimes jealous, which creates an idol and victims amid the little innocents brought into the world, for each of whom we are equally bound to soften the burdens of life. Of this error so common and so shameful to human nature, I am now going to give an example.

In one of the maritime provinces, M. De Carandon, an intendant, who had rendered himself respectable by his severity in repressing grievances, making it a principle to favour the weak and controul the strong, died poor, and almost insolvent. He had left behind him a daughter, whom nobody would marry, because she had much pride, little beauty, and no fortune. At last, a rich and honest merchant made his addresses to her, out of respect to the memory of her father. "He has done us so many good offices," said the worthy Corée, (this was the merchant's name) "it is but just that some of us should repay them to the daughter." With these thoughts Corée offered himself in an humble manner; and Mademoiselle

Carandon, with a great deal of reluctance, consented to give him her hand, on condition that she should maintain an absolute authority in his house. The good man's respect for the memory of the father extended even to the daughter; he consulted her as his oracle; and if at any time he happened to differ in opinion from her, she had nothing to do but to utter these silencing expressions, "The late M. De Carandon, my father——." Corée never waited for her to conclude, before he confessed himself in the wrong.

He died rather young, and left her two children, of which she had condescended to permit him to be the father. On his death-bed he thought it his duty to regulate the partition of his effects; but M. De Carandon held it, as she told him, for a maxim, that in order to retain children under the dependence of a mother, it was necessary to render her the dispenser of their effects. This law was the rule of Corée's will; and his inheritance was left in the hands of his wife, with the fatal right of distributing it to her children as she should think proper. Of these two children the eldest was her delight; not that he was handsomer, or of a more happy disposition, than the younger, but because she had run some danger of her life in bringing him into the world; he had first made her experience the pains and joy of child-bed, he had possessed himself of her tenderness, which he also seemed to have exhausted; she had, in short, all the bad reasons that a bad mother could have for loving only him.

Little Jemmy was the rejected child; his mother hardly vouchsafed to see him, and never spoke to him but to chide him. The poor child, intimi-

dated, durst not look up before her, nor answer her without trembling. He had, she said, his father's disposition, a vulgar soul, and the air of such kind of folks.

As to the eldest, whom she had taken care to render as headstrong, disobedient and humoursome as possible, he was gentility itself; his obstinacy was called greatness of spirit; his humours, excess of sensibility. She was delighted to see that he would never give up a point when he was in the right; and you must know that he was never in the wrong. She was eternally declaring that he knew his own good, and that he had the honour of resembling the sweet madam his mamma. This eldest boy, who was stiled M. De l'Etang, (for it was not thought right to leave him the name of Corée) had masters of all sorts: the lessons they were set for him alone, but little Jemmy reaped the fruits of them; insomuch, that at the end of a few years, Jemmy knew all that they had taught M. De l'Etang, who knew nothing at all.

The good women, who make a practice of attributing to children all the little wit they have themselves, and who ruminate all the morning on the pretty things they are to say in the day, had made the mother, whose weakness they were well acquainted with, believe that her eldest son was a prodigy. The masters, less complaisant, or less artful, while they complained of the indocility and inattention of this favourite, were boundless in their encomiums on Jemmy; they did not absolutely say that M. De l'Etang was a blockhead, but they said that little Jemmy had the genius of an angel. The mother's vanity was wounded; and out of an injustice, which one would not believe

existed in nature, if this vice of mothers were less in fashion, she redoubled her aversion to the little wretch, became jealous of his improvement, and resolved to take away from her spoiled child the humiliation of a comparison.

A very affecting adventure awakened, however, in her, the sentiments of nature ; but this retort upon herself only humbled, without correcting her. Jemmy was ten years of age, M. De l'Etang nearly fifteen, when she fell dangerously ill. The eldest employed himself about his pleasures, and very little about his mother's health. It is the punishment of foolish mothers to love unnatural children. However, she began to grow uneasy ; Jemmy perceived it, and his little heart was seized with grief and fear : the impatience to see his mother grew too strong for him to conceal. They had accustomed him never to appear but when he was called ; but at last his tenderness gave him courage. He seized the first instant when the chamber door was half open, entered silent, and with trembling steps approached his mother's bed. " Is it you, my son ?" said she.—" No, mamma, it is Jemmy."—This natural and overwhelming answer penetrated with shame and grief the soul of this unjust woman ; but a few caresses from her bad son soon restored him to his full ascendancy ; and Jemmy, in the end, was neither the better beloved, nor reckoned the more worthy to be so.

Scarce was Madam Corée recovered, when she resumed the design of banishing him her house ; her pretence was, that M. De l'Etang, being naturally lively, was too susceptible of dissipation to have a companion in his studies ; and the imperti-

nent prepossessions of the masters for the child, who was the most humble and fawning with them, might easily discourage the other, whose spirit being higher, and less tractable, required more management: it was her pleasure, therefore, that L'Etang should be the only object of their cares, and she got rid of the unfortunate Jemmy by exiling him to a college.

At sixteen L'Etang quitted his masters in the mathematics, physics, music, &c. just as he had taken them: he began his exercise, which he performed much in the same manner as he had done his studies; and at twenty he appeared in the world with the self-sufficiency of a coxcomb, who has heard of every thing, but reflected on nothing.

Jemmy, on his part, had gone through his studies; and his mother was quite wearied with the commendations they gave him. "Well then," said she, "since he is so wise, he will succeed in the church; he has nothing to do but to take to that course of life."

Unfortunately, Jemmy had no inclination for the ecclesiastic state; he came therefore to entreat his mother to dispense with his entering into it. "You imagine, then," said she to him, with a cold and severe air, "that I have enough to maintain you in the world? I assure you I have not. Your father's fortune was not so considerable as was imagined; it will scarce be sufficient to settle your elder brother. For your part, you have only to consider whether you will run the career of benefices or of arms; whether you will have your head shaven or broken. In short, whether you will take a band, or a lieutenancy of in-

fantry : this is all that I can do for you." Jemmy answered with respect, that there was less violent courses to be taken by the son of a merchant. At these words Mad. de Caradon was near dying with grief, for having brought into the world a son so unworthy of her, and forbid him her sight. Young Corée, distressed at having incurred his mother's anger, retired sighing, and resolved to try whether fortune would be less cruel to him than nature. He learned that a vessel was on the point of sailing for the Antilles, whither he had a design of repairing. He writ to his mother to ask her consent, her blessing, and a parcel of goods. The two first articles were amply granted him, but the latter very sparingly.

His mother, too happy in being rid of him, wanted to see him before his departure, and, while she embraced him, bestowed on him a few tears. His brother also had the goodness to wish him a good voyage. These were the first caresses he had ever received from his relations : his sensible heart was penetrated with them ; yet he durst not ask them to write to him ; but he had a fellow-collegian by whom he was tenderly beloved, and he conjured him at parting, now and then to send him news of his mother.

She was now only employed in the care of settling her favourite son. He declared for the robe ; they obtained him a dispensation from his studies ; and he was soon admitted into the sanctuary of the laws. Nothing remained wanting but an advantageous marriage ; they proposed a rich heiress : but they required of the widow the settlement of her fortune. She had the weakness to consent to

it, scarce reserving to herself sufficient to live decently; well assured that her son's fortune would be always at her disposal.

At the age of twenty-five, M. De l'Etang found himself a dapper little counsellor, neglecting his wife as much as his mother, taking great care of his own person, and paying very little regard to the bar. As it was genteel for a husband to have somebody besides his wife, L'Etang thought it his duty to set up for a man of intrigue. A young girl, whom he ogled at the play, returned his invitations, received him at her lodgings with a great deal of politeness, told him he was charming, which he very readily believed, and in a short time eased him of a pocket-book with ten thousand crowns. But as there is no such thing as eternal love, this perjured beauty quitted him at the expiration of three months, for a young English lord, equally foolish, and more magnificent. L'Etang, who could not conceive how they could dismiss such a person as himself, resolved to avenge himself by taking a mistress still more celebrated, and loading her with favours. His new conquest raised him a thousand rivals; and when he compared himself with a crowd of adorers, who sighed for her in vain, he had the pleasure of thinking himself more amiable, as he found himself more happy. However, having perceived that he was not without uneasiness, she was desirous of convincing him, that there was nothing in the world which she was not resolved to quit for him, and proposed, for the sake of avoiding impertinence, that they should go together to Paris, to forget all the world, and live only for each other. L'Etang was transported

at this mark of tenderness. Every thing is got ready for the journey ; they set out, they arrive, and chuse their retreat in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal. Fatima (that was the name of the beauty) asked and obtained, without difficulty, a coach to take the air. L'Etang was surprized at the number of friends he found in this good city. These friends had never seen him, but his merit attracted them in crowds. Fatima received none but L'Etang's company, and he was always very sure of his friends and of her. This charming woman had, however, one weakness ; she believed in dreams. One night she had one, which could not, she said, be effaced from her memory. L'Etang wanted to know this dream which engaged her attention so seriously. " I dreamed," said she, " that I was in a delicious apartment. In it was a damask bed of three different colours, with tapestry and sophas suited to this superb bed ; pannels dazzling with gold, polished cabinets, porcelaine of Japan, China monkees, the prettiest in the world ; but all this was nothing. A toilette was ready set out ; I drew near to it ; what did I see ? My heart beats at it : a casket of diamonds ; and what diamonds ! the most beautiful aigrette, the finest ear-rings, the handsomest esclavage, and a river without end. I am sure, Sir, something very extraordinary will happen to me. This dream has effected me very strongly, and my dreams never deceive me."

It was in vain that M. De l'Etang employed all his eloquence to persuade her that dreams signified nothing ; she maintained that this dream did signify something ; and, at length, he feared lest

some of his rivals should propose to realise it. He was under a necessity, therefore, of capitulating; and, except in some few circumstances; resolved to accomplish it himself. We may easily judge, that this experiment did not cure her of dreaming; she took a delight in it, and dreamed so often, that even the fortune of good Master Corée became hardly any thing more than a dream. M. De l'Etang's young wife, to whom this journey had not been very agreeable, demanded to be separated from the fortunes of a husband who abandoned her; and her portion, which he was obliged to restore, put him still less at his ease.

Play is a resource. L'Etang pretended to excel at piquet; his friends, who made up a common purse, all betted for him, while one of them played against him. Every time that he threw out, "Faith," said one of the betters, "that is well played!"—"There is no playing better," said another. In short, M. De l'Etang played the best in the world, but he never had the aces. While they insensibly stripped him, the faithful Fatima, who perceived his decline, dreamed one night that she quitted him, and left him the next day; however as it is mortifying to fall off, he piqued himself upon his honour, and would not abate any thing of his grandeur, so that in a few years he was ruined.

He was now at his last shifts, when the good lady his mother, who had not managed her own reserve better, wrote to him to desire some money. He returned her answer, that he was very sorry; but that, far from being able to send her any relief, he stood in need of it himself. The alarm

was already spread among their creditors, and the question was, who should first seize the ruins of their fortune—"What have I done," said the distracted mother, "I have stripped myself of all for a son who has squandered every thing."

In the mean time, what became of the unfortunate Jemmy? Jemmy, with a good understanding, the best heart, the handsomest figure in the world, and his little venture, was happily arrived at St. Domingo. It is well known how easy a Frenchman of good morals, and a good person, finds it to establish himself in the isles. The name of Corée, his own good sense and prudence, soon acquired him the confidence of the inhabitants. With the assistances that were offered him, he purchased himself a settlement, cultivated it, and rendered it flourishing; trade, which was then very brisk, enriched him in a short time, and in the space of five years he was become the object of the jealousy of the handsomest and richest widows and damsels of the colony. But, alas! his fellow-collegian, who till that time had given him none but the most satisfactory news, now sent him word that his brother was ruined, and that his mother, abandoned by every body, was driven to the most dreadful extremities. This fatal letter was bedewed with tears. "Ah, my poor mother," cried he, "I will fly to her relief." He would not trust his charge to any body. Accident, infidelity, neglect, or delay, might deprive her of the assistance sent by her son, and leave her to perish in indigence and despair.—"Nothing ought to detain a son," said he to himself, "when the honour and life of a mother are at stake."

With these sentiments Corée was only employed in the care of rendering his riches portable. He sold all his possessions, and this sacrifice cost him nothing ; but he could not but feel some regret for a more precious treasure which he left in America. Lucella, the young widow of an old colonist, who had left her immense riches, had cast upon Corée one of those looks which seem to penetrate the bottom of the soul, and to unravel his character ; one of those looks which decide the opinion, determine the inclination, and the sudden and confused effect of which is generally taken for a sympathetic motion. She had imagined she saw in this young man every thing that could render a virtuous and sensible woman happy ; and her love for him had not waited for reflection to give it birth and discover itself. Corée, on his part, had distinguished her among her rivals, as the most worthy of captivating the heart of a wise and virtuous man. Lucella, with a figure the most noble and interesting ; an air the most animated, and yet the most modest ; a brown complexion, but fresher than the rose ; hair of the blackness of the ebony, and teeth of a dazzling whiteness and enamel ; the stature and gait of one of Diana's nymphs ; the smile and look of the companions of Venus ; Lucella, with all these charms, was endowed with that greatness of spirit, that loftiness of temper, that justness in her ideas, that rectitude in her sentiments, which makes us say, though not with the greatest propriety, that such a woman has a soul of a man. It was not one of Lucella's principles to be ashamed of a virtuous inclination. Scarce had Corée confessed to her the choice of his heart, when he ob-

tained from her, without evasion, a like confession, by way of reply ; and their mutual inclination becoming more tender, in proportion as it became more considered, now wanted nothing but to be consecrated at the altar. Some disputes, concerning the inheritance of Lucella's husband, had retarded their happiness. These disputes were on the point of being settled, when the letter from Corée's friend arrived, to tear him all at once from what he held dearest in the world except his mother. He repaired to the beautiful widow's, shewed her the letter from his friend, and asked her advice. " I flatter myself," said she, " that you have no need of it. Convert your wealth into mercantile commodities, hasten to the relief of your mother, pay your respects to all your friends, and come back again : my fortune awaits you. If I die, my will shall secure it to you ; if I live, instead of a will, you know what right you will have over it." Corée, struck with gratitude and admiration, seized the hands of this generous woman, and bathed them with his tears ; but as he was launching out in encomiums on her, " Go," said she to him, " you are a child : entertain not the prejudices of Europe. The moment a woman does any thing tolerably handsome, they cry her up as a prodigy, as if Nature had not given us a soul. Should you, in my place, now, be much pleased to see me in astonishment, and viewing you, as a phenomenon, the pure emotion of a good heart?"—" Pardon me," said Corée, " I ought to have expected it ; but your principles, your sentiments, the ease, the simplicity of your virtues, enchant me : I admire them without being amazed at them."—" Go, my dear," said she to

him, saluting him; "I am thine, such as God has made me. Do your duty, and return as soon as possible."

He embarks, and with him he embarks all his fortune. The passage was pretty favourable till they came towards the Canaries; but there, their vessel, pursued by a corsair from Morocco, was obliged to seek for safety in its sails. The corsair which chased them was on the point of joining them; and the captain, terrified at the danger of being boarded, was going to strike to the pirate. "Oh, my dear mother!" cried Corée, embracing the casket in which were contained all his hopes, and then tearing his hair with grief and rage. "No," said he, "this barbarous African shall have my heart first." Then addressing himself to the captain, the crew, and the affrighted passengers, "What! my friends," said he, "shall we surrender ourselves like cowards? Shall we suffer this robber to carry us to Morocco, loaded with irons; and to sell us like beasts? Are we disarmed? Are the people on board the enemy's ship invulnerable? or are they braver than we? They want to board us: let them! what then? we shall have them the nearer." His courage reanimated their spirits; and the captain, embracing him, extolled him for having set the example. Every thing is now got ready for defence; the corsair boards them; the vessels dash against each other: death flies on both sides. In a short time the two ships are covered with a cloud of smoke and fire. The cannonade ceases; day-light appears, and the sword singles out its victims. Corée, sabre in hand, made a dreadful slaughter. The moment he saw an African throw himself on

board, he ran up to him, and cleaved him in two, crying out, "O my poor mother!" His fury was as that of the lioness defending her little ones; it was the last effort of nature in despair, and the gentlest, the most sensible heart that ever existed, was now become the most violent and bloody. The captain discerned him every where, his eyes flashing fire, and his arm drenched in blood. "This is not a mortal," said he to his companions, "it is a god who fights for us!" His example kindled their courage. He finds himself at length hand to hand with the chief of the barbarians. "My God!" cried he, "have pity on my mother!" and, at these words, with a back-handed blow, he let out the pirate's bowels. From this moment the victory was decisive: the few who were left of the crew of the corsair begged their lives, and were put in irons. Corée's vessel, with her booty, arrives at length on the coast of France; and this worthy son, without allowing himself one night's repose, repairs with his treasure to his unhappy mother. He finds her on the brink of the grave, and in a state more dreadful than death itself; stripped of all relief, and in the care of one man servant, who disgusted at suffering the indigence to which she was reduced, paid her, with regret, the last duties of an humiliating pity. The shame of her situation had induced her to forbid this servant from admitting any person, except the priest and the charitable physician who sometimes visited her. Corée asks to see her, and is refused.

"Tell my name," said he to the servant.—
"And what is your name?"—"Jemmy." The servant approaches the bed. "A stranger," says

he, “ asks to see you, Madam.”—“ Alas ! and who is this stranger ? ”—“ He says that his name is Jemmy.” At this name her heart was so violently agitated, that she was near expiring. “ Ah ! my son,” said she, with a faint voice, and lifting upon him her dying eye-lids. “ Ah ! my son, at what a moment are you returned to see your mother ! Your hand will soon close her eyes.” What was the grief of this pious and tender child, to see that mother whom he had left in the bosom of luxury and opulence, to see her now in a bed surrounded with rags, the very description of which would make the stomach rise, if it were permitted me to give it. “ Oh, my mother,” cried he, throwing himself on this bed of woe : his sobs choaked his voice, and the rivers of tears with which he bathed the bosom of his expiring mother, were for a long time the only expression of his grief and love. “ Heaven punishes me,” replied she, “ for having loved too much an unnatural son ; for having——” He interrupted her : “ All is atoned for, my dear mother,” said this virtuous young man ; “ live : Fortune has loaded me with her favours ; I come to pour them into the lap of Nature ; it is for you that they are given me. Live ! I have enough to make you love life.”—“ Ah ! my dear child, if I have any desire to live, it is to expiate my injustice ; it is to love a son of whom I was not worthy ; a son whom I have deprived of his inheritance.” At these words she covered her face, as unworthy to see the light. “ Ah, Madam ! ” cried he, pressing her in his arms, “ deprive me not of the sight of my mother. I am come across the seas to seek and relieve her ! ” At this instant arrive the priest and physician.

“ See, there,” said she, “ my child, the only comforts that Heaven has left me: without their charity I should now be no more.” Corée embraces them, bursting into tears. “ My friends!” says he to them, “ my benefactors! what do I not owe you! but for you I should no longer have had a mother: go on, recal her to life. I am rich; I am come to make her happy. Redouble your cares, your consolations, your assistances: restore her to me.” The physician prudently saw that this situation was too violent for the sick lady. “ Go, Sir,” said he to Corée, “ trust in our zeal, and think of nothing but to provide her a convenient and wholesome lodging; to which the lady shall this evening be removed.”

Change of air, proper nourishment, or rather the revolution created by joy, and the calm which succeeded it, insensibly reanimated the organs of life. A profound chagrin had been the ground of the disease; consolation was the remedy. Corée learned that his unhappy brother had just perished in misery. I draw a veil over the frightful picture of his death, which he had but too justly merited. They kept the knowledge of it from a feeling mother, who was as yet too weak to support, without expiring, a new attack of grief. She learned it at last, when her health was better established. All the wounds of her heart were now opened afresh, and the maternal tears trickled from her eyes. But Heaven, while it took away from her a son unworthy of her tenderness, restored her one who had merited it by every sensible and touching tie of nature and virtue. He confided to her the desires of his soul; which were to em-

brace at once his mother and his wife. Madam Corée seized with joy the opportunity of going over with her son to America. A city, filled with her follies and misfortunes, was to her an odious place of residence ; and the moment in which she embarked restored her a new life. Heaven, which protects piety, granted them a favourable passage, Lucella received the mother of her lover as she would have received her own. Hymen made of these lovers the happiest couple, and their days still roll on in that unalterable peace, in those pure and serene pleasures, which are the portion of virtue.

THE SHEPHERDESS OF THE ALPS.

IN the mountains of Savoy, not far from the road from Briançon to Modena, is a solitary valley, the sight of which inspires travellers with a pleasing melancholy. Three little hills in form of an amphitheatre, on which are scattered, at a great distance from each other, some shepherds huts, torrents that fall from the mountains, clumps of trees here and there, pastures always green, form the ornament of this rural place.

The Marchioness of Fonrose was returning from France to Italy with her husband. The axle-tree of their carriage broke, and as the day was on the

decline, they were obliged to seek in this valley for some shelter to pass the night. As they advanced towards one of the huts, they saw a flock going that way, conducted by a shepherdess whose gait astonished them. They drew nearer, and heard a heavenly voice, whose plaintive and moving accents made the echoes groan.

“How the setting sun still glitters with a gentle light! It is thus,” said she, “that at the end of a painful race, the exhausted soul departs to grow young again in the pure source of immortality. But, alas! how distant is the period, and how long is life!” On saying these words, the shepherdess retired, with her head inclined; but the negligence of her attitude seemed to give still more nobleness and majesty to her person and deportment.

Struck with what they saw, and still more with what they had just heard, the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose redoubled their pace, in order to overtake the shepherdess whom they admired. But what was their surprize, when under the plainest head-dress, beneath the most humble garb, they saw all the graces, all the beauties united! “Child,” said the marchioness to her, on seeing that she avoided them, “fear nothing; we are travellers, whom an accident obliges to seek shelter in these huts till the day: will you be so good as to be our guide?”—“I pity you, Madam,” said the shepherdess to her, looking down and blushing; “these huts are inhabited by poor wretches, and you will be very ill-lodged.”—“You lodge there, without doubt, yourself,” replied the marchioness; “and I can easily endure, for one night,

the inconveniencies which you suffer always.”—
“I am formed for that,” said the shepherdess, with a modesty that charmed them. “No, surely,” said the Marquis de Fonrose, who could no longer dissemble the emotion she had caused in him; “no, you are not formed to suffer; and Fortune is very unjust! Is it possible, lovely damsel, that so many charms are buried in this desert, under that habit?”—“Fortune, Sir!” replied Adelaïde, (this was the name of the shepherdess) “Fortune is not cruel, but when she takes from us that which she has given us. My condition has its pleasures for one who knows no other; and custom creates wants for you, which shepherds do not know.”—“That may be,” said the marquis, “with respect to those whom Heaven has placed from their birth in this obscure condition; but you, astonishing damsel, you whom I admire, you who enchant me, you were never born what you now are! that air, that gait, that voice, that language, every thing betrays you. But two words which you have just now spoken, proclaim a cultivated understanding, a noble soul. Proceed; teach us what misfortune can have reduced you to this strange abasement.”—“For a man in misfortune,” replied Adelaïde, “there are a thousand ways to extricate himself; for a woman, you know, there is no other honest resource than servitude, and the choice of masters. They do well, in my opinion, who prefer the good. You are now going to see mine; you will be charmed with the innocence of their lives, the candour, the simplicity, the probity of their manners.”

While she talked thus, they arrived at the hut.

It was separated by a partition from the fold into which this incognita drove her sheep, telling them over with the most serious attention, and without deigning to take any further notice of the travellers, who contemplated her. An old man and his wife, such as Philomel and Baucis are described to us, came forth to meet their guests, with that village honesty which recalls the golden age to our minds. "We have nothing to offer you," said the good woman, "but fresh straw for a bed; milk, fruit, and rye-bread for your food; but the little that Heaven gives us, we will most heartily share with you." The travellers, on entering the hut, were surprized at the air of regularity which every thing breathed there. The table was one single plank of walnut-tree, highly polished: they saw themselves in the enamel of the earthen vessels designed for their milk. Every thing presented the image of cheerful poverty, and of the first wants of nature agreeably satisfied. "It is our dear daughter," said the good woman, "who takes upon her the management of our house. In the morning, before her flock ramble far into the country, and while they begin to graze round the house on the grass covered with dew, she washes, cleans, and sets every thing in order, with a dexterity that charms us."—"What!" said the marchioness, "is this shepherdess your daughter?"—"Ah, Madam, would to Heaven she were!" cried the good old woman: "it is my heart that calls her so, for I have a mother's love for her: but I am not so happy as to have borne her; we are not worthy to have given her birth."—"Who is she then? Whence comes she? and what misfortune

has reduced her to such a condition?"—"All that is unknown to us. It is now four years since she came in the habit of a female peasant to offer herself to keep our flocks; we would have taken her for nothing, so much had her good look and pleasing manner won upon our hearts. We doubted her being born a villager; but our questions afflicted her, and we thought it our duty to abstain from them. This respect has but augmented in proportion as we have become better acquainted with her soul; but the more we would humble ourselves to her, the more she humbles herself to us. Never had daughter more attention for her father and mother, nor officiousness more tender. She cannot obey us, because we are far from commanding her; but it seems as if she saw through us, and every thing that we can wish is done, before we perceive that she thinks of it. She is an angel come down among us to comfort our old age."—"And what is she doing now in the fold?" demanded the marchioness.—"Giving the flock fresh litter; drawing the milk from the ewes and she-goats. This milk, pressed out by her hand, seems to become the more delicate for it. I, who go and sell it in the town, cannot serve it fast enough. They think it delicious. The dear child employs herself, while she is watching the flock, in works of straw and osier, which are admired by all. Every thing becomes valuable beneath her fingers. You see, Madam," continued the good old woman, "you see here the image of an easy and quiet life: it is she that procures it to us. This heavenly daughter is never employed but to make us happy."—"Is she happy herself," demanded

the Marquis de Fonrose.—“She endeavours to persuade us so,” replied the old man; “but I have frequently observed to my wife, that at her return from the pasture, she had her eyes bedewed with tears, and the most afflicted air in the world. The moment she sees us, she affects to smile; but we see plainly that she has some grief that consumes her. We dare not ask her what it is.”——

“Ah, Madam?” said the old woman, “how I suffer for this child, when she persists in leading out her flocks to pasture in spite of rain and frost! Many a time have I thrown myself on my knees, in order to prevail with her to let me go in her stead; but I never could prevail on her. She goes out at sun-rise, and returns in the evening, benumbed with cold. ‘Judge now,’ says she to me, ‘whether I would suffer you to quit your fire-side, and expose yourself, at your age, to the rigours of the season. I am scarce able to withstand it myself.’ Nevertheless, she brings home under her arm the wood with which we warm ourselves; and when I complain of the fatigue she gives herself: ‘Have done, have done, my good mother, it is by exercise that I keep myself from cold: labour is made for my age.’ In short, Madam, she is as good as she is handsome, and my husband and I never speak of her but with tears in our eyes.”——

“And if she should be taken from you?” said the marchioness——

“We should lose,” interrupted the old man, “all that we hold dearest in the world; but if she herself was to be happier for it, we would die happy in that consolation.”——

“Oh, aye,” replied the old woman, shedding tears; “Heaven grant her a fortune worthy of her, if it be possible! It was my hope, that that hand so dear to me, would

have closed my eyes, for I love her more than my life." Her arrival broke off their discourse.

She appeared with a pail of milk in one hand, a basket of fruit in the other ; and after saluting them with an ineffable grace, she directed her attention to the care of the family, as if nobody observed her. " You give yourself a great deal of trouble, my dear child," said the marchioness. —" I endeavour, Madam," replied she, " to fulfil the intention of those I serve, who are desirous of entertaining you in the best manner they are able. You will have," continued she, spreading over the table a coarse but very white cloth, " you will have a frugal and rural repast : this bread is not the whitest in the world, but it tastes pretty well ; the eggs are fresh, the milk is good ; and the fruits, which I have just now gathered, are such as the season affords." The diligence, the attention, the noble and becoming grace with which this wonderful shepherdess paid them all the duties of hospitality ; the respect she shewed for her master and mistress, whether she spoke to them, or whether she sought to read in their eyes what they wanted her to do ; all these things filled the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose with astonishment and admiration. As soon as they were laid down on the bed of fresh straw which the shepherdess had prepared for them herself. " Our adventure has the air of a prodigy," said they one to another : " we must clear up this mystery ; we must carry away this child along with us."

At break of day, one of the men who had been up all night mending their carriage, came to inform them that it was thoroughly repaired. Madam De Fonrose, before she set out, ordered the

shepherdess to be called to her. "Without wanting to pry," said she, "into the secret of your birth, and the cause of your misfortune, all that I see, all that I hear, interests me in your favour. I see that your spirit has raised you above ill-fortune; and that you have suited your sentiments to your present condition: your charms and your virtues render it respectable, but yet it is unworthy of you. I have it in my power, amiable stranger, to procure you a happier lot; my husband's intentions agree entirely with mine. I have a considerable estate at Turin: I want a friend of my own sex, and I shall think I bear away from this place an invaluable treasure, if you will accompany me. Separate from the proposal, from the suit I now make you, all notion of servitude: I do not think you made for that condition; but though my prepossessions in your favour should deceive me, I had rather raise you above your birth, than leave you beneath it. I repeat to you, it is a friend of my own sex that I want to attach to me. For the rest, be under no concern for the fate of these good people: there is nothing which I would not do to make them amends for your loss; at least they shall have wherewith to spend the remainder of their lives happily, according to their condition; and it is from your hand that they shall receive the benefits I intend them." The old folks who were present at this discourse, kissing the hands of the marchioness, and throwing themselves at her feet, begged the young incognita to accept of these generous offers: they represented to her with tears, that they were on the brink of the grave; that she had no other consolation than to make them happy in their old age; and that at their

death, when left to herself, their habitation would become a dreadful solitude. The shepherdess, embracing them, mingled her tears with their's; she returned thanks to the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose for their goodness, with a sensibility that made her still more beautiful. "I cannot," said she, "accept of your courtesies. Heaven has marked out my place, and its will is accomplished; but your goodness has made impressions on my soul which will never be effaced. The respectable name of Fonrose shall ever be present to my imagination. I have but one favour more to ask you," said she, blushing, and looking down; "that is, to be so good as to bury this adventure in eternal silence, and to leave the world for ever ignorant of the lot of an unknown wretch, who wants to live and die in oblivion." The Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose, moved with pity and grief, redoubled a thousand times their instances: she was immoveable, and the old people, the travellers, and the shepherdess, separated with tears in their eyes.

During the journey, the marquis and his lady were taken up with nothing but this adventure. They thought they had been in a dream. Their imaginations being filled with this kind of romance, they arrive at Turin. It may easily be imagined that they did not keep silence, and this was an inexhaustible subject for reflections and conjectures. The young Fonrose, being present at these discourses, lost not one circumstance. He was at that age wherein the imagination is most lively, and the heart most susceptible: but he was one of those characters whose sensibility displays not itself outwardly, and who are so much the more

violently agitated, when they are so at all, as the sentiment which affects them does not weaken itself by any sort of dissipation. All that Fonrose hears said of the charms, virtues, and misfortunes of the shepherdess of Savoy, kindles in his soul the most ardent desire of seeing her. He forms to himself an image of her, which is always present to him. He compares her to every thing that he sees, and every thing that he sees vanishes before her. But the more his impatience redoubles, the more care he takes to conceal it. Turin becomes odious to him. The valley, which conceals from the world its brightest ornament, attracts his whole soul. It is there that happiness waits him. But if his project is known, he foresees the greatest obstacles: they will never consent to the journey he meditates; it is the folly of a young man, the consequences of which they will be apprehensive of; the shepherdess herself, affrighted at his pursuits, will not fail to withdraw herself from them; he loses her, if he should be known. After all these reflections, which employed his thoughts for three months, he takes a resolution to quit every thing for her sake; to go, under the habit of a shepherd, to seek her in her solitude, and to die there, or to draw her out of it.

He disappears; they see him no more. His parents become alarmed at his absence: their fear increases every day; their expectations disappointed throw the whole family into affliction; the fruitlessness of their enquiries completes their despair; a duel, an assassination, every thing that is most unfortunate, presents itself to their imagination; and these unhappy parents ended their researches by lamenting the death of their son, their

only hope. While his family are in mourning, Fonrose, under the habit of a shepherd, presents himself to the inhabitants of the hamlets adjoining to the vallies, which they had but too well described to him. His ambition is accomplished: they trust him with the care of their flocks.

The first day after his arrival, he left them to wander at random, solely attentive to discover the places to which the shepherdess led.

