

HONORIA SOMMERVILLE:

A

NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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VOLUME I.

The hues of bliss more brightly glow
Chasten'd by fabler tints of woe,
And blended form with artful strife
The strength and harmony of life.

GRAY.

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NOVEL.

CHAP. I.

AS Mr. and Mrs. Fortescue were travelling from the North of Ireland to their own estate near Dublin, a violent storm of thunder and lightning frighten'd the Lady so much, she was unable to proceed; and not being near any town or capital village, they were obliged to stop at a miserable cottage 'till the tempest abated. Apprehensive of no danger but from the lightning, when the storm was over, Mr. Fortescue in vain persuaded his Lady to postpone their journey 'till the next morning: the hovel they were in was so very wretched, as almost to justify her obstinacy, though it was many miles to the inn at which they were to sleep, and great part of the road was over a dreary and unfrequented common. In compliance to her wishes, though against his own judgment, the indulgent husband ordered the carriage, and left the hamlet at eight o'clock. I will take the opportunity of the first part of their journey, which passed without misfortune or adventure, to introduce them to my readers in form, as they are to bear so considerable a part in the ensuing pages.

Mr. Fortescue was a man of rank and fortune, his disposition amiable and benevolent; but though his conversation was lively, and he did not want sense, yet his judgment was weak, and his opinion easily guided by those for whom he had a regard. Of a temper irresolute and apprehensive, he was fortunate in being united to a woman whose understanding and strength of mind superior to most of her sex, made her capable of directing him in all affairs of consequence; yet her sentiments were always given with such mildness, and she opposed him, when wrong, with such delicacy, that he could scarcely avoid supposing he followed the bent of his own inclinations.

Mrs. Fortescue was, indeed, in every sense of the word, a valuable woman: her natural understanding had been improved by the best books and the best company; nor had a constant course of prosperity rendered her unfeeling to the miseries of others; yet her sensibility was not of that kind, which could

Weep o'er the withering leaf of a rose;
but her generosity was unbounded, and her charity universal: nor did the fear of wounding her feelings ever drive her from a scene of distress, as she regarded not a slight inconvenience to herself, if she could by any means contribute to the relief or comfort of others.

When they were half way over the wild common I mentioned before, a slight accident that happened to the harness obliged the postillion to dismount to repair it. The instant the carriage stopt, they were alarmed by loud and repeated groans, that seemed to proceed from some person in extreme agony very near them, and which the noise of the wheels had before prevented their hearing. Equally courageous and humane, neither the fears of the servants, nor Mr. Fortescue's half-owned apprehensions, could prevent Mrs. Fortescue from desiring the man to drive the carriage slowly to the place from whence the groans were heard. He unwillingly obeyed, and a few moments brought them to the spot. Their terror subsided on seeing a post-chaise which had been overturned down a small bank: fortunately the horses were so entangled in the harness that they could not go on, or the driver must have been instantaneously killed, but he was totally confined by one of the wheels, and miserably bruised. Whilst the servants were busily employed in releasing him, Mrs. Fortescue was eagerly enquiring if there was no one in the carriage? An answer in the affirmative, raised her apprehensions for the fate of the passenger, and her fears were soon confirmed by the doors being opened, and a woman meanly drest taken out, whom, as it was supposed, a violent blow on the temple had deprived of life. Wrapped carefully up in the woman's cloth cloak, they found in the bottom of the chaise asleep, a little infant, not more than three months old; apparently unhurt. Of her Mrs. Fortescue immediately took the charge, leaving the driver to the care of their footman, who placed him in the carriage, and mounting the horses, followed his master's, 'till they arrived at the town where they were to sleep.

Their first care was to send for a surgeon, who pronounced the woman irrecoverably gone; set the fellow's arm, which was broken, and declared him in no danger. Their attention was then bestowed on their little charge, whose extreme beauty made such an impression on Mrs. Fortescue, together with its helpless and forlorn situation, that she begged her husband to let her keep the child, as she doubted not the consent of its friends would be easily obtained, as she could not suppose from the appearance of the woman, or the dress of the child, which though clean was coarse, that they were of any very elevated rank in life. In this opinion they were confirmed by enquiring of the driver from what place he had brought them; as he said he was returning from a town some miles distant, at the edge of the heath he met the woman walking with the child in one arm, and a bundle in the other: she begged, as the chaise was empty, he would let her get in, as the storm was then coming on with great violence: he consented merely from a principle of humanity, as he could have no hopes of a reward:—he added, he did not know from what place she came, but supposed from her apparent fatigue she had walked many miles, and quite across the country, as it was in a very unfrequented road he first saw her.

To an infant thrown so peculiarly under her protection, Mrs. Fortescue considered herself bound by every tie, and determined never to forsake her; but fearing her husband's relations, many of whom were narrow-minded and illiberal, would condemn her for bringing into the family a child, who had no claims but on their benevolence, and who could never repay their services, but with affection and gratitude, she requested the infant might pass for her niece. Her sister, who had just embarked from England for the East-

Indies, had lost a little girl about the same age; it was therefore settled that she should be introduced to Mr. Fortescue's family as this child, whom her sister, Mrs. Sommerville, had sent over, fearing the length of the voyage and the heat of the climate might be fatal to her.

This point concluded, they next sent for the clergyman of the place, who baptized the infant by the name of Honoria Sommerville; and to him they gave an account of the accident that threw the child on their protection, and begged his assistance in endeavouring to find her father. He promised to take every possible method, and let them know privately the result of his enquiries. Mr. Fortescue gave a handsome present to the poor fellow who had broken his arm, desiring him, if ever he should discover who the woman was he had taken up, to inform Mr. Richardson. They then proceeded on their journey with that satisfaction of mind which ever flows from a consciousness of having acted right; and at the next stage took a nurse for little Honoria, and by this precaution evaded all possibility of a discovery, as they could confide in their servant, who had lived with Mr. Fortescue's father from a boy; and at the same time were well assured, Mr. Richardson would use every method to discover the relations of the unfortunate infant.

Mrs. Fortescue had examined the woman's bundle, but could find nothing to throw any light on the mysterious affair. It contained only some linen, and one coarse gown; but from her pocket they took a seal set in gold, with the cypher EB, a very remarkable crown piece, and a small silver cross. Of these Mrs. Fortescue thought it her duty to take particular care, as they might one day lead to a knowledge of the child's birth: though she was more than ever convinced that birth was low, yet it lessened not her affection for the infant; on the contrary, she rejoiced in the idea that if acknowledged, the child would scarcely be taken away, as her relations would probably be highly pleased at the prospect of her being so well provided for.

Respecting the infancy and childhood of our heroine, I have little more to add than that she was received by Mr. Fortescue's relations as his wife's niece; and Mr. and Mrs. Sommerville dying abroad, made a discovery of the imposture less probable. She was educated with the same care and attention that they bestowed on their daughter Henrietta, who was two years older than Honoria, and who inheriting all her mother's goodness, loved her fictitious cousin with the same affection.

In the course of sixteen years they had frequently heard from Mr. Richardson, who always informed them his enquiries had been unattended with success.