“Let us manage,” said he, “the timidity of this solitary fair-one: if she is unfortunate, her heart has need of consolation; if it be nothing but a desire to banish herself from the world, and the pleasure of a tranquil and innocent life that retains her here, she will feel some dull moments, and wish for company to amuse or console her. If I succeed so far as to render that agreeable to her, she will soon find it necessary; then I shall take counsel from the situation of her soul. After all, we are here alone, as it were, in the world, and we shall be every thing to each other. From confidence to friendship the passage is not long; and from friendship to love, at our age, the road is still easier.” And what was Fonrose’s age when he reasoned thus? Fonrose was eighteen: but three months reflection on the same object unfolds a number of ideas. While he was thus giving himself up to his imagination, with his eyes wandering over the country, he hears at a distance that voice, the charms of which had been so often extolled to him. The emotion it excited in him was as lively as if she had been unexpected. “It is here,” said the shepherdess in her plaintive strains; “it is here that my heart enjoys the only happiness that remains to it. My grief has a luxury in it for my

soul ; I prefer its bitterness to the deceitful sweets of joy." These accents rent the sensible heart of Fonrose. "What," said he, "can be the cause of the chagrin that consumes her? How pleasing would it be to console her!" A hope still more pleasing presumed, not without difficulty, to flatter his desires. He feared to alarm the shepherdess if he resigned himself imprudently to his impatience of seeing her near, and for the first time it was sufficient to have heard her. The next day he went out again to lead his sheep to pasture ; and after observing the route which she had taken, he placed himself at the foot of the rock, which the day before repeated to him the sounds of that touching voice. I forgot to mention that Fonrose, to the handsomest figure had joined those talents which the young nobility of Italy do not neglect. He played on the hautboy like Besuzzi, of whom he had taken his lessons, and who formed at that time the delight of Europe. Adelaïde, buried in her own afflicting ideas, had not yet made her voice heard, and the echoes kept silence. All on a sudden this silence was interrupted by the plaintive sounds of Fonrose's hautboy. These unknown sounds excited in the soul of Adelaïde a surprize mingled with anxiety. The keepers of the flocks that wandered on the hills had never caused her to hear aught before but the sounds of rustic pipes. Immoveable and attentive, she seeks with her eyes who it was that could form such harmonious sounds. She perceives, at a distance, a young shepherd seated in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which he fed his flock ; she draws near, to hear him the better. "See," said she, "what the

mere instinct of nature can do! The ear teaches this shepherd all the refinements of art. Can any one breathe purer sounds? What delicacy in his inflections! what variety in his gradations! Who can say after this, that taste is not the gift of nature? Ever since Adelaïde had dwelled in this solitude, this was the first time that her grief, suspended by an agreeable distraction, had delivered up her soul to the sweet emotion of pleasure. Fonrose, who saw her approach and seat herself at the foot of a willow to hear him, pretended not to perceive her. He seized, without seeming to affect it, the moment of her retreat, and managed the course of his own flock in such a manner as to meet her on a declivity of a hill, where the road crossed. He cast only one look on her, and continued his route, as if taken up with nothing but the care of his flock. But what beauties had that one look ran over; what eyes! what a divine mouth! How much more ravishing still would those features be, which are so noble and touching in their languor, if love reanimated them! He saw plainly that grief alone had withered in their spring the roses on her lovely cheeks; but of so many charms, that which had moved him most was the noble elegance of her person and her gait: in the ease of her motions he thought he saw a young cedar, whose straight and flexible trunk yields gently to the zephyrs. This image, which love had just engraven in flaming characters on his memory, took up all his thoughts. “How feebly,” said he, “have they painted to me this beauty, unknown to the world, whose adoration she merits! And it is a desert that she inhabits! and

it is thatch that covers her ! She who ought to see kings at her feet, employs herself in tending an humble flock ! Beneath what garments has she presented herself to my view ? She adorns every thing, and nothing disfigures her. Yet what a life for a frame so delicate ! Coarse food, a savage climate, a bed of straw ; great gods ! And for whom are the roses made ? Yes, I will draw her out of this state, so much too hard and too unworthy of her." Sleep interrupted his reflections, but effaced not her image. Adelaïde, on her side, sensibly struck with the youth, the beauty of Fonrose, ceased not to admire the caprices of fortune. " Where is nature going," said she, " to re-assemble together so many talents and so many graces ! But, alas ! those gifts which to him are here but useless, would be perhaps his misfortune in a more elevated state. What evils does not beauty create in the world ! Unhappy as I am, is it for me to set any value on it ?" This melancholy reflection began to poison in her soul the pleasures she had tasted ; she reproached herself for having been sensible of it, and resolved to deny it herself for the future. The next day Fonrose thought he perceived that she avoided his approach ; he fell into a profound melancholy. " Could she suspect my disguise ?" said he. " Should I have betrayed it myself ?" This uneasiness possessed him all the live-long day, and his hautboy was-neglected. Adelaïde was not so far but she could easily have heard it ; and his silence astonished her. She began to sing herself. " It seems," said the song, " that every thing around me partakes of my heaviness : the birds send forth none but sorrowful notes ;

echo replies to me in complaints ; the zephyrs moan amidst these leaves ; the sound of the brooks imitates my sighs, one might say that they flowed with tears.” Fonrose, softened by these strains, could not help replying to them. Never was concert more moving than that of his hautboy with Adelaïde’s voice. “ O Heaven !” said she, “ it is enchantment ! I dare not believe my ears : it is not a shepherd, it is a god whom I have heard ! Can the natural sense of harmony inspire such concord of sounds ?” While she was speaking thus, a rural or rather a celestial melody, made the valley resound. Adelaïde thought she saw those prodigies realizing which poetry attributes to her sprightly sister music. Astonished, confounded, she knew not whether she ought to take herself away, or resign herself up to this enchantment. But she perceived the shepherd, whom she had just heard, re-assembling his flock in order to regain his hut. “ He knows not,” says she, “ the delight he diffuses around him ; his undisguised soul is not in the least vain of it : he waits not even for the praises I owe him. Such is the power of music : it is the only talent that places its happiness in itself ; all the others require witnesses. This gift of heaven was granted to man in his innocence : it is the purest of all pleasures. Alas ! it is the only one I still relish ; and I consider this shepherd as a new echo, who is come to answer my grief.”

The following day Fonrose affected to keep at a distance in his turn : Adelaïde was afflicted at it. “ Chance,” said she, “ seemed to have procured me this feeble consolation ; I gave myself up to it too easily, and, to punish me, she has de-

prived me of it." At last, one day, when they happened to meet on the declivity of the hill, "Shepherd," said she to him, "are you leading your flocks far off?" These first words of Adelaïde caused an emotion in Fonrose which almost deprived him of the use of his voice. "I do not know," said he, hesitating; "it is not I who lead my flock, but my flock leads me; these places are better known to it than to me: I leave to it the choice of the best pastures."—"Whence are you, then?" said the shepherdess to him. "I was born beyond the Alps," replied Fonrose. "Were you born among shepherds?" continued she. "As I am a shepherd," said he, looking down, "I must have been born to be one."—"I doubt it," replied Adelaïde, viewing him with attention. "Your talents, your language, your very air, all tell me, that fate had placed you in a better situation."—"You are very obliging," said Fonrose; "but ought you of all persons to believe that nature refuses every thing to shepherds? Were you born to be a queen?" Adelaïde blushed at this answer; and changing the subject, "The other day," said she, "by the sound of a hautboy you accompanied my songs with an art that would be a prodigy in a simple shepherd."—"It is your voice that is so," replied Fonrose, "in a simple shepherdess."—"But has nobody instructed you?"—"I have, like yourself, no other guide than my heart and my ear. You sung, I was melted; what my heart feels, my hautboy expresses; I breathe my soul into it. This is the whole of my secret; nothing in the world is easier."—"That is incredible," said Adelaïde. "I said the very same on

hearing you," replied Fonrose, " but I was forced to believe it. What will you say? Nature and love sometimes take a delight in assembling their most precious gifts in persons of the most humble fortune, to shew that there is no condition which they cannot ennoble."

During this discourse, they advanced towards the valley; and Fonrose, whom a ray of hope now animated, began to make the air resound with those sprightly notes which pleasure inspires. " Ah, pr'ythee now!" said Adelaïde, " spare my soul the troublesome image of a sentiment which she cannot relish. This solitude is consecrated to grief; her echoes are not used to repeat the accents of a profane joy; here every thing groans in concert with me."—" I also have cause to complain!" replied the young man; and these words, pronounced with a sigh, were followed by a long silence. " You have cause to complain!" replied Adelaïde; " is it of mankind? is it of fortune?"—" No matter," said he, " but I am not happy: ask me no more."—" Hear me," said Adelaïde: " Heaven gives us to each other as a consolation in our troubles; mine are like an overwhelming load, which weighs down my heart. Whoever you may be, if you know misfortune, you ought to be compassionate, and I believe you worthy of my confidence; but promise me that it shall be mutual."—" Alas!" said Fonrose, " my misfortunes are such, that I shall perhaps be condemned never to reveal them." This mystery but redoubled the curiosity of Adelaïde. " Repair to-morrow," said she to him, " to the foot of that hill, beneath that old tufted oak where you have heard me moan.

There I will teach you things that will excite your pity." Fonrose passed the night in the utmost emotion. His fate depended on what he was going to hear. A thousand alarming ideas agitated him by turns. He dreaded, above all, the being driven to despair by the communication of an unsuccessful and faithful love. "If she is in love," said he, "I am undone!"

He repairs to the appointed place. He sees Adelaïde arrive, the day was overcast with clouds, and nature mourning seemed to forebode the sadness of their conversation. As soon as they were seated at the foot of the oak, Adelaïde spoke thus. "You see these stones which the grass begins to cover; they are the tomb of the most tender, the most virtuous of men, whom my love and my imprudence have cost his life. I am a French woman, of a family of distinction; and, to my misfortune, too rich. The Count D'Orestan conceived the tenderest passion for me; I was sensible of it, sensible to excess. My parents opposed the inclination of our hearts, and my frantic passion made me consent to a marriage sacred to virtuous souls, but disallowed by the laws. Italy was at that time the theatre of war. My husband went thither to join the corps which he was to command; I followed him as far as Briançon: my foolish tenderness retained him there two days in spite of himself: for he, a young man, full of honour, prolonged his stay there with the greatest reluctance. He sacrificed his duty to me: but what would not I have sacrificed to him? In a word, I required it of him; and he could not withstand my tears. He took leave with a foreboding which alarmed me. I accompanied him as far as

this valley, where I received his adieus ; and in order to wait to hear from him, I returned to Briangon. A few days after a report was spread of a battle. I doubted whether D'Orestan had got thither ; I wished it for his honour, I dreaded it for my love ; when I received a letter from him, which I thought very consoling, “ I shall be such a day, at such an hour,” said he, “ in the valley, and under the oak where we parted ; I shall repair there alone ; I conjure you to go there, and expect me, likewise, alone ; I live yet but for you.” How great was my mistake ! I perceived in his billet nothing more than an impatience to see me again, and this impatience made me happy. I repaired, then, to this very oak. D'Orestan arrives ; and after the tenderest reception : ‘ You would have it so, my dear Adelaïde,’ said he, ‘ I have failed in my duty at the most important moment of my life. What I feared is come to pass. A battle has happened, my regiment charged. It performed prodigies of valour, and I was not there. I am dishonoured, lost without resource. I reproach not you with my misfortune, but I have now but one sacrifice more to make you, and my heart is come to accomplish it.’ At this discourse, pale, trembling, and scarce breathing, I took my husband into my arms. I felt my blood congeal in my veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell down senseless. He availed himself of my fainting to tear himself from my bosom ; and in a little time I was recalled to life by the report of a shot which killed him. I will not describe to you the situation I was in ; it is inexpressible ; and the tears which you now see flowing, the sighs that stifle my voice are but a feeble image of it. After passing



Painted by A. Perigal.

Engraved by C. Pye.

SHEPHERDESS OF THE ALPS.

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the whole night beside his bloody corpse, in a grief that stupified me, my first care was to bury along with him my shame : my hands dug out his grave. I seek not to move you ; but the moment in which the earth was to separate me from the sorrowful remains of my husband, was a thousand times more dreadful to me than that can be which is to separate my body from my soul. Spent with grief, and deprived of nourishment, my enfeebled hands took up two whole days in hollowing out this tomb with inconceivable labour. When my strength forsook me, I reposed myself on the livid and cold bosom of my husband. In short, I paid him the rites of sepulture, and my heart promised him to wait in these parts till death reunites us. In the mean time, cruel hunger began to devour my exhausted entrails. I thought it criminal to refuse nature the supports of a life more grievous than death. I changed my garments for the plain habit of a shepherdess, and I embraced that condition as my only refuge. From that time my only consolation has been to come here, and weep over this grave, which shall be my own. You see," continued she, "with what sincerity I open my soul to you. With you I may henceforth weep at liberty ; it is a consolation I had need of ; but I expect the same confidence from you. Do not think that you have deceived me. I see clearly that the state of a shepherd is as foreign, and newer to you than to me. You are young, perhaps sensible ; and, if I may believe my conjectures, our misfortunes have the same source, and you have loved as well as I. We shall only feel the more for one another. I consider you as a friend, whom Heaven, touched by my misfortunes, deigns to

send me in my solitude. Do you also consider me as a friend, capable of giving you, if not salutary counsel, at least a consolatory example."

"You pierce my very soul," said Fonrose, overcome with what he had just heard; "and whatever sensibility you may attribute to me, you are very far from conceiving the impression that the recital of your misfortunes has made on me. Alas! why cannot I return it with that confidence which you testify towards me, and of which you are so worthy? But I warned you of it; I foresaw it. Such is the nature of my sorrows, that an eternal silence must shut them up in the bottom of my heart. You are very unhappy," added he with a profound sigh; "I am still more unhappy," this is all I can tell you. Be not offended at my silence; it is terrible to me to be condemned to it. The constant companion of all your steps, I will soften your labours: I will partake of all your griefs: I will see you weep over this grave, I will mingle my tears with yours. You shall not repent having deposited your woes in a heart, alas! but too sensible."—"I repent me of it from this moment," said she with confusion; and both, with downcast eyes, retired in silence from each other. Adelaïde, on quitting Fonrose, thought she saw in his countenance the impression of a profound grief. "I have revived," said she, "the sense of his sorrows; and what must be their horror, when he thinks himself still more wretched than I!"

From that day more sighing and more conversation followed between Fonrose and Adelaïde. They neither sought nor avoided one another: looks of consternation formed almost their only language; if he found her weeping over the grave of

her husband, his heart was seized with pity, jealousy, and grief; he contemplated her in silence, and answered her sighs with deep groans.

Two months had passed away in this painful situation, and Adelaïde saw Fonrose's youth wither as a flower. The sorrow which consumed him afflicted her so much the more deeply, as the cause of it was unknown to her. She had not the most distant suspicion that she was the cause of it. However, as it is natural, when two sentiments divide a soul, for one to weaken the other, Adelaïde's regret on account of the death of D'Orestan became less lively every day, in proportion as she delivered herself up to the pity with which Fonrose inspired her. She was very sure that this pity had nothing but what was innocent in it; it did not even come into her head to defend herself from it; and the object of this generous sentiment being continually present to her view, awakened it every instant. The languor into which this young man was fallen became such, that she thought it her duty not to leave him any longer to himself. "You are dying," said she to him, and you add to my griefs that of seeing you consumed with sorrow under my eye, without being able to apply any remedy. If the recital of the imprudences of my youth has not inspired you with a contempt for me; if the purest and tenderest friendship be dear to you: in short, if you would not render me more unhappy than I was before I knew you, confide to me the cause of your griefs: you have no person in the world but myself to assist you in supporting them; your secret, though it were more important than mine, fear not that I shall divulge. The death of my husband has placed a gulph betwixt

the world and me; and the confidence which I require will soon be buried in this grave, to which grief is with slow steps conducting me.”—“I hope to go before you,” said Fonrose, bursting into tears. “Suffer me to finish my deplorable life without leaving you afterwards the reproach of having shortened its course.”—“O Heaven, what do I hear,” cried she with distraction. “What I! can I have contributed to the evils which overwhelm you? Go on; you pierce my soul! What have I done? what have I said? Alas, I tremble! Good heaven! hast thou sent me into the world only to create wretches? Speak; nay, speak; you must no longer conceal who you are; you have said too much to dissemble any longer.”—“Well, then, I am—I am Fonrose, the son of those travellers, whom you filled with admiration and respect. All that they related of your virtues and your charms inspired me with the fatal design of coming to see you in this disguise. I have left my family in the deepest sorrow, thinking they have lost me, and lamenting my death. I have seen you; I know what attaches you to this place; I know that the only hope that is left me, is to die here adoring you. Give me no useless counsel or unjust reproaches. My resolution is as firm and immoveable as your own. If in betraying my secret you disturb the last moments of a life almost at an end, you will to no purpose injure me, who would never offend you.”

Adelaïde, confounded, endeavoured to calm the despair into which this young man was plunged. “Let me,” said she, “do to his parents the service of restoring him to life; let me save their only hope: Heaven presents me with

this opportunity of acknowledging their favours." Thus, far from making him furious by a misplaced rigour, all the tenderness of pity, and consolation of friendship, were put in practice in order to soothe him.

"Heavenly angel!" cried Fonrose, "I see all the reluctance that you feel to make any one unhappy: your heart is with him who reposes in this grave: I see that nothing can detach you from him; I see how ingenuous your virtue is to conceal your woe from me; I perceive it in all its extent, I am overwhelmed by it, but I pardon you: it is your duty never to love me, it is mine ever to adore you."

Impatient of executing the design which she had conceived, Adelaïde arrives at her hut. "Father," said she to her old master, "do you think you have strength to travel to Turin? I have need of somebody whom I can trust, to give the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose the most interesting intelligence." The old man replied, that his zeal to serve them inspired him with courage. "Go," resumed Adelaïde, "you will find them bewailing the death of their only son; tell them that he is living, and in these parts, and that I will restore him to them; but that there is an indispensable necessity for their coming here themselves to fetch him."

He sets out, arrives at Turin, sends in his address as the old man of the valley of Savoy. "Ah!" cried Madam de Fonrose, "some misfortune, perhaps, has happened to our shepherdess."—"Let him come in," added the marquis, "he will tell us, perhaps, that she consents to live with

us.”—“ After the loss of my son,” said the marchioness, “ it is the only comfort I can taste in this world.” The old man is introduced. He throws himself at their feet; they raise him. “ You are lamenting the death of your son,” said he; “ I come to tell you that he lives; our dear child has discovered him in the valley; she sends me to inform you of it; but yourselves only, she says, can bring him back.” As he spoke this, surprize and joy deprived the Marchioness de Fonrose of her senses. The marquis distracted and amazed, calls out for help for his lady, recalls her to life, embraces the old man, publishes to the whole house that their son is restored to them. The marchioness resuming her spirits, “ What shall we do,” said she, taking the old man by the hands, and pressing them with tenderness, “ what shall we do in gratitude for this benefit which restores life to us?”

Every thing is ordered for their departure. They set out with the good man! they travel night and day, and repair to the valley, where their only good awaits them. The shepherdess was out at pasture: the old woman conducts them to her; they approach. How great is their surprize! their son, that well-beloved son, is by her side in the habit of a simple shepherd. Their hearts sooner than their eyes acknowledge him. “ Ah, cruel child,” cried his mother, throwing herself into his arms, “ what sorrow have you occasioned us! why withdraw yourself from our tenderness? and what is it you come here for?”—“ To adore,” said he, “ what you yourself admired.”—“ Pardon me, Madam,” said Adelaïde, while Fonrose em-

braced his father's knees, who raised him with kindness; "pardon me for having left you so long in grief: if I had known it sooner, you should have been sooner consoled." After the first emotions of nature, Fonrose relapsed into the deepest affliction. "Let us go," said the marquis, "let us go rest ourselves in the hut, and forget all the pain that this young madman has occasioned us."—"Yes, Sir, I have been mad," said Fonrose to his father, who led him by the hand. "Nothing but the loss of my reason could have suspended in my heart the emotions of nature, so as to make me forget the most sacred duties; in short, to detach myself from every thing that I held dearest in the world: but this madness you gave birth to, and I am but too severely punished for it. I love without hope the most accomplished person in the world; you see nothing, you know nothing of this incomparable woman; she is honesty, sensibility, virtue itself; I love her even to idolatry, I cannot be happy without her, and I know that she cannot be mine."—"Has she confided to you," said the marquis, "the secret of her birth?"—"I have learned enough of it," said Fonrose, "to assure you, that it is in no respect beneath my own; she has even renounced a considerable fortune to bury herself in this desert."—"And do you know what has induced her to it?"—"Yes, Sir, but it is a secret which she alone can reveal to you."—"She is married perhaps?"—"She is a widow, but her heart is not the more disengaged; her ties are but too strong."—"Daughter," said the marquis, on entering the hut, "you see that you turn the heads of the whole family of Fonrose. The

extravagant passion of this young man cannot be justified but by such a prodigy as you are. All my wife's wishes are confined to having you for a companion and a friend; this child here, will not live, unless he obtains you for his wife; I desire no less to have you for my daughter: see how many persons you will make unhappy by a refusal."—"Ah, Sir," said she, "your goodness confounds me, but hear and judge for me." Then Adelaïde, in the presence of the old man and his wife, made a recital of her deplorable adventure. She added the name of her family, which was not unknown to the Marquis de Fonrose, and ended by calling on himself to witness the inviolable fidelity she owed her spouse. At these words consternation spread itself over every countenance. Young Fonrose, choaked with sobs, threw himself into a corner of the hut, in order to give them free scope. The father, moved at the sight, flew to the assistance of his son. "See," said he, "my dear Adelaïde, to what a condition you have reduced him!" Madam de Fonrose, who was near Adelaïde, pressed her in her arms, bathing her at the same time with her tears. "Alas! why, my daughter," said she, "why will you a second time make us mourn the death of our dear child?" The old man and his wife, their eyes filled with tears, and fixed upon Adelaïde, waited her speaking. "Heaven is my witness," said Adelaïde, rising, "that I would lay down my life in gratitude for such goodness. It would heighten my misfortunes to have occasion to reproach myself with yours; but I am willing that Fonrose himself should be my judge; suffer me, if you please, to

“speak to him for a moment.” Then retiring with him alone; “Fonrose,” said she, “You know what sacred ties retain me in this place. If I could cease to love and lament a husband who loved me but too well, I should be the most despicable of women. Esteem, friendship, gratitude, are the sentiments I owe you; but none of these can cancel love: the more you have conceived for me, the more you should expect from me; it is the impossibility of fulfilling that duty, that hinders my imposing it on myself. At the same time I see you in a situation that would move the least sensible heart; it is shocking to me to be the cause, it would be still more shocking to me to hear your parents accuse me with having been your destruction. I will forget myself, then, for the present, and leave you, as far as in me lies, to be the arbiter of our destiny. It is for you to chuse that of the two situations which appears to you least painful; either to renounce me, to subdue yourself, and forget me; or to possess a woman, whose heart being full of another object, can only grant you sentiments too feeble to satisfy the wishes of a lover.”—“That is enough,” said Fonrose; “and in a soul like yours, friendship should take place for love. I shall be jealous, without doubt, of the tears which you shall bestow on the memory of another husband: but the cause of that jealousy, in rendering you more respectable, will render you also more dear in my eyes.”

“She is mine!” said he, coming and throwing himself into the arms of his parents; “it is to her respect for you, to your goodness, that I owe her, and it is owing you a second life.” From

that moment their arms were chains from which Adelaïde could not disengage herself.

Did she yield only to pity, to gratitude? I would fain believe it, in order to admire her the more : Adelaïde believed so herself. However it be, before she set out, she would revisit the tomb which she quitted but with regret. “ O, my dear D’Orestan,” said she, “ if from the womb of the dead thou canst read the bottom of my soul, thy shade has no cause to murmur at the sacrifice I make : I owe it to the generous sentiments of this virtuous family ; but my heart remains thine for ever. I go to endeavour to make them happy without any hope of being myself so.” It was not without some sort of violence they forced her from the place ; but she insisted that they should erect a monument here to the memory of her husband ; and that the hut of her old master and mistress, who followed her to Turin, should be converted into a country house, as plain as it was solitary, where she proposed to come sometimes to mourn the errors and misfortunes of her youth. Time, the assiduities of Fonrose, the fruits of her second marriage, have since opened her soul to the impressions of a new affection ; and they cite her as an example of a woman, remarkable and respectable even in her infidelity.

SOLIMAN II.

It is pleasant to see grave historians racking their brains, in order to find out great causes for great events. Sylla's valet de chambre would perhaps have laughed heartily to hear the politicians reason on the abdication of his master ; but it is not of Sylla that I am now going to speak.

Soliman II. married his slave, in contempt of the laws of the sultans. It is natural at first to paint to ourselves this slave as an accomplished beauty, with an elevated soul, an uncommon genius, and a profound skill in politics. No such thing : the fact was as follows :

Soliman grew splenetic in the midst of his glory : the various, but ready pleasures of the seraglio, were become insipid to him. " I am weary," said he one day, " of receiving here the caresses of mere machines. These slaves move my pity. Their soft docility has nothing poignant, nothing flattering. It is to hearts nourished in the bosom of liberty, that it would be delightful to make slavery agreeable."

The whimsies of a sultan are laws to his ministers. Large sums were instantly promised to such as should bring European slaves to the seraglio. In a short time there arrived three, who, like the three Graces, seemed to have divided among themselves all the charms of beauty :

Features noble and modest, eyes tender and lan-

guishing, an ingenuous temper, and a sensible soul, distinguished the touching Elmira. The entrance of the seraglio, the idea of servitude, had chilled her with a mortal terror: Soliman found her in a swoon in the arms of his women. He approaches; he recalls her to life; he encourages her: she lifts towards him a pair of large blue eyes, bedewed with tears: he reaches forth his hand to her; he supports her himself; she follows him with a tottering step. The slaves retire; and as soon as he is alone with her—"It is not with fear, beautiful Elmira," said he to her, "that I would inspire you. Forget that you have a master; see in me only a lover."—"The name of lover," said she to him, "is not less unknown to me than that of master; and both the one and the other make me tremble. They have told me (and I still shudder at the thought) that I am destined to your pleasures. Alas! what pleasure can it be to tyrannize over weakness and innocence! Believe me, I am not capable of the compliances of servitude; and the only pleasure possible for you to taste with me, is that of being generous. Restore me to my parents, and my country; and in the respect you shew for my virtue, my youth, and my misfortunes, merit my gratitude, my esteem, and my regret."

This discourse from a slave was new to Soliman: his great soul was moved by it. "No," said he, "my dear child, I will owe nothing to violence. You charm me! I will make it my happiness to love and please you; and I will prefer the torment of never seeing you more to that of seeing you unhappy. However, before I restore you to liberty, give me leave to try, at least,

whether it be not possible for me to dissipate that terror which the name of slave strikes into you. I ask only one month's trial; after which, if my love cannot move you, I will avenge myself no otherwise on your ingratitude, than by delivering you up to the inconstancy and perfidy of mankind."——"Ah! my lord!" cried Elmira, with an emotion mixed with joy, "how unjust are the prejudices of my country, and how little are your virtues known there! Continue such as I now see you, and I no longer reckon this day unfortunate."

Some moments after, she saw slaves enter, carrying baskets filled with stuffs and valuable trinkets. "Chuse," said the sultan to her; "these are cloaths, not ornaments, that are here presented to you: nothing can adorn you."—"Decide for me," said Elmira to him, running her eyes over the baskets. "Do not consult me," replied the sultan; "I hate without distinction every thing that can rob me of your charms." Elmira blushed, and the sultan perceived she preferred the colours most favourable to the character of her beauty. He conceiving a pleasing hope from that circumstance: for care to adorn one's self is almost a desire to please.

The month of trial passed away in timid gallantries on the part of the sultan, and on Elmira's side in complaisance and delicate attentions. Her confidence in him increased every day without her perceiving it. At first he was not permitted to see her, but after the business of the toilette, and on condition to depart when she prepared to undress again; in a short time he was admitted both to her toilet and dishabile. It was there that the plan of their amusements for that day and the next was formed. Whatever either proposed was

exactly what the other was going to propose. Their disputes turned only on the stealing of thoughts. Elmira, in these disputes, perceived not some small slips which escaped her modesty. A pin misplaced, or a garter put on unthinkingly, &c. afforded the sultan pleasures which he was cautious not to testify. He knew (and it was much for a sultan to know) that it was impolitic to advertise modesty of the dangers to which it exposes itself; that it is never fiercer than when alarmed: and that in order to subdue it, one should render them familiar. Nevertheless, the more he discovered of Elmira's charms, the more he perceived his fears increase, on account of the approach of the day that might deprive him of them.

The fatal period arrives. Soliman causes chests to be prepared, filled with stuffs, precious stones, and perfumes. He repairs to Elmira, followed by these presents. "It is to-morrow," said he, "that I have promised to restore you to liberty, if you still regret the want of it. I now come to acquit myself of my promise, and to bid adieu to you for ever."—"What!" said Elmira trembling, "is it to-morrow? I had forgot it."—"It is to-morrow," resumed the sultan, "that, delivered up to my despair, I am to become the most unhappy of men."—"You are very cruel then to yourself, to put me in mind of it!"—"Alas! it depends only on you, Elmira, that I should forget it for ever."—"I confess," said she to him, "that your sorrow touches me; that your proceedings have interested me in your happiness; and if, to shew my gratitude, it were necessary only to prolong the time of my slavery"—"No, Madam, I am but too much accustomed to the happiness of possessing you.

I perceive that the more I shall know of you, the more terrible it would be to me to lose you : this sacrifice will cost me my life ; but I shall only render it the more grievous by deferring it. May your country prove worthy of it ! May the people whom you are going to please, deserve you better than I do ! I ask but one favour of you, which is, that you would be pleased cordially to accept these presents, as the feeble pledges of a love the most pure and tender that yourself, yes, that yourself, are capable of inspiring.”—“ No,” said she to him, with a voice almost smothered, “ I will not accept your presents. I go : you will have it so ! But I shall carry away from you nothing but your image.” Soliman lifting up his eyes to Elmira, met her’s bedewed with tears. “ Adieu, then, Elmira !”—“ Adieu, Soliman !” They bid each other so many and such tender adieus, that they concluded by swearing not to separate for life. The avenues of pleasure through which he had passed so rapidly with his slaves from Asia, appeared to him so delicious with Elmira, that he found an inexpressible charm in going through them step by step : but arrived at the happiness itself, his pleasures had from that time the same defect as before ; they became too easy of access, and in a short time after too languid. Their days so well filled up till then, began to hang heavy. In one of these moments, when complaisance alone retained Soliman with Elmira—“ Would it be agreeable to you,” said he, “ to hear a slave from your own country, whose voice has been greatly commended to me ?” Elmira, at the proposal, plainly perceived that she was lost : but to put any constraint on a lover who begins to grow

tired, is to tire him still more. "I am for any thing," said she, "that you please;" and the slave was ordered to enter.

Delia (for that was the singer's name) had the figure of a goddess. Her hair exceeded the ebony in blackness, and her skin the whiteness of ivory. Two eye-brows, boldly arched, crowned her sparkling eyes. As soon as she began tuning, her lips, which were of the finest vermilion, displayed two rows of pearl set in coral. At first she sung the victories of Soliman, and the hero felt his soul elevated at the remembrance of his triumphs. His pride hitherto, more than his taste, applauded the accents of that thrilling voice, which filled the whole saloon with its harmony and strength.

Delia changed her manner, to sing the charms of pleasure. She then took the theorbo, an instrument favourable to the display of a rounded arm, and to the movements of a delicate and light hand. Her voice, more flexible and tender, now resounded none but the most touching sounds. Her modulations, connected by imperceptible gradations, expressed the delirium of a soul intoxicated with pleasure, or exhausted with sentiment. Her sounds, sometimes expiring on her lips, sometimes swelled and sunk with rapidity, expressed by turns the sighs of modesty and the vehemence of desire; while her eyes still more than her voice animated these lively descriptions.

Soliman, quite transported, devoured her both with his ears and eyes. "No," said he, "never before did so beautiful a mouth utter such pleasing sounds. With what delight must she, who sings so feelingly of pleasure, inspire and relish it! How charming to draw that harmonious breath,

and to catch again in their passage those sounds animated by love!" The sultan, lost in these reflections, perceived not that all the while he kept beating time on the knee of the trembling Elmira. Her heart oppressed with jealousy, she was scarce able to breathe. "How happy is Delia," said she, in a low voice, to Soliman, "to have so tuneable a voice! Alas! it ought to be the organ of my heart! every thing that she expresses, you have taught me to feel." So said Elmira, but Soliman did not listen to her.

Delia changed her tone a second time to inconstancy. All that the changeful variety of nature contains, either interesting or amiable, was recapitulated in her song. It seemed like the fluttering of the butterfly over roses, or like the zephyrs losing themselves among the flowers. "Listen to the turtle," said Delia, "she is faithful but melancholy. See the inconstant sparrow: pleasure moves his wings; his warbling voice is exerted merely to return thanks to love. Water freezes only in stagnation; a heart never languishes but in constancy. There is but one mortal on earth, whom it is possible to love always. Let him change, let him enjoy the advantage of making a thousand hearts happy; all prevent his wishes, or pursue him. They adore him in their own arms; they love him even in the arms of another. Let him give himself up to our desires, or withdraw himself from them, still he will find love wherever he goes, wherever he goes will leave the print of love on his footsteps."

Elmira was no longer able to dissemble her displeasure and grief. She gets up and retires: the

sultan does not recall her ; and while she is overwhelming herself with tears, repeating a thousand times—" Ah, the ungrateful ! ah, the perfidious man !" Soliman, charmed with his divine songstress, prepares to realize with her some of those pictures which she had drawn so much to the life. The next morning the unhappy Elmira writ a billet filled with reproach and tenderness, in which she puts him in mind of the promise he had made her. " That is true," said the sultan, " let us send her back to her country, laden with marks of my favour. This poor girl loves me dearly, and I am to blame on her account."

The first moments of his love for Delia were no more than an intoxication ; but as soon as he had time for reflection, he perceived that she was more petulant than sensible, more greedy of pleasure than flattered in administering it ; in a word, fitter than himself to have a seraglio at command. To feed his illusion, he sometimes invited Delia, that he might hear that voice which had enchanted him ; but that voice was no longer the same. The impression made by it became every day weaker and weaker by habitude ; and it was now no more than a slight emotion, when an unforeseen circumstance dissipated it for ever.

The chief officer of the seraglio came to inform the sultan, that it was impossible to manage the untractable vivacity of one of the European slaves ; that she made a jest of his prohibitions and menaces ; and that she answered him only by cutting railleries and immoderate bursts of laughter. Soliman, who was too great a prince to make a state affair of what merely regarded the regulation of

his pleasures, entertained a curiosity of seeing this young madcap. He repaired to her, followed by the eunuch. As soon as she saw Soliman, "Heaven be praised!" said she, "here comes a human figure! You are without doubt the sublime sultan, whose slave I have the honour to be? Do me the favour to drive away this old knave, who shocks my very sight." The sultan had a great deal of difficulty to refrain from laughing at this beginning. "Roxalana," said he to her, for so she was called, "shew some respect, if you please, to the minister of my pleasures: you are yet a stranger to the manners of the seraglio; till they can instruct you in them, contain yourself and obey."—"A fine compliment!" said Roxalana. "*Obey!* Is that your Turkish gallantry? Sure you must be mightily beloved, if it is in this strain you begin your addresses to the ladies! *Respect the minister of my pleasures!* You have your pleasures, then? and, good Heaven! what pleasures, if they resemble their minister! an old amphibious monster, who keeps us here, penned in, like sheep in a fold, and who prowls round with his frightful eyes always ready to devour us! See here the confidante of your pleasures, and the guardian of our prudence! Give him his due, if you pay him to make yourself hated, he does not cheat you of any his wages. We cannot take a step but he growls. He forbids us even to walk, and to receive or pay visits. In a short time, I suppose, he will weigh out the air to us, and give us light by the yard. If you had seen him rave last night, because he found me in these solitary gardens! Did you order him to forbid our going into them? Are you afraid that it

should rain men? and if there should fall a few from the clouds, what a misfortune! Heaven owes us this miracle.”

While Roxalana spoke thus, the sultan examined, with surprise, the fire of her looks, and the play of her countenance. “By Mahomet!” said he to himself, “here is the prettiest looking romp in all Asia. Such faces as these are made only in Europe. Roxalana had nothing fine, nothing regular in her features; but, taken all together, they had that smart singularity which touches more than beauty. A speaking look, a mouth fresh and rosy, an arch smile, a nose somewhat turned up, a neat and well made shape; all these circumstances gave her giddiness a charm which disconcerted the gravity of Soliman. But the great, in his situation, have the resource of silence; and Soliman, not knowing how to answer her, fairly walked off, concealing his embarrassment under an air of majesty.

The eunuch asked him what orders he would be pleased to give with respect to this saucy slave. “She is a mere child,” replied the sultan, “you must pass over some things in her.”

The air, the tone, the figure, the disposition of Roxalana, had excited in the soul of Soliman an anxiety and emotion which sleep was not able to dispel. As soon as he awoke he ordered the chief of the eunuchs to come to him. “You seem to me,” said he, “to be but little in Roxalana’s good graces; in order to make your peace, go and tell her I will come and drink tea with her.” On the arrival of the officer, Roxalana’s women hastened to wake her. “What does the ape want with

me?" cried she, rubbing her eyes. "I come," replied the eunuch, "from the emperor, to kiss the dust off your feet, and to inform you that he will come and drink tea with the delight of his soul."—"Get away with your strange speeches! My feet have no dust, and I do not drink tea so early."

The eunuch retired without replying, and gave an account of his embassy. "She is in the right," said the sultan; "why did you wake her? You do every thing wrong." As soon as it is broad day with Roxalana he went thither. "You are angry with me?" said he, "they have disturbed your sleep, and I am the innocent cause of it. Come, let us make peace; imitate me: you see that I forget all that you said to me yesterday."—"You forget it! so much the worse: I said some good things to you. My frankness displeases you, I see plainly: but you will soon grow accustomed to it. And are you not too happy to find a friend in a slave? Yes, a friend who interests herself in your welfare; and who would teach you to love. Why have not you made a voyage to my country? It is there that they know love; it is there that it is lively and tender; and why? Because it is free. Sentiment is involuntary, and does not come by force. The yoke of marriage amongst us is much lighter than that of slavery; and yet a husband that is beloved is a prodigy. Every thing under the name of duty saddens the soul, blasts the imagination, cools desire, and takes off that edge of self-love which gives all the relish and seasoning to affection. Now, if it be so difficult to love a husband, how much harder is it to love a master,

especially if he has not the address to conceal the fetters he puts upon us!"—"And I," replied the sultan; "I will forget nothing to soften your servitude; but you ought in your turn—"—"I ought! nothing but what one ought! Leave off, I pr'ythee, now, these humiliating phrases. They come with a very ill grace from the mouth of a man of gallantry, who has the honour of talking to a pretty woman."—"But, Roxalana, do you forget who I am, and who you are?"—"Who you are, and who I am! You are powerful, I am pretty; and so we are even."—"May be so," replied the sultan haughtily, "in your country; but here, Roxalana, I am master, and you a slave."—"Yes, I know you have purchased me: but the robber who sold me could transfer to you only those rights over me which he had himself, the rights of rapine and violence; in one word, the rights of a robber; and you are too honest a man to think of abusing them. After all, you are my master, because my life is in your hands; but I am no longer your slave, if I know how to despise life; and truly the life one leads here is not worth the fear of losing it."—"What a frightful notion!" cried the sultan: "do you take me for a barbarian? No, my dear Roxalana, I would make use of my power only to render this life delightful to yourself and me."—"Upon my word," said Roxalana, "the prospect is not very promising. These guards, for instance, so black, so disgusting, so ugly, are they the smiles and sports which here accompany love?"—"These guards are not set upon you alone. I have five hundred women, whom our manners and laws oblige me to keep

watched.”—“ And why five hundred women ?” said she to him, with an air of confidence. “ It is a kind of state which the dignity of sultan imposes upon me.”—“ But what do you do with them, pray ? for you lend them to nobody.”—“ Inconstancy,” replied the sultan, “ has introduced this custom. A heart void of love stands in need of variety. Lovers only are constant, and I never was a lover till I saw you. Let not the number of these women give you the shadow of uneasiness ; they shall serve only to grace your triumph : you shall see them all eager to please you, and you shall see them attentive to no one but yourself.”

“ Indeed,” said Roxalana, with an air of compassion, “ you deserve better luck. It is pity you are not a plain private gentleman in my country ; I should then be weak enough to entertain some sort of kindness for you, for, at the bottom, it is not yourself that I hate, it is that which surrounds you. You are much better than ordinary for a Turk : you have even something of the Frenchman about you ; and, without flattery, I have loved some who were not so deserving as yourself.”—“ You have loved !” cried Soliman with horror.”—“ Oh, not at all ! I took care of that. But do you expect one to have kept one’s virtue all one’s lifetime, in order to surrender it to you ? Indeed, these Turks are pleasant people !”—“ And you have not been virtuous ? O Heavens, what do I hear ! I am betrayed ! I am lost ! Destruction seize the traitors who meant to impose upon me !” —“ Forgive them,” said Roxalana ; “ the poor creatures are not to blame. The most knowing are often deceived. And then, the misfortune is not very great. Why do not you restore me to

my liberty if you think me unworthy of the honours of slavery?"—"Yes, yes, I will restore you to that liberty, of which you have made so good use." At these words the sultan retired in a rage, saying to himself, "I plainly foresaw that this little turned-up nose had made a slip."

It is impossible to describe the confusion into which this imprudent avowal of Roxalana's had thrown him. Sometimes he had a mind to have sent her away, sometimes that they should shut her up, next that they should bring her to him, and then again, that she should have been sent away. The great Soliman no longer knows what he says. "My lord," remonstrated the eunuch, "can you fall into despair for a trifle? One girl more or less; is there any thing so uncommon in her? Besides, who knows whether the confession she has made be not an artifice to get herself sent back to her own country?"—"What say you? How! can it be possible? It is the very thing! He opens my eyes. Women are not used to make such confessions. It is a trick! a stratagem! Ah, the perfidious hussy! Let me dissemble in my turn: I will drive her to the last extremity. Hark ye! go and tell her that I invite her to sup with me this evening. But, no; order the songstress to come here: it is better to send her."

Delia was charged to employ all her art to engage the confidence of Roxalana. As soon as the latter had heard all that she had got to say, "What!" said she, "young and handsome as you are, does he charge you with his messages, and have you the weakness to obey him? Get you gone; you are not worthy to be my country-woman. Ah! I see plainly that they spoil him,

and that I alone must take upon me to teach this Turk how to live. I will send him word that I keep you to sup with me ; I must have him make some atonement for his impertinence.”—“ But, Madam, he will take it ill.”—“ He ! I should be glad to see him take any thing ill of me.”—“ But he seemed desirous of seeing you alone.”—“ Alone, ah ! it is not come to that yet ; and I shall make him go over a good deal of ground, before we have any thing particular to say to each other.”

The sultan was as much surprised as piqued to learn that they should have a third person. However, he repaired early to Roxalana's. As soon as she saw him coming, she ran to meet him with as easy an air as if they had been upon the best footing in the world together. “ There,” said she, “ is a handsome man come to sup with us ! Do you like him, Madam ? Confess, Soliman, that I am a good friend. Come, draw near, salute the lady. There ! very well. Now, thank me. Softly ; I do not like to have people dwell too long on their acknowledgments. Wonderful ! I assure you he surprises me. He has had but two lessons, and see how he is improved ! I do not despair of making him one day or other an absolute Frenchman.”

Do but imagine the astonishment of a sultan ; a sultan ! the conqueror of Asia ! to see himself treated like a school-boy by a slave of eighteen. During supper, her gaiety and extravagance were inconceivable. The sultan was beside himself with transport. He questioned her concerning the manners of Europe. One picture followed another. Our prejudices, our follies, our humours, were all laid hold of, all represented. Soliman

thought himself in Paris. "The witty rogue!" cried he; "the witty rogue!" From Europe she fell upon Asia. This was much worse; the haughtiness of the men, the weakness of the women, the dulness of their society, the filthy gravity of their amours, nothing escaped her, though she had seen nothing but cursorily. The seraglio had its turn; and Roxalana began by felicitating the sultan on having been the first to imagine that he could insure the virtue of the women by the absolute impotence of the blacks.

She was preparing to enlarge upon the honour that this circumstance of his reign would do him in history; but he begged her to spare him. "Well," said she, "I perceive that I take up those moments which Delia could fill up much better. Throw yourself at her feet, to obtain from her one of those airs which they say she sings with so much taste and spirit." Delia did not suffer herself to be entreated. Roxalana appeared charmed: she asked Soliman, in a low voice, for a handkerchief; he gave her one, without the least suspicion of her design. "Madam," said she to Delia, presenting it to her, "I am desired by the sultan to give you the handkerchief; you have well deserved it."—"Oh, to be sure!" said Soliman, transported with anger; and presenting his hand to the songstress, retired along with her.

As soon as they were alone, "I confess," said he to her, "that this giddy girl confounds me. You see the style in which she treats me. I have not the courage to be angry with her. In short, I am mad, and I do not know what method to take to bring her to reason."—"My lord," said Delia,

“I believe I have discovered her temper. Authority can do nothing. You have nothing for it but extreme coldness or extreme gallantry. Coldness may pique her; but I am afraid we are too far gone for that. She knows that you love her. She will enjoy the pain that this will cost you; and you will come too sooner than she. This method, besides, is disagreeable and painful; and if one moment’s weakness should escape you, you will have all to begin again.”—“Well then,” said the sultan, “let us try gallantry.”

From that time there was in the seraglio every day a new festival, of which Roxalana was the object; but she received all this as an homage due to her, without concern or pleasure, but with a cool complaisance. The sultan sometimes asked her, “How did you like those sports, those concerts, those spectacles?”—“Well enough,” said she, “but there was something wanting.”—“And what?”—“Men and liberty.”

Soliman was in despair; he had recourse to Delia. “Upon my word,” said the songstress, “I know nothing else that can touch her; at least, unless glory have a share in it. You receive tomorrow the ambassadors of your allies; cannot I bring her to see this ceremony behind the curtain, which may conceal us from the eyes of your court?”—“And do you think,” said the sultan, “that this would make any impression on her?”—“I hope so,” said Delia, “the women of her country love glory.”—“You charm me!” cried Soliman. “Yes, my dear Delia, I shall owe my happiness to you.”

At his return from this ceremony, which he took care to render as pompous as possible, he re-

paired to Roxalana. "Get you gone," said she to him, "out of my sight, and never see me more." The sultan remained motionless and dumb with astonishment. "Is this, then," pursued he, "your art of love? Glory and grandeur, the only good things worthy to touch the soul, are reserved for you alone; shame and oblivion, the most insupportable of all evils, are my portion; and you would have me love you! I hate you worse than death!" The sultan would fain have turned this reproach into raillery. "Nay, but I am serious," resumed she; "if my lover had but a hut, I would share his hut with him, and be content. He has a throne: I will share his throne, or he is no lover of mine. If you think me unworthy to reign over the Turks, send me back to my own country, where all the handsome women are sovereigns, and much more absolute than I should be here; for they reign over hearts."—"The sovereignty of mine then is not sufficient for you?" said Soliman, with the most tender air in the world. "No, I desire no heart which has pleasures that I have not. Talk to me no more of your feasts, all mere pastimes for children! I must have embassies."—"But, Roxalana, you are either mad or you dream!"—"And what do you find, then, so extravagant, in desiring to reign with you? Am I formed to disgrace a throne? and do you think that I should have displayed less greatness and dignity than yourself in assuring our subjects and allies of our protection?"—"I think," said the sultan, "that you would do every thing with grace; but it is not in my power to satisfy your ambition, and I beseech you to think no more of it."—"Think no more of it! Oh! I promise you

I shall think of nothing else : and I will from henceforward dream of nothing but a sceptre, a crown, an embassy." She kept her word. The next morning she had already contrived the design of her diadem, and had already settled every thing, except the colour of a ribband which was to tie it. She ordered rich stuffs to be brought her for her habits of ceremony ; and as soon as the sultan appeared, she asked his opinion on the choice. He exerted all his endeavours to divert her from this idea ; but contradiction plunged her into the deepest melancholy ; and to draw her out of it again, he was obliged to flatter her illusion. Then she displayed the most brilliant gaiety. He seized these moments to talk to her of love ; but, without listening, she talked to him of politics. All her answers to the harangues of the deputies, on her accession to the crown, were already prepared. She had even formed projects of regulations for the territories of the grand signior. She would make them plant vines and build opera houses ; suppress the eunuchs, because they were good for nothing, shut up the jealous, because they disturbed society ; and banish all self-interested persons, because sooner or later they become rogues. The sultan amused himself for sometime with these follies : nevertheless, he still burned with the most violent love, without any hope of being happy. On the least suspicion of violence she became furious, and was ready to kill herself. On the other hand Soliman found not the ambition of Roxalana so very foolish : " For, in short," said he, " is it not cruel to be alone deprived of the happiness of associating to my fortune a woman whom I esteem

and love? All my subjects may have a lawful wife; an absurd law forbids marriage to me alone." Thus spoke love, but policy put him to silence. He took the resolution of confiding to Roxalana the reasons which restrained him. "I would make it," said he, "my happiness to leave nothing wanting to yours: but our manners—" "Idle stories!"—"Our laws—" "Old songs!"—"The priests—" "What care they!"—"The people and the soldiery—" "What is it to them? Will they be more wretched when you shall have me for your comfort? You have very little love, if you have so little courage!" She prevailed so far, that Soliman was ashamed of being so fearful. He orders the mufti, the vizier, the camaican, the aga of the sea, and the aga of the janissaries, to come to him; and he says to them, "I have carried, as far as I was able, the glory of the crescent; I have established the power and peace of my empire; and I desire nothing, by way of recompence for my labours, but to enjoy, with the good will of my subjects, a blessing which they all enjoy. I know not what law, but it is one that is not derived down to us from the prophet, forbids the sultans the sweets of the marriage-bed: thence I perceive myself reduced to the condition of slaves, whom I despise; and I have resolved to marry a woman whom I adore. Prepare my people, then, for this marriage. If they approve of it, I receive their approbation as a mark of their gratitude; but if they dare to murmur at it, tell them that I will have it so." The assembly received the sultan's orders with a respectful silence, and the people followed their example.

Soliman transported with joy and love, went to fetch Roxalana, in order to lead her to the mosque; and said to himself in a low voice, as he was conducting her thither, “Is it possible that a little turned-up nose should overturn the laws of an empire?”

THE TWO UNFORTUNATE LADIES.

IN the convent of the visitation of Cl**** had for some short time retired the Marchioness of Clarence. The calm and serenity which she saw reign in this solitude, did but render more lively and bitter the grief that consumed her. “How happy,” said she, “are those innocent doves, which have taken their flight towards heaven! Life is to them a cloudless day; they know neither the sorrows nor pleasures of the world.”

Amidst these pious maidens, whose happiness she envied, one only, named Lucilia, seemed to her to be pensive and pining. Lucilia, still in the bloom of her youth, had that style of beauty which is the image of a sensible heart; but sorrow and tears had taken off its freshness, like a rose which the sun has withered, but which leaves us still capable of judging, in its languishing state, of all the beauty it had in the morning. There seems to be a dumb language between tender souls. The marchioness read in the eyes of this afflicted fair-one what nobody had discovered there before. So natural is it to the unhappy to complain, and

love their partners in affliction ! She took a liking to Lucilia. Friendship, which in the world is hardly a sentiment, in the cloister is a passion. Their connection in a short time became very intimate, but on both sides a concealed sorrow poisoned its sweetness. They were sometimes a whole hour sighing together, without presuming to ask each other the secret of their griefs. The marchioness at last broke the silence.

“ A mutual confession,” said she, “ would spare us perhaps a great deal of uneasiness : we stifle our sighs on both sides ; ought friendship to keep any thing a secret from the breast where a mutual friendship is found.” At these words a modest blush animated the features of Lucilia, and the veil of her eye-lids dropped over her fine eyes. “ Ah ! why,” replied the marchioness, “ why this blush ? Is it the effect of shame ? Is it thus that the thought of happiness ought to colour beauty ? Speak my Lucilia, pour out your heart into the bosom of a friend more, without doubt, to be lamented than yourself, but who would console herself for her own happiness, if she could but soften yours.” — “ What is it you ask of me, Madam ? I share all your sorrows, but I have none of my own to confide to you. The alteration of my health is the only cause of that languor into which you see me plunged. I am decaying insensibly ; and, thanks to Heaven, my end approaches.” She spoke these last words with a smile, at which the marchioness was greatly affected. “ Is that, then,” said she, “ your only consolation ? yet, though impatient to die, you will not confess to me what it is that renders life odious to you. How

long have you been here?"—"Five years, Madam."—"Was you brought hither by compulsion?"—"No, Madam, by reason, by Heaven, which was pleased to attract my heart entirely to itself?"—"That heart, then, was attached to the world?"—"Alas! yes, for its own punishment."—"Finish."—"I have told you all."—"Were you in love Lucilia, and had the fortitude to bury yourself alive? Was it some perfidious wretch whom you have abandoned?"—"The most virtuous, most tender, and most valuable of mankind. Ask no more: you see the guilty tears that steal from my eyes; all the wounds of my heart open afresh at the thought."—"No, my dear Lucilia, it is not a time for us now to keep any thing a secret. I would penetrate into the inmost recesses of your heart, in order to pour consolation into it; believe me, the poison of grief exhales not but by complaints; shut up in silence, it only becomes the more violent."—"You will have it, Madam? Weep then over the unfortunate Lucilia; weep over her life, and shortly over her death.

"Scarce had I appeared in the world, when this fatal beauty attracted the eyes of a fickle and imprudent youth, whose homage could not dazzle me. One man alone, yet in the age of innocence and candour, taught me that I was sensible of love. The equality of our years, birth, fortune; the connection also between our families; and above all, a mutual inclination, had united us to each other. My lover lived only for me: he saw with pity this immense void of the world, where pleasure is only a shadow, where love is but a gleam; our hearts full of themselves——But I lose myself.

Ah, Madam, what do you now oblige me to call to mind!"—"What, my dear, do you reproach yourself for having been just? When Heaven has formed two virtuous and sensible hearts, does it make it criminal in them to seek each other, to attract, to captivate reciprocally? If so, why has it made them?"—"It formed, no doubt, with pleasure that heart in which mine lost itself; where virtue took place of reason, and where I saw nothing that was a reproach to nature. Oh, Madam, who was ever loved like me! Would you believe that I was obliged to spare my lover's delicacy even the confession of those tender inquietudes which sometimes afflict love? He would have deprived himself of life, if Lucilia had been jealous of it. When he perceived in my eyes any mark of sorrow, it was to him as if all nature had been eclipsed: he supposed himself always the cause, and reproached himself for all my faults.

"It is but too easy to judge to what excess the most amiable of men must have been loved. Interest, which dissolves all ties except those of love, interest disunited our families: a fatal law-suit, commenced against my mother, was to us the æra and source of our misfortunes. The mutual hatred of our friends raised itself as an eternal barrier between us: we were obliged to give over seeing each other. The letter which he wrote to me will never be effaced out of my memory:—

"Every thing is lost to me, my dear Lucilia: they tear from me my only happiness. I am just come from throwing myself at my father's feet, I am just come from conjuring him, bathing him at the same time with my tears, to give over this fatal law-suit. He received me as a child. I pro-

tested to him that your fortune was sacred to me, that my own would become odious. He has treated my disinterestedness as a folly. Mankind conceive not that there is something above riches: and yet what should I do with wealth if I lose you? They say that one day I shall be glad they did not listen to me. If I believed that age, or what they call reason, could so far debase my soul, I should cease to live from this moment, terrified at what was to come. No, my dear Lucilia, no; all I have or ask is yours. The laws would in vain give me a part of your inheritance; my laws are in my heart, and my father there stands condemned. A thousand pardons for the uneasinesses he occasions you! Pray God that I offer up no criminal wishes; I could cut off from my own days to add to my father's; but, if ever I am master of those riches he is now accumulating, and with which he would overload me in spite of myself, ample reparation shall be made for all. But yet I am deprived of you. They will dispose, perhaps, of the heart which you have given me. Ah! beware of ever consenting to it: think that my life is at stake, think that our oaths are written in heaven. But can you withstand the imperious will of a mother? I shudder at the thought: speak comfort to me, in the name of the most tender love."

"You answered him, without doubt?"—"Yes, Madam; but in a very few words:—

"I upbraid you with nothing. I am unhappy, but I know how to be so: learn from me to suffer."

"The law-suit, however, was begun and carried on with heat. One day, alas! one terrible day, while my mother was reading with indignation a memorial published against her, somebody asked to speak with me. 'Who is it?' said she, 'let them come in.' The servant, confounded, hesitates for some time, stammers in his answers, and concludes, by confessing that he was charged with a billet to me. 'For my daughter! from

whom?’ I was present; judge of my situation; judge of the indignation of my mother when she heard the name of the son of the person whom she called her persecutor. If she had vouchsafed to read the billet, which she sent back without opening, perhaps she had been moved by it. She would have seen, at least, the extreme purity of our sentiments: but whether the vexations into which this law-suit had plunged her, required only an opportunity to vent itself, or that a secret correspondence between her daughter and her enemies was in her eyes a real crime, there are no reproaches with which I was not loaded. I fell down confounded at my mother’s feet, and submitted to the humiliation of her upbraidings, as if I had deserved them. It was determined on the spot that I should go and conceal in a cloister what she called my shame and her own. Being brought here the day after, orders were given not to suffer me to see any body; and I was here three whole months, as if my family and the world had been entirely annihilated to me. The first and only visit I received was my mother’s: I presaged from her embraces the sentence she was going to pronounce. ‘I am ruined,’ said she to me, as soon as we were alone: ‘iniquity has prevailed; I have lost my law-suit, and with it all means of establishing you in the world. Scarce enough remains for my son to support himself according to his birth. As to you, my daughter, God has called you here; here you must live and die: to-morrow you take the veil.’ At these words, which were strenghtened by the cold and absolute tone in which they were pronounced, my heart was struck, and my tongue frozen; my knees gave way be-

neath me, and I fell senseless on the ground. My mother called for assistance, and laid hold of that opportunity to withdraw herself from my tears. When I was come to myself again, I found myself surrounded with those pious damsels, whose companion I was to be, and who invited me to partake with them the sweet tranquillity of their condition. But that state, so fortunate for an innocent and disengaged soul, presented to my eyes nothing but struggles, perjuries, and remorse. A dreadful abyss was going to be opened betwixt my lover and me; I found my better part torn from me; I saw no longer any thing around me but silence and vacuity; and in this immense solitude, in this renunciation of all nature, I found myself in the presence of Heaven, with my heart full of the lovely object, which it was necessary I should forget for its sake. These holy damsels told me, with the strongest conviction, all that they knew of the vanities of the world: but it was not to the world that I was attached; the most horrible desert would have seemed a ravishing abode with the man whom I had left in that world which to me was nothing.

“ I desired to see my mother again: she pretended at first to have taken my swooning for a natural accident. “ No, Madam, it is the effect of the violent situation into which you have thrown me; for it is no longer time to feign. You have given me life, you may take it from me: but, Madam, have you conceived me only as a victim devoted to the torment of a lingering death? and to whom is it you sacrifice me? Not to God. I feel that he rejects me: the Almighty demands only pure victims, voluntary sacrifices: he is jea-

lous of the offerings made him, and the heart which presents itself to him ought thenceforward to be his alone. If violence drags me to the altar, perjury and sacrilege attend me there.”—“What say you, wretched girl?”—“A terrible truth, which despair forces from me. Yes, Madam, my heart has given itself away without your consent; innocent or culpable, it is no longer mine; God only can break the band by which it is tied.”—“Go, unworthy daughter, go and ruin yourself: I will never acknowledge you more.”—“Dear mother, by your own blood, abandon me not; see my tears, my despair, see hell open at my feet!”—“Is it in this light, then, that a fatal passion makes thee view the asylum of honour, the tranquil port of innocence? What, is there then, but the world in thy eyes? Know, however, that this world has but one idol, interest. All our homages are for the successful: oblivion, desertion, and contempt, are the portion of the unfortunate.”

“Ah, Madam! separate from that corrupt multitude the man—” “Whom you love: is it not so? I know all that he can have said to you. He is no accomplice in the iniquity of his father; he disclaims it, he complains to you of it; he will repair the injury done you! Vain promises; the fine speeches of a young man, which will be forgot to-morrow. But were he constant in his passion, and faithful in his promises, his father is young, he will grow old, for the wicked grow old; and in the mean time love becomes extinct, ambition prompts, duty commands; rank, alliance, fortune, present themselves to him, and the credulous, beguiled maid, becomes the public talk,

Such is the lot that awaited you : your mother has preserved you from it. I now cost you some tears, but you will one day bless me for it. I leave you, my daughter : prepare yourself for the sacrifice which God requires of you. The more painful this sacrifice, the more worthy will it be of Him."

"In a word, Madam, I was obliged to resolve. I took this veil, this bandage ; I entered the path of penitence ; and, during the time of probation, in which we are yet free, I flattered myself with the hopes of subduing myself, and attributed my irresolution and weakness solely to the fatal liberty of having it in my power to return. I thought the time long till I could bind myself by an irrevocable oath. I took that oath ; I renounced the world ; an easy matter. But, alas ; I renounced also my lover, and that was more than renouncing my life. On pronouncing those vows, my soul fluttered on my lips, as if ready to leave me. Scarce had I strength enough to drag me to the foot of the altar ; whence they were obliged to carry me away as dead. My mother came to me transported with a cruel joy.—Pardon me, my God : I respect, I love her still ; I will love her to my last gasp." These words of Lucilia were interrupted by sighs, and two rivulets of tears overflowed her face.

"The sacrifice was now completed," resumed she after a long silence : "I was the Almighty's, I was no longer my own. All sensual ties were now to be broken ; I was become dead to the earth ; I presumed to believe it. But what was my terror, on searching into the abyss of my own soul ! I there still found love but a frantic and criminal

love; love covered with shame and despair; love rebelling against Heaven, against nature, against myself; love consumed by regret, torn with remorse, and transformed into rage. "What have I done!" cried I to myself a thousand times; "what have I done! This adored man, whom I must see no more, presents himself to my imagination in all his charms." The happy knot which was to have made us one, all the moments of a delicious life, all the emotions of two hearts which death alone would have separated, presented themselves to my distracted soul. Ah, Madam, how grievous was the image! There is nothing which I have not done in order to blot it from my memory. For these five years past have I by turns banished it from my sight, and seen it recur without ceasing. In vain do I sink myself in sleep, which only revives it in my mind; in vain do I abstract myself in solitude, where it awaits me: I find it at the foot of the altar, I bear it into the bosom of God himself. Meantime that God, who is the father of mercies, has at length taken pity on me. Time, reason, penance, have weakened the first shocks of this criminal passion, but a painful languor has succeeded. I feel myself dying every moment, and the thought that I am drawing near to my grave is my sole consolation."

"Oh, my dear Lucilia!" cried the marchioness, after hearing her, "which of us is most to be pitied! Love has been the cause both of your misfortunes and mine: but you loved the tenderest, the most faithful, the most grateful of men; and I the most perfidious, the most ungrateful, the most cruel. You devoted yourself to Heaven, I de-

livered up myself to a villain; your retreat was a triumph, mine is a reproach: people lament you, love you, and respect you; but me they revile and traduce."

"Of all lovers, the most passionate before marriage was the Marquis of Clarence. Young, amiable, seducing to the highest degree, he promised a most happy disposition. He seemed to possess all the virtues, as he really did all the graces. The docile ease of his temper received in so lively a manner the impression of virtuous sentiments, that they seemed as if they could never have been effaced. It was too easy for him, alas! to inspire me with the passion which he had himself, or at least thought he had for me. All the conveniencies, which make great matches, conspired with this mutual inclination; and my parents, who had seen it rising in my bosom, consented to crown it. Two years passed in the tenderest union. O, Paris! O theatre of vices! O dreadful rock of love, innocence, and virtue! My husband, who till then had been but little conversant with those of his own age, and that merely to amuse himself, as he said, with their irregularities and follies, imbibed insensibly the poison of their example. The noisy preparation for their insipid meetings, the mysterious confidence of their adventures, the proud recitals of their empty pleasures, the commendations lavished on their worthless conquests, all excited his curiosity. The sweetness of an innocent and peaceful union had no longer the same charms for him. I had myself no other talents than those which a virtuous education bestows; I perceived that he required more

in me. “I am undone,” said I to myself, “my heart is no longer a sufficient return for his.” Indeed his attentions from that time were nothing more than complaisance; he no longer preferred those conversations, those private interviews, so delicious to me, to the ebb and flow of a tumultuous society. He himself persuaded me to abandon myself to dissipation, only in order to authorise him to be abandoned. I became more pressing, and restrained him. I took the resolution of leaving him at liberty, that he might wish for me, and see me again with pleasure, after a comparison which I thought must be to my advantage: but young corrupters seized that soul, unfortunately too flexible; and from the instant he had steeped his lips in the poisoned cup, his intoxication was without remedy, and his wandering without return. I wanted to recall him; but it was too late. “You destroy yourself, my dear,” said I to him: “and though it be dreadful to me to see a husband torn from me who formed all my delight, yet it is more for your sake than my own that I lament your error. You seek happiness where it is most assuredly not to be found. False delights, shameful pleasures, will never satisfy your soul. The art of seducing and deceiving is the whole of that worldly art that now charms you; your wife knows it not, and you know it no better than she: that infamous school is not formed for our hearts: your’s suffers itself to be lost in its intoxication; but it will last only for a time; the illusion will vanish like a dream; you will return to me, and find me still the same; an indulgent and faithful love waits your return, and all

will be forgotten. You will have neither reproach nor complaint to fear from me: happy if I can console you, for all the chagrins which you may have occasioned me! But you, who know the value of virtue, and have tasted of her charms; you, whom vice shall have plunged from one abyss into another; you, whom it shall dismiss perhaps with contempt, to conceal at home with your wife the languishing days of a premature old age, your soul a prey to cruel remorse, how will you reconcile yourself to yourself? how will you be able still to relish the pure pleasure of being beloved by me? Alas! my love itself will be your punishment. The more lively also and tender that love will be, the more humiliating will it be for you. It is this, my dear marquis, it is this that grieves and overpowers me. Cease to love me if you please; I can forgive you, since I have ceased to be agreeable: but never render yourself unworthy of my tenderness, and contrive at least not to be obliged to blush before me." Would you believe it, my dear Lucilia? a piece of railery was all his answer. He told me that I talked like an angel, and that what I had said deserved to be committed to writing. But seeing my eyes brimful of tears, "Nay, do not play the child!" said he to me. "I love you, you know it; suffer me to amuse myself, and be assured that nothing attaches me."