Long descriptions are in general tiresome and uninteresting; therefore I will only say that at the age of seventeen Honoria was the wonder of all who knew her; that her beauty was exquisite, her understanding elevated, and her wit refined; without enumerating those trivial graces and elegant accomplishments she possessed in an eminent degree, which though not essential to the character of a woman, often strike more forcibly than the most solid virtues without them. But in the amiable Honoria every

charm was united; for whilst the graces of her person attracted admiration, the qualities of her heart and mind ensured esteem.

Henrietta was handsome, elegant, spirited and accomplished; and her attachment to Honoria was like Celia's to Rosalind, she acknowledged, though she envied not her superiority.

CHAP. II.

MR. FORTESCUE lived about three miles from a small town, where there were no families of rank to visit at Wood-Park, consequently all the society they had was from the gentlemen's seats around them; and as in that part of the country these were but thinly scattered, the acquisition of a new acquaintance was considered by the younger part of the family as the most desirable event that could possibly happen. Early in the spring that completed Honoria's seventeenth year, the neighbourhood was enlivened by the arrival of a regiment at L——. Mr. Fortescue, as well as the rest of the gentlemen, gave the officers a general invitation to his house; a circumstance that could not but be pleasing to two girls, who had spent the winter in almost an entire solitude, the family in consequence of a severe fit of illness that attacked Mr. Fortescue, having given up their usual journey to Dublin.

Among all the ladies who graced the parties and assemblies, Miss Fortescue and Miss Sommerville were distinguished by the officers by a particular attention, and though these ladies found no attractions in the gentlemen that could either charm or captivate, yet being of a disposition to be pleased, they were amused with the follies in the young which they could not admire, and endeavoured to improve by the sense and knowledge of some of the elder, who had not the power to entertain.

One day at dinner, Major Stevens in a blunt manner addressed the young ladies thus: "I hope you intend to be at the assembly to-morrow, for Captain Effingham is just arrived, and makes his first appearance; and whatever you may think of our young men in general, he is well worth your notice, as he is really the prettiest fellow in the regiment." "Indeed, Major, (replied Honoria) that will be no recommendation to me; I do not like pretty fellows in any profession, but especially in the military." "Why, to be sure, (returned the Major, filling his glass) he is but young, and does not love his bottle so well as a soldier should, for a cheerful glass, you know, Mr. Fortescue, inspires one with courage, but when the young man has been a few months in the regiment, he will improve, no doubt." "If he follows your example, to be sure he will," (replied Henrietta smiling). Nothing more passed that day respecting the Captain, but enough had been said to excite some curiosity in the young ladies.

When Mrs. Fortescue came the next morning into the breakfast parlour, she told them with an air of concern, that she was sorry to disappoint them, but Mr. Fortescue was so ill, in consequence of having drunk too freely the day before in compliment to the Major, that it was impossible she could leave him, "and you know (added she) you cannot go without me." "But, dear madam," cried Henrietta, "surely we need not all stay at home; leave me with my father, and take Honoria." "Do you believe me so selfish? (answered Honoria, reproachfully) no, madam, I will attend my uncle, and Henrietta shall go with you." "Well, (said Mrs. Fortescue) settle the contest as you please; if one of you will stay at home, I will go with the other with all my heart." When they retired to their

apartment a generous argument took place, but after a great many entreaties from Henrietta, and excuses from Honoria, the latter was prevailed upon to go.

Honoria never looked so charming; her dress was white muslin, with sky-blue ribbands, yet she was dissatisfied with herself, and when seated in the coach, almost repented having accepted her cousin's obliging offer. Immediately on their entering the ball room, Major Stevens introduced Captain Effingham to her, and she could not but allow his encomiums were just. They stood up to dance very soon. Honoria was unusually cheerful, but her partner, though polite and sensible, was reserved; this checked her vivacity. She might however have had the satisfaction of being envied by almost every woman in the room, but her heart was too benevolent to receive pleasure from any circumstance that apparently gave pain to another.

Mr. Fortescue retired early, but his daughter was too impatient to hear some account of the evening, not to sit up for Honoria, who dismissed her maid sooner than usual, that she might gratify her friend's curiosity. When they were alone, "Well, my dear girl," (cried Henrietta,) "have you seen the irresistible stranger? did you dance with him? how do you like him? did he answer your expectations?" "When you will give me time, (answered Honoria, smiling,) I will reply to your questions. I danced with Captain Effingham, but I really cannot tell how I like him. He is undoubtedly greatly superior to his brother officers, both for sense and elegance of person." "But I want (returned Henrietta) a particular description." "Really I did not observe him enough to be a proper painter, (rejoined Honoria) but you may judge for yourself on Tuesday, for my aunt has asked him to dinner with the Colonel and Mr. Wilmington. Yet I will endeavour to give you a description, though ill qualified for it. He is very tall, and extremely well made; the contour of his face uncommonly striking; his eyes are dark, and expressive of good sense and benevolence; there is a dignity in his aspect and a gentleness in his manner, that are seldom seen in the same person: his teeth are very white, and his nose Grecian. He danced so much better than any man in the room, that a comparison would be ridiculous. He talked but little, yet, from what he said, it was easy to observe he had a very superior understanding, and had always been accustomed to the best company." "Upon my word, Honoria, (said Henrietta) considering you took so little notice of your partner, you have described him very accurately, and on Tuesday I shall judge of the likeness." Honoria coloured, and turned the conversation to the rest of the company; it lasted only a quarter of an hour longer, and they parted for the night.

Captain Effingham had lost his parents in his infancy, but Lord Bridgewater, his mother's brother, bred him up, and treated him with the affection of a father; the Captain was educated with his Lordship's son at Oxford; but when Mr. Bridgewater went on his travels, he bought his nephew a commission, as almost from his childhood he had manifested a preference for a military life. The family at Wood Park soon distinguished the Captain from the rest of the corps, nor was he insensible of their attention, or unworthy of it: he had too much discernment not to observe the striking superiority of these ladies, and too much goodness of heart not to be grateful for their kindness. Often weary of the boisterous mirth of his brother officers, he would fly for relief to the elegant

society at the Park, who on their side were always happy in such an addition to their little parties of reading, walking and riding. In a few months he became absolutely essential to their happiness; and the day in which he visited them not, was considered by the whole family as a blank. He paid such an equal attention to all, that none but the most delicate observer, and one well acquainted with all the fears and tender anxieties of love, could discern that Honoria was the object of his preference, though she was indeed the object of his most ardent affection. At their balls he danced alternately with the cousins, chatted to them equally, and maintained such an apparent indifference in his company, that Mrs. Fortescue was quite satisfied; for though she delighted in his company, she by no means wished that an attachment should take place between him and either her daughter or Honoria. But Honoria was not insensible to his merits, nor unacquainted with his partiality, though her delicacy scarcely permitted her to own, even to herself, that she regarded him with more than common friendship; and Effingham, from a point of honour, had never acquainted her with his passion by any method but his eyes, and these had disclosed the secret unknown to himself.