"However, some officious friends failed not to inform me of every thing that could grieve and confound me. Alas! my husband himself in a short time desisted from keeping himself under my restraint, and even from flattering me.

“ I shall not tell you, my dear Lucilia, the many marks of humiliation and disgust that I endured. Your griefs in comparison of mine would even appear light to you. Imagine, if possible, the situation of a virtuous and feeling soul, lively and delicate to excess, receiving every day new outrages from the only object of its affection; still living for him alone, when he lives no longer for her, when he is not ashamed to live for objects devoted to contempt. I spare your delicacy the most horrible part of this picture. Rejected, abandoned, sacrificed by my husband, I devoured my grief in silence: and if I afforded some profligate companies a topic of ridicule, a more just and compassionate public consoled me with its pity; and I enjoyed the sole good which his vice could not take from me, a spotless character. I have since lost that, my dear Lucilia. The wickedness of the women, whom my example humbled, could not bear to see me irreproachable. They interpreted, according to their wishes, my solitude and apparent tranquillity: they ascribed to me as a lover, the first man who had the impudence to conceive that he was well received by me. My husband, to whom my presence was a continual reproach, and who found himself not yet sufficiently at liberty, in order to rid himself of my importunate grief, took the first pretext that was presented to him, and banished me to one of his country-seats. Unknown to the world, far from the sight of my misfortunes, I at least enjoyed in solitude the liberty of indulging my grief; but the cruel man caused it to be notified to me, that I might chuse a convent; that his

seat of Florival was sold, and that I must retire from thence.”—“Florival!” interrupted Lucilia, in a violent emotion. “That was the place of my exile,” resumed the marchioness. “Ah, Madam! what name have you pronounced?”—“The name of my husband before he acquired the marquisate of Clarence.”—“What do I hear! Oh, Heaven! Oh, just Heaven! is it possible?” cried Lucilia, throwing herself upon the bosom of her friend. “What is the matter! what troubles you! what sudden revolution! Lucilia, recover your senses.”—“How, Madam! is Florival then the perfidious wretch, the villain, who betrays and dishonours you?”—“Do you know him?”—“It is the man, Madam, whom I adored, whom I have mourned for these five years past; the man who would have had my last sighs!”—“What say you?”—“It is he, Madam! Alas, what had been my lot!” At these words Lucilia bowing her face to the ground, “Oh, my God!” said she, “Oh, my God! it was thou who stretched’st out thine hand towards me.” The marchioness was confounded, and unable to recover from her astonishment. “Doubt it not,” said she to Lucilia; “the designs of Heaven are visibly manifested upon us; it brings us together, inspires us with a mutual confidence, and opens our hearts to each other, as two sources of light and consolation. Well, my worthy and tender friend, let us endeavour to forget at once both our misfortunes, and the person who occasioned them.”

From this time the tenderness and intimacy of their friendship encreased to the highest degree: their solitude had pleasures known only to the un-

fortunate. But, in a little time, this calm was interrupted by the news of the danger which threatened the marquis. His dissipations cost him his life. At the point of death he asked for his virtuous wife. She tears herself from the arms of her forlorn companion; hastens to him; arrives; and finds him expiring. "Oh you, whom I have so greatly and so cruelly injured," said he to her on recollecting her, "see the fruit of my irregularities; see the dreadful stroke which the hand of God hath inflicted upon me. If I am yet worthy of your pity, raise up to Heaven your innocent voice, and lay my remorse before it." The distracted wife would have thrown herself on his bosom. "Stand off," said he; "I shudder at myself; my breath is the blast of death:" adding after a long silence, "Do you know me again in this state to which my crimes have reduced me? Is this that pure soul that used to mix itself with thine? Is this that half of thyself? Is this that nuptial bed that received me when worthy of thee? Perfidious friends, detestable enchantresses; come, see, and shudder! Oh, my soul! who will deliver thee from this hideous prison?—Sir," said he to his physician, "have I long to live? My pains are intolerable. Leave me not, my generous friend; I should fall, but for thee, into the most dreadful despair Cruel death, complete, complete the expiation of my life. There are no evils which I do not deserve: I have betrayed, dishonoured, basely persecuted innocence and virtue itself."

The marchioness, in the agonies of grief, made every moment new efforts to throw herself on

the bed, from which they endeavoured to remove her. At last the unhappy man expired; his eyes fixed upon her, and his voice died away in asking her pardon.

The only consolation the marchioness was capable of, arose from that religious confidence with which so good a death inspired her. “He was,” said she “more weak than wicked, and more frail than culpable. The world led him astray by its pleasures; God brought him back again by his afflictions: he has chastised and pardons him.—Yes, my husband, my dear Clarence,” cried she, “now disencumbered of the ties of blood and the world, thou waitest me in the bosom of thy God.”

Her soul filled with these holy ideas, she went to join her friend, whom she found at the foot of the altar. Lucilia’s heart was rent within her at the relation of this cruel and virtuous death. They wept together for the last time; and some time after, the marchioness consecrated to God, with the same vows as Lucilia, that heart, those charms, those virtues, of which the world was unworthy.

THE GOOD HUSBAND.

FELISONDE, one of those good fathers of a family who recall the golden age to our minds, had married his only daughter, Hortensia, to the Baron de Valsain; and his niece, Amelia, to the President de Lusane.

Valsain, gallant without assiduity, sufficiently tender without jealousy, too much taken up about his own glory and advancement to make himself the guardian of his wife, had left her, upon the strength of her own virtue, to deliver herself up to the dissipations of a world; in which being launched himself, he took a delight in seeing her shine. Lusane, more retired, more assiduous, breathed only for Amelia; who, on her side, lived but for him. The mutual care of pleasing was their constant employment, and to them the most sacred of duties was the sweetest of pleasures.

Old Felisonde was enjoying the union of his family, when the deaths of Amelia and Valsain diffused sorrow and mourning over it. Lusane in his grief had not even the consolation of being a father: Valsain left Hortensia two children with very little to support them. The first sorrows of the young widow were only her husband; but we forget ourselves in vain, we return thither insensibly. The time of mourning was that of reflection.

At Paris, a young woman, resigned to dissipation, is exempt from censure as long as she is in the power of a husband; they suppose that the person most interested ought to be the most rigid, and what he approves they dare not blame; but, delivered up to herself, she falls again under the tutelage of a severe and jealous public, and it is not at twenty-two that widowhood is a free state. Hortensia then saw clearly that she was too young to depend only on herself, and Felisonde saw it still clearer. One day this good father communicated his fears to his nephew Lusane. "My friend," said he, "you are much to be pitied,

but I am still more so. I have but one daughter ; you know how I love her, and you see the dangers that she runs. The world, which has seduced her, invites her back again ; her mourning over, she will resign herself to it ; and I am afraid, old as I am, I may live long enough to have occasion to be ashamed. My daughter has a fund of virtue ; but our virtue is within ourselves, and our honour, that honour so dear, is placed in the opinion of others.”—“ I understand you, Sir ; and to say the truth, I share your uneasiness. But can we not engage Hortensia to a new match ?”—“ Ha, my friend ! what reasons she has to oppose me ! two children, two children without fortune ; for you know I am not rich, and that their father was ruined.”—“ No matter, Sir ; consult Hortensia : I know a man, if it should be agreeable to her, who thinks justly enough, who has a heart good enough to serve as a father to her children.” The good old man thought he understood him. “ O, you,” said he to him, “ who formed the happiness of my niece Amelia, you whom I love as my own son ; Lusane ! Heaven reads in my heart—But tell me, does the husband whom you propose know my daughter ? Is not he afraid of her youth, her levity, the flight she has taken in the world ?”—“ He knows her as well as you do, and he esteems her no less.” Felisonde delayed not to speak to his daughter. “ Yes, my father, I agree,” said she, “ that my situation is delicate. To be observant of one’s self, to be afraid of one’s self without ceasing, to be in the world as before one’s judge, is the lot of a widow at my age : it is painful and dangerous.”—“ Well, then, daughter, Lusane has talked to me

of a husband who would suit you.”—Lusane, my father? Ah, if it be possible, let him give me one like himself! Happy as I was myself with Valsain, I could not help envying sometimes the lot of his wife.” The father transported with her answer, went to give an account of it to his nephew. “If you do not flatter me,” said Lusane, “to-morrow we shall all be happy.”—“What, my friend, is it you?”—“I myself.”—“Alas! my heart had told me so.”—“Yes, it is I, Sir, who would console your old age, by bringing back to her duty a daughter worthy of you. Without giving into indecent extravagancies, I see that Hortensia has assumed all the airs, all the follies of a woman of fashion. Vivacity, caprice, the desire of pleasing and of amusements, have engaged her in the labyrinth of a noisy and frivolous acquaintance; the point is to withdraw her from it. To do that, I have occasion for a little courage and resolution: I shall have tears perhaps to contend with, and that is much for a heart so sensible as mine; nevertheless, I can answer for myself. But you, Sir, you are a father; and if Hortensia should come to complain to you——” “Fear nothing; dispose of my daughter; I confide her to thy virtue; and if the authority of a husband be not enough, I resign to you that of a father.”

Lusane was received by Hortensia with the most touching graces. “Think that you see in me,” said she to him, “the wife that you have lost; if I take her place in your heart, I have nothing to regret.”

When they came to draw up the articles; “Sir,” said Lusane to Felisonde, “let us not forget that

we have two orphans. Their father's estate has not permitted him to leave them a large inheritance; let us not deprive them of their mother's, nor let the birth of my children be a misfortune to them." The old man was moved even to weeping with the generosity of his nephew, whom he called from that moment his son. Hortensia was not less sensible to the proceedings of her new husband. The most elegant equipage, the richest cloaths, the most precious trinkets, a house in which every thing breathed taste, elegance, wealth, proclaimed to this young lady a husband attentive to all her pleasures. But the joy she felt was not of long duration.

As soon as a calm had succeeded to the tumult of the wedding, Lusane thought it his duty to come to an explanation with her on the plan of life which he wanted to trace out to her. He took for this serious discourse the peaceful moment of her waking; that moment in which the silence of the senses leaves the reason its perfect freedom, wherein the soul herself, lulled by the trance of sleep, seems to revive with pure ideas, and being wholly mistress of herself, contemplates herself, and reads in her own bosom, as we see to the bottom of a clear and smooth water.

"My dear Hortensia," said he to her, "I want you to be happy, and to be always so. But it will cost you some slight sacrifices, and I had much rather ask them plainly of you, than engage you to them by indirect methods, which would shew distrust.

"You have passed with the Baron de Valsain some agreeable years. Made for the world, and for pleasures, young, brilliant, and dissipated

himself, he inspired you with all his tastes. My character is more serious, my condition more modest, my temper a little more severe; it is not possible for me to assume his manners, and I believe it is the better for you. The path you have yet followed is strewed with flowers and snares; that which we are going to pursue has fewer attractions and fewer dangers. The charm which surrounded you would have been dissipated with youth; the serene days I prepare for you will be the same in all seasons. It is not in the midst of the world that an honest woman finds happiness; it is in the midst of her own family, in the love of her duties, the care of her children, and the intimate commerce of a worthy set of acquaintance."

The preamble gave Hortensia some surprize; above all, the word *family* startled her ear: but assuming a tone of raillery, "I shall become, perhaps, some day or other," said she, "an excellent manager of a family; at present I know nothing of it. My duty is to love you, I fulfil it; my children do not yet want me: as to my acquaintance, you know that I see none but genteel people."—"Let us not confound, my dear, genteel people with good people."—"I understand your distinction; but in point of acquaintances, we ought not to be so difficult. The world, such as it is, amuses me; and the way of living in it has nothing incompatible with the decency of your condition; it is not I who wear the robe, and I do not see why Madame Lusane should be more obliged to be a mope than Madame de Valsain. Be, then, my dear president, as grave as you please; but do not take it amiss that your wife be

giddy a few years longer : every age will bring its likings along with it.”—“ It is pity,” replied Lusane, “ to bring you back to seriousness, for you are a charming trifler. There is a necessity, however, for talking reason to you. In the world, do you love without distinction every thing that composes it?”—“ Not separately ; but the medley pleases me well enough altogether.”—“ What of the dealers in scandal, for instance?”—“ The scandal-mongers have their charms.”—“ They give a ridiculous turn to the plainest things, a criminal air to the most innocent, and publish, with exaggeration, the foibles or irregularities of those whom they have just flattered.”—“ It is true, that at the first glance we are frightened at these characters, but at bottom they are very little dangerous : from the moment that we rail at all the world, railing does no harm : it is a species of contagion which weakens in proportion as it extends itself.”—“ And those fops, whose very looks are an insult to a virtuous woman, and whose conversation dishonours her, what say you to them?”—“ One never believes them.”—“ I would not imitate them in speaking ill of your sex : there are many valuable women, I know, but there are——” “ Just as it is amongst you, a mixture of virtues and vices.”—“ Very well ; and what prevents our making a choice in this mixture ?”—“ We *do* make one intimacy, but in the world we live with the world.”—“ But I, my dear, I would live only with people, who by their manners and character are deserving to be my friends.”—“ Your friends, Sir, your friends ! and how many of them have we in life ?”—“ A great many,

when we are worthy, and know how to cultivate them. I speak not of that generous friendship, the devotion of which proceeds almost to heroism; I call those friends who come to me with the desire of finding joy and peace, disposed to pardon my foibles, to conceal them from the eyes of the public, to treat me when present with frankness, when absent with tenderness. Such friends are not so rare; and I presume to hope, that I shall have such.”—“With all my heart; we will introduce our several acquaintance to each other.”—“I will not have two sets of acquaintance.”—“What, Sir, will not your door be open?”—“Open to my friends, always: to every comer, never, I give you my word.”—“No, Sir, I will not suffer you to revolt against the public by odious distinctions. We may not love the world, but we ought to fear it, and not offend it.”—“Oh, be easy, my dear, that is my concern: they will say that I am a brute; jealous, perhaps; that signifies little to me.”—“It signifies to me. I would have my husband be respected, and not have cause to reproach me with having made him the town talk. Form your own company as you should think proper, but leave me to cultivate my old acquaintance, and prevent the court and town from letting their tongues loose upon you.”

Lusane admired the address of a young woman in defending her liberty. “My dear Hortensia,” said he to her, “it is not as a whim, that I have taken my resolution: it is upon thorough consideration, you may believe me, and nothing in the world can change it. Chuse, among the persons whom you see, such a number of decent women

and prudent men as you shall think proper, my house shall be theirs ; but that choice made, take leave of the rest. I will join my friends to yours : our two lists united shall be deposited with my porter for his constant rule ; and if he deviates from it, he shall be discharged. This is the plan I propose to myself, and which I wanted to communicate to you."

Hortensia remained confounded at seeing all her fine projects vanish in a moment. She could not believe that it was Lusane, that gentle and complaisant man, who had just been talking to her. "After this," said she, "who can trust men? see the tone this man assumes! with what composure he dictates his will to me! To see only virtuous women, and accomplished men! a fine chimera! And then the amusing society which this circle of respectable friends must afford! *Such is my plan*, said he, as if there was nothing but to obey when he had said it. See how we spoil them. My cousin was a good little woman, who moped as much as he pleased. She was as happy as a queen the moment her husband deigned to smile upon her, and quite transported with one caress, she would come to me and boast of him as a divinity.

He believes, without doubt, that according to her example I shall have nothing else to do but to please him ; he is mistaken ; and if he intends to put me in leading-strings, I will let him see that I am no longer a child."

From that moment, to the joyous, free and endearing manner which she had observed with Lusane, succeeded a cold and reserved air, which he saw plain enough, but took no notice of it to her.

She had not failed to make her marriage known to that swarm of slight acquaintances, who are called friends. They came in crowds to congratulate her, and Lusane could not decline returning with her those visits of ceremony; but he infused into his politeness such striking distinctions, that it was not difficult for Hortensia to discern those whom he wished to see again.

In this number was not included one Olympia, who with a sovereign contempt for the opinion of the public, pretends that every thing which pleases is right, and joins the example to the precept; nor one Climene, who does not know why a woman should make any scruple to change her lovers when she is tired of the man she has taken, and thinks the timid precautions of secrecy too much beneath her quality. In this number were not included those smart toilet and scene hunters, who leading in Paris a life of idleness and inutility, (*grubs in the morning, and butterflies in the evening**) pass one half of their time in having nothing to do, and the other half in doing nothing; nor those obliging gentry by profession, who having no personal existence in the world, attach themselves to a handsome woman to pass for one of her dangles, and who ruin her in order to support themselves.

Hortensia retired to her own apartment uneasy

* Grubs in the morning, and butterflies in the evening. *Chenilles le matin, et papillons le soir.* The humour of this passage, being in some degree local, cannot be entirely preserved in the translation. It is an illusion to dress, *en chenille* being at Paris a common cant phrase for a morning dishabille.

and pensive. She thought she saw herself on the point of being deprived of every thing that makes life agreeable: vanity, a taste for pleasure, the love of liberty, every thing revolted against the empire which her husband wanted to assume. However, having armed herself with resolution, she thought it her duty to dissemble for a time, the better to chuse the moment of breaking out.

The next day Lusane asked her if she had made out her list. “No, Sir,” said she, “I have not, and shall not make any.”—“Here is mine,” continued he, without any discomposure; “see, if in the number of your friends and of mine I have forgot any one you like, and that is fit for us.”—“I have told you, Sir, that I shall not meddle in your arrangements, and I beg of you, once for all, not to interfere in mine. If our acquaintance do not suit, let us do like all the rest of the world: let us divide them without constraining ourselves. Have those whom you like to dinner; I will have those whom I like to supper.”—“Ah, my dear Hortensia! what you propose to me is far from my principles. Do not think of it: never in my house shall such a custom take place. I will make it as agreeable as I can to you; but no distinction, if you please, between your friends and mine. This evening all whom this list contains are invited to sup with you. Receive them well, I beseech you, and prepare yourself to live with them.” At these words he retired, leaving the list for Hortensia to peruse. “There,” said she, “his law is laid down!” And running it over, she was encouraging herself not to submit to it, when the Countess de Fierville, Valsain’s aunt, came to see

her, and found her with tears in her eyes. This haughty woman had taken Hortensia into her friendship, and as she flattered her inclinations, had gained her confidence. The young lady, whose heart stood in need of consolation, told her the cause of her chagrin. "How! what!" cried the countess, "after having had the folly to dispose of yourself so unsuitably, will you also be so weak as to degrade yourself? You a slave! and to whom? a man of the robe? Remember that you have had the honour to be Madame De Val-sain." Hortensia was now ashamed of having had the weakness to expose her husband. "Though he might be in the wrong," said she, "that should not hinder me from respecting him: he is the most honest man in the world, and what he has done for my children——"—"An honest man! and who is not so? That is a merit to be met with in every street. And what has this honest man done so wonderful for your children? He has not robbed them of their fortune. To be sure it would have been worth while to have abused your father's weakness! No, Madam, he has not acquired the right of talking so magisterially. Let him preside in his own court, but leave you to command at home." At these words Lusane entered. "In my house, Madam, it is neither my wife nor I that commands, it is reason: and probably it is not you that she may chuse for an arbitress."—"No, Sir!" replied the countess, with a commanding tone, "it is not for you to make laws for this lady. You have heard me, and I am glad of it: you know my opinion of the absurdity of your proceedings."—"Madam," replied Lusane,

“if I were as wrong as you suppose me, I am not to be corrected by affronts. Gentleness and modesty are the arms of your sex, and Hortensia by herself is much more powerful than with your assistance. Leave our agreements to ourselves, since we are the persons who must live together. Though you should have rendered her duties odious to her, you could not have dispensed with her fulfilling them; though you should have made her lose the confidence and friendship of her husband, you could not have made her amends for them. Spare her that advice which she neither will or ought to follow. To another they might have been dangerous; to her, thank Heaven, they are only useless. Hortensia,” added he, going, “you have not desired to give me uneasiness, but let this serve you as a lesson.”—“See how you defend yourself!” said Madame de Fierville to Hortensia, who had not even dared to lift up her eyes. “Obey, my dear, obey! it is the portion of weak souls. Good Heaven!” said she going out, “I am the gentlest, the most virtuous woman on the face of the earth; but if a husband had dared to treat me thus, I should have taken a handsome revenge of him!” Hortensia had scarce strength enough to get up to attend Madame de Fierville, so great was her terror and confusion. She perceived the advantage that her imprudence gave her husband; but far from availing himself of it, he did not even so much as reproach her with it; and his delicacy punished her more than his resentment would have done.

In the evening the visitors being assembled, Lusane seized the moment when his wife was yet in her own apartment. “Here,” said he to them,

“is the rendezvous of friendship : if you like it, come often, and let us pass our life together.” They all replied with one voice that they desired nothing better. “There,” continued he, presenting to them the good Felisonde, “there is our worthy and tender father, who will be the soul of our pleasures. At his age, joy has something more sensible and tender in it than youth, and nothing is more amiable than an amiable old man. He has a daughter, whom I love, and whom I would make happy. Assist me, my friends, to keep her among us ; and let love, nature, and friendship, conspire to render her house every day more agreeable to her. She entertains for the world the prepossessions of her age ; but when we shall have tasted the charms of a virtuous society, this vain world will touch her but little.” While Lusane spoke thus, old Felisonde could not refrain letting fall some tears. “O, my friend !” said he clasping him in his arms ; “happy the father who at his death can leave his daughter in such good hands !”

The instant after arrived Madame de Lusane. All hearts flew out to meet her ; but her own was not easy. She disguised her ill temper under the reserved air of ceremony ; and her politeness, though grave, still appeared amiable and touching ; such a gift have the natural graces of embellishing every thing.

They played. Lusane made Hortensia observe that all his company played low. “It is,” said he, “the way to maintain union and joy. High play prepossesses and alienates our minds : it afflicts those who lose ; it imposes on those who win the duty of being grave, and I think it incompatible with the openness of friendship.” The supper was

delicious: transport and good humour were diffused round the table. The heart and the mind were at ease: the gallantry was such as modesty might smile at, and neither decency nor liberty were under restraint.

Hortensia in another situation would have relished these tranquil pleasures; but the idea of constraint which she attached to them, embittered their sweetness. The day after, Lusane was surprised to find her of a freer and pleasanter air; he suspected she had taken some new resolution. "What shall we do to-day?" said he. "I am going to the play," said she, "and I shall come home to supper."—"Very well; and who are the ladies you are going with?"—"Two of Valsain's friends, Olympia and Artenice."—"It is cruel to me," said the husband, "to be obliged to give you uneasiness continually; but why, Hortensia, will you expose me to it? Do you think me so inconsistent in the principles I have laid down, as to consent that you should be seen in public with those women?"—"To be sure you must consent to it, for the party is settled, and I shall certainly not fail in it."—"Pardon me, Madam; you shall fail in it, that you may not fail in the regard due to yourself."—"Is it failing in regard to myself to see women whom all the world sees?"—"Yes, it is to expose yourself to be confounded with them in the opinion of the public."—"The public, Sir, is not unjust; and in the world all persons answer for themselves."—"The public, Madam, supposes with reason, that those who are allied in pleasures are allied in manners, and you ought not to have any thing in common with Olympia and Artenice. If you would not break off with them too abruptly,

there is a way ; excuse yourself only from the play, and invite them to supper : my door shall be shut against all my friends, and we will be alone with them.” — “ No, Sir ! no ! ” said she to him with ill-humour ; “ I will not abuse your complaisance.” And she writ to disengage herself. Nothing had cost her so much as this billet : tears of anger bedewed it. “ To be sure,” said she, “ I care very little for these women ; the play interests me still less : but to see one’s self opposed in every thing ; never to have a will of one’s own ! to be subjected to that of another, to hear him dictating his laws to me with an insulting tranquillity ! that is what drives me mad, and what will make me capable of every thing.”

It was certain, however, that the tranquillity of Lusane was far from having an insulting air, and it was easy to see that he did violence to himself. His father-in-law, who came to sup with him, perceived the melancholy into which he was plunged. “ Ah, Sir ! ” said Lusane to him, “ I see that I have entered into an engagement with you very painful to fulfil ! ” He told him what happened. “ Courage, my friend,” said this good father to him, “ let us not be discouraged ; if it pleases Heaven, you will render her worthy your cares and love. In pity to me, in pity to my daughter, maintain your resolution. I am going to see her, and if she complain—” “ If she complain, console her, Sir, and appear sensible to her grief : her reason will be more tractable when her heart is comforted. Let her hate me just at present ; I expected it, and am not surprised at it ; but if the bitterness of her temper should alter the sentiments of nature in her soul, if her confidence

in you should be weakened, all would be lost. The goodness of her heart is my only resource, and it is only by an unalterable gentleness that we can prevent her being exasperated. After all, the trials to which I put her are grievous at her time of life, and you must be her support."

These precautions were useless; whether from vanity or delicacy, Hortensia had the power to conceal her chagrin from the eyes of her father. "A good sign," said Lusane; "she knows how to subdue herself; and there are none but weak souls of whom we ought to despair." The day following they dined together alone, and in the most profound silence. At their getting up from table, Hortensia ordered the horses to be put to. "Where are you going?" said her husband. "To make an excuse, Sir, for the rudeness I was guilty of yesterday."—"Go, Hortensia, since you will have it so; but if my repose be dear to you, take your last leave of those women."

Artenice and Olympia, to whom Madame de Fierville had related the scene she had had with Lusane, suspected that it was he who had hindered Hortensia from going to the play with them. "Yes," said they to her, "it was he; we saw him but for a minute, but we have formed our opinion of him: he is a morose absolute man, and one who will make you unhappy."—"He has hitherto talked to me only in the style of friendship. It is true, that he has his particular principles, and a way of living but little compatible with the customs of the world, but—" "But let him live by himself," replied Olympia; "and let him leave us to amuse ourselves in peace. Do you ask him to follow you? A husband is the man in the world

we can best spare, and I do not see why you have occasion for his advice to receive whomsoever you think proper, and to go and see whom you please.” —“No, Madam,” said Hortensia to her, “it is not so easy as you imagine, to put one’s self, at my age, above the will of a husband who has behaved so well to me.” —“She gives way; see she is quite tamed,” replied Artenice. “Ah, my dear! you do not know what it is to yield once to a man, with whom one is to pass one’s life. Our husbands are our tyrants if they are not our slaves. Their authority is a torrent which swells as it runs; we can stop it only at its source; and I speak from experience: for having been guilty of an unfortunate complaisance to my husband twice, I have been for six months together obliged to struggle with him for the ascendancy which my weakness had given him; and but for an unparalleled effort of courage it would have been all over with me, I was a gone woman.” —“That depends upon tempers,” said Hortensia; “and my husband is not one of those who are to be brought down by obstinacy.” —“Undeceive yourself,” replied Olympia; “there is not one whom gentleness ever reconciles; it is by opposing them that we rule them; it is by the dread of ridicule and shame that we hold them; what are you afraid of? We are very strong when we are handsome; and have nothing to reproach ourselves. Your cause is that of all the women; and the men themselves, the men who know how to live, will be on your side.” Hortensia objected the example of her cousin whom Lusane had made happy. They replied that her cousin was a weak woman; that if the life which she had led was a good one to her,

it was because she knew no better; but that a woman, launched into the great world, who had tasted the charms of it, and formed its ornament, was not made to bury herself in the solitude of her own house, and the narrow circle of an obscure acquaintance. They talked to her of a superb ball which the Dutchess of —— was to give the next day. “All the handsome women will be invited there,” said they to her: “if your husband prevents your going, it is a stroke that will cry out for vengeance; and we advise you as friends, to seize that occasion to make a noise, and to part.”

Though Hortensia was very far from wishing to follow these violent counsels, she still retained a bitterness in her soul, at seeing that her unhappiness was going to be known in the world, and that they would look for her in vain at those feasts where but for this she would have seen herself adored. On her return home, a card was put into her hands; she read it with impatience; and sighed after having read it. Her trembling hand still held it, when her husband accosted her. “It is,” said she to him carelessly, “a card of invitation to the Dutchess of ——’s ball.”—“Well, Madam!”—“Well, Sir, I shall not go: be easy.”—“Why, then, Hortensia, deprive yourself of decent pleasures? Have I forbid them you? The honour that is done you pleases me as much, and more than it does yourself: go to the ball: eclipse every thing there that is most lovely; that will be a triumph to me.” Hortensia was not able to dissemble her surprise and joy. “Ah, Lusane!” said she to him, “why are you not always the same? There now is the husband I promised myself. I recover

him now; but is it for a long time?" Lusane's company assembled in the evening, and Hortensia was adorable. They proposed suppers, parties to the play; she engaged herself to them with the best grace. Cheerful with the men, engaging with the women, she charmed them all. Lusane alone dared not yet deliver himself up to the joy which she inspired; he foresaw that this good humour would not continue long without clouds. In the mean time he said just one word to his valet de chambre; and the next day, when his wife asked for her domino, it was like a surprise in a play. They presented her with a dress for the ball, which the hand of Flora seemed to have varied with the most beautiful colours of the spring; those flowers in which the art of Italy equals nature, and deceives the ravished eyes, those flowers ran in garlands over the light waves of a silk tissue of the most brilliant freshness. Hortensia, in love with her dress, her husband, and herself, could not conceal her transport. Her glass being consulted, promised her the most striking successes, and that oracle never deceived her: accordingly, on appearing at the assembly, she enjoyed the flattering emotions occasioned by unanimous admiration; and to a young woman this ebb and flow, this murmur, have altogether something so touching! It is easy to judge that at her return Lusane was pretty well treated; it seemed as if she wanted to paint all the transports which she had raised. At first he received her caresses without reflection, for the wisest sometimes forget themselves; but when he recollected himself—"A ball," said he, "a domino, turns this young head! Ah! what

conflicts have I yet to sustain before I see her such as I could wish her!"

Hortensia had seen at the ball all those giddy young people, from whom her husband wanted to detach her. "He does right," said they to her, "to grow reasonable, and to restore you to your friends: he was going to become the public jest, and we had made a league to distress him wherever he appeared; tell him then for his own ease to vouchsafe to let us see you. If we have the unhappiness to displease him, we give him leave to put himself under no restraint; but let him be contented with rendering himself invisible, without requiring that his wife should be so." Intimidated by these menaces, Hortensia gave her husband to understand, that they took it ill that his door was shut against them, that people of fashion complained of it, and proposed to remonstrate even to him upon it. "If they do," said he, "I will teach them how to take their revenge on me: let each of them marry a handsome woman, live at home with their friends, and shut their doors in my face every time that I go to trouble them."