Several months passed away in perfect ease and tranquillity; not that insipid tranquillity, that unvarying calmness, which stagnates the soul; for every morning's dawn brought with it some animating hope, and every setting sun saw that hope realized. When one morning Captain Effingham entered the house with an appearance of uneasiness that surprised and alarmed the whole family, Mr. Fortescue advanced to meet him; Mrs. Fortescue let her book fall to the ground; Henrietta exclaimed, "Heavens! what's the matter?" but Honoria turned pale as death, sat still, and spoke not a word. The cause was too soon explained; the regiment was ordered to America, and they were to begin their march the next day for the place from whence they were to embark. The concern the whole family felt at this intelligence, prevented them from observing the effect it had on each other; and the expressions of regret were so warm and animated, that only an uninterested spectator could have noticed that Honoria joined not in them, though her countenance evidently expressed how deeply her heart was affected. In a short time, however, they all grew more composed, and Effingham, after promising to spend the day with them, walked out with Mr. Fortescue to view some improvements he had been making in the park. Henrietta then proposed to her mother a stroll into the garden, purposely to give her friend time to recover from the agitation into which this unwelcome surprise had thrown her. With a look expressive of gratitude and affection, she availed herself of this opportunity, and retired to her chamber. After relieving her heart by tears, she took it severely to task, for its weakness in feeling too high a degree of regard for a man, who, though amiable and deserving, had only paid her common attention, and to whom therefore common esteem was only due. Assisted by this recollection, and summoning her sex's pride to her aid, she soon fancied she had obtained a compleat conquest over her heart, and with a determination to think no more of the author of her uneasiness, she left her room, and went into the garden to meet Mrs. Fortescue. But fate had otherwise ordained it. Mr. Fortescue had been called to one of his tenants, and Captain Effingham was returning to seek the ladies, when he met Honoria at the end of a long walk. The confusion that appeared in both their countenances was a proof that this interview, though unexpected, was not displeasing to either party. Effingham addressed

Honorina with hesitation, and for some minutes they walked on in a total silence, which she was anxious to break, that almost without knowing what she said, she observed he would see nothing in America like the scene before him. "No, Madam, (he replied) nor shall I ever again see so perfect a model of human excellence as that I now behold," looking at her with a peculiar tenderness. Doubly distressed at a compliment she had so inadvertently brought upon herself, she blushed, but made no answer, and they again walked in silence, till they came to a terrace, which looked over a beautiful valley, at the bottom of which a river meandered, and the opposite hill was diversified with cornfields and meadows, and crowned with woods. Here they stopped, and Honorina fixed her eyes, apparently with admiration, on the prospect; but so differently were her thoughts engaged, that had the beautiful verdure of the fields been covered with snow, the change would by her have been unobserved. With a forced smile, which was intended to conceal the anguish he felt; "I shall, indeed, (said Captain Effingham) never again behold objects so interesting to me. Yet averse as I am to the voyage, it is not, believe me, the dangers of war that I dread; no: as I cannot be here, I know no situation preferable to a field of battle: despair has so completely filled my mind, that as I have no hope of happiness here, I have no fear of death, and if I am so fortunate as to render my country any service, it will not I hope be material whether I was actuated by a love of glory, or a carelessness of life; for the sensations with which I shall march to an engagement, will by no means be equal to what I shall this evening feel, when I quit Wood-Park, perhaps for ever." "Good Heavens, Sir, what do you mean?" (exclaimed Honorina). He proceeded: "I can no longer continue the cruel silence I have hitherto imposed on myself; and surely at this time, at this probably last interview, it will be no breach of honour to confess, loveliest of women! the passion I have ill endeavoured to conceal; yet conscious as I have ever been of the inferiority of my expectations, and of my dependant situation, how could I, consistently with my ideas of propriety, return Mr. Fortescue's hospitality by endeavouring to make an interest in the heart of his beloved niece? Yet the thoughts of leaving you unacquainted with the state of my mind, was an additional pang to the many I felt when the order arrived for our march; and I shall not repent, if you, Miss Sommerville, will forgive my audacity; I only ask your forgiveness and friendship—more I dare not hope for." Agitated as she was with this speech, she had enough command of herself to say with tolerable composure, "The friendship, Sir, of all this family is your's, and their best wishes for your safety and return, in all which I sincerely join them."—"And is this all?—at least tell me you pardon me: do not let me leave you with the insupportable idea of having incurred your displeasure." "Pardon you!—Oh! Captain Effingham!"— She could add no more; the tears were forcing their passage down her cheeks, and she feared to trust her voice, lest it should betray the sentiments of her soul. Love in a young mind is ever inclined to hope: he seized her hand in a transport of gratitude: "Let me, my beloved Miss Sommerville, let me thank you for the compassion I read in your countenance. May I once more trespass on your goodness; may I ask, if, contrary to my expectations, I should meet with some happy turn of fortune, that by raising me nearer to a level with yourself, might enable me to aspire to your hand,—whether if you are then disengaged, you would in pity to my constant love, to my long concealed and almost hopeless passion, permit me to solicit Mr. Fortescue for his interest with his charming niece?"

Honorina blushed, but replied not.

“As you do not absolutely forbid my hopes, I will (continued he) put that construction on your silence most favourable to them. And here (dropping on his knees) though I mean not even to hint a wish that you should follow my example, let me convince you of my sincerity, by voluntarily swearing never to address any other woman in the language of love, whilst you will condescend to listen to me; and my heart is too entirely devoted to you, ever to repent the solemn engagement by which I bind myself yours for ever.” He then rose from his humble attitude.

The variety of emotions in Honorina’s mind were too strong for expression; she was surprized, delighted, confused, and almost terrified; but a period was at once put to their conversation, by the approach of Mrs. Fortescue, and they had both time to recover from the agitation into which this unexpected declaration had thrown Honorina, and the fears of what reception that declaration would meet with from her lover, before she joined them; they then walked towards the house, and the remainder of the day was spent in mutual expressions of regret.

Henrietta, who knew nothing of what had passed in the garden, was somewhat surprized at the tranquillity which sat on her cousin’s brow, for not even the idea of parting, could at that time balance the satisfaction she felt from the assurance of his unalterable affection.

Captain Effingham had promised to correspond with Mr. Fitzosborne, a neighbouring gentleman, from whom he said he hoped to hear constantly of their welfare. At seven o’clock his horses were brought. He sat half an hour uneasy and irresolute, obliged to depart, yet not knowing how to take leave; he then suddenly started up, shook Mr. Fortescue hastily by the hand, bowed to the ladies, but spoke not, mounted his horse, and was out of sight in an instant. They all stood at the window for some time in silence, which Mrs. Fortescue broke as she pulled down the sash: “I think I love that young man as well as if he was my son; I wish he was not a soldier, God forbid he should be killed, but he must stand the chance of war, as well as the rest.” “Killed!” (repeated Henrietta). The word struck Honorina like a flash of lightning, and raised an idea in her breast she had not before thought on, and banished every pleasing reflection she had indulged. She took the first opportunity to tell her friend all the particulars of her interview with Captain Effingham, who soothed her fears, cherished her hopes, and shared with the truest sympathizing tenderness in all her joy and sorrow.

The silence that seemed to reign in the house the next day, was felt by all the family, though not in an equal degree, but time, that constant friend to the afflicted, at last softened their regret, though it lessened not their regard for the absent.

CHAP. III.