Some days after, two of these young fellows, piqued at not having been able to introduce themselves to Hortensia, saw Lusane at the opera, and went up to him, in order to ask him the reason of the rude behaviour of his Swiss. "Sir," said the Chevalier De St. Placide to him, "have they told you that the Marquis De Cirval and myself have been twice at your house?"—"Yes, gentlemen, I know that you have given yourselves that trouble."—"Neither yourself nor your lady were to be seen."—"That is very often the case."—

“ Yet you see company.”—“ Only friends.”—
“ We are Hortensia’s friends, and in Valsain’s time we always saw her. Ah, Sir! what an agreeable man was Valsain! she has not lost by the exchange; but he was the genteelest, the most complaisant of all husbands.”—“ I know it.”—“ He, for example, was not jealous.”—“ Happy man!”—
—“ You speak as if you envied him; can it be true, as they say, that you are not so easy?”—
“ Ah, gentlemen, if ever you marry, take care you do not love your wives; it is a cruel thing, this jealousy!”—“ What, are you really come to that?”—
—“ Alas, yes, for my sins.”—“ But Hortensia is so virtuous!”—“ I know it.”—“ She lived like an angel with Valsain.”—“ I hope she will live the same with me too.”—“ Why, then, do her the injustice of being jealous?”—“ It is an involuntary emotion, which I cannot account for.”—“ You confess, then, it is a folly?”—“ To such a degree, that I cannot see near my wife any man of handsome figure, or distinguished merit, but my head turns; and this is the reason that my gate is shut against the most amiable people in the world.”—
“ The marquis and I,” said the chevalier, “ are not dangerous, and we hope—” “ You, gentlemen, you are among those who would make me unhappy all my life. I know you too well not to fear you: and since I must confess it, I have myself required of my wife that she should never see you again.”—“ But, Mr. President, that is but a sorry kind of a compliment.”—“ Ah, gentlemen, it is the most agreeable one that a jealous husband can make you.”—“ Chevalier,” said the marquis, when Lusane had quitted them, “ we wanted, I

thought, to make a jest of this man.”—“ That was my design.”—“ I am afraid, God forgive me, that he makes a jest of us.”—“ I have some suspicion of it; but I will take my revenge on him.”—“ How?”—“ As men revenge themselves on a husband.”

The same evening, at supper, at the Marchioness of Bellune's, they represented Lusane as the most odious of men. “ And the little woman,” said the marchioness, “ has the meanness to suffer him to restrain her? Ah! I will give her a lesson.” Madame de Bellune's house was the rendezvous of all the giddy people both of city and court, and her secret for drawing them together was to assemble the handsomest women. Hortensia was invited to a ball which she gave. There was a necessity of acquainting Lusane with it before hand; but without having any appearance of asking his consent, she just dropped a word *en passant*. “ No, my dear,” said Lusane to Hortensia, “ Madame de Bellune's house is in a style that does not suit you. Her ball is a rendezvous at which you ought not to be. The public is not obliged to believe you more infallible than another, and in order to prevent all suspicion of miscarriage, the surest way is to avoid the hazard of it.” The young woman, so much the more irritated at this refusal, as she did not expect it, burst into complaints and reproaches. “ You abuse,” said she to him, “ the authority which I have confided to you; but beware of driving me to extremities.”—“ I understand you, Madam,” replied Lusane, in a firmer and graver tone; “ but as long as I esteem you, I shall not fear this menace, and I should fear it still

less, if I were to cease to esteem you." Hortensia, who had annexed no idea to the words that had just escaped her, blushed at the meaning they seemed to carry with them, and replied only by tears. Lusane seized the moment when resentment yielded to confusion. "I grow odious to you," said he, "yet what is my crime? that of saving your youth from the dangers which surround it, of detaching you from that which might cast a blemish,—I do not say on your innocence, but on your reputation; of wanting to make you love soon what it is necessary that you must love always."—"Yes, Sir, your intentions are good; but you have a bad method of carrying them into execution. You want to make me love my duty, and you make a slavery of it; there may be some ill consequences to be foreseen in my connections; but I must dissolve instead of breaking them, and detach myself insensibly from the people who displease you, without making you an object of ridicule, by imprisoning me in my own house."—"When the ridicule is without foundation," replied Lusane, "it recoils on those who give it. The prison of which you complain is the asylum of virtue, and will also be that of peace and happiness, whenever you shall think proper to make it so. You upbraid me with not having used a little delicacy towards these people and yourself; I have had my reasons for cutting to the quick. I know that at your time of life the contagion of fashion, example, and habitude, make new progress every day: and that without cutting off all communication, there is no way of guarding against it. It gives me inexpressible uneasiness to talk to you in an

absolute tone ; but it is my affection for you that gives me the courage ; a friend ought to know on occasion how to contradict a friend. Be well assured then, that as long as I love you, I shall have the strength to resist you ; and woe to you, if I abandon you !”—“ Woe to me ! you esteem me very little, if you think me lost the moment you cease to lead me in a string. No, Sir, I knew how to conduct myself long ago ; and Valsain, who did me justice, never had occasion to repent of his confidence. I own to you, that in my husband I did not intend to create myself a tyrant. In order to submit to your will, one ought to have a strength or a weakness which I have not ; all the denials you impose on me are grievous, and I will never accustom myself to them.”

Lusane, left alone to himself, reproached himself for the tears he had made her shed. “ What have I undertaken ?” said he, “ and what a trial to my soul ! I her tyrant ! I, who love her more than my life, and whose heart is torn in pieces with her complaints ! if I persist, I drive her to distraction, and if I give way one single moment, I lose the fruit of my perseverance. One step into this round of company, which she loves, will engage her in it anew. I must support this cruel character, this character so much more cruel to myself than to her.”

Hortensia passed the night in the greatest trouble : all violent measures presented themselves to her mind : but the probity of her mind shuddered at them. “ Why discourage myself ?” said she, when her wrath was a little appeased : “ this man commands himself and rules me because he does not love me ; but if he should ever come to love

me, I should soon reign in my turn. Let me use the only arms Nature has given us, gentleness and seduction."

Lusane, who had not closed his eyes, came to ask her in the morning, with an air of friendship, how she had passed the night. "You know how," said she to him: "you who take a pleasure in disturbing my repose. Ah, Lusane! was it for you to be the cause of my unhappiness; who could have told me that I should have repented of a choice which I made with such a good will, and such good intentions?" In pronouncing these words, she had stretched out her hand to him; and two eyes, the most eloquent that love ever yet made speak, reproached him for his ingratitude. "My better half," said he to her, embracing her, "believe that I have placed all my glory and happiness in making you happy. I would have your life strewed with flowers; but permit me to pluck away the thorns. Wish for what may never cost you any regret, and be assured it shall be fulfilled in my soul, as soon as formed in thine. The law which I impose upon you is only your own will; not that of a moment, which is a whim, a caprice; but that which will arise from reflection and experience, that which you will have ten years hence. I entertain for you the tenderness of a lover, the frankness of a friend, and the uneasy vigilance of a father: there is my heart, it is worthy of you; and if you are still unjust enough to complain of it, you shall not long have occasion to do so." This discourse was accompanied with the most touching marks of a passionate love, and Hortensia appeared sensible of them. Eight days past away in the best understanding, in the most

intimate union that could reign between two married people. To the charms of beauty, of youth, Hortensia joined the enchantment of those timid caresses, which love, in conjunction with duty, seems to steal from modesty. It is the finest of all toils to emmesh a tender heart. But was all this really sincere? Lusane thought so; I think so too. After all, she would not be the first woman who should have made her inclination agree with her views, and her policy with her pleasures.

In the mean time, they approach those days consecrated to folly and joy, during which we are as foolish, but much less joyous than our fathers. Hortensia gave some intimation to Lusane of her desire to give an entertainment, in which music should precede a supper, which should be followed by a dance. Lusane consented with the best grace in the world, but not without precaution: he agreed with his wife on the choice and number of persons whom she should invite; and according to this arrangement the cards were distributed.

The day arrives, and every thing is prepared with the attention of a magnificent lover; but that very morning the Swiss asks to speak to his master. "Besides those who shall come with cards, it is my lady's pleasure," said he to him, "that I admit all who come to the ball. Is that your intention, Sir?"—"To be sure," said Lusane, concealing his surprise, "and you ought not to doubt but I approve what your lady orders." He then went directly to her, and having told her what had just happened: "You have exposed yourself," said he, "to be put to shame before your servants; you have hazarded what a woman cannot too much conciliate, the confidence of your husband.

Is it for you Hortensia, to make use of surprize towards me? Were I less persuaded of the probity of your soul, what an opinion would you give me of it, and what would have been the consequence of this imprudence? The pleasure of afflicting me for a moment, and of making me more mistrustful of you than I would wish to be. Ah! suffer me to esteem you for ever, and respect yourself as much as I respect you! I will not humble you by revoking the order you have given, but you will give me unspeakable uneasiness if you do not revoke it yourself, and your conduct this day shall be my rule all my life.”—“I have committed a fault,” said she, “I see it, and I will repair it. I will send word that I shall have neither music, nor supper, nor ball to-night; I would not wear an appearance of joy when I have a deadly grief in my heart. The public shall know that I am unhappy, for I am weary of dissembling.” Lusane then falling at her feet; “If I loved you less,” said he, “I should yield to your reproaches; but I adore you: I will subdue myself: I shall die of grief to be hated by my wife, but I cannot live in the shame of having betrayed her by abandoning her. I took a sensible pleasure in giving you an entertainment; you refuse it, because I exclude what is not worthy to approach you; you declare to me from thence, that a frivolous world is dearer to you than your husband: it is enough; I will go and give notice that the entertainment will not take place.” Hortensia, moved to the bottom of her soul with what she had just heard, and more touched still with the tears that she had seen trickle from his eyes, recollected herself. “What am I going to persist in?” said she: “Are the people

whom he wants me to detach myself from, my friends? Would they sacrifice the slightest of their interests to me? and yet for them I lose the quiet of my life? I trouble it; I embitter it. I renounce every thing that can form its happiness. It is spite, it is vanity that inspire me. Have I even chosen to examine whether my husband was right? I have seen nothing but the humiliation of obeying. But who shall command, if it be not the wisest? I am a slave; and who is not so, or who ought not to be so to their duties? I call an honest man a tyrant, who conjures me with tears in his eyes, to take care of my reputation! where then is that pride with which I reproach him? Ah! I should perhaps be much to be pitied if he were weak as I. I afflict him in the very moment that he had shewn the most delicate attention to spare me! These are injuries, these are real ones, and not those which I attribute to him—Go,” said she to one of her women; “go and tell your master that I would speak to him.” Scarce had she sent this message, when a sudden qualm seized her. “I am going, then,” said she, “to consent to mope all my life: for I cannot conceal it from myself, but that one has amusements only in the great world; and all those good folks among whom he wants me to live, have not the charms of Val-sain’s friends.” As this reflection had a little changed the disposition of her soul, she contented herself with telling Lusane, that she would willingly give way to him for this once. She excused herself to the people who had asked to be admitted to her ball; and the entertainment, which was as brilliant as possible, had all the vivacity of joy, without tumult and confusion.

“Tell me then, my dear, if any thing has been wanting to our amusement?” said Lusane to Hortensia. “You disguise sometimes,” said she to him, “the constraint you put upon me; but entertainments do not come every day. It is in the void and silence of her house that a woman of my age draws in the poison of dulness; and if you would see that slow poison consume my youth, you will have all the pleasure of it.” “No, Madam,” said he to her, penetrated with grief; “I have not that deliberate cruelty of which you suspect me. If I must renounce the care of making you happy, that dear, that pleasing care, which ought to take up my whole life, at least I will not have to reproach myself with having poisoned the happiness of your days. Neither I, nor the virtuous friends I have chosen for you, have sufficient to make you amends for the denials I occasion you; without that crowd that surrounded you, my house seems a dreadful solitude to you; you have the cruelty to tell me so yourself: I must restore you then to that liberty, without which you like nothing; I ask of you but one more act of complaisance; to-morrow I shall bring you a new set of company; and if you do not judge them worthy to employ your leisure, if they do not take place of this world, which is so dear to you, all is over, and I give you up to yourself.” Hortensia had not much difficulty in granting him what he asked: she was very sure that he had nothing to present her which was equivalent to her liberty: but it was not purchasing it too dear to submit to this slight trial.

The next day, on her waking, she saw her husband enter with a shining countenance, in which sparkled love and joy. “Here,” said he, “is the

new company which I propose to you ; if you are not satisfied with this, I no longer know how to amuse you." Imagine the surprize of this sensible mother on seeing before her the two children whom she had by Valsain. " Children," said Lusane, taking them in his arms, in order to lift them to Hortensia's bed, " embrace your mother, and prevail on her tenderness to vouchsafe to share the cares which I shall take to bring you up." Hortensia pressed them to her bosom, and bathed them with her tears. " Till nature," continued Lusane, " grants me the title of father, love and friendship give it me, and I am going to fulfil its duties."—— " Come, my love," said Hortensia, " this is to me the dearest and tenderest of all your lessons. I had forgot that I was a mother ; I was going to forget that I was a wife. You recal me to those duties ; and those two bands united, bind me for all my life.

HAWKESWORTH.

CRITICAL ESSAY ON HIS WRITINGS AND GENIUS.

THE course of our selection has now brought us to Dr. HAWKESWORTH, an English miscellaneous writer, but whose talents are in nothing more conspicuous than in the few moral tales which are interspersed in his works. We have already said enough in our former essays upon the subject of the equal utility and interest of this species of writing. It is more, therefore, to our present purpose, to mark out the characteristic distinctions of the several writers who are brought to contribute to our work.

Dr. HAWKESWORTH did not come forward to the public as a writer of tales. We believe, that no distinct and complete collection of his tales exists any where but in our own work. They were written originally either as numbers for his *Adventurer*, or as occasional contributions to the magazines of the day; we can here, therefore, put in one claim to public favour—that in our “CLASSIC TALES” alone can be found a uniform and distinct collection of the Moral Tales of HAWKESWORTH.

An observation here casually suggests itself: many of the best tales of Dr. HAWKESWORTH, as we

have said, were originally written for the magazines of the day, and some of them for magazines whose very name has perished in a merited oblivion. It was the same with many of the tales and essays of Dr. GOLDSMITH. ARTHUR MURPHY, an author of our own times, a man certainly of no inconsiderable genius, consumed the earlier part of his life in the conduct and compilation of a periodical work, to which many of the most eminent writers of the day were in the constant habit of contribution. This *Periodical Register* is now nowhere to be found. How many excellent essays, how many admirable tales, how much of the wit of JOHNSON, and of the simplicity of GOLDSMITH, of the fancy of BURKE, and of the correct elegance of HAWKESWORTH, is smothered under this rubbish! Would not that man, therefore, contribute much to the amusement, perhaps to the instruction, of the age, who, in this book-making generation, having the possession or access to good libraries and ancient collections, should collect these scattered excellencies into a uniform work.

To return however to our more immediate subject—

Dr. HAWKESWORTH, as a writer of tales, has a matter and manner peculiarly his own. He can neither be brought into comparison with any English or any French writer.

We have already had occasion to observe of VOLTAIRE, that, as a writer of tales, he was much more distinguished for his manner than for his subject matter. Like FONTAINE, he seems to take a peculiar pride in working up a very silly subject into unexpected interest and elegance. His excellence is all collateral, it never essentially belongs to his subject, but is always dexterously appended to it. He throws an imperial robe, as it were, over a block, but the block is concealed beneath the splendour of the drapery. It is thus with the greater part of the tales of VOLTAIRE. As moral, or even philosophical, they are absolutely without meaning: but such extraneous elegancies, such unexpected wit, is hung on every peg as it were of the fabric, that whilst we hang in admiration on the adjuncts, we never think of looking at the ground-work. If this be not true of all the tales of VOLTAIRE, it is true of the greater part, and may be almost adopted as the characteristic of him as a moral writer. His *Candide* perhaps is a philosophical satire or ridicule; but his *Huron* is little more than *merum sal*. It is not a picture of manners, nor a lesson of life. It ridicules what must be, and therefore cannot contain any lesson of what ought to be.

MARMONTEL is a writer of a very different kind. Like VOLTAIRE, he has a manner of his own; but,

unlike VOLTAIRE, he is as attentive to his subject as to the manner of his narration.

Dr. HAWKESWORTH is so different from both these writers, that it almost amounts to the impertinence of a truism to make the observation. With respect to VOLTAIRE, there is not a single trait in which there is a sufficient general resemblance between them to constitute a comparison. Dr. HAWKESWORTH seldom attempts wit, and when he does attempt it, it must be confessed that he is not very successful. Dr. HAWKESWORTH is as seldom gay as he is witty. He seems to consider himself, or at least his purpose, as above both. He writes always to the heart or to the judgment, but more frequently to the latter. He is sometimes animated, and always correct; relates what is simple with elegance, and explains a more abstruse truth or maxim with equal force and ease. His narrative is dramatic, and his evident end is to amend the heart, rather than cater to the passions. If he is not witty, he is never even equivocally obscene. If he is not gay, he never recommends a lax morality, by treating the sober duties of life with injudicious levity.

In comparison with MARMONTEL, Dr. HAWKESWORTH may appear to possess some of the qualities of that French writer. Like MARMONTEL, he occasionally gives a crayon sketch of a character

from life. The sketch is evidently, in both cases, by the hand of a master. The manner in each seems to differ rather from the nature of the subject than from the talents of the masters. MARMONTEL draws from French life—Dr. HAWKESWORTH from English. MARMONTEL's portraitures, therefore, have more grace and elegance, because, in the age of LOUIS the Fifteenth, French manners were infinitely more refined and more artificial than the English at the same period. The gallantry of the court of LOUIS the Fourteenth gave an indelible character to the whole of the French nation; the impression, in some degree, remains even to the present age. France was governed for nearly a century by women, and they gave a polish, a refinement, and gallantry, which has subsequently been a main characteristic in the manners of that nation.

Dr. HAWKESWORTH does not exhibit any of these characters in his *Adventurer*, and for this very simple reason, because they were not the characters of his day. The court of CHARLES the Second had indeed, in some degree, produced a similar effect upon English, as that of LOUIS the Fourteenth upon the French manners; but the impression had passed more rapidly away. The sober reign of ANN had corrected the evil before it had become confirmed. The princes of the House of HANOVER further confirmed this im-

proved taste, by the ingraftment of the German national traits upon the old English stock. From these several fortunate causes, for such they must be considered, the national character of England has never been long impaired; and, with a very few and those very short intervals, we have retained, from the Saxon æra to the present day, our ancient characteristic—a people of sober deportment, of solid judgment, and of domestic virtue.

The *Adventurer*, therefore, like the *Guardian* and the *Spectator*, has none of that gay and highly coloured portraiture which distinguishes the French school of moral painting. We have no writer like LA BRUYERE, because we have no such extravagancies as that writer delights to describe. We have no ladies like those of MARMONTEL, and therefore have no writer whom we can strictly compare with him. Our writers, as our national humours, are peculiar to ourselves, and must be compared together. They will square to no other rule. To form a just estimate of the talents of HAWKESWORTH, GOLDSMITH, ADDISON, &c. they must be collated together. We must endeavour to investigate what each of them have of their own, or where they contend in similar talents; where they draw the same bow, which of them shall send their arrow farthest.

In comparison with ADDISON, as a moral painter, a writer of tales, Dr. HAWKESWORTH is certainly

of inferior merit. ADDISON was distinguished by a mind of most peculiar elegance : and such of his characters and narratives as are given in the *Guardian*, the *Spectator*, and the *Tatler*, are equally pleasing as tales and descriptively faithful as portraiture from life. ADDISON, moreover, had an advantage which falls to the share of few authors by profession. He lived in the midst of a court, and was caressed by all the nobles of his day. He wrote only from the impulse of his own mind, and had not even to consult the public taste. It is not perhaps too much to say, that the very modes of life in the days of ADDISON were infinitely more brilliant than those in the days of HAWKESWORTH. HAWKESWORTH therefore, in his *Adventurer*, is inferior to ADDISON from the very nature of his matter. The age of wit had passed away, and the characters of ADDISON had ceased to exist in the days of HAWKESWORTH.

In one respect, however, HAWKESWORTH has imitated and improved upon ADDISON. ADDISON was almost the first writer amongst us, who being at once a poet and an elegant writer of prose, had grafted some of the beauties of the former upon the latter, and introduced the forms and figures of poetry into common writing. His allegories, so thickly and beautifully interspersed in his *Spectator*, are eminent instances of the truth of this observation. ADDISON, moreover, gave a new form

to the allegory hitherto in use. He rendered it a kind of narrative of common life, in which the persons only were fanciful, the fable itself being a moral truth, exhibited under substantial images. Dr. HAWKESWORTH, in his *Adventurer*, has repeatedly imitated these allegories, and though we have not made these parts of his writings the matter of our collection, we conceive it necessary to add, that HAWKESWORTH, in these fabulous narratives, falls but little short of his more celebrated precursor.

There was another species of writing introduced by ADDISON, and cultivated with eminent success by HAWKESWORTH; a species of writing to which Dr. JOHNSON was peculiarly attached, and in which he sought and obtained a considerable part of his reputation. It is almost needless to say, that we here speak of his *Eastern Tales*; a kind of writing which, by the characteristic elevation of the style, and not unfrequently the dignity of the personages, gives room for all the powers of language and all the energies of thought. The *Eastern Tales* of ADDISON and JOHNSON hold a kind of a middle station between prose and poetry; the figures of the latter are embossed as it were on the ground-work of the former. The *Eastern Tales* of ADDISON have doubtless more elegance: those of JOHNSON more wisdom. With some allowance for the general gloom of the work, in which a con-

stitutional melancholy evidently had some share, the *Rasselas* of JOHNSON is perhaps the most finished tale in our language. The peculiar talent of the writer, his nice discrimination into the several modes of life, his knowledge of the characteristic rules in each, are exhibited in every page, and almost in every sentence; and it would be difficult to point out any other work, in any language ancient or modern, in which so much substance is compressed into such narrow compass.

Dr. HAWKESWORTH has tried his powers upon the same grounds; and though he does not pretend to the familiar elegance of ADDISON, nor the discriminating wisdom of JOHNSON; though he neither contends with the one in his characteristic grace, nor with the other in his equally characteristic vigour and precision of thought and dignity, he equals them both in propriety. He executes what he undertakes; and if his powers may sink in the comparison with those of these fathers of English wit, they evidently rise above all other writers of his day. The Eastern fictions of Dr. HAWKESWORTH are the most pleasing part of his writings: he owes no inconsiderable part of his reputation to his *Almorán and Hamet*.

The purpose of this kind of writing necessarily limits its merit. Having no other object but to exhibit a moral truth, it does not require that variety of character and incident which enter into

moral tales, properly so called. The writer of an Eastern tale has no possible change of character but that of a sultan and vizier, and his fable requires no incident but what is necessary to the simple enforcement of his moral. It is thus with the *Almorán* and *Hamet* of HAWKESWORTH. The reader will form a very unworthy judgment of it, if he expects any variety in character, or any dexterous involution in the incident. It must be judged by totally another rule.

Amongst the French writers, VOLTAIRE was peculiarly attached to this kind of fiction. He contrived, however, to give it his own characteristic stamp. He is always gay and satirical, in despite of the dignity of his characters. His sultans and sultanas, his viziers and his bashaws, are all Frenchmen; and what is certainly no inconsiderable proof of the genius of the writer, they do not appear unnatural even with these inconsistent appendages. It must not indeed be denied to this writer, that whatever he attempted, he executed with grace and spirit. He infused, as it were, his own character into every thing and every one; and though always full of vigour, is never serious, in his imagery at least, through three complete sentences. Under such a writer, therefore, the established *dramatis personæ* of the Eastern tales wholly changed their tone and character. Instead of being a kind of epic poem in

miniature, as these Oriental fictions have been defined to be, they became comedies, satires, in a word, any thing but pictures of Oriental manners and characters.

This observation will not apply to the *Almorán and Hamet* of Dr. HAWKESWORTH. He is here widely different from VOLTAIRE; inasmuch as having assumed Oriental personages, he does not offend against Oriental habits. He introduces no sultan as a coxcomb, and no vizier as a *petit-maitre*. His characters are as regular and even as his narrative.

It is always to be considered as no insufficient proof of the talents and genius of a writer, when by his manner of treating a subject he contrives to render it so popular and prevalent, that he introduces as it were a peculiar taste, and displacing a former style, substitutes his own characteristic manner. Dr. HAWKESWORTH, if measured upon this rule, must be rated very highly. Previous to his *Almorán and Hamet*, and other Eastern tales, all these Oriental narratives were written in the imitation of the splendid diction and magnificent imagery introduced by Dr. JOHNSON in his *Rasselas*. The just reputation of this great man rendered every thing about him an object of minute and laborious imitation in the minor wits of the age; and it is not perhaps too much to say,

that JOHNSON, like SENECA, has injured our language as much through others as he improved it himself. His early style was imitated with facility, because its character was prominent; and the imitation almost always led into error and into a false taste, because few or none of his imitators had any thing of the precision of language or vigour of intellect of their great original. Hence his tale of *Rasselas* produced a long succession of Oriental fictions, distinguished only by their empty pomposity and fantastic bombast. It was the peculiar merit of Dr. HAWKESWORTH, that he corrected this bad taste, and introduced the ease of familiar narrative into this species of writing. The literary world are much indebted to him for this change; our Oriental tales are now less sublime, and more intelligible. We may have less fine writing, but we have more common sense. The style of *Almorán and Hamet* is sufficient for the narrative, and is seldom disfigured by affectations. Considering, moreover, the circumstances under which Dr. HAWKESWORTH wrote, and that his bookseller would not have given him less for the work, had it been less correctly written, the merit of *Almorán and Hamet* must not be estimated too cheap.

Next to *Almorán and Hamet*, the History of *Amurath* is one of the most reputed tales of Dr.

HAWKESWORTH. The fable is very simple, and resembles much the style of the *Arabian Nights*. The fiction of the ring is pleasing, and its powers are judiciously called into action. The gradations by which Amurath advances from a state of comparative innocence into that vice which finally degrades him from manhood, and sends him as a monster into the desert, are perhaps too abrupt; but the tale is, on the other hand, too compressed to allow room for any more detailed exhibition of the gradual fall of nature from virtue into the most abandoned profligacy. Too much is not to be expected in these abridged moral portraitures.

The displeasure of the sultan at the vizier, who being commanded to lay aside all ceremony, and imagine his sovereign his equal, literally obeyed the command, and indulged in the full liberty of friendship, is well imagined and well represented. The disgust which Amurath at length conceives at his ring, and his anxiety rather to be rid of his monitor, than by correcting his irregularities to render it harmless, are equally natural, and contain an equally good moral.

It is another stroke of nature in this tale, that the resentment of the sultan against Alibeg is but more violent in proportion to its injustice, and the bitterness of his reflections upon treating a faithful servant so unjustly, only further exasperates him,

and renders him more precipitate against his object. This is nature and the human mind.

The manner in which Amurath finally throws away the admonitory ring, his soliloquy which accompanies this action, the appearance and the address of the Genius, and finally the transformation of Amurath into a Satyr, in all these circumstances Dr. HAWKESWORTH seems so far to exceed himself, that we find it almost difficult to persuade ourselves that this tale was the production of his own unassisted powers. We cannot but incline to an opinion, at one time very prevalent, that these Eastern tales have many of the characteristics of JOHNSON.

It is almost needless to observe, that the power of conscience is finely allegorized in the fiction of the ring. This tale is one of the most elegant and forcible of all those reputed to be written by HAWKESWORTH.

The tale of *Nouraddin and Amana* is totally of another species, and of a different degree of merit, to those of *Almorán and Hamet* and of *Amurath*. *Nouraddin and Amana* has no other merit than that of a well narrated and well managed fable. The incidents are rapid, and the surprizes admirably contrived. It is totally, however, without any moral purpose, except that, in the fate of Nouraddin as poisoned by Amana, it may be supposed

to inculcate the folly and mischief of despair. If the death of Nardic, the sultan, however, was necessary to the defence of the virtue of Amana, there certainly could be no criminality in Amana's barely conceiving the wish. The fate of Nou-radden is equally without any moral instruction. Upon the whole, therefore, this tale must not be put into comparison with either that of *Almorán* and *Hamet*, or with the History of *Amurath*.

Almenine and Shelimah is a tale of a different kind from any of the preceding. This narrative is equally good as a tale, and excellent as a moral apologue. The purpose of it may be sufficiently collected from the destinies under which Shelimah was born. "Let her person," said the one Fairy, "be rendered hideous by every species of deformity, and let all her wishes spontaneously produce an opposite effect." "Be it so," replied the other, "since I cannot contravene the malediction; but the coarsest food shall be the most exquisite dainty to Shelimah, and the rags which cover her shall, in her estimation, be equal to cloth of gold. She shall prefer a cottage to a palace, and love shall be a stranger to her breast." Almenine, on the other hand, is introduced as a perfect beauty, endowed with every natural excellence both of body and mind.

This narrative accordingly contains an excellent

illustration of the vanity of our hopes and fears, or as Dr. JOHNSON has termed the satire of JUVENAL, upon which the moral of this fable is built, of the vanity of human wishes.

In the story of *Flavilla*, Dr. HAWKESWORTH appears in a new character. The fable is here an imitation from domestic life ; and though there is less variety of character than in the tales of MARMONTEL of the same species, the story of *Flavilla* is by no means inferior to the *Good and Bad Husband* of MARMONTEL. The necessity, indeed the morality of consulting appearances, is here strongly enforced ; and as long as so much of the happiness of life depends upon prudence and decorum, as well as upon actual virtue and innocence, so long must the story of *Flavilla* be held in more than common estimation. *Flavilla*, moreover, is certainly a character from life ; a character of which every day may give us an example. The story is natural, and none of the incidents strained or twisted so as to enforce the writer's purpose. It will not be too much to say, that this narrative will not suffer in comparison with any of MARMONTEL's ; and that it is at least equal to any thing in the *Spectator*. Dr. HAWKESWORTH used to set a high value upon this production, and it has ever been produced as a satisfactory example, that he possessed that observation and

knowledge of life and manners which would have enabled him to excel in comedy.

The History of *Fidelia* is not of equal merit with that of *Flavilla*, but it equally contains an excellent moral, and the principal character is equally drawn from life. The purpose of this tale is to exhibit the necessity of impressing upon the minds of women a due sense of revealed religion. The History of *Fidelia* is very well calculated to enforce this important truth. It has been sometimes doubted whether this tale was written by HAWKESWORTH, and this doubt has been in some degree supported by the signature affixed to it in the *Adventurer*, which is said to be one which HAWKESWORTH never used. HAWKESWORTH himself disavows it in the acknowledgments subjoined to his *Adventurer*. It may not perhaps be very difficult to reconcile these contending probabilities. On the one side, the similarity of the style; on the other, the express disavowal of Dr. HAWKESWORTH. The point of fact, perhaps, is, that the Story of *Fidelia* was sent to the *Adventurer* in a different form to that in which it now appears, but that Dr. HAWKESWORTH, as the author of that work, gave it its present character and polish.

The above-mentioned narratives, and the remarks on them, are sufficient to convey to the reader an adequate idea of the peculiar talents and genius of Dr. HAWKESWORTH, a writer who must

ever be enumerated amongst those who, by their public efforts, have given new ardour to virtue, and new confidence to truth. This is perhaps the best praise to which a writer can attain, and it was this unwearied zeal in the cause of religion and morals which endeared HAWKESWORTH to Dr. JOHNSON. HAWKESWORTH was likewise a cotemporary with GOLDSMITH, whom he resembles in his correctness and equality, though he is certainly not equal to him either in humour or in simplicity. GOLDSMITH had a manner peculiarly his own, which HAWKESWORTH could never reach. HAWKESWORTH, however, certainly excelled GOLDSMITH both in the knowledge and practice of life. HAWKESWORTH accordingly passed his life in much easier circumstances; and what POPE has termed a miracle in authors, HAWKESWORTH bequeathed a good property behind him, the produce of his literary industry.



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NOURADDIN AND AMANA.

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NOURADDIN AND AMANA.

(FROM THE ADVENTURER.)

THE following narrative is by an eastern tradition attributed to one Heli ben Hamet, a moralist of Arabia, who is said to have delivered his precepts in public and periodical orations. This tradition corresponds with the manner in which the narrative is introduced; and, indeed, it may possibly have no other foundation; but the tradition itself, however founded, is sufficient authority to consider Heli as the literary Adventurer of a remote age and nation; and as only one number of his work is extant, I shall not scruple to incorporate it with my own.

Dost thou ask a torch to discover the brightness of the morning? dost thou appeal to argument for proofs of Divine Perfection? Look down to the earth on which thou standest, and lift up thine eye to the worlds that roll above thee. Thou beholdest splendour, abundance, and beauty; is not He who produced them mighty? Thou considerest; is not He who formed thy understanding, Wise? Thou enjoyest; is not He who gratifies thy senses, Good? Can aught have limited his bounty but his wisdom? or can defects in his sagacity be discovered by thine? To Heli, the preacher of humility and resignation, let thine ear be again attentive, thou whose heart has rebelled in secret, and whose wish has silently accused thy Maker.

I rose early in the morning to meditate, that I might without presumption hope to be heard. I left my habitation, and, turning from the beaten path, I wandered without remarking my way, or regarding any object that I passed, till the extreme heat of the sun, which now approached the meridian, compelled my attention. The weariness which I had insensibly contracted by the length of my walk, became in a moment insupportable; and looking round for shelter, I suddenly perceived that I was not far from the wood, in which Rhedi the hermit investigates the secrets of nature, and ascribes glory to God. The hope of improving my meditation by his wisdom, gave me new vigour; I soon reached the wood, I was refreshed by the shade, and I walked forward till I reached the cell. I entered, but Rhedi was absent. I had not, however, waited long, before I discovered him through the trees at some distance, advancing towards me with a person whose appearance was, if possible, yet more venerable, and whom before I had never seen.

When they came near I rose up, and laying my hand upon my lips, I bowed myself with reverence before them. Rhedi saluted me by my name, and presented me to his companion, before whom I again bowed myself to the ground. Having looked stedfastly in my countenance, he laid his hand upon my head, and blessed me: “Heli,” said he, “those who desire knowledge that they may teach virtue, shall not be disappointed: sit down, I will relate events which yet thou knowest but in part, and disclose secrets of Providence from which thou mayest derive instruction.” We

sat down, and I listened as to the counsel of an angel, or the music of Paradise.

Amana, the daughter of Sanbad the shepherd, was drawing water at the wells of Adail, when a caravan which had passed the desert arrived, and the driver of the camels alighted to give them drink: those which came first to the wells belonged to Nouraddin the merchant, who had brought fine linen and other merchandize of great value from Egypt. Amana, when the caravan drew near, had covered herself with her veil, which the servant of Nouraddin, to gratify a brutal curiosity, attempted to withdraw.

Amana, provoked by the indignity, and encouraged by the presence of others, struck him with the staff of the bucket; and he was about to retaliate the violence, when Nouraddin, who was himself with the caravan, called out to him to forbear, and immediately hasted to the well. The veil of Amana had fallen off in the struggle, and Nouraddin was captivated with her beauty: the lovely confusion of offended modesty that glowed upon her cheek, the disdain that swelled her bosom, and the resentment that sparkled in her eyes, expressed a consciousness of her sex, which warmed and animated her beauty: they were graces which Nouraddin had never seen, and produced a tumult in his breast which he had never felt; for Nouraddin, though he had now great possessions, was yet a youth, and a stranger to woman: the merchandize which he was transporting, had been purchased by his father, whom the angel of death had intercepted in the journey, and the sudden accession of independence and wealth did not dispose him to restrain the impetuosity of desire: he,

therefore, demanded Amana of her parents; his message was received with gratitude and joy; and Nouraddin, after a short time, carried her back to Egypt, having first punished the servant, by whom she had been insulted at the well, with his own hand.

But he delayed the solemnities of marriage, till the time of mourning for his father should expire; and the gratification of a passion which he could not suppress, was without much difficulty suspended now its object was in his power. He anticipated the happiness which he believed to be secured; and supposed that it would increase by expectation, like a treasure by usury, of which more is still possessed, as possession is longer delayed.

During this interval Amana recovered from the tumultuous joy of sudden elevation; her ambition was at an end, and she became susceptible of love. Nouraddin, who regretted the obscurity of her birth only because it had prevented the cultivation of her mind, laboured incessantly to supply the defect: she received his instruction not only with gratitude, but delight; while he spoke she gazed upon him with esteem and reverence, and had no wish but to return the happiness which he was impatient to bestow.

At this time Osmin the Caliph was upon the throne of Egypt. The passions of Osmin, thou knowest, were impetuous as the torrents of Alared, and fatal as the whirlwind of the desert: to excite and to gratify, was the whole purpose of his mind; but his wish was still unsatisfied, and his life was wretched. His seraglio was filled with beauty; but the power of beauty he had exhausted: he

became outrageous to revive desire by a new object, which he demanded of Nardic the eunuch, whom he had not only set over his women but his kingdom, with menace and execration. Nardic, therefore, caused a proclamation to be made, that whoever should produce the most beautiful virgin within two days, should stand in the presence of the Caliph, and be deemed the third in his kingdom.

Caled, the servant who had been beaten by Nouraddin, returned with him to Egypt: the sullen ferocity of his temper was increased by the desire of revenge, and the gloom of discontent was deepened by despair: but when he heard the proclamation of Nardic, joy kindled in his aspect like lightning in the darkness of a storm; the offence which he had committed against Amana, enabled him to revenge the punishment which it produced. He knew that she was yet a virgin, and that her marriage was near: he, therefore, hastened to the palace, and demanded to be brought before Nardic, who in the midst of magnificence and servility, the flattery of dependent ambition, and the zeal of unlimited obedience, was sitting pale and silent, his brow contracted with anxiety, and his breast throbbing with apprehension.

When Caled was brought into his presence, he fell prostrate before him: "By the smile of my lord," said he, "let another be distinguished from the slaves who mingle in obscurity, and let his favour elevate another from the dust; but let my service be accepted, and let the desire of Osmin be satisfied with beauty. Amana will shortly be espoused by Nouraddin; but of Amana the sovereign of Egypt only is worthy. Haste, therefore,

to demand her; she is now with him in the house, to which I will conduct the messenger of thy will."

Nardic received this intelligence with transports of joy; a mandate was instantly written to Nouraddin; it was sealed with the royal signet, and delivered to Caled, who returned with a force sufficient to compel obedience.

On this day the mourning of Nouraddin expired: he had changed his apparel, and perfumed his person; his features were brightened with the gladness of his heart; he had invited his friends to the festival of his marriage, and the evening was to accomplish his wishes: the evening also was expected by Amana, with a joy which she did not labour to suppress; and she was hiding her blushes in the breast of Nouraddin, when Caled arrived with the mandate and the guard.

The domestics were alarmed and terrified; and Nouraddin, being instantly acquainted with the event, rushed out of the apartment of Amana with disorder and trepidation. When he saw Caled, he was moved with anger and disdain; but he was intimidated by the appearance of the guard. Caled immediately advanced, and, with looks of insolence and triumph, presented the mandaté. Nouraddin seeing the royal signet, kneeled to receive it; and having gazed a moment at the superscription, pressed it upon his forehead in an agony of suspense and terror. The wretch who had betrayed him enjoyed the anguish which he suffered; and perceiving that he was fainting, and had not fortitude to read the paper, acquainted him with the contents: at the name of Amana he started, as if he had felt the sting of a scorpion, and immediately fell to the ground.

Caled proceeded to execute his commission without remorse; he was not to be moved by swooning, expostulation, entreaty, or tears; but having conducted Amana to the seraglio, presented her to Nardic, with exultation and hope. Nardic, whose wish was flattered by her stature and her shape, lifted up her veil with impatience, timidity, and solicitude: but the moment he beheld her face, his doubts were at an end: he prostrated himself before her, as a person on whose pleasure his life would from that moment depend. She was conducted to the chamber of the women, and Caled was the same hour invested with his new dignity; an apartment was assigned him in the palace, and he was made captain of the guard that kept the gates.

Nouraddin, when he recovered his sensibility, and found that Amana had been conducted to the seraglio, was seized by turns with distraction and stupidity: he passed the night in agitations, by which the powers of nature were exhausted, and in the morning he locked himself into the chamber of Amana, and threw himself on a sofa, determined to admit no comforter, and to receive no sustenance.

While Nouraddin was thus abandoned to despair, Nardic's description of Amana had roused Osmin from his apathy. He commanded that she should be prepared to receive him, and soon after went alone into her apartment. Familiar as he was with beauty, and satiated with enjoyment, he could not behold Amana without emotion: he perceived, indeed, that she was in tears, and that his presence covered her with confusion; yet he believed that

her terrors would be easily removed, that by kindness she might be soothed to familiarity, and by caresses excited to dalliance; but the moment he approached her, she threw herself at his feet, and entreated to be heard, with an importunity which he chose rather to indulge than resist; he, therefore, raised her from the ground, and supporting her in his arms, encouraged her to proceed. "Let my lord," said she, "dismiss a wretch who is not worthy of his presence, and compassionate the distress which is not susceptible of delight. I am the daughter of a shepherd, betrothed to the merchant Nouraddin, from whom my body has been forced by the perfidy of a slave, and to whom my soul is united by indissoluble bonds. O! let not the terrors of thy frown be upon me! shall the sovereign of Egypt stoop to a reptile of the dust? shall the judge of nations retain the worthless theft of treachery and revenge? or shall he, for whom ten thousand languish with desire, rejoice in the sufferance of one alienated mind?" Osmin, whose breast had by turns been inflamed with desire and indignation, while he gazed upon the beauties of Amana, and listened to her voice, now suddenly threw her from him, and departed without reply.

When he was alone, he remained a few moments in suspence: but the passions which eloquence had repressed, soon became again predominant; and he commanded Amana to be told, that if within three hours she did not come prepared to gratify his wishes, he would cast the head of the slave for whom he was rejected at her feet.

The eunuch by whom this message was de-

livered, and the woman who had returned to Amana when the Caliph retired, were touched with pity at her distress, and trembled at her danger: the evils which they could scarce hope to prevent, they were yet solicitous to delay; and, therefore, advised her to request three days of preparation, that she might sufficiently recover the tranquillity of her mind, to make a just estimate of her own happiness; and with this request to send, as a pledge of her obedience, a bowl of sherbet, in which a pearl had been dissolved; and of which she had first drank herself.

To this advice, after some throbs of desperation, she at length consented, and prepared to put it in execution.

At the time when this resolution was taken, Nouraddin suddenly started from a restless slumber; he was again stung by an instantaneous reflection upon his own misery, and indulged the discontent of his mind in this exclamation: "If wisdom and goodness do indeed preside over the works of Omnipotence, whence is oppression, injustice, and cruelty? As Nouraddin alone has a right to Amana, why is Amana in the power of Osmin? O that now the justice of Heaven would appear in my behalf! O that from this hour I was Osmin, and Osmin Nouraddin!" The moment he had uttered this wish, his chamber was darkened as with a thick cloud, which was at length dissipated by a burst of thunder; and a being, whose appearance was more than human, stood before him. "Nouraddin," said the vision, "I am of the region above thee: but my business is with the children of the earth. Thou hast wished to be

Osmin, and as far as this wish is possible it shall be accomplished ; thou shalt be enabled to assume his appearance, and to exercise his power. I know not yet whether I am permitted to conceal Osmin under the appearance of Nouraddin, but till to-morrow he shall not interrupt thee."

Nouraddin, who had been held motionless by astonishment and terror, now recovered his fortitude as in the presence of a friend ; and was about to express his gratitude and joy, when the Genius bound a talisman on his left arm, and acquainted him with its power : " As often as this bracelet," said he, " shall be applied to the region of thy heart, thou shalt be alternately changed in appearance from Nouraddin to Osmin, and from Osmin to Nouraddin." The Genius then suddenly disappeared, and Nouraddin, impatient to recover the possession of Amana, instantly applied the stud of the bracelet to his breast, and the next moment found himself alone in an apartment of the seraglio.

During this interval, the Caliph, who was expecting the issue of his message to Amana, became restless and impatient : he quitted his apartment, and went into the gardens, where he walked backward and forward with a violent but interrupted pace ; and at length stood still, frowning and pensive, with his eyes fixed on the clear surface of a fountain in the middle of the walk. The agitation of his mind continued, and at length broke out into this soliloquy : " What is my felicity, and what is my power ? I am wretched, by the want of that which the caprice of women has bestowed upon my slave. I can gratify revenge, but not

desire ; I can withhold felicity from him, but I cannot procure it to myself. Why have I not power to assume the form in which I might enjoy my wishes ? I will at least enjoy them in thought. If I was Nouraddin, I should be clasped with transport to the bosom of Amana." He then resigned himself to the power of imagination, and was again silent : but the moment his wish was uttered, he became subject to the Genius who had just transported Nouraddin to his palace. This wish, therefore, was instantly fulfilled ; and his eyes being still fixed upon the water, he perceived, with sudden wonder and delight, that his figure had been changed in a moment, and that the mirror reflected another image. His fancy had been warmed with the ideal caresses of Amana ; the tumult of his mind was increased by the prodigy ; and the gratification of his appetite being the only object of his attention, he hasted instantly to the palace, without reflecting that, as he would not be known, he would be refused admittance. At the door, to which he advanced with eagerness and precipitation, he was stopped by a party of the guard that was now commanded by Caled : a tumult ensued, and Caled being hastily called, believed that Nouraddin, in the phrenzy of desperation, had scaled the walls of the garden to recover Amana ; and rejoicing in an opportunity of revenge that exceeded his hope, instantly stabbed him with his poniard, but at the same time received that of the Caliph in his heart. Thus fell at once the tyrant and the traitor ; the tyrant by the hand which had been armed to support him in oppression, and the traitor by the fury of the appetite which his perfidy had excited.

In the mean time the man who was believed to be slain, reposed in security upon a sofa; and Amana, by the direction of her women, had prepared the message and the bowl. They were now dispatched to the Caliph, and received by Nouraddin. He understood by the message that Amana was yet inviolate: in the joy of his heart, therefore, he took the bowl, which having emptied, he returned by the eunuch, and commanded that Amana should be brought into his presence.

In obedience to this command, she was conducted by her women to the door, but she entered alone pale and trembling; and though her lips were forced into a smile, the characters which grief, dread, and aversion had written in her countenance, were not effaced. Nouraddin, who beheld her disorder, exulted in the fidelity of her love, and springing forward, threw his arms about her in an extasy of tenderness and joy; which was still heightened when he perceived, that in the character of Osmin those embraces were suffered with reluctance, which in his own were returned with ardour: he, therefore, retreating backward a few paces, applied the talisman again to his breast, and having recovered his own form, would have rushed again into her arms; but she started from him in confusion and terror. He smiled at the effect of the prodigy; and sustaining her on his bosom, repeated some tender incidents which were known to no other; told her by what means he had intercepted her message; and urged her immediately to escape, that they might possess all their desires in each other, and leave the incumbrance of royalty to the wretch whose likeness he had been enabled to assume, and was now im-

patient to renounce. Amana gazed at him with a fixed attention, till her suspicion and doubts were removed; then suddenly turned from him, tore her garment, and looking up to heaven, imprecated curses upon her head, till her voice faltered, and she burst into tears.

Of this agony, which Nouraddin beheld with unutterable distress, the broken exclamations of Amana at length acquainted him with the cause. "In the bowl," said she, "which thou hast intercepted, there was death. I wished, when I took it from my lips, that the draught which remained might be poison: a powder was immediately shaken into it by an invisible hand, and a voice whispered me, that him who drank the potion it would inevitably destroy."

Nouraddin, to whose heart the fatal malignity had now spread, perceived that his dissolution would be sudden: his legs already trembled, and his eyes became dim, he stretched out his arms towards Amana, and his countenance was distorted by an ineffectual effort to speak; impenetrable darkness came upon him, he groaned and fell backwards. In his fall the talisman again smote his breast; his form was again changed, and the horrors of death were impressed upon the features of Osmin. Amana, who ran to support him, when she perceived the last transformation, rushed out of the apartment with the wild impetuosity of distraction and despair. The seraglio was alarmed in a moment: the body, which was mistaken for that of Osmin, was examined by the physicians; the effects of poison were evident; Amana was immediately suspected; and by the

command of Shomar, who succeeded his father, she was put to death.

“Such,” said the companion of Rhedi, “was the end of Nouraddin and Amana, of Osmin and Caled, from whose destiny I have withdrawn the veil: let the world consider it, and be wise. Be thou still the messenger of instruction, and let increase of knowledge clothe thee with humility.”

While mine eye was fixed upon the hoary sage, who had thus vouchsafed me counsel and knowledge, his countenance became bright as the morning, and his robe fleecy like a cloud; he rose like a vapour from the ground, and the next moment I saw him no more.

I then turned towards Rhedi the hermit, chilled with reverence, and dumb with astonishment: but in the countenance of Rhedi was the calm cheerfulness of superior virtue; and I perceived that the sanctity of his life had acquainted him with divine intelligence. “Hamet,” said he, “the voice which thou hast heard, is the voice of Zachis the genius; by whose power the wonders which he has related were produced. It is the province of Zachis to punish impatience and presumption, by fulfilling the desires of those who wish to interrupt the order of nature, and presume to direct the hand of Providence. Relate what thou hast heard, to preserve others from his power.”

Now, therefore, let virtue suffer adversity with patience, and vice dread to incur the misery she would inflict: for by him who repines at the scale of Heaven, his own portion of good is diminished; and he who presumptuously assumes the sword, will turn the point upon his own bosom.

HISTORY OF FIDELIA.

(FROM THE ADVENTURER.)

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I SHALL make no apology for the trouble I am about to give you, since I am sure the motives that induce me to give it will have as much weight with you as they have with me: I shall therefore, without further preface, relate to you the events of a life, which, however insignificant and unentertaining, affords a lesson of the highest importance; a lesson, the value of which I have experienced, and may therefore recommend.

I am the daughter of a gentleman of good family, who, as he was a younger brother, purchased with the portion that was allotted him a genteel post under the government. My mother died when I was but twelve years old; and my father, who was excessively fond of me, determined to be himself my preceptor, and to take care that my natural genius, which his partiality made him think above the common rank, should not want the improvements of a liberal education.

He was a man of sense, with a tolerable share of learning. In his youth he had been a free liver, and perhaps for that reason took some pains to become what is called a free-thinker. But whatever fashionable frailties he might formerly have allowed in himself, he was now in advanced life,

and had at least worldly wisdom enough to know, that it was necessary his daughter should be restrained from those liberties, which he had looked upon as, trifling errors in his own conduct. He, therefore, laboured with great application to inculcate in me the love of order, the beauty of moral rectitude, and the happiness and self-reward of virtue; but at the same time professed it his design to free my mind from vulgar prejudices and superstition, for so he called revealed religion. As I was urged to chuse virtue, and reject vice, from motives which had no necessary connection with immortality, I was not led to consider a future state either with hope or fear: my father, indeed, when I urged him upon that subject, always intimated that the doctrine of immortality, whether true or false, ought not at all to influence my conduct or interrupt my peace; because the virtue which secured happiness in the present state, would also secure it in a future: a future state, therefore, I wholly disregarded, and, to confess a truth, disbelieved: for I thought I could plainly discover that it was disbelieved by my father, though he had not thought fit explicitly to declare his sentiments. As I had no very turbulent passions, a ductile and good disposition, and the highest reverence for his understanding, as well as the tenderest affection for him, he found it an easy task to make me adopt every sentiment and opinion which he proposed to me as his own; especially, as he took care to support his principles by the authority and arguments of the best writers against Christianity. At the age of twenty I was called upon to make use of all the philosophy I had been taught, by his death; which not only

deprived me of a parent I most ardently loved, but with him of all the ease and affluence to which I had been accustomed. His income was only for life, and he had rather lived beyond than within it; consequently, there was nothing left for me but the pride and helplessness of a genteel life, a taste for every thing elegant, and a delicacy and sensibility that has doubled all my sufferings. In this distress a brother of my mother's, who was grown rich in trade, received me into his house, and declared he would take the same care of me as if I had been his own child. When the first transports of my grief were abated, I found myself in an easy situation, and from the natural cheerfulness of my temper, I was beginning once more to taste of happiness. My uncle, who was a man of a narrow understanding and illiberal education, was a little disgusted with me for employing so much of my time in reading; but still more so, when, happening to examine my books, he found by the titles that some of them were what he called blasphemy, and tended, as he imagined, to make me an atheist. I endeavoured to explain my principles, which I thought it beneath the dignity of virtue to disguise or disavow; but as I never could make him conceive any difference between a deist and an atheist, my arguments only served to confirm him in the opinion that I was a wicked wretch, who, in his own phrase, believed neither God nor devil. As he was really a good man, and heartily zealous for the established faith, though more from habit and prejudice than reason, my errors gave him great affliction: I perceived it with the utmost concern;

I perceived too, that he looked upon me with a degree of abhorrence mixed with pity, and that I was wholly indebted to his good nature for that protection which I had flattered myself I should owe to his love. I comforted myself, however, with my own integrity, and even felt a conscious pride in suffering this persecution from ignorance and folly, only because I was superior to vulgar errors and popular superstition; and that Christianity deserved these appellations, I was not more convinced by my father's arguments than my uncle's conduct, who, as his zeal was not according to knowledge, was by no means qualified to "adorn the doctrine which he professed to believe."

I had lived a few months under the painful sensibility of receiving continual benefits from a person whose esteem and affection I had lost, when my uncle one day came into my chamber, and after preparing me for some unexpected good fortune, told me, he had just had a proposal of marriage for me from a man to whom I could not possibly have any objection. He then named a merchant, with whom I had often been in company at his table. As the man was neither old nor ugly, had a large fortune and a fair character, my uncle thought himself sufficiently authorised to pronounce as he did, that I could not possibly have any objection to him. An objection, however, I had, which I told my uncle was to me insuperable; it was, that the person whom he proposed to me as the companion, the guide and director of my whole life, to whom I was to vow not only obedience but love, had nothing in him that could ever engage

my affection : his understanding was low, his sentiments mean and indelicate, and his manner unpolite and displeasing.—“ What stuff is all this,” interrupted my uncle, “ sentiments indelicate ! unpolite ! his understanding, forsooth, not equal to your own ! Ah, child, if you had less romance, conceit, and arrogance, and more true discretion and prudence, it would do you more good than all the fine books you have confounded your poor head with, and what is worse, perhaps, ruined your poor soul. I own, it went a little against my conscience to accept my honest friend’s kind offer, and give him such a pagan for his wife. But how know I whether the believing husband may not convert the unbelieving wife ?—As to your flighty objections, they are such nonsense, that I wonder you can suppose me fool enough to be deceived by them. No, child ; wise as you are, you cannot impose upon a man who has lived as many years in the world as I have. I see your motive ; you have some infidel libertine rake in your eye, with whom you would go headlong to perdition. But I shall take care not to have your soul to answer for as well as your person. Either I shall dispose of you to an honest man that may convert you, or you shall dispose of yourself how you please for me ; for I disclaim all further care or trouble about you : so I leave you to consider, whether or no the kindness I have shewn you entitles me to some little influence over you, and whether you chuse to seek protection where you can find it, or accept of the happy lot providence has cut out for you.”

He left me at the close of this fine harangue, and I seriously set myself to consider as he bade

me, which of the two states he had set before me I ought to chuse; to submit to a legal sort of prostitution, with the additional weight of perjury on my conscience, or to expose myself to all the distresses of friendless poverty and unprotected youth. After some hours of deliberation, I determined on the latter, and that more from principle than inclination; for though my delicacy would have suffered extremely in accepting a husband at least indifferent to me; yet as my heart was perfectly disengaged, and my temper naturally easy, I thought I could have been less unhappy in following my uncle's advice, than I might probably be by rejecting it: but then I must have submitted to an action I could not think justifiable, in order to avoid mere external distresses. This would not have been philosophical. I had always been taught, that virtue was of itself sufficient to happiness; and that those things which are generally esteemed evils, could have no power to disturb the felicity of a mind governed by the eternal rule of right, and truly enamoured of the charms of moral beauty. I resolved, therefore, to run all risks, rather than depart from this glorious principle; I felt myself raised by the trial, and exulted in the opportunity of shewing my contempt of the smiles or frowns of fortune, and of proving the power of virtue to sustain the soul under all accidental circumstances of distress.

I communicated my resolution to my uncle, assuring him at the same time of my everlasting gratitude and respect, and that nothing should have induced me to offend or disobey him, but his requiring me to do what my reason and conscience

disapproved; that supposing the advantages of riches to be really as great as he believed, yet still those of virtue were greater, and I could not resolve to purchase the one by a violation of the other; that a false vow was certainly criminal; and that it would be doing an act of the highest injustice, to enter into so solemn an engagement without the power of fulfilling it; that my affections did not depend on my own will; and that no man should possess my person, who could not obtain the first place in my heart.

I was surprized that my uncle's impatience had permitted me to go on thus far; but looking in his face, I perceived that passion had kept him silent. At length the gathering storm burst over my head in a torrent of reproaches. My reasons were condemned as romantic absurdities, which I could not myself believe; I was accused of designing to deceive, and to throw myself away on some worthless fellow, whose principles were as bad as my own. It was in vain for me to assert that I had no such design, nor any inclination to marry at all; my uncle could sooner have believed the grossest contradiction, than that a young woman could so strenuously refuse one man without being prepossessed in favour of another. As I thought myself injured by his accusations and tyranny, I gave over the attempt to mitigate his anger. He appealed to Heaven for the justice of his resentment, and against my ingratitude and rebellion; and then giving me a note of fifty pounds, which he said would keep me from immediate indigence, he bade me leave his house, and see his face no more. I bowed in sign of obedience; and collect-

ing all my dignity and resolution, I arose, thanked him for his past benefits, and with a low curtesy left the room.

In less than an hour I departed with my little wardrobe to the house of a person who had formerly been my father's servant, and who now kept a shop and let lodgings. From hence I went the next day to visit my father's nephew, who was in possession of the family estate, and had lately married a lady of great fortune. He was a young gentleman of good parts, his principles the same as my father's, though his practice had not been quite agreeable to the strict rules of morality; however, setting aside a few of those vices which are looked upon as genteel accomplishments in young fellows of fortune, I thought him a good sort of man; and as we had always lived in great kindness, I doubted not that I should find him my friend, and meet with approbation and encouragement at least, if not assistance from him. I told him my story, and the reasons that had determined me to the refusal that had incurred my uncle's displeasure. But how was I disappointed, when, instead of the applause I expected for my heroic virtue and unmerited persecutions, I perceived a smile of contempt on his face, when he interrupted me in the following manner: "And what, in the devil's name, my dear cousin, could make a woman of your sense behave so like an idiot: What! forfeit all your hopes from your uncle, refuse an excellent match, and reduce yourself to beggary, because truly you were not in love? Surely one might have expected better from you even at fifteen. Who is it, pray, that marries the person of

their choice? For my own part, who have rather a better title to please myself with a good fifteen hundred a-year, than you who have not a shilling, I found it would not do, and that there was something more to be sought after in a wife than a pretty face or a genius. Do you think I cared three farthings for the woman I married? No, faith. But her thirty thousand pounds were worth having; with that I can purchase a seraglio of beauties, and indulge my taste in every kind of pleasure. And pray what is it to me whether my wife has beauty, or wit, or elegance, when her money will supply me with all that in others? You, cousin, had an opportunity of being as happy as I am: the men, believe me, would not like you a bit the worse for being married; on the contrary, you would find, that for one who took notice of you as a single woman, twenty would be your admirers and humble servants when there was no danger of being taken-in. Thus you might have gratified all your passions, made an elegant figure in life, and have chosen out some gentle swain as romantic and poetical as you pleased for your cecisbeo. The good John Trot husband would have been easily managed, and——” Here my indignation could be contained no longer, and I was leaving the room in disdain, when he caught me by the hand——“Nay, prithee, my dear cousin, none of these violent airs. I thought you and I had known one another better. Let the poor souls, who are taught by the priests and their nurses to be afraid of hell-fire, and to think they shall go to the devil for following nature and making life agreeable, be as outrageously virtuous as they please: you have too much sense to be frightened

at bugbears; you know that the term of your existence is but short; and it is highly reasonable to make it as pleasant as possible.”—I was too angry to attempt confuting his arguments; but bursting from his hold, told him I would take care not to give him a second opportunity of insulting my distress and affronting my understanding; and so left his house with a resolution never to enter it again.

I went home mortified and disappointed. My spirits sunk into a dejection, which took from me for many days all inclination to stir out of my lodging, or to see a human face. At length I resolved to try, whether indigence and friendship were really incompatible, and whether I should meet with the same treatment from a female friend, whose affection had been the principal pleasure of my youth. Surely, thought I, the gentle Amanda, whose heart seems capable of every tender and generous sentiment, will do justice to the innocence and integrity of her unfortunate friend; her tenderness will encourage my virtue and animate my fortitude, her praises and endearments will compensate all my hardships. Amanda was a single woman of a moderate independent fortune, which I heard she was going to bestow on a young officer, who had little or nothing besides his commission. I had no doubt of her approbation of my refusing a mercenary match, since she herself had chosen from motives so opposite to those which are called prudent. She had been in the country some months, so that my misfortunes had not reached her ear till I myself related them to her. She heard me with great attention, and answered me

with politeness enough, but with a coldness that chilled my very heart. “You are sensible, my dear Fidelia,” said she, “that I never pretended to set my understanding in competition with yours. I knew my own inferiority; and though many of your notions and opinions appeared to me very strange and particular, I never attempted to dispute them with you. To be sure, you know best; but it seems to me a very odd conduct for one in your situation to give offence to so good an uncle; first, by maintaining doctrines which may be very true for aught I know, but which are very contrary to the received opinions we are brought up in, and therefore are apt to shock a common understanding; and secondly, to renounce his protection, and throw yourself into the wide world, rather than marry the man he chose for you; to whom, after all, I do not find you had any real objection, nor any antipathy for his person.”—Antipathy, my dear! said I; are there not many degrees between loving and honouring a man preferably to all others, and beholding him with abhorrence and aversion? The first is, in my opinion, the duty of a wife, a duty voluntarily taken upon herself, and engaged in under the most solemn contract. As to the difficulties that may attend my friendless, unprovided state, since they are the consequences of a virtuous action, they cannot really be evils, nor can they disturb that happiness which is the gift of virtue.—“I am heartily glad,” answered she, “that you have found the art of making yourself happy by the force of imagination? I wish your enthusiasm may continue; and that you may still be further convinced, by your own

experience, of the folly of mankind, in supposing poverty and disgrace to be evils."

I was cut to the soul by the unkind manner which accompanied this sarcasm, and was going to remonstrate against her unfriendly treatment, when her lover came in with another gentleman, who, in spite of my full heart, engaged my attention, and for a while made me forget the stings of unkindness. The beauty and gracefulness of his person caught my eye, and the politeness of his address and the elegance of his compliments soon prejudiced me in favour of his understanding. He was introduced by the captain to Amanda as his most intimate friend, and seemed desirous to give credit to his friend's judgment by making himself as agreeable as possible. He succeeded so well, that Amanda was wholly engrossed by the pleasure of his conversation, and the care of entertaining her lover and her new guest; her face brightened, and her good humour returned. When I arose to leave her, she pressed me so earnestly to stay dinner, that I could not, without discovering how much I resented her behaviour, refuse. This, however, I should probably have done, as I was naturally disposed to show every sentiment of my heart, had not a secret wish arose there to know a little more of this agreeable stranger. This inclined me to think it prudent to conceal my resentment, and to accept the civilities of Amanda. The conversation grew more and more pleasing; I took my share in it, and had more than my share of the charming stranger's notice and attention. As we all grew more and more unreserved, Amanda dropt hints in the course of the conversation re-

lating to my story, my sentiments, and unhappy situation. Sir George Freeloze, for that was the young gentleman's name, listened greedily to all that was said of me, and seemed to eye me with earnest curiosity as well as admiration. We did not part till it was late, and Sir George insisted on attending me to my lodgings: I strongly refused it, not without a sensation which more properly belonged to the female than the philosopher, and which I condemned in myself as arising from dishonest pride. I could not without pain suffer the polite Sir George, upon so short an acquaintance, to discover the meanness of my abode. To avoid this, I sent for a chair; but was confused to find, that Sir George and his servants prepared to attend it on foot by way of guard; it was in vain to dispute; he himself walked before, and his servants followed it. I was covered with blushes, when after all this parade, he handed me in at the little shop door, and took leave with as profound respect as if he had guarded me to a palace. A thousand different thoughts kept me from closing my eyes that night. The behaviour of Amanda wounded me to the soul: I found that I must look on her as no more than a common acquaintance; and that the world did not contain one person whom I could call my friend. My heart felt desolate and forlorn; I knew not what course to take for my future subsistence; the pain which my pride had just given me, convinced me that I was far from having conquered the passions of humanity, and that I should feel too sensibly all the mortifications which attend on poverty. I determined,

however, to subdue this pride, and called to my assistance the examples of ancient sages and philosophers, who despised riches and honours, and felt no inconveniencies from the malice of fortune. I had almost reasoned myself into a contempt for the world, and fancied myself superior to its smiles or frowns, when the idea of Sir George Freelove rushed into my mind, and destroyed at once the whole force of my reasoning. I found that however I might disregard the rest of the world, I could not be indifferent to his opinion; and the thought of being despised by him was insupportable. I recollected that my condition was extremely different from that of an old philosopher, whose rags perhaps were the means of gratifying his pride, by attracting the notice and respect of mankind: at least, the philosopher's schemes and wishes were very different from those which at that time were taking possession of my heart. The looks and behaviour of Sir George left me no doubt that I had made as deep an impression in his favour, as he had done in mine. I could not bear to lose the ground I had gained, and to throw myself into a state below his notice. I scorned the thoughts of imposing on him with regard to my circumstances, in case he should really have had favourable intentions for me; yet to disgrace myself for ever in his eye, by submitting to servitude or any low way of supporting myself, was what I could not bring myself to resolve on.