IT was now the approach of winter, and several months passed without any material event occurring, except that Mrs. Fortescue caught a fever by walking too late; but though the violence of her disorder abated, it left her extremely weak; nevertheless, as she apparently recovered, though very slowly, her family were not alarmed. Captain Effingham's place by their fire-side, was filled by Sir James Eustace, a young Baronet of a good estate, not many miles from them, who was just returned from his travels. His father had been Mr. Fortescue's most intimate friend, but exclusive of that, his own merit would have insured him a welcome reception at the Park.

He soon paid Miss Fortescue that particular attention which no woman can mistake, and he was too pleasing to be slighted by a disengaged heart. She confest to her mother she had no objection to him, and her parents were both delighted at his choice and her approbation. Sir James had an ample fortune, but that was little regarded by them: their principal wish was to bestow her on a man of an amiable disposition, and who had an understanding to set a proper value on her merit. Sir James had no friends to consult; Miss Fortescue's were all anxious to see them united: Mrs. Fortescue joined Sir James in persuading their daughter to fix an early day: the mother felt herself daily declining, though she never complained, and feared, if her daughter's marriage was delayed, her illness would become visible, and prevent its completion.

Henrietta did no violence to her own inclinations in obeying her mother, and they were married the beginning of February. Mrs. Fortescue exerted herself so much on this occasion, and the festivities which followed it, that her health became a sacrifice: she fainted one day as they were sitting down to dinner, and was immediately carried to her chamber, which she left not for a week. The faculty who attended her, entertained very little hope of her recovery; she was in a rapid decay: it had been long coming on, but now increased so fast, that Honoria and her daughter were terrified to a degree at the daily alteration in her countenance, though they yet knew not the reason they had to be alarmed. It would be difficult to say which of them suffered most; but Lady Eustace had a tender friend to soothe her anxiety: Honoria wept alone.

Mrs. Fortescue grew every day weaker, and being sensible of her own danger, thought it a duty incumbent on her to acquaint her beloved ward with the circumstances that attended her first knowledge of her. It was a painful task, but she judged it improper to leave to her husband the revealing of a secret that required so much tenderness and delicacy in the disclosure. Yet it was absolutely necessary she should know it, she had long observed with pain her high spirit, and dreaded the effect so mortifying a discovery would have on her.

Finding herself one morning tolerably composed, she desired Sir James would drive his Lady out in the phaeton, as she feared so long a confinement would be prejudicial to her, and for the same reason begged Mr. Fortescue would accompany them

on horseback; Honoria, she said, would sit with her during their absence. They obeyed her, and for a little change of air she was carried in her easy chair into the drawing-room. Honoria followed with an aching heart, which was not a little increased by the recollection of the sad contrast of that day to the same in the year before; a trifling circumstance had brought to her mind, it was that on which she first saw Effingham at the ball. But she had not long leisure to indulge these melancholy reflections, before Mrs. Fortescue, laying her burning hand on her arm, and looking at her eyes which were red with weeping, said, "You must not, my love, permit your tenderness for me to afflict you thus deeply; indeed, Honoria, your distress adds to my sufferings; you should rather rejoice, that blest as I have ever been in all my relatives, I do not let the attachment I still have to this world draw back my heart too strongly; and though I have known more happiness than is the general lot of mortals, and my life has been embittered with fewer sorrows, I not only give up my life with resignation to the Divine Will, but look forward with ardent hope to that world, in which we are taught to expect our bliss will be complete; which those will ever do, who can at this awful period look back without remorse. And now, my beloved Honoria, while it is yet in my power, let me reveal to you a secret which must astonish, but suffer it not to grieve you. You have hitherto regarded yourself as my niece, but, though my affection for you is equal to that I bear my own child, you are not allied to me by any ties of blood." Honoria terrified, arose to ring the bell; she thought Mrs. Fortescue's senses wandered; but aware of the idea her speech had given rise to, she gently took hold of her hand and detained her. "I know what you think, my dear, but when you are more composed I will give you such convincing proofs of the truth of what I say, that you will no longer doubt me." Trembling and agitated she sat down, and Mrs. Fortescue continued: "In that box," pointing to one which stood by her, and giving her the key, "you will find in my own hand writing the particulars of the event which gave you to me. I wrote it many years since, thinking if I should be taken suddenly away, the knowledge of the time and place where I first met you, might perhaps lead to a discovery of your parents."

Honoria was extremely shocked at the hint this speech conveyed, but though her feelings were almost too strong for concealment, she endeavoured to suppress them, fearing the effect her agitation would have on the weak frame of her more than maternal friend, who thus continued: "In that box you will also find the cloaths of the woman who was in the chaise with you; that also which you had on, and a few trifling articles that were in her pocket. The paper too, was signed by the clergyman, who, except Mr. Fortescue, is the only person in the world who knows you are not my niece. My reasons for wishing you to pass for such are there set down. But do not, my love, as every endeavour both of Mr. Richardson and ourselves to discover your birth have hitherto failed, form any romantic hopes on that head or indulge ideas which the former part of my speech may perhaps have raised; the things in my possession, are of themselves by far too trifling to be of any service to you, but if any application should ever be made to Mr. Richardson, in consequence of the advertisements we at that time put in the papers, they may prove the identity of your person. Though, my dear Honoria, I must leave you, yet under the care of my husband, I feel no apprehensions for your future fate: my daughter too loves you as a sister; cultivate the friendship of Sir James, he is amiable and will

Over this paper Honoria again wept in an agony of grief, when she was found by Lady Eustace, who shocked and terrified at her situation, and whose mind turning only on one possible and constantly dreaded calamity, could only exclaim, "Oh my dear mother!" From this fear Honoria relieved her as soon as she could speak, and putting into her hand the cruel testimony of her birth, again covered her face to conceal the violence of her emotions.

The surprize of Lady Eustace was almost inexpressible; but ever attentive to the feelings of her friend, her first words were to assure her of her unalterable esteem and affection, which could never be lessened by any change of circumstances. Honoria then shewed her the contents of the box, and as they were examining them, they discovered another paper written in Mrs. Fortescue's own hand, and dated only a few months before, containing a most affecting and tender address to Honoria, with the reasons for letting her pass for her niece, and setting every event in a fuller point of view; concluding with a most earnest prayer for her future happiness. Her gratitude was so peculiarly excited by these repeated marks of affection, that she most impatiently waited for Mrs. Fortescue to awake, that she might pour out the effusions of her soul on her maternal bosom. But this satisfaction she was never to enjoy: her beloved benefactress, after a long and heavy sleep, awoke in convulsions, and in a few hours expired. Her death, though so long dreaded, was too sudden at last not to give an additional shock to the feelings of the whole family. It was many days before they could meet at that table she had so long graced, and many more ere they could recover even a tolerable degree of composure.

Sir James had, a very short time after his marriage, received intelligence that a considerable legacy which had been left him by a distant relation, who died in the East-Indies, had not been remitted according to his expectation; and the friend who wrote him the account, advised him by all means to go over himself and look into it; for the trustees had refused to pay it into the hands of the agent he had appointed. He resolved to follow this advice, but unwilling to leave his lady in Ireland, and it being then impossible even to mention the voyage to her, he waited 'till she had a little recovered the severe stroke of her mother's death, before he spoke of it. She objected not to the proposal, and preparations were immediately made for their departure. She earnestly wished for Honoria to accompany them, but would not even hint it to her father, he had suffered so severely from the loss of his amiable partner, and was so much hurt at the approaching separation from his child, though he acknowledged the propriety of her going, that the society of his niece, for she still passed for such, was absolutely essential to his comfort.