In the midst of these reflections I was surprised the next morning by a visit from Sir George. He made respectful apologies for the liberty he took; told me he had learnt from my friend, that the

unkindness and tyranny of an uncle had cast me into uneasy circumstances; and that he could not know that so much beauty and merit were so unworthily treated by fortune, without earnestly wishing to be the instrument of doing me more justice. He entreated me to add dignity and value to his life, by making it conducive to the happiness of mine; and was going on with the most fervent offers of service, when I interrupted him by saying, that there was nothing in his power that I could with honour accept, by which my life could be made happier, but that respect which was due to me as a woman and a gentlewoman, and which ought to have prevented such offers of service from a stranger, as could only be justified by a long-experienced friendship; that I was not in a situation to receive visits, and must decline his acquaintance, which nevertheless in a happier part of my life would have given me pleasure.

He now had recourse to all the arts of his sex, imputing his too great freedom to the force of his passion, protesting the most inviolable respect, and imploring on his knees, and even with tears, that I would not punish him so severely as to deny him the liberty of seeing me, and making himself more and more worthy of my esteem. My weak heart was but too much touched by his artifices, and I had only just fortitude enough to persevere in refusing his visits, and to insist on his leaving me, which at last he did; but it was after such a profusion of tenderness, prayers, and protestations, that it was some time before I could recal my reason enough to reflect on the whole of his behaviour, and on my own situation, which

compared, left me but little doubt of his dishonourable views.

I determined never more to admit him to my presence, and accordingly gave orders to be denied if he came again. My reason applauded, but my heart reproached me, and heavily repined at the rigid determination of prudence. I knew that I acted rightly, and I expected that that consciousness would make me happy; but I found it otherwise; I was wretched beyond what I had ever felt or formed any idea of; I discovered that my heart was entangled in a passion which must for ever be combated, or indulged at the expence of virtue. I now considered riches as truly desirable, since they would have placed me above disgraceful attempts, and given me reasonable hopes of becoming the wife of Sir George Free-love. I was discontented and unhappy, but surprised and disappointed to find myself so, since hitherto I had no one criminal action to reproach myself with; on the contrary, my difficulties were all owing to my regard for virtue.

I resolved, however, to try still farther the power of virtue to confer happiness, to go on in my obedience to her laws, and patiently wait for the good effects of it. But I had stronger difficulties to go through than any I had ever yet experienced. Sir George was too much practised in the arts of seduction, to be discouraged by a first repulse: every day produced either some new attempt to see me, or a letter full of the most passionate protestations and entreaties for pardon and favour. It was in vain I gave orders that no more letters should be taken in from him; he had so many different contrivances to convey them, and

directed them in hands so unlike, that I was surprised into reading them contrary to my own intentions. Every time I stirred out he was sure to be in my way, and to employ the most artful tongue that ever ensnared the heart of woman, in blinding my reason and awakening my passions.

My virtue, however, did not yet give way, but my peace of mind was utterly destroyed. Whenever I was with him, I summoned all my fortitude, and constantly repeated my commands that he should avoid me. His disobedience called for my resentment, and, in spite of my melting heart, I armed my eyes with anger, and treated him with as much disdain as I thought his unworthy designs deserved. But the moment he left me, all my resolution forsook me. I repined at my fate: I even murmured against the Sovereign Ruler of all things, for making me subject to passions which I could not subdue, yet must not indulge: I compared my own situation with that of my libertine cousin, whose pernicious arguments I had heard with horror and detestation, who gave the reins to every desire, whose house was the seat of plenty, mirth, and delight, whose face was ever covered with smiles, and whose heart seemed free from sorrow and care. Is not this man, said I, happier than I am? And if so, where is the worth of virtue? Have I not sacrificed to her my fortune and my friends? Do I not daily sacrifice to her my darling inclination? Yet what is the compensation she offers me? What are my prospects in this world but poverty, mortification, disappointment and grief? Every wish of my heart denied, every passion of humanity com-

bated and hurt, though never conquered! Are these the blessings with which Heaven distinguishes its favourites? Can the King of Heaven want power or will to distinguish them? Or does he leave his wretched creatures to be the sport of chance, the prey of wickedness and malice? Surely no. Yet is not the condition of the virtuous often more miserable than that of the vicious? I myself have experienced that it is. I am very unhappy, and see no likelihood of my being otherwise in this world—and all beyond the grave is eternal darkness. Yet why do I say that I have no prospect of happiness? Does not the most engaging of men offer me all the joys that love and fortune can bestow? Will not he protect me from every insult of the proud world that scoffs at indigence? Will not his liberal hand pour forth the means of every pleasure, even of that highest and truest of all pleasures, the power of relieving the sufferings of my fellow-creatures, of changing the tears of distress into tears of joy and gratitude, of communicating my own happiness to all around me? Is not this a state far preferable to that in which virtue has placed me? But what is virtue? Is not happiness the laudable pursuit of reason? Is it not then laudable to pursue it by the most probable means? Have I not been accusing Providence of unkindness, whilst I myself only am in fault for rejecting its offered favours? Surely, I have mistaken the path of virtue: it must be that which leads to happiness. The path which I am in is full of thorns and briars, and terminates in impenetrable darkness: but I see another that is strewed with flowers, and bright with the sunshine of prosperity; this, surely, is the path of

virtue and the road to happiness. Hitherto then let me turn my weary steps, nor let vain and idle prejudices fright me from felicity. It is surely impossible that I should offend God, by yielding to a temptation which he has given me no motive to resist. He has allotted me a short and precarious existence, and has placed before me good and evil.—What is good but pleasure? What is evil but pain? Reason and nature direct me to choose the first, and avoid the last. I sought for happiness in what is called virtue, but I found it not: shall I not try the other experiment, since I think I can hardly be more unhappy by following inclination, than I am by denying it?

Thus had my frail thoughts wandered into a wilderness of error, and thus had I almost reasoned myself out of every principle of morality, by pursuing through all their consequences the doctrines which had been taught me as rules of life and prescriptions for felicity, the talismans of truth, by which I should be secured in the storms of adversity, and listen without danger to the syrens of temptation: when, in the fatal hour of my presumption, sitting alone in my chamber, collecting arguments on the side of passion, almost distracted with doubts, and plunging deeper and deeper into falsehood, I saw Sir George Free-love at my feet, who had gained admittance, contrary to my orders, by corrupting my landlady. It is not necessary to describe to you his arts, or the weak efforts of that virtue which had been graciously implanted in my heart, but which I had taken impious pains to undermine by false reasoning, and which now tottered from the foundation:

suffice it that I submitted to the humiliation I have so well deserved, and tell you, that, in all the pride of human reason, I dared to condemn, as the effect of weakness and prejudice, the still voice of conscience which would yet have warned me from ruin; that my innocence, my honour, was the sacrifice to passion and sophistry; that my boasted philosophy, and too much flattered understanding, preserved me not from the lowest depth of infamy, which the weakest of my sex with humility and religion would have avoided.

I now experienced a new kind of wretchedness. My vile seducer tried in vain to reconcile me to the shameful life to which he had reduced me, by loading me with finery, and lavishing his fortune in procuring me pleasures which I could not taste, and pomp which seemed an insult on my disgrace. In vain did I recollect the arguments which had convinced me of the lawfulness of accepting offered pleasures, and following the dictates of inclination: the light of my understanding was darkened, but the sense of guilt was not lost. My pride and my delicacy, if, criminal as I was, I may dare to call it so, suffered the most intolerable mortification and disgust, every time I reflected on my infamous situation. Every eye seemed to upbraid me, even that of my triumphant seducer. O depth of misery! to be conscious of deserving the contempt of him I loved, and for whose sake I was become contemptible to myself.

This was the state of my mind during a year which I passed in Sir George's house. His fondness was unabated for eight months of the time; and as I had no other object to share my attention, neither friend nor relation to call off any

part of my tenderness, all the love of a heart naturally affectionate centered in him. The first dawnings of unkindness were but too visible to my watchful eyes. I had now all the torments of jealousy to endure, till a cruel certainty put an end to them. I learned at length, that my false lover was on the brink of marriage with a lady of great fortune. I immediately resolved to leave him; but could not do it without first venting my full heart in complaints and reproaches. This provoked his rage, and drew on me insolence, which though I had deserved, I had not learnt to bear. I returned with scorn, which no longer became me, all the wages of my sin and the trappings of my shame, and left his house in the bitterest anguish of resentment and despair.

I returned to my old lodgings; but unable to bear a scene which recalled every circumstance of my undoing, ashamed to look in the face of any creature who had seen me innocent, wretched in myself, and hoping from change of place some abatement of my misery, I put myself into a post-chaise at two in the morning, with orders to the driver to carry me as far from town as he could before the return of night, leaving it to him to choose the road.

My reason and my senses seemed benumbed and stupified during my journey. I made no reflections on what I was about, nor formed any design for my future life. When night came, my conductor would have stopped at a large town, but I bid him go on to the next village. There I alighted at a paltry inn, and dismissed my vehicle, without once considering what I was to do with myself, or why I chose that place for my abode.

To say truth, I can give no account of my thoughts at this period of time; they were all confused and distracted. A short frenzy must have filled up those hours, of which my memory retains such imperfect traces. I remember only, that without having pulled off my clothes, I left the inn as soon as I saw the day, and wandered out of the village.

My unguided feet carried me to a range of willows by a river's side, where, after having walked some time, the freshness of the air revived my senses, and awakened my reason. My reason, my memory, my anguish and despair, returned together! Every circumstance of my past life was present to my mind; but most the idea of my faithless lover and my criminal love tortured my imagination, and rent my bleeding heart, which, in spite of all its guilt and all its wrongs, retained the tenderest and most ardent affection for its undoer. This unguarded affection, which was the effect of a gentle and kind nature, heightened the anguish of resentment, and completed my misery. In vain did I call off my thoughts from this gloomy retrospect, and hope to find a gleam of comfort in my future prospects. They were still more dreadful: poverty, attended by infamy and want, groaning under the cruel hand of oppression and the taunts of insolence, was before my eyes. I, who had once been the darling and the pride of indulgent parents, who had once been beloved, respected, and admired, was now the outcast of human nature, despised and avoided by all who had ever loved me, by all whom I had most loved! hateful to myself, belonging to no one, exposed to wrongs and insults from all!

I tried to find out the cause of this dismal change, and how far I was myself the occasion of it. My conduct with respect to Sir George, though I spontaneously condemned, yet, upon recollection, I thought the arguments which produced it, would justify. But as my principles could not preserve me from vice, neither could they sustain me in adversity; conscience was not to be perverted by the sophistry which had beclouded my reason. And if any, by imputing my conduct to error, should acquit me of guilt, let them remember, it is yet true, that in this uttermost distress I was neither sustained by the consciousness of innocence, the exultation of virtue, nor the hope of reward: whether I looked backward or forward, all was confusion and anguish, distraction and despair. I accused the Supreme Being of cruelty and injustice, who, though he gave me not sufficient encouragement to resist desire, yet punished me with the consequences of indulgence. If there is a God, cried I, he must be either tyrannical and cruel, or regardless of his creatures. I will no longer endure a being which is undeservedly miserable either from chance or design, but fly to that annihilation in which all my prospects terminate. Take back, said I, lifting my eyes to Heaven, the hateful gift of existence, and let my dust no more be animated to suffering and exalted to misery.

So saying, I ran to the brink of the river, and was going to plunge in, when the cry of some person very near me, made me turn my eyes to see whence it came. I was accosted by an elderly clergyman, who with looks of terror, pity and benevolence, asked what I was about to do? At

first I was sullen, and refused to answer him ; but by degrees the compassion he showed, and the tenderness with which he treated me, softened my heart, and gave vent to my tears.

“ O ! madam,” said he, “ these are gracious signs, and unlike those which first drew my attention, and made me watch you unobserved, fearing some fatal purpose in your mind. What must be the thoughts which could make a face like your’s appear the picture of horror ! I was taking my morning walk, and have seen you a considerable time ; sometimes stopping and wringing your hands, sometimes quickening your pace, and sometimes walking slow with your eyes fixed on the ground, till you raised them to heaven, with looks not of supplication and piety, but rather of accusation and defiance. For pity tell me how is it that you have quarrelled with yourself, with life, nay even with Heaven ? Recall your reason and your hope, and let this seasonable prevention of your fatal purpose be an earnest to you of good things to come, of God’s mercy not yet alienated from you, and stooping from his throne to save your soul from perdition.”

The tears which flowed in rivers from my eyes while he talked, gave me so much relief, that I found myself able to speak, and desirous to express my gratitude for the good man’s concern for me. It was so long since I had known the joys of confidence, that I felt surprising pleasure and comfort from unburthening my heart, and telling my kind deliverer every circumstance of my story, and every thought of my distracted mind. He shuddered to hear me upbraid the Divine Providence ; and stopping me short, told me, he would

lead me to one who should preach patience to me, whilst she gave me the example of it.

As we talked he led me to his own house, and there introduced me to his wife, a middle-aged woman, pale and emaciated, but of a cheerful placid countenance, who received me with the greatest tenderness and humanity. She saw I was distressed, and her compassion was beforehand with my complaints. Her tears stood ready to accompany mine; her looks and her voice expressed the kindest concern; and her assiduous cares demonstrated that true politeness and hospitality, which is not the effect of art but of inward benevolence. While she obliged me to take some refreshment, her husband gave her a short account of my story, and of the state in which he had found me. "This poor lady," said he, "from the fault of her education and principles, sees every thing through a gloomy medium: she accuses Providence, and hates her existence for those evils, which are the common lot of mankind in this short state of trial. You, my dear, who are one of the greatest sufferers I have known, are best qualified to cure her of her faulty impatience; and to convince her, by your own example, that this world is not the place in which virtue is to find its reward. She thinks no one so unhappy as herself; but if she knew all that you have gone through, she would surely be sensible, that if you are happier than she, it is only because your principles are better."

"Indeed, my dear madam," said she, "that is the only advantage I have over you; but that, indeed, outweighs every thing else. It is now but ten days since I followed to the grave my

only son, the survivor of eight children, who were all equally the objects of my fondest love. My heart is no less tender than your own, nor my affections less warm. For a whole year before the death of my last darling, I watched the fatal progress of his disease, and saw him suffer the most amazing pains. Nor was poverty, that dreaded evil to which you could not submit, wanting to my trials. Though my husband is by his profession a gentleman, his income is so small, that I and my children have often wanted necessaries: and though I had always a weakly constitution, I have helped to support my family by the labour of my own hands. At this time I am consuming, by daily tortures, with a cancer which must shortly be my death. My pains, perhaps, might be mitigated by proper assistance, though nothing could preserve my life; but I have not the means to obtain that assistance.”——O hold, interrupted I, my soul is shocked at the enumeration of such intolerable sufferings. How is it that you support them? Why do I not see you, in despair like mine, renounce your existence, and put yourself out of the reach of torment? But above all, tell me how it is possible for you to preserve, amidst such complicated misery, that appearance of cheerfulness and serene complacency which shines so remarkably in your countenance, and animates every look and motion?

“That cheerfulness and complacency,” answered the good woman, “I feel in my heart. My mind is not only serene, but often experiences the highest emotions of joy and exultation, that the brightest hopes can give.” And whence, said I, do you derive this astonishing art of extracting

joy from misery, and of smiling amidst all the terrors of pain, sorrow, poverty and death? She was silent a moment; then stepping to her closet, reached a Bible, which she put into my hands. "See there," said she, "the volume in which I learn this art. "Here I am taught, that everlasting glory is in store for all who will accept it upon the terms which infinite perfection has prescribed; here I am promised consolation, assistance and support from the Lord of Life; and here I am assured that my transient afflictions are only meant to fit me for eternal and unspeakable happiness. This happiness is at hand. The short remainder of my life seems but a point, beyond which opens the glorious prospect of immortality. Thus encouraged, how should I be dejected? Thus supported, how should I sink? With such prospects, such assured hopes, how can I be otherwise than happy?"

While she spoke, her eyes sparkled, and her whole face seemed animated with joy. I was struck with her manner, as well as her words. Every syllable she uttered seemed to sink into my soul, so that I never can forget it. I resolved to examine a religion, which was capable of producing such effects as I could not attribute either to chance or error. The good couple pressed me with so much unaffected kindness, to make their little parsonage my asylum till I could better dispose of myself, that I accepted their offer. Here, with the assistance of the clergyman, who is a plain, sensible, and truly pious man, I have studied the Holy Scriptures, and the evidences of their authority. But after reading them with can-

dour and attention, I found all the extrinsic arguments of their truth superfluous. The excellency of their precepts, the consistency of their doctrines, and the glorious motives and encouragements to virtue which they propose, together with the striking example I had before my eyes of their salutary effects, left me no doubt of their divine authority.

During the time of my abode here, I have been witness to the more than heroic, the joyful, the triumphant death of the dear good woman. With as much softness and tenderness as ever I saw in a female character, she shewed more dauntless intrepidity than the sternest philosopher or the proudest hero. No torment could shake the constancy of her soul, or length of pain wear out the strength of her patience. Death was to her an object not of horror but of hope. When I heard her pour forth her last breath in thanksgiving and saw the smile of extasy remain on her pale face when life was fled, I could not help crying out in the beautiful language I had lately learned from the sacred writings, “O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?”

I am now preparing to leave my excellent benefactor, and get my bread in a service, to which he has recommended me in a neighbouring family. A state of servitude, to which once I could not resolve to yield, appears no longer dreadful to me; that pride, which would have made it galling, Christianity has subdued, though philosophy attempted it in vain. As a penitent, I should gratefully submit to mortification; but as a Christian, I find myself superior to every mortification, ex-

cept the sense of guilt. This has humbled me to the dust: but the full assurances that are given me by the Saviour of the World, of the divine pardon and favour upon sincere repentance, have calmed my troubled spirit, and filled my mind with peace and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away. Thus, without any change for the better in my outward circumstances, I find myself changed from a distracted, poor, despairing wretch, to a contented, happy, grateful being; thankful for, and pleased with my present state of existence, yet exulting in the hope of quitting it for endless glory and happiness.

O! sir, tell the unthinking mortals, who will not take the pains of enquiring into those truths which most concern them, and who are led by fashion and the pride of human reason into a contempt for the sacred oracles of God; tell them these amazing effects of the power of Christianity: tell them this truth, which experience has taught me, that, “Though vice is constantly attended by misery, virtue itself cannot confer happiness in this world, except it is animated with the hopes of eternal bliss in the world to come.”

I am, &c.

FIDELIA.

MELISSA.

(FROM THE ADVENTURER.)

I RECEIVED, a few weeks ago, an account of the death of a lady whose name is known to many, but the “eventful history” of whose life has been communicated to few: to me it has been often related during a long and intimate acquaintance; and as there is not a single person living, upon whom the making it public can reflect unmerited dishonour, or whose delicacy or virtue can suffer by the relation, I think I owe to mankind a series of events from which the wretched may derive comfort, and the most forlorn may be encouraged to hope; as misery is alleviated by the contemplation of yet deeper distress, and the mind fortified against despair by instances of unexpected relief.

The father of Melissa was the younger son of a country gentleman who possessed an estate of about five hundred a year; but as this was to be the inheritance of the elder brother, and as there were three sisters to be provided for, he was at about sixteen taken from Eton school, and apprenticed to a considerable merchant at Bristol. The young gentleman, whose imagination had been fired by the exploits of heroes, the victories gained by magnanimous presumption, and the wonders discovered by daring curiosity, was not

disposed to consider the acquisition of wealth as the limit of his ambition, or the repute of honest industry as the total of his fame. He regarded his situation as servile and ignominious, as the degradation of his genius and the preclusion of his hopes; and longing to go in search of adventures, he neglected his business as unworthy of his attention, heard the remonstrances of his master with a kind of sullen disdain, and after two years legal slavery made his escape, and at the next town enlisted himself a soldier; not doubting but that, by his military merit and the fortune of war, he should return a general officer, to the confusion of those who would have buried him in the obscurity of a counting-house. He found means effectually to elude the enquiries of his friends, as it was of the utmost importance to prevent their officious endeavours to ruin his project and obstruct his advancement.

He was sent with other recruits to London, and soon after quartered with the rest of his company in a part of the country, which was so remote from all with whom he had any connection, that he no longer dreaded a discovery.

It happened that he went one day to the house of a neighbouring gentleman with his comrade, who was become acquainted with the chambermaid, and by her interest admitted into the kitchen. This gentleman, whose age was something more than sixty, had been about two years married to a second wife, a young woman who had been well educated and lived in the polite world, but had no fortune. By his first wife, who had been dead about ten years, he had several children; the

youngest was a daughter who had just entered her seventeenth year; she was very tall for her age, had a fine complexion, good features, and was well shaped; but her father, whose affection for her was mere instinct, as much as that of a brute for its young, utterly neglected her education. It was impossible for him, he said, to live without her; and as he could not afford to have her attended by a governess and proper masters in a place so remote from London, she was suffered to continue illiterate and unpolished; she knew no entertainment higher than a game at romps with the servants; she became their confidant, and trusted them in return; nor did she think herself happy any where but in the kitchen.

As the capricious fondness of her father had never conciliated her affections, she perceived it abate upon his marriage without regret. She suffered no new restraint from her new mother, who observed with a secret satisfaction that Miss had been used to hide herself from visitors, as neither knowing how to behave nor being fit to be seen, and chose rather to conceal her defects by excluding her from company, than to supply them by putting her to a boarding school.

Miss, who had been told by Betty that she expected her sweetheart, and that they were to be merry, stole down stairs, and, without scruple, made one in a party at blindman's buff. The soldier of fortune was struck with her person, and discovered, or thought he discovered, in the simplicity of nature, some graces which are polished away by the labour of art. However, nothing that had the appearance of an adventure could be

indifferent to him ; and his vanity was flattered by the hope of carrying off a young lady under the disguise of a common soldier, without revealing his birth, or boasting of his expectations.

In this attempt he became very assiduous, and succeeded. The company being ordered to another place, Betty and her young mistress departed early in the morning with their gallants ; and there being a privileged chapel in the next town, they were married.

The old gentleman, as soon as he was informed that his daughter was missing, made so diligent and scrupulous an enquiry after her, that he learned with whom and which way she was gone : he mounted his horse, and pursued her, not without curses and imprecations ; discovering rather the transports of rage than the emotions of tenderness, and resenting her offence rather as the rebellion of a slave than the disobedience of a child. He did not, however, overtake them till the marriage had been consummated ; of which when he was informed by the husband, he turned from him with expressions of brutality and indignation, swearing never to forgive a fault which he had taken no care to prevent.

The young couple, notwithstanding their union frequently doubled their distress, still continued fond of each other. The spirit of enterprize and the hope of presumption were not yet quelled in the young soldier ; and he received orders to attend King William, when he went to the siege of Namur, with exultation and transport, believing his elevation to independence and distinction as certain as if he had been going to take possession of a title and estate. His wife, who had been

some months pregnant, as she had no means of subsistence in his absence, procured a passage with him. When she came on shore and mingled with the crowd that followed the camp, wretches who without compunction wade in human blood, to strip the dying and the dead, to whom horror is become familiar and compassion impossible, she was terrified: the discourse of the women, rude and unpolished as she was, covered her with confusion; and the brutal familiarity of the men filled her with indignation and disgust: her maid, Betty, who had also attended her husband, was the only person with whom she could converse, and from whom she could hope the assistance of which she was so soon to stand in need.

In the mean time she found it difficult to subsist; but accidentally hearing the name of an officer, whom she remembered to have visited her mother soon after her marriage, she applied to him, told him her name, and requested that he would afford her his protection, and permit her to take care of his linen. With this request the captain complied; her circumstances became less distressed, and her mind more easy: but new calamity suddenly overtook her; she saw her husband march to an engagement in the morning, and saw him brought back desperately wounded at night. The next day he was removed in a waggon, with many others who were in the same condition, to a place of greater safety, at the distance of about three leagues, where proper care might be taken of their wounds. She intreated the captain to let her go in the waggon with him; but to this he could not consent, because the waggon would be filled with those who neither were able to walk, nor could be

left behind. He promised, however, that if she would stay till the next day, he would endeavour to procure her a passage ; but she chose rather to follow the waggon on foot, than to be absent from her husband. She could not, however, keep pace with it, and she reached the hospital but just time enough to kneel down by him upon some clean straw, to see him sink under the last agony, and hear the groan that is repeated no more. The fatigue of the journey, and the perturbation of her mind, immediately threw her into labour, and she lived but to be delivered of Melissa, who was thus, in the most helpless state, left without father, mother, or friend, in a foreign country, in circumstances which could afford no hope of reward to the tenderness that should attempt the preservation of her life, and among persons who were become obdurate and insensible, by having been long used to see every species of distress.

It happened that, among those whom accident or distress had brought together at the birth of Melissa, there was a young woman, whose husband had fallen in the late engagement, and who a few days before had lost a little boy that she suckled. This person, rather perhaps to relieve herself from an inconveniency, than in compassion to the orphan, put it to her breast : but whatever was her motive, she believed that the affording sustenance to the living conferred a right to the apparel of the dead, of which she therefore took possession ; but in searching her pocket she found only a thimble, the remains of a pocket looking-glass, about the value of a penny in Dutch money, and the certificate of her marriage. The paper, which she could not read, she gave after-

wards to the captain, who was touched with pity at the relation which an enquiry after his laundress produced. He commended the woman who had preserved the infant, and put her into the place of its mother. This encouraged her to continue her care of it till the captain returned to England, with whom she also returned, and became his servant.

This gentleman, as soon as he had settled his immediate concerns, sent Melissa under the care of her nurse to her grandfather; and inclosed the certificate of her mother's marriage in a letter containing an account of her death, and the means by which the infant had been preserved. He knew that those who had been once dear to us, by whatever offence they may have alienated our affection when living, are generally remembered with tenderness when dead; and that after the grave has sheltered them from our resentment, and rendered reconciliation impossible, we often regret as severe that conduct which before we approved as just; he, therefore, hoped, that the parental fondness which an old man had once felt for his daughter, would revive at the sight of her offspring; that the memory of her fault would be lost in the sense of her misfortunes; and that he would endeavour to atone for that inexorable resentment which produced them, by cherishing a life to which she had, as it were, transferred her own. But in these expectations, however reasonable, he was mistaken. The old man, when he was informed by the messenger that the child she held in her arms was his grand-daughter, whom she was come to put under his protection, refused to examine the contents of the letter, and dismissed

her with menaces and insult. The knowledge of every uncommon event soon becomes general in a country town. An uncle of Melissa's, who had been rejected by his father for having married his maid, heard this fresh instance of his brutality with grief and indignation; he sent immediately for the child and the letter, and assured the servant that his niece should want nothing which he could bestow: to bestow much, indeed, was not in his power, for his father having obstinately persisted in his resentment, his whole support was a little farm which he rented of the squire: but as he was a good economist and had no children of his own, he lived decently; nor did he throw away content, because his father had denied him affluence.

Melissa, who was compassioned for her mother's misfortunes, of which her uncle had been particularly informed by her maid Betty, who had returned a widow to her friends in the country, was not less beloved for her own good qualities; she was taught to read and write and work at her needle, as soon as she was able to learn; and she was taken notice of by all the gentry as the prettiest girl in the place, : but her aunt died when she was about eleven years old, and before she was thirteen she lost her uncle.

She was now again thrown back upon the world, still helpless though her wants were increased, and wretched in proportion as she had known happiness: she looked back with anguish, and forward with distraction; a fit of crying had just afforded her a momentary relief, when the squire, who had been informed of the death of his tenant, sent for her to his house. This gentleman had

heard her story from her uncle, and was unwilling that a life which had been preserved almost by miracle, should at last be abandoned to misery ; he therefore determined to receive her into his family, not as a servant, but as a companion to his daughter, a young lady finely accomplished, and now about fifteen. The old gentleman was touched with her distress, and Miss received her with great tenderness and complacency : she wiped away her tears, and of the intolerable anguish of her mind nothing remained but a tender remembrance of her uncle, whom she loved and revered as a parent. She had now courage to examine the contents of a little box which he had put into her hand just before he expired ; she found in it only the certificate of her mother's marriage, enclosed in the captain's letter, and an account of the events that have been before related, which her uncle had put down as they came to his knowledge : the train of mournful ideas that now rushed upon her mind, raised emotions which, if they could not be suppressed by reason, were soon destroyed by their own violence.

In this family, which in a few weeks after returned to London, Melissa soon became a favourite : the good squire seemed to consider her as his child, and Miss as her sister ; she was taught dancing and music, introduced to the best company, elegantly dressed, and allowed such sums as were necessary for trivial expences. Youth seldom suffers the dread of to-morrow to intrude upon the enjoyment of to-day, but rather regards present felicity as the pledge of future : Melissa was probably as happy as if she had been in the actual possession of a fortune, that, to the ease

and splendor which she enjoyed already, would have added stability and independence.

She was now in her eighteenth year, and the only son of her benefactor was just come from the university to spend the winter with his father in town. He was charmed with her person, behaviour, and discourse; and what he could not but admire, he took every opportunity to commend. She soon perceived that he shewed particular marks of respect to her, when he thought they would not be perceived by others; and that he endeavoured to recommend himself by an officious assiduity, and a diligent attention to the most minute circumstances that might contribute to her pleasure. But this behaviour of the young gentleman, however it might gratify her vanity, could not fail to alarm her fear: she foresaw, that if what she had remarked in his conduct should be perceived by his father or sister, the peace of the family would be destroyed; and that she must either be shipwrecked in the storm, or thrown overboard to appease it. She therefore affected not to perceive that more than a general complaisance was intended by her lover; and hoped that he would thus be discouraged from making an explicit declaration: but though he was mortified at her disregard of that which he knew she could not but see, yet he determined to address her in such terms as should not leave this provoking neutrality in her power: though he revered her virtue, yet he feared too much the anger of his father to think of making her his wife; and he was too deeply enamoured of her beauty, to relinquish his hopes of possessing her as a mistress.

An opportunity for the execution of his purpose was not long wanting: she received his general professions of love with levity and merriment; but when she perceived that his view was to seduce her to prostitution, she burst into tears, and fell back in an agony unable to speak. He was immediately touched with grief and remorse; his tenderness was alarmed at her distress, and his esteem encreased by her virtue; he caught her in his arms, and as an atonement for the insult she had received, he offered her marriage: but as her chastity would not suffer her to become his mistress, neither would her gratitude permit her to become his wife; and as soon as she was sufficiently recollected, she entreated him never more to urge her to violate the obligation she was under either to herself or to her benefactor:—“Would not,” said she, “the presence of a wretch whom you had seduced from innocence and peace to remorse and guilt, perpetually upbraid you; and would you not always fear to be betrayed by a wife, whose fidelity no kindness could secure; who had broken all the bands that restrain the generous and the good; and who by an act of the most flagitious ingratitude had at once reached the pinnacle of guilt, to which others ascend by imperceptible gradations?”

These objections, though they could neither be obviated nor evaded, had yet no tendency to subdue desire: he loved with greater delicacy, but with more ardour; and as he could not always forbear expostulations, neither could she always silence them in such a manner as might most effectually prevent their being repeated. Such was

one morning the situation of the two lovers: he had taken her hand into his, and was speaking with great eagerness; while she regarded him with a kind of timorous complacency, and listened to him with an attention which her heart condemned: his father, in this tender moment, in which their powers of perception were mutually engrossed by each other, came near enough to hear that his heir had made proposals of marriage, and retired without their knowledge.

As he did not dream that such a proposal could possibly be rejected by a girl in Melissa's situation, imagining that every woman believed her virtue to be inviolate, if her person was not prostituted, he took his measures accordingly. It was near the time in which his family had been used to remove into the country: he, therefore, gave orders, that every thing should be immediately prepared for the journey, and that the coach should be ready at six the next morning, a man and horse being dispatched, in the mean time, to give notice of their arrival. The young folks were a little surprised at this sudden removal; but though the squire was a good-natured man, yet as he governed his family with high authority, and as they perceived something had offended him, they did not enquire the reason, nor indeed did they suspect it. Melissa packed up her things as usual: and in the morning the young gentleman and his sister having by their father's orders got into the coach, he called Melissa into the parlour; where in a few words, but with great acrimony, he reproached her with having formed a design to marry his son without his consent, an act of in-

gratitude which he said justified him in upbraiding her with the favours which he had already conferred upon her, and in a resolution he had taken, that a bank bill of fifty pounds, which he then put into her hand, should be the last: adding, that he expected she should within one week leave the house. To this heavy charge she was not in a condition to reply; nor did he stay to see whether she would attempt it, but hastily got into the coach, which immediately drove from the door.