Sir James was obliged to go first to England, where they were to stay a fortnight or three weeks with an aunt of his in London, before their embarkation. The parting was on all sides very affecting, but Mr. Fortescue bore it better than they expected.

'Till within a few weeks, Honoria had never known a real trouble, but they had since crowded upon her so fast, that her cheerfulness was totally lost, and her constitution, naturally delicate, was materially hurt by these accumulated distresses. One circumstance indeed happened, that by giving her thoughts a different turn, contributed more to the

relief of her mind than any thing had yet done. I should first mention that, through Mr. Fitzosborne, they had frequently heard of Captain Effingham since his arrival in America; his most grateful and affectionate respects were ever sent to the family at Wood-Park, and the most tender remembrances to his beloved Miss Sommerville, which Mr. Fitzosborne never failed to deliver, if he could find an opportunity. These compliments were in general, though friendly terms, returned through him to America. But a few days after Lady Eustace had left Ireland, as Honoria was walking in the Park, mournfully reflecting on the happy hours she had passed there, on the dear companions of her former walks, and the impossibility of their ever being renewed; a countryman came up, and giving her a small box, which he said he was ordered to deliver into her own hand, directly left her, and was out of sight before she could sufficiently recover from her astonishment to enquire from whence he came. With no little degree of curiosity she opened it, and discovered a beautiful locket. On one side was the figure of Hope leaning on an anchor of pearls; and on the other the letter E in gold in the centre, and exactly over it in small gold letters, Souvenir; surrounded with pearls on both sides. She could not doubt from whom it originally came, and she suspected Mr. Fitzosborne was the confidant. For some time she indulged the pleasing ideas it gave rise to, and her heart felt a satisfaction to which it had been long a stranger, from the recollection she was still dear to him. But she was not long to enjoy happiness of any kind; the fatal mystery of her birth darted at once into her mind, and destroyed every pleasing illusion. From having been an object to which Effingham had looked up, she would perhaps sink beneath his notice, when he was acquainted with her real story; this stung her soul almost to madness, and in the first delirium of her grief she determined to return the locket, however painful it might be; but the impossibility of doing this, from not knowing where to direct it, fortunately struck her, and though unknown to herself, she was glad of an excuse. Giving it to Mr. Fitzosborne next occurred, but the awkwardness of this, if, which might be the case, he was really ignorant of it, gave her a second reprieve. By degrees she entirely reconciled herself to keeping it, and fastening it round her neck with a ribband, returned to the house, joined Mr. Fortescue at supper, and retired to rest with more serenity than she had experienced since the first day she apprehended Mrs. Fortescue's danger.

CHAP. IV.

AMONG the families who paid their visits of condolance at the Park, were Mr. and Mrs. Kilmorey; they lived only two miles from it, and as soon as Mr. Fortescue received company to dinner, they came accompanied by Mr. and Miss O'Carrol. The Kilmoreys were what is usually termed very worthy people, that is, they were good-humoured, affronted no one, and from a total dislike to solitude, were never so happy as when in company. Miss O'Carrol was a lady of eight and thirty; her father had a tolerable place under government, but living to the extent of his income, he had little to leave his children. His son was bred to the law, and the few hundreds his daughter found herself possess of at his death, were very insufficient to support the affluence to which she had been accustomed. Too proud to endeavour to gain a livelihood by any honest method, and neither young nor handsome enough to expect an advantageous settlement in marriage, she condescended to accept the offers made by some of her relations, to live with them alternately. To this, of all dependent situations the most irksome, she submitted with a good grace; but as they often took care to remind her of the obligations she owed them, she was ever ready to accept the invitations made by others of her friends, and these were not unfrequent, as her disposition, though naturally extremely bad, was always subservient to her interest; and she behaved with such an excess of civility, not only to the superiors but domestics of every family she visited, she was never an unwelcome guest: but to those who were the least in her power, she was tyrannical to an extreme, and her ill-nature could only be exceeded by her art.

It was in Mrs. Kilmorey's last excursion to Dublin she became acquainted with this lady; and as they returned into the country only a short time before Mrs. Fortescue's death, the two families had never met since Miss O'Carrol had been a guest at Kilmorey Hall, except at a morning visit, when the scheme first darted into her head that she now put in execution. Her friends were recalled to Dublin by a law-suit; she would of course be obliged to attend them, and be again resident under a roof, which was of late become particularly disagreeable, from the ridicule with which she was treated by three or four great girls who had just left school. She had nothing either in person or manner to excite respect, and they always found something in cousin Sukey's dress or behaviour to afford them amusement; and however terrible this was, she dared not resent it.

She began by paying great court to Miss Sommerville; but finding that did not answer her purpose, she changed her plan, and lamented to Mr. Fortescue how very dull it would be for him and his niece, when their neighbours had left the Hall, and expressed the deepest regret that she must accompany them, as, were she to stay in the country, she would do all in her power to make up to Miss Sommerville the absence of her friends. Honoria only bowed, she was above disguise, and could never command her tongue to express a direct falshood in a compliment; but Mr. Fortescue, who dreaded nothing so much as that she should find their solitude wearisome, directly asked Miss O'Carrol, if she could not leave Mrs. Kilmorey when she went to Dublin, and stay a few months with them? She thanked him, and waited for Honoria to join in the request; but finding her still

silent, she would not from a point of delicacy refuse an asylum, where at least she might promise herself peace and plenty; and after a little hesitation, consented. Our heroine was then obliged to throw some satisfaction into her voice and expressions, though she was in reality far from feeling any; for the extreme servility of Miss O'Carrol's manner, had from the first moment she saw her excited her disgust and aversion.

Mrs. Kilmorey declared it was a lucky thought of Mr. Fortescue, and said nothing would do them so much good as a little of her pleasant conversation, and though sorry to lose her, she should rejoice at the advantages they would derive. Alas, thought Honoria, with a deep sigh, how differently people think!

The same day in the following week that carried the Kilmoreys to the metropolis, brought Miss O'Carrol to Wood-Park; where she was received by its master with extreme pleasure, by Honoria with civility only. Her brother was also a constant, though as yet but a daily visitor. I said before he was bred to the law. He practised at L——, I should rather say lived there; practice he had little or none; as he wanted two very principal recommendations, namely, capacity and attention.

Miss O'Carrol soon perceived Mr. Fortescue was highly pleased with her, and determined to take an advantage of it; she thought if Patrick could marry Miss Sommerville, it would make him for ever: she communicated her plan to him; he doubted not gaining the lady's affections, and she promised to obtain the uncle's consent. Thus in their own minds it was finally settled, and they immediately began the attack. Honoria with pain observed the increasing influence she gained over Mr. Fortescue, but Patrick's assiduities only heightened her dislike into antipathy. The lady played back-gammon every afternoon with the old gentleman, whilst her brother attended our heroine at her harpsichord, or walked with her if she chose a ramble, or if she worked, would read. All this was so much against her inclinations, that to avoid him she frequently retired to her chamber, the only place free from his intrusion, and by this means, often for hours together, left Mr. Fortescue exposed to the artful conversation and deep-laid schemes of Miss O'Carrol, who failed not to improve his partiality by every method in her power.

Conscious that Honoria's aversion to her brother would prevent the success of her first plan, Miss O'Carrol now turned her whole thoughts towards attaching Mr. Fortescue to herself; and this was not only the most probable from the attention he paid her, but the most eligible scheme in every respect, as, if she could prevail on him to marry her, she should never want her brother's assistance, but have it in her power to provide for him, in case of a refusal from Miss Sommerville. In consequence of this, the next time they were at backgammon, she began by asking Mr. Fortescue what he would do when his niece was married? "and, indeed," continued she, "I have long observed an attachment between her and a young man, who shall be nameless." "Indeed! (replied he) I shall be very far from controuling her inclinations when they are made known to me; and as for myself, I must do as well as I can." "Why, (returned the lady) you must follow her example, I believe, and can you do better?" "What, marry, madam! why who in the name of fortune do you think would have me?" "Rather ask, Sir, (holding down her head and affecting to

blush) who would refuse you?” “Why surely, Miss O’Carrol, you cannot be serious; what, with all the infirmities of age coming fast upon me, do you think, that is, would you—” Here this interesting conversation was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of a young man, who had been for some time intimate in the family. His name was Cleveland; he had spent great part of a very good estate in a variety of fashionable follies, yet he had an excellent heart, and a fine understanding. He was gay, good-humoured, thoughtless and extravagant; in short, he was the counterpart of Charles Surface, yet in one point he would not resemble him; he was determined justice should take place of generosity, and before he was irretrievably ruined, he gave up his estate to his creditors for a certain number of years, and contrived himself to live on the very small allowance they made him, and this he never exceeded. To take himself out of the way of temptation, he left Dublin, and retired to cheap lodgings at L——, where he amused himself with reading, visiting the neighbouring families, and attending the gentlemen in all their country sports. In his travels, he had gone farther than the grand tour, as it is usually called, and the fund of knowledge he had laid up, made him a most agreeable companion, whence his society was universally coveted. He had often relieved Honoria from the weariness she felt from the insipid conversation of the O’Carrols, and she ever received him with a smile. Her friendship she gave him, it was all in her power to bestow, but that did not satisfy him. Drawn to her by an irresistible impulse, and by a general similarity of sentiments, he was never happy but in her company, and as she was unconscious of his attachment, she ever attended to him with ease and affability.

His present visit to the Park was occasioned by a message to her from a family with whom he had spent several days. Miss Meriton, daughter to the gentleman he had been visiting, requested Miss Sommerville would stay a week or two with her. Mr. Cleveland offered to be the messenger, and glad of any excuse to see and converse with Honoria, he pleaded for her friend with a peculiar earnestness.

Miss O’Carrol thought herself highly favoured by fortune, as Miss Sommerville’s leaving the Park at this time would give her an opportunity to hasten the success of her plan; and though Mr. Cleveland had prevented the so much wished-for eclairsissement, she freely forgave him, in consideration of the intention of his visit. Our heroine at first refused; but Mr. Fortescue desiring her to comply, she at last consented. Miss O’Carrol and her brother, he said, would perhaps both stay with him during her absence, and though he never wished to be separated from her, she would return in better health and spirits. It was then settled that she should go the next day, attended by Mr. Cleveland.

Honoria left Wood-Park with a regret she could not then account for, but she afterwards fancied it was a pre-sentiment that every happy hour she was destined to spend there was past. She endeavoured however to banish every unpleasant reflection; anticipated the pleasure she should enjoy in the society of Sophia Meriton, who had been the companion of her youth, and was only just returned from a visit of eighteen months to a married sister in the North of Ireland; and attended to the entertaining remarks of her companion, not a few of which were excited by the ridiculous behaviour of Miss O’Carrol.

Their journey was short, and her reception at Castlewood affectionate and flattering. A large party was in the house, and the evenings were devoted to musick or dancing; the mornings to walking or riding. Amusement succeeded amusement; and in this manner a fortnight passed rapidly away. Nor were the kindest expressions of friendship wanting to sooth the mind of Honoria, who at times was unhappy and dejected. Sophia was tenderly attached to her, and lamented with her the death of her kind protectress, and the absence of her valued friend; but she knew not the various sources of uneasiness which preyed upon her soul, and rendered her at first almost insensible to the gaieties around her: yet these gaieties, by degrees, had their usual effect; her spirits in some measure returned; she joined in the dance, where Cleveland was her constant partner, and refused not to let her voice add to the concert. The restraints she had lived under ever since the arrival of her disagreeable guest, made the care which reigned here particularly pleasing to her, and she was both grieved and surprized when the day arrived on which she had promised Mr. Fortescue to return. Her friends were equally sorry to lose her, but a promise was to her sacred. Mr. Cleveland was again her escorte; and she was not a little astonished when on the road he made her a serious and earnest declaration of love. He attempted not to disguise the embarrassment of his fortune, but said he hoped a few years at least would restore him to affluence; that as he had been taught prudence by adversity, it was a lesson he should never forget; and he believed he might say, the errors of his youth would never be repeated; that if he was so fortunate as to be approved of by her, and she could condescend to live a little while in retirement, he would apply to her uncle, and leave him to make his own terms with respect to the settlements, and every thing of that kind. Honoria thanked him in a frank and easy manner for his preference, but in terms at once gentle and resolute, declined his offers; adding that her friendship and best wishes should ever attend him; and that if she had apparently given him encouragement, it was quite unintentionally, and proceeded merely from a total ignorance of the sentiments he entertained for her.

Convinced by her looks, as well as the tone of her voice, that she was really in earnest, he could not flatter himself he should ever prevail on her to change an opinion, which seemed unalterable. He was disappointed, but not angry. Taking her hand, which however she immediately withdrew, he again addressed her: "I fear, Miss Sommerville, you will think me impertinent, if I make one request; but if you will answer me truly and sincerely, I will promise you to endeavour to be contented with your friendship; at least I will never again solicit your attention to the subject which I have now dared to speak upon. Is your refusal founded wholly on dislike or indifference to me? or is there another person who has been so happy as to make an interest in your heart? She blushed at this question, and only replied, "Indeed, Mr. Cleveland, I have no dislike to you, nor are you wholly indifferent to me; yet I can never consider you in any other light than as a friend." "It is enough, madam, I am convinced, fatally convinced, I must not hope for more than your esteem; yet to deserve that shall be the future study of my life." He then turned the conversation, but the restraint which sat on both, made them equally pleased when the park gates appeared in view. But now let me acquaint my readers with what had passed within them since the departure of Honoria.