Thus was Melissa a third time, by a sudden and unexpected desertion, exposed to penury and distress, with this aggravation, that ease and affluence were become habitual; and that though she was not so helpless as at the death of her uncle, she was exposed to yet greater danger; for few that have been used to slumber upon down, and wake to festivity, can resist the allurements of vice, who still offers ease and plenty, when the alternative are a flock bed and a garret, short meals, coarse apparel, and perpetual labour.

Melissa, as soon as she had recovered from the stupor which had seized her upon so astonishing and dreadful a change of fortune, determined not to accept the bounty of a person who imagined her to be unworthy of it; nor to attempt her justification, while it would render her veracity suspected, and appear to proceed only from the hope of being restored to a state of splendid dependence, from which jealousy or caprice might again at any time remove her, without cause and without notice: she had not, indeed, any hope of being ever able to defend herself against her accuser upon equal terms; nor did she know how to subsist

a single day, when she had returned his bill and quitted his house : yet such was the dignity of her spirit, that she immediately inclosed it in a blank cover, directed to him at his country seat, and calling up the maid who had been left to take care of the house, sent her immediately with it to the post-office. The tears then burst out, which the agitation of her mind had before restrained ; and when the servant returned, she told her all that had happened, and asked her advice what she should do. The girl, after the first emotions of wonder and pity had subsided, told her that she had a sister who lodged in a reputable house, and took in plain-work, to whom she would be welcome, as she could assist her in her business, of which she had often more than she could do ; and with whom she might continue till some more eligible situation could be obtained. Melissa listened to this proposal as to the voice of Heaven ; her mind was suddenly relieved from the most tormenting perplexity, from the dread of wandering about without money or employment, exposed to the menaces of a beadle, or the insults of the rabble : she was in haste to secure her good fortune, and felt some degree of pain lest she should lose it by the earlier application of another ; she therefore went immediately with the maid to her sister, with whom it was soon agreed that Melissa should work for her board and lodging ; for she would not consent to accept as a gift, that which she could by any means deserve as a payment.

While Melissa was a journeywoman to a person, who but a few weeks before would have regarded her with envy, and approached her with confu-

sion, it happened that a suit of linen was brought from the milliner's wrapped up in a newspaper: the linen was put into the work-basket, and the paper being thrown carelessly about, Melissa at last caught it up, and was about to read it; but perceiving that it had been published a fortnight, was just going to put it into the fire, when by an accidental glance she saw her father's name: this immediately engaged her attention, and with great perturbation of mind she read an advertisement, in which her father, said to have left his friends about eighteen years before, and to have entered either into the army or the navy, was directed to apply to a person in Staples Inn, who could inform him of something greatly to his advantage. To this person Melissa applied with all the ardor of curiosity, and all the tumult of expectation: she was informed that the elder brother of the person mentioned in the advertisement was lately dead, unmarried; that he was possessed of fifteen hundred a year, five hundred of which had descended to him from his father, and one thousand had been left him by an uncle, which upon his death, there being no male heir, had been claimed by his sisters; but that a mistress who had lived with him many years, and who had been treated by the supposed heiresses with too much severity and contempt, had in the bitterness of her resentment published the advertisement, having heard in the family that there was a younger brother abroad.

The conflict of different passions that were at once excited with uncommon violence in the breast of Melissa, deprived her for a time of the power of reflection; and when she became more calm,

she knew not by what method to attempt the recovery of her right: her mind was bewildered amidst a thousand possibilities, and distressed by the apprehension that all might prove ineffectual. After much thought and many projects, she recollected that the captain, whose servant brought her to England, could probably afford her more assistance than any other person: as he had been often pointed out to her in public places by the squire, to whom her story was well known, she was acquainted with his person, and knew that within a few months he was alive: she soon obtained directions to his house, and being readily admitted to a conference, she told him with as much presence of mind as she could, that she was the person whom his compassion had contributed to preserve when an infant; in confirmation of which she produced his letter, and the certificate which it inclosed; that by the death of her father's elder brother, whose family she had never known, she was become entitled to a very considerable estate; but that she knew not what evidence would be necessary to support her claim, how such evidence was to be produced, nor with whom to intrust the management of an affair in which wealth and influence would be employed against her. The old captain received her with that easy politeness which is almost peculiar to his profession, and with a warmth of benevolence that is seldom found in any: he congratulated her upon so happy and unexpected an event; and without the parade of ostentatious liberality, without extorting an explicit confession of her indigence, he gave her a letter to his lawyer, in whom he said she might with the utmost security confide, and with whom

she would have nothing more to do than to tell her story : “ And do not,” said he, doubt of success, for I will be ready to testify what I know of the affair, whenever I shall be called upon ; and the woman who was present at your birth, and brought you over, still lives with me, and upon this occasion may do you signal service.”

Melissa departed, melted with gratitude and elated with hope. The gentleman, to whom the captain's letter was a recommendation, prosecuted her claim with so much skill and assiduity, that within a few months she was put into the possession of her estate. Her first care was to wait upon the captain, to whom she now owed not only life but a fortune : he received her acknowledgments with a pleasure which only those who merit it can enjoy ; and insisted that she should draw upon him for such sums as she should want before her rents became due. She then took very handsome ready-furnished lodgings, and determined immediately to justify her conduct to the squire, whose kindness she still remembered, and whose resentment she had forgiven. With this view she set out in a chariot and six, attended by two servants in livery on horseback, and proceeded to his country-seat, from whence the family was not returned : she had lain at an inn within six miles of the place, and when the chariot drove up to the door, as it was early in the morning, she could perceive the servants run to and fro in a hurry, and the young lady and her brother gazing through the window to see if they knew the livery : she remarked every circumstance which denoted her own importance with exultation ; and enjoyed the solicitude which her presence produced among those, from whose

society she had so lately been driven with disdain and indignation.

She now increased their wonder, by sending in a servant to acquaint the old gentleman, that a lady desired to speak with him about urgent business, which would not however long detain him: he courteously invited the lady to honour him with her commands, hasted into his best parlour, adjusted his wig, and put himself into the best order to receive her: she alighted, and displayed a very rich undress, which corresponded with the elegance of her chariot, and the modish appearance of her servants. She contrived to hide her face as she went up the walk, that she might not be known too soon; and was immediately introduced to her old friend, to whom she soon discovered herself to his great astonishment; and before he had recovered his presence of mind, she addressed him to this effect, “ You see, Sir, an orphan who is under the greatest obligations to your bounty, but who has been equally injured by your suspicions. When I was a dependent upon your liberality, I would not assert my innocence, because I could not bear to be suspected of falsehood: but I assert it now I am the possessor of a paternal estate, because I cannot bear to be suspected of ingratitude: that your son pressed me to marry him, is true; but it is also true that I refused him, because I would not disappoint your hopes and impoverish your posterity.” The old gentleman’s confusion was increased by the wonders that crowded upon him: he first made some attempts to apologize for his suspicions with awkwardness and hesitation; then doubting the truth of appearance, he broke off abruptly and remained silent;

then reproaching himself, he began to congratulate her upon her good fortune, and again desisted before he had finished the compliment. Melissa perceived his perplexity, and guessed the cause ; she was, therefore, about to account more particularly for the sudden change of her circumstances, but Miss, whose maid had brought her intelligence from the servants, that the lady's name who was with her papa was Melissa, and that she was lately come to a great estate by the death of her uncle, could no longer restrain the impatience of her affection and joy : she rushed into the room and fell upon her neck, with a transport that can only be felt by friendship, and expressed by tears. When this tender silence was past, the scruples of doubt were soon obviated ; the reconciliation was reciprocal and sincere ; the father led out his guest, and presented her to his son with an apology for his conduct to them both.

Melissa had bespoke a dinner and beds at the inn, but she was not suffered to return. Within a few weeks she became the daughter of her friend, who gave her hand to his son, with whom she shared many years that happiness which is the reward of virtue. They had several children, but none survived them ; and Melissa, upon the death of her husband, which happened about seven years ago, retired wholly from town to her estate in the country, where she lived beloved, and died in peace.

DESDEMONA.

(FROM THE ADVENTURER.)

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I WILL not anticipate the subject of this letter, by relating the motives from which I have written it ; nor shall I expect it to be published, if, when you have read it, you do not think that it contains more than one topic of instruction.

My mother has been dead so long that I do not remember her ; and when I was in my eighteenth year, I was left an orphan with a fortune of twenty thousand pounds, at my own disposal. I have often been told, that I am handsome ; and I have some reasons to believe it to be true, which are very far from gratifying my vanity or conferring happiness.

I was soon addressed by many lovers, from among whom I selected Hilario, the elder brother of a good family, whose paternal estate was something more than equivalent to my fortune.

Hilario was universally admired as a man of sense ; and, to confess the truth, not much less as a man of pleasure. His character appeared to rise in proportion as it was thought to endanger those about him ; he derived new dignity, not only from the silence of the men, but the blushes of the ladies ; and those, whose wit or virtue did not suffer by the admission of such a guest, were

honoured as persons who could treat upon equal terms with a hero, who was become formidable by the number of his conquests: his company, therefore, was courted by all whom their fears did not restrain; the rest considered him as moving in a sphere above them, and, in proportion as they were able to imitate him, they became vicious and petulant in their own circle.

I was myself captivated with his manner and conversation; I hoped that upon his understanding I should be able to engraft virtue; I was rather encouraged than cautioned by my friends; and after a few months courtship I became his wife.

During a short time all my expectations were gratified, and I exulted in my choice. Hilario was at once tender and polite; present pleasures were heightened by the anticipation of future; my imagination was perpetually wandering among the scenes of poetry and romance; I appropriated every luxurious description of happy lovers; and believed, that whatever time should take from desire, would be added to complacency; and that in old age we should only exchange the tumultuous extasy of love, for the calm, rational, and exalted delights of friendship, which every year would increase by new reciprocations of kindness, more tried fidelity, and implicit confidence.

But from this pleasing dream it was not long before I awaked. Although it was the whole study of my life to unite my pleasures with those of Hilario, to regulate my conduct by his will, and thus prolong the felicity which was reflected from his bosom to mine; yet his visits abroad in which I was not a party became more frequent,

and his general behaviour less kind. I perceived that when we were alone his mind was often absent, and that my prattle became irksome: my assiduities to recover his attention, and excite him to cheerfulness, were sometimes suffered with a cold civility, sometimes wholly neglected, and sometimes peevishly repressed as ill-timed officiousness, by which he was rather disturbed than obliged. I was, indeed, at length convinced, with whatever reluctance, that neither my person nor my mind had any charm that could stand in competition with variety; and though, as I remember, I never even with my looks upbraided him, yet I frequently lamented myself, and spent those hours in which I was forsaken by Hilario in solitude and tears.

But my distress still increased, and one injury made way for another. Hilario, almost as soon as he ceased to be kind, became jealous; he knew that disappointed wishes, and the resentment which they produce, concur to render beauty less solicitous to avoid temptation, and less able to resist it; and as I did not complain of that which he knew I could not but discover, he thought he had greater reason to suspect that I made reprisals: thus his sagacity multiplied his vices, and my virtue defeated its own purpose.

Some maxims, however, which I had gathered from novels and plays, were still uppermost in my mind. I reflected often upon the arts of Amanda, and the persevering tenderness and discretion of Lady Easy; and I believed, as I had been taught by the sequel of every story, that they could not be practised without success, but

against sordid stupidity and obdurate ill-nature ; against the Brutes and the Sullens, whom, on the contrary, it was scarce a crime to punish, by admitting a rake of parts to pleasures of which they were unworthy.

From such maxims, and such examples, I therefore derived some hope. I wished earnestly to detect Hilario in his infidelity ; that in the moment of conviction I might rouse his sensibility of my wrongs, and exalt his opinion of my merit ; that I might cover him with confusion, melt him with tenderness, and double his obligations by generosity.

The opportunity for which I had so often wished, but never dared to hope, at length arrived. I learned by accident one morning, that he intended to go in the evening to a masquerade ; and I immediately conceived a design to discover his dress, and follow him to the theatre : to single him out, make some advances, and if possible bring on an assignation, where, in the ardour of his first address, I might strike him with astonishment by taking off my mask, reprove him without reproach, and forgive him without parade, mingling with the soft distress of violated affection the calm dignity of injured virtue.

My imagination was fired with these images, which I was impatient to realize. My pride, which had hitherto sustained me above complaint, and thrown a veil of cheerfulness over my distress, would not suffer me to employ an assistant in the project I had undertaken ; because this could not be done without revealing my suspicions, and confiding my peace to the breast of another,

by whose malice or caprice it might be destroyed, and to whom I should, therefore, be brought into the most slavish subjection, without insuring the secrecy of which my dependence would be the price. I therefore resolved, at whatever risk of disappointment or detection, to trace him to the warehouse where his habit was to be hired, and discover that which he should choose myself.

He had ordered his chariot at eleven : I, therefore, wrapped myself up in an undress, and sate alone in my room till I saw him drive from the door. I then came down, and as soon as he had turned into St. James's-street, which was not more than twenty yards, I went after him, and meeting with a hackney-coach at the end of the street, I got hastily into it, and ordered the driver to follow the chariot at some distance, and to stop when it stopped.

I pulled up both the windows ; and after half an hour spent in the most tormenting suspense and anxiety, it stopped at the end of Tavistock-street. I looked hastily out of the window, hiding my face with my handkerchief, and saw Hilario alight at the distance of about forty yards, and go into a warehouse of which I could easily distinguish the sign. I waited till he came out ; and as soon as the chariot was out of sight, I discharged the coach, and going immediately to the warehouse that Hilario had left, I pretended to want a habit for myself. I saw many lying upon the counter, which I supposed had been brought out for Hilario's choice ; about these, therefore, I was very inquisitive, and took par-

ticular notice of a very rich Turkish dress, which one of the servants took up to put away. When I saw he was about to remove it, I asked hastily whether it was hired, and learned with unspeakable satisfaction, that it had been chosen by the gentleman who was just gone. Thus far I succeeded to the utmost of my hopes, not only by discovering Hilario's dress, but by his choice of one so very remarkable; for if he had chosen a domino, my scheme would have been rendered impracticable, because in a domino I could not certainly have distinguished him from others.

As I had now gained the intelligence I wanted, I was impatient to leave the shop; which it was not difficult to do, as it was just filled with ladies from two coaches, and the people were in a hurry to accommodate them. My dress did not attract much notice, nor promise much advantage; I was, therefore, willingly suffered to depart, upon slightly leaving word that I would call again.

When I got into the street, I considered that it would not have been prudent to have hired a habit, where Hilario would either come to dress, or send for that which he had hired for himself: I, therefore, took another coach at the end of Southampton-street, and went to a shop near the Hay-market, where I had before purchased a capuchin and some other trifles, and where I knew habits were to be hired, though not in so public a manner as at other places.

I now returned home; and such was the joy and expectation which my success inspired, that I had forgot I had succeeded only in an attempt,

for which I could find neither motive nor apology but in my wretchedness.

During the interval between my return and the time when the doors of the theatre were to be opened, I suffered the utmost inquietude and impatience, I looked every moment at my watch, could scarce believe that it did not by some accident go too slow, and was continually listening to discover whether it had not stopped: but the lingering hour at length arrived; and though I was among the first that entered, yet it was not long before I singled out my victim, and found means to attract his regard.

I had, when I was at school, learned a way of expressing the alphabet with my fingers, which I have since discovered to be more generally known than at that time I imagined. Hilario, during his courtship, had once observed me using it to a lady who had been my school-fellow, and would never let me rest till I had taught it him. In this manner I saw my Turk conversing with a Nun, from whom he suddenly turned with an appearance of vexation and disappointment. I thought this a favourable opportunity to accost him; and, therefore, as he passed by me, I pulled him gently by the sleeve, and spelt with my fingers the words, "I understand." At first I was afraid of being discovered by shewing my art; but I reflected, that it would effectually secure me from being discovered by my voice, which I considered as the more formidable danger. I perceived that he was greatly pleased; and after a very short conversation, which he seemed to make a point of continuing in the manner I

had begun, an assignation was made, in consequence of which we proceeded in chairs to a bagnio near Covent-Garden. During this journey my mind was in great agitation; and it is difficult to determine whether pleasure or pain was predominant. I did not, however, fail to anticipate my triumph in the confusion of Hilario; I conceived the manner and the terms in which I would address him, and exulted in the superiority which I should acquire by this opposition of his character to mine.

He was ready to receive me when my chair was brought into the entry, and giving me his hand, led me hastily up stairs. As soon as we entered the room he shut the door, and, taking off his mask, ran to me with the utmost impatience to take off mine. This was the important moment; but at this moment I discovered, with inexpressible astonishment and terror, that the person with whom I was alone in a brothel, was not Hilario, but Caprinus, a wretch whom I well remembered to have seen among the rakes that he frequently brought to his table.

At this sight, so unexpected and so dreadful, I shrieked aloud, and threw myself from him into an easy chair that stood by the bedside. Caprinus, probably believing I had fainted, hastily tore away my mask to give me air. At the first view of my face, he started back, and gazed at me with the same wonder that had fixed my eyes upon him. But our amazement was the next moment increased; for Hilario, who had succeeded in his intrigue, with whatever lady, happened to be in the next room, and either alarmed

by the voice of distress, or knowing it to be mine, rushed in at the door, which flew open before him; but, at the next step, stood fixed in the same stupor of astonishment which had seized on us. After a moment's recollection, he came up to me, and, dragging me to the candle, gazed stedfastly in my face with a look so frightful as never to be forgotten; it was the pale countenance of rage, which contempt had distorted with a smile; his lips quivered; and he told me, in a voice scarce articulate, that "though I might well be frightened at having stumbled upon an acquaintance whom I doubted whether I could trust, yet I should not have screamed so loud." After this insult, he quitted me with as much negligence as he could assume; and bowing obsequiously to Caprinus, told him, "he would leave me to his care." Caprinus had not sufficient presence of mind to reply; nor had I power to make any attempt, either to pacify or retain Hilario.

When he was gone I burst into tears, but was still unable to speak. From this agony Caprinus laboured to relieve me; and I began to hope that he sincerely participated my distress: Caprinus, however, soon appeared to be chiefly solicitous to improve what, with respect to himself, he began to think a fortunate mistake. He had no conception that I intended an assignation with my husband; but believed, like Hilario, that I had mistaken the person for whom my favours were intended: while he lamented my distress and disappointment, therefore, he pressed my hand with great ardour, wished that he had been thought worthy of my confidence and my love; and to facilitate his design upon the wife of his

friend, declared himself a man of honour, and that he would maintain the character at the hazard of his life.

To such an address in such circumstances, what could I reply? Grief had disarmed my resentment, and the pride of suspected virtue had forsaken me. I expressed myself, not in reproaches but complaints; and abruptly disengaging myself from him, I adjured him to tell me, “how he had procured his habit, and whether it had not been hired by Hilario?” He seemed to be struck with the question, and the manner in which I urged it: “I hired it,” said he, “myself, at a warehouse in Tavistock-street; but when I came to demand it, I was told it had been the subject of much confusion and dispute. When I made my agreement, the master was absent; and the servant neglecting to acquaint him with it at his return, he afterwards, in the absence of the servant, made the same agreement with another; but I know not with whom; and it was with great difficulty that he was brought to relinquish his claim, after he had been convinced of the mistake.”

I now clearly discovered the snare in which I had been taken, and could only lament that it was impossible to escape. Whether Caprinus began to conceive my design, or whether he was indeed touched at my distress, which all his attempts to alleviate increased, I know not; but he desisted from further protestations and importunity, and at my earnest request procured me a chair, and left me to my fortune.

I now reflected, with inconceivable anguish, upon the change which a few hours had made in my condition. I had left my house in the height

of expectation, that in a few hours I should add to the dignity of an untainted reputation the felicity of conjugal endearments. I returned disappointed and degraded; detected in all the circumstances of guilt, to which I had not approached even in thought; having justified the jealousy which I sought to remove, and forfeited the esteem which I hoped to improve to veneration. With these thoughts I once more entered my dressing-room, which was on the same floor with my chamber and in less than half an hour I heard Hilario come in.

He went immediately to his chamber; and being told that I was in the next room, he locked the door, but did not go to bed, for I could hear him walk backward and forward all the night.

Early in the morning I sent a sealed billet to him by his valet: for I had not made a confidante, even of my woman: it contained only a pressing intreaty to be heard, and a solemn asseveration of my innocence, which I hoped it would not be impossible to prove. He sent me a verbal answer, that I might come to him: to him, therefore, I went, not as a judge but a criminal; not to accuse him whom I knew to be guilty, but to justify myself whom I knew to be innocent; and, at this moment, I would have given the world to have been restored to that state, which the day before I had thought intolerable.

I found him in great agitation; which yet he laboured to conceal. I, therefore, hasted to relate my project, the motives from which it was undertaken, and the means by which it had been disappointed. He heard me with calmness and atten-

tion, till I related the particulars of the habit: this threw him into a new fit of jealousy, and, starting from his seat, "What," said he, "have you paid for this intelligence? Of whom could you learn it, but the wretch with whom I left you? Did he not, when he found you were disappointed of another, solicit for himself?" Here he paused for my reply; and as I could not deny the fact, I was silent: my inviolable regard for truth was mistaken for the confusion of guilt, and equally prevented my justification. His passion returned with yet greater violence. "I know," said he, "that Caprinus related this incident, only that you might be enabled to impose upon my credulity, and that he might obtain a participation of the favours which you lavished upon others: but I am not thus to be deceived by the concurrence of accident with cunning, nor reconciled to the infamy which you have brought upon my name." With this injurious reproach he would have left me; but I caught hold of him, and intreated that he would go with me to the warehouse, where the testimony of persons, wholly disinterested, might convince him that I was there immediately after him, and enquired which dress he had chosen. To this request he replied, by asking me, in a peremptory tone, "Whether Caprinus had not told me where the habit was hired?" As I was struck with the suddenness and the design of the question, I had not fortitude to confess a truth which yet I disdained to deny. Hilario again triumphed in the successful detection of my artifices; and told me, with a sneer of insupportable contempt and derision, that "he, who had so

kindly directed me to find my witnesses, was too able a solicitor, not to acquaint them what testimony they were to give."

Expostulation was now at an end, and I disdained to intreat any mercy, under the imputation of guilt. All that remained, therefore, was still to hide my wretchedness in my bosom; and, if possible, to preserve that character abroad which I had lost at home. But this I soon found to be a vain attempt; it was immediately whispered, as a secret, that, "Hilario, who had long suspected me of a criminal correspondence, had at length traced me from the masquerade to a bagnio, and surprized me with a fellow." It was in vain for me to attempt the recovery of my character by giving another turn to this report, for the principal facts I could not deny; and those who appeared to be most my friends, after they had attended to what they call nice distinctions and minute circumstances, could only say, that it was a dark affair, and they hoped I was not so guilty as was generally believed. I was avoided by my female acquaintance as infamous: if I went abroad, I was pointed out with a whisper and a nod; and if I stayed at home, I saw no face but my servant's. Those whose levity I had silently censured by declining to practise it, now revenged themselves of the virtue by which they were condemned, and thanked God they had never yet picked up fellows, though they were not so squeamish as to refuse going to a ball. But this was not the worst; every libertine, whose fortune authorized the insolence, was now making me offers of protection in nameless scrawls, and feared not to solicit me to adultery; they dared to hope I should accept their

proposal by directing to A. B. who declares, like Caprinus, that he is a man of honour, and will not scruple to run my husband through the body, who now, indeed, thought himself authorized to treat me with every species of cruelty but blows, at the same time that his house was a perpetual scene of lewdness and debauchery.

Reiterated provocation and insult soon became intolerable: I therefore applied to a distant relation, who so far interested himself in my behalf as to obtain me a separate maintenance, with which I retired into the country, and in this world have no hope but to perpetuate my obscurity.

In this obscurity, however, your paper is known; and I have communicated an adventure to the Adventurer, not merely to indulge complaint, or gratify curiosity, but because I think it confirms some principles which you have before illustrated.

Those who doubt of a future retribution, may reflect, that I have been involved in all the miseries of guilt, except the reproach of conscience and the fear of hell, by an attempt which was intended to reclaim another from vice, and obtain the reward of my own virtue.

My example may deter others from venturing to the verge of rectitude, and assuming the appearance of evil. On the other hand, those who judge of mere appearances without charity, may remark, that no conduct was ever condemned with less shew of injurious severity, nor yet with less justice than mine. Whether my narrative will be believed indeed, I cannot determine; but where innocence is possible, it is dangerous to impute guilt, because, "with whatsoever judgment men

judge they shall be judged ;” a truth which, if it was remembered and believed by all who profess to receive it upon divine authority, would impose silence upon the censorious, and extort candour from the selfish. And I hope that the ladies, who read my story, will never hear, but with indignation, that the understanding of a libertine is a pledge of reformation ; for his life cannot be known without abhorrence, nor shared without ruin.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

DESDEMONA.

ALMET, THE DERVISE.

(FROM THE ADVENTURER.)

ALMET, the dervise, who watched the sacred lamp in the sepulchre of the Prophet, as he one day rose up from the devotions of the morning, which he had performed at the gate of the temple with his body turned towards the east and his forehead on the earth, saw before him a man in splendid apparel attended by a long retinue, who gazed stedfastly at him with a look of mournful complacence, and seemed desirous to speak, but unwilling to offend.

The dervise, after a short silence, advanced, and saluting him with the calm dignity which independence confers upon humility, requested that he would reveal his purpose.

“ Almet,” said the stranger, “ thou seest before thee a man, whom the hand of prosperity has overwhelmed with wretchedness. Whatever I once desired as the means of happiness, I now possess ; but I am not yet happy, and therefore I despair. I regret the lapse of time, because it glides away without enjoyment ; and as I expect nothing in the future but the vanities of the past, I do not wish that the future should arrive. Yet I tremble lest it should be cut off ; and my heart sinks when I anticipate the moment, in which eternity shall close over the vacuity of my life like the sea upon the path of a ship, and leave no traces of my existence more durable than the furrow which remains after the waves have united. If in the treasures of thy wisdom there is any precept to obtain felicity, vouchsafe it to me : for this purpose am I come ; a purpose which yet I feared to reveal, lest like all the former it should be disappointed.” Almet listened, with looks of astonishment and pity, to this complaint of a being, in whom reason was known to be a pledge of immortality ; but the serenity of his countenance soon returned ; and stretching out his hand towards Heaven, “ Stranger,” said he, “ the knowledge which I have received from the Prophet, I will communicate to thee.”

As I was sitting one evening at the porch of the temple pensive and alone, mine eye wandered among the multitude that was scattered before me ;

and while I remarked the weariness and solicitude which was visible in every countenance, I was suddenly struck with a sense of their condition. Wretched mortals, said I, to what purpose are you busy? if to produce happiness, by whom is it enjoyed? Do the linens of Egypt, and the silks of Persia, bestow felicity on those who wear them, equal to the wretchedness of yonder slaves whom I see leading the camels that bring them? Is the fineness of the texture, or the splendour of the tints, regarded with delight by those to whom custom has rendered them familiar? Or can the power of habit render others insensible of pain, who live only to traverse the desert; a scene of dreadful uniformity, where a barren level is bounded only by the horizon: where no change of prospect, or variety of images, relieves the traveller from a sense of toil and danger, of whirlwinds which in a moment may bury him in the sand, and of thirst which the wealthy have given half their possessions to allay? Do those on whom hereditary diamonds sparkle with unregarded lustre, gain from the possession what is lost by the wretch who seeks them in the mine; who lives excluded from the common bounties of nature; to whom even the vicissitude of day and night is not known; who sighs in perpetual darkness, and whose life is one mournful alternative of insensibility and labour? If those are not happy who possess, in proportion as those are wretched who bestow, how vain a dream is the life of man! and if there is, indeed, such difference in the value of existence, how shall we acquit of partiality the hand by which this difference has been made?

While my thoughts thus multiplied, and my heart burned within me, I became sensible of a sudden influence from above. The streets and the crowds of Mecca disappeared; I found myself sitting on the declivity of a mountain, and perceived at my right hand an angel, whom I knew to be Azoran the minister of reproof. When I saw him, I was afraid. I cast mine eye upon the ground, and was about to deprecate his anger, when he commanded me to be silent. — “Almet,” said he, “thou hast devoted thy life to meditation, that thy counsel might deliver ignorance from the mazes of error, and deter presumption from the precipice of guilt; but the book of nature thou hast read without understanding: it is again open before thee: look up, consider it and be wise.”

I looked up, and beheld an inclosure, beautiful as the gardens of Paradise, but of a small extent. Through the middle, there was a green walk; at the end, a wild desert; and beyond, impenetrable darkness. The walk was shaded with trees of every kind, that were covered at once with blossoms and fruit; innumerable birds were singing in the branches; the grass was intermingled with flowers, which impregnated the breeze with fragrance, and painted the path with beauty: on one side flowed a gentle transparent stream, which was just heard to murmur over the golden sands that sparkled at the bottom; and on the other were walks and bowers, fountains, grottoes, and cascades, which diversified the scene with endless variety, but did not conceal the bounds.

While I was gazing in a transport of delight and wonder on this enchanting spot, I perceived

a man stealing along the walk with a thoughtful and deliberate pace : his eyes were fixed upon the earth, and his arms crossed on his bosom ; he sometimes started, as if a sudden pang had seized him ; his countenance expressed solicitude and terror ; he looked round with a sigh, and having gazed a moment on the desert that lay before him, he seemed as if he wished to stop, but was impelled forwards by some invisible power : his features however soon settled again into a calm melancholy ; his eye was again fixed on the ground ; and he went on, as before, with apparent reluctance, but without emotion. I was struck with this appearance ; and turning hastily to the Angel, was about to enquire what could produce such infelicity in a being, surrounded with every object that could gratify every sense ; but he prevented my request : “ The book of nature,” said he, “ is before thee ; look up, consider it, and be wise.” I looked, and beheld a valley between two mountains that were craggy and barren ; on the path there was no verdure, and the mountains afforded no shade ; the sun burned in the zenith, and every spring was dried up ; but the valley terminated in a country that was pleasant and fertile, shaded with woods, and adorned with buildings. At a second view, I discovered a man in this valley, meagre indeed and naked, but his countenance was chearful, and his deportment active : he kept his eye fixed upon the country before him, and looked as if he would have run, but that he was restrained, as the other had been impelled, by some secret influence : sometimes, indeed, I perceived a sudden expression of pain, and sometimes he stepped

short as if his foot was pierced by the asperities of the way ; but the sprightliness of his countenance instantly returned, and he pressed forward without appearance of repining or complaint.

I turned again toward the Angel, impatient to inquire from what secret source happiness was derived, in a situation so different from that in which it might have been expected : but he again prevented my request : “ Almet,” said he, “ remember what thou hast seen, and let this memorial be written upon the tablets of thy heart. Remember, Almet, that the world in which thou art placed, is but the road to another ; and that happiness depends not upon the path, but the end ; the value of this period of thy existence is fixed by hope and fear. The wretch who wished to linger in the garden, who looked round upon its limits with terror, was destitute of enjoyment, because he was destitute of hope, and was perpetually tormented by the dread of losing that which yet he did not enjoy ; the song of the birds had been repeated till it was not heard, and the flowers had so often recurred that their beauty was not seen ; the river glided by unnoticed ; and he feared to lift his eye to the prospect, lest he should behold the waste that circumscribed it. But he that toiled through the valley was happy, because he looked forward with hope. Thus, to the sojourner upon earth, it is of little moment whether the path he treads be strewed with flowers or with thorns, if he perceives himself to approach those regions, in comparison of which the thorns and the flowers of this wilderness lose their distinction, and are both alike impotent to give pleasure or pain.

“ What then has Eternal Wisdom unequally dis-

tributed? That which can make every station happy, and without which every station must be wretched, is acquired by virtue, and virtue is possible to all. Remember, Almet, the vision which thou hast seen; and let my words be written on the tablet of thy heart, that thou may'st direct the wanderer to happiness, and justify God to men."

While the voice of Azoran was yet sounding in my ear, the prospect vanished from before me, and I found myself again sitting at the porch of the temple. The sun was gone down, the multitude was retired to rest, and the solemn quiet of midnight concurred with the solution of my doubts to complete the tranquillity of my mind.

Such, my son, was the vision which the Prophet vouchsafed me, not for my sake only, but for thine. Thou hast sought felicity in temporal things; and, therefore, thou art disappointed. Let not instruction be lost upon thee, as the seal of Mahomet in the well of Aris; but go thy way, let thy flock clothe the naked, and thy table feed the hungry; deliver the poor from oppression, and let thy conversation be above. Thus shalt thou "rejoice in hope," and look forward to the end of life as the consummation of thy felicity.

Almet, in whose breast devotion kindled as he spake, returned into the temple, and the stranger departed in peace.

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