Her absence at this period was particularly favourable to the designs of Miss O'Carrol: she justly feared her influence, if exerted, might overturn all she had been so earnestly employed in bringing to effect; and she well knew the strongest exertions of that influence would be the consequence of a discovery of her plan before its completion; and whilst she remained under the roof, it could not be executed without her knowledge. Apprehensive therefore lest by any accident she should return before the appointed time, she resolved to begin immediately. That very afternoon Mr. O'Carrol received a pretended summons to attend a client: he promised his sister to be with her the next day at dinner, but in the morning he sent her a note, to say the business in which he was engaged obliged him to take a journey of near thirty miles, and would otherwise unavoidably detain him more than a week. At dinner she informed Mr. Fortescue of this circumstance, and when the servants were withdrawn, expressed her sorrow at being obliged to quit him before the arrival of his niece; but as her brother was prevented from fulfilling his promise, she could not stay alone with him without a manifest impropriety; and therefore requested he would permit his carriage to attend her to the next town, from whence she might meet with some conveyance to Dublin.

A natural love of society, and the fear, which her artifices had first raised, that if so probable an event as Honoria's marriage should take place, he would be left solitary and uncomfortable, at a period of life when not only a companion, but a nurse is almost necessary; had so strongly impressed on his mind an idea, on which he had dwelt ever since his last conversation with her, and which her present resolution hastened the disclosure of, that he replied to her request for the chariot, by an immediate offer of marriage. Thus was her wish exactly answered. After a few faint refusals and forced blushes, she consented, and with some difficulty concealed the innate satisfaction she felt at her success. But she had yet another point to gain; this was to hasten the conclusion within the fortnight; and to effect this, she told Mr. Fortescue it would be necessary for her to leave him to make the usual preparations. But he, who dreaded nothing so much as solitude, combated her resolution, which was no difficult task; and proposed a private and immediate solemnization, to which she acceded, though apparently with reluctance, only begging to wait her brother's return. Now as this event happened some days before the time fixed on, as my readers may easily guess, his absence had been wholly regulated by his sister's direction, the wedding was celebrated in little more than a week from the day Honoria went to Castle-wood, and in less than eight months from the death of the first Mrs. Fortescue.

Mr. Fortescue neither felt, nor pretended to feel, any ardent affection for his bride, but he was pleased with her society, happy he had secured it for ever, delighted at the preference he fancied she had for him, and grateful for her condescension in uniting herself for life, to a man so many years her senior. Thus a perfect satisfaction for some time reigned on both sides.

One day Mrs. Fortescue began lamenting to him how probable it was his niece's disapprobation would follow her knowledge of this event. That he said was impossible;

she would derive too many advantages from her society, ever to regret the cause; but even if she should, it was too much her interest to conceal, what if known would raise his highest displeasure, for her to express it: he then revealed the secret, so long, so faithfully kept, respecting her birth, and the obligations she owed him. Mrs. Fortescue's astonishment at this discovery was succeeded by an innate sensation of delight, though she could scarcely yet trace its source; but when she was alone, a new train of reflections brought with them new hopes of gratification of her two favourite passions, avarice and cruelty. Her brother loved Honoria as much as a man could love, without either soul or sentiment mixed with the passion: she doubted not but her influence would induce her husband to insist on Honoria's consent to the union, whose dependent situation, she imagined, would oblige her to comply, if strenuously urged. Thus, whatever Mr. Fortescue might be inclined to leave her, would not go out of her family. If on the contrary she should still continue the aversion she had hitherto shewn him, disobedience to the commands of one she had so long considered almost as a parent, would be an excellent excuse for deserting her, and she feared not gaining her husband over to any point she chose to exert herself on. This would be securing a double advantage. Honoria's ingratitude to her benefactor, would be a reason to the world for throwing her wholly on its protection; and the fortune which might be destined for her, would thus perhaps be added to what he intended for herself. She was by no means satisfied with the jointure settled on her, though a very handsome one; and she determined to add to it by every method in her power. Her resentment and malice towards Honoria would also be highly gratified, as either way she was certain of making her miserable. But the ways of Providence are just though inscrutable: the wicked intentions of this vile woman were instrumental to her greatest happiness; and the evil she designed for this innocent victim fell on her own head; for disappointed malice ever preys upon itself.

CHAP. V.

THE astonishment of Honoria may be more easily conceived than expressed when on her return Mr. Fortescue presented his bride to her. Shocked almost to a degree of insensibility, at an event so wholly unexpected, so entirely unwished for, she could not for some moments frame an answer, and when she did, her regret was so visible, that perhaps it had been better if she had said nothing. That Lady, enraged at her coolness, determined to mortify her by letting her know she was well acquainted with her dependant situation; and having done this the first opportunity that occurred, she added with an affectation of kindness, she would ever be a friend to her, whilst she behaved in a manner deserving of that friendship; that her secret should be faithfully concealed, if she would not stand in her own light, by refusing an offer so highly to her advantage as that of her brother's hand, who, in consideration of his love, would generously overlook the meanness of her birth, and the uncertainty of her fortune.

Honoria had a high spirit, but a calm mind; had her temper been in the least passionate, the cruelty and insolence of this speech must have excited her warmest resentment; but she looked down with mingled contempt and pity on a woman, whose little soul could thus insult and tyrannize over the unfortunate. In a firm and collected manner she replied, "If, madam, you intended your speech should raise my gratitude, believe me, it has lost its effect, and I am as insensible to your promises, as I should be to your threats. I owe Mr. Fortescue the duty of a child, as I feel for him the affection of one, but not even his commands should oblige me to give up not only my happiness, but my principles, in vowing to love and honour a man, for whom I can feel nothing but contempt and aversion; and sooner than comply with your wishes, I would joyfully return to that poverty, from which the genuine and unaffected benevolence of the first Mrs. Fortescue rescued me." There was more of sarcasm in the latter words of Honoria, than Mrs. Fortescue could bear, for she ever pretended to the highest refinements of sensibility, and even to the practice of humanity; and she fell into so violent a passion, that her terrified opponent made a hasty retreat to her own room, where she locked the door, and throwing herself upon the bed, gave way to a bitter agony of tears; her spirits, which had kept up so well during the interview, were now wholly subdued by the excess of her sorrow. By degrees she became more tranquil, and prepared herself for supper, where she sat down with a heavy heart, and an aching head. Her appearance with swelled eyes, and pale dejected countenance, alarmed Mr. Fortescue so much, who not guessing the cause, imputed it to illness, that he wanted to send for some advice; but she so strenuously opposed it, declaring it was nothing but a cold and head-ach, that he at last gave it up. His earnestness alarmed his lady, and she affected the kindest concern, and even begged Honoria to let her sit up with her; this duplicity was so disgusting to her ingenuous mind, that she could no longer sit at table, but thanking her very coolly for her offer, hastily arose and retired immediately.

Mrs. Fortescue now began to apprehend she had been too hasty, and feared she had not yet gained ascendancy enough over her husband, to counteract the regard he had

so long felt for Honoria; and determined to alter her behaviour. But unfortunately the next day at breakfast, Mr. Fortescue reproved Honoria so severely for replying to an enquiry of his lady's with great indifference, that the latter resolved to adhere to her first plan.

It would be both tedious and painful to enumerate the various methods she took from this time to mortify and distress Honoria; and this the natural goodness of her disposition prevented her at first from disclosing to her benefactor, lest the discovery of the barbarity of the woman to whom he had united himself, should make his life as wretched as was her own. But in a few months all complaints would have been fruitless; Mrs. Fortescue had gained such an entire power over her husband, that he no longer moved or spoke but in obedience to her will: it was nevertheless in vain that she endeavoured to obtain Honoria's consent to marry her brother, and at last she gave up the point. She circulated the story of her birth over the whole neighbourhood so that she could no longer enjoy the pleasure of society, without hearing the whispers, and observing the malicious and curious glances of those, who having formerly envied her superiority, now rejoiced at her humiliation.

Mortified abroad, wretched at home, where she was exposed to the cruellest insults, the continual and impertinent sollicitations of Mr. O'Carrol, and deprived by degrees of every little indulgence she had always been accustomed to; her mind wholly dejected, and her constitution nearly worn out by constant anxiety; she at length formed a plan of leaving Wood-Park, and gaining some situation where she might remain till the return of Lady Eustace, who she doubted not would protect her till some eligible scheme could be fixed on for her future support. This Lady was totally unacquainted with her present misery, she had written only just before her visit to Castlewood, and she wished not to make known to her the distress she now laboured under, lest it should appear like an intention of throwing herself wholly on her for subsistence: against this her spirit revolted, and she determined not to write till she had gained some asylum.

Had Lady Eustace been only in England, her first application would have been made to her, but she was then at Bengal; and long before any answer could arrive, Honoria hoped to be far from that spot, which loved and honoured as it once was, had now been the scene of too much misery, not to be regarded with more horror than affection.

Mr. Cleveland still visited them, though not so frequently as before. The report of Honoria's birth, which Mr. Fortescue himself confirmed, and the evident dejection of her mind, which he plainly saw arose from the insolence of Mrs. Fortescue, encouraged him once more to make her an offer of his hand, for his regard was too sincere to be lessened by her misfortunes; indeed the calm resolution with which she bore them, rather heightened his opinion of her mind and principles, while it raised a hope that she might listen more favourably to his proposals. These were made in terms so delicate, that though she again absolutely rejected them, she was pleased with the idea that there was still some generosity left in the world, and that the cruel discovery had not robbed her of all her friends.

Her new scheme was still thought upon, though as yet she had not concerted any methods to bring it to effect: she falsely imagined Mrs. Fortescue would oppose it, and therefore endeavoured to think on some way of going to England, without exciting any suspicion in the family. The servants had been all changed so often since a new mistress had governed them, that to depend on them was impossible. At last it occurred to her, that the woman who had nursed her, and who had married the gardener, was the properest person to apply to; she at least could assist her to escape, but where to go, when she had left the Park, she knew not, nor had she a friend to direct her. The only person whose advice she could have asked was Mr. Cleveland, and this was so improper, for various reasons, that she could not bring herself to think of it.

Confused and bewildered with the uncertainty of her schemes, she could fix on nothing but to go the next morning to Mrs. Connor, and consult her. This good woman doated on our heroine, and it was a long time before she would believe that she was not Mr. Fortescue's niece, insisting the story was all a lie, invented by that wicked *creature*, the squire's new madam; but when it was confirmed by her own lips, she burst into tears, to think that her sweet child, as she always called her, should belong to nobody, when so many people, who had no children at all, would be glad to have her one of them. Honoria's present visit and relation filled this honest creature with the greatest affliction. The Irish women are remarkable for their attachment to the children they have suckled, and Mrs. Connor proved this, by swearing she would rather swim across the channel with Honoria on her back, than that she should stay another week under the roof with that wicked wretch, who she was sure must have bewitch'd her master, who was quite another sort of man when her old mistress was alive. She concluded this harangue by promising to see Honoria the next morning, and would then acquaint her with the result of the consultation she meant to hold with her husband, who would be equally ready with herself to assist and comfort her.

A little consoled with this promise, Honoria was preparing to return, when her nurse begged she would go into her garden, and see a pair of ring-doves, which her master had lately sent in addition to those he had before. The place where they were kept had formerly been built to resemble a little temple, as it terminated a view from one of the windows of the house, and a little rivulet ran by it.

Here, after looking at the doves, she sat down wholly lost in the reflections it inspired. In the happy years of her childhood, she had often, when visiting her nurse, played with Henrietta on this very spot; there was something in the recollection that excited in her bosom a momentary sensation of delight, that however soon gave way to the painful ideas raised by the sight of the library window, which though at a distance, was exactly opposite. It was there so many hours had been spent in those halcyon days, that were now past for ever, in the society of her maternal friend, her kind companion, and her beloved Effingham. That room was now quite forsaken; Mr. Fortescue was grown too inanimate to attend to literary pursuits, his lady read nothing but magazines and newspapers, and Honoria scarcely ever entered it of late; her mind had been too much

disturbed, and she would not add to her uneasiness, by voluntarily reviving the sad memory of the “days that were gone.” The shutter was partly open, the hinge of one half broken, and it hung as if falling to the ground, and discovered not only two panes of glass that were shattered by its fall, but the white curtain which had been fringed by Mrs. Fortescue’s own hands; the festoon on one side was unfastened, and it drooped as if in sympathy with her own heart. She fixed her eyes on this melancholy object, ’till the tears which rose in them hid it from her; but seeing the pain it gave her good nurse to witness her sorrow, she determined to conquer it, and for that purpose turned her thoughts as well as her eyes to the scene more immediately before her: they wandered a few minutes, but at last were attracted by eight lines written on the stucco in a well-known hand, and every sentiment of pleasure revived in her breast, as she read,

*Gentle zephyr, as you fly,
If you kiss my fair one’s ear;
Whisper soft that you’re a sigh,
But from whose breast she must not hear.
Limpid stream, if e’er my love
Near thy gurgling runnel rove;
Murmur, that from tears you rise,
But tell her not from whose red eyes.*

In a tone of voice very different from that in which she last addressed her, she asked the good woman, who had been writing on the walls? she replied, “What to be sure, Miss, you do not know that the Captain used to come here, and sit for hours together, reading his book, and doing nothing at all; and arrah! now I think of it, I have a book of his here now, that is up stairs in my box, that was never out of his pocket, and I found it one day on the seat, and could not tell how to give it him, because I heard he had been gone a couple of weeks; so I thought no more of it ’till now.” Honoria begged to see it; it was a volume of translations from different Italian authors, from which the little elegant sonnet above mentioned was taken. Mrs. Connor desired she would keep it, as it was of no use to her or her husband. This was a request she very readily complied with, and giving her a handsome present in return, walked to the house in a much serener state of mind than when she quitted it; fully convinced of the truth of the assertion, that, “Some portion of the complacency and delight we receive, from the presence of those we love and admire, is annexed to their idea, or to our thoughts concerning them when they are absent.”

But in the course of the day every pleasing reflection was dissipated, by a speech of Mrs. Fortescue’s; it threw out a hint of all others the most terrifying to her, that if she was not more condescending to her brother, he would take some method to secure her person, and enforce her obedience to him. This was intended to alarm her, and drive her to quit the house; a circumstance she had long wished for; and it lost not the effect. It is so common in Ireland for young women to be carried away by violence, that it is no proof of a romantic disposition in our heroine, that she apprehended some scheme of this kind,

and resolved if possible to avoid it by an immediate flight, which she was now more than ever bent upon.

The following day before breakfast, Mrs. Connor arrived, and being admitted to her apartment, informed her, that her husband had contrived better than she expected; that if she could get out of the house when the family were at rest, he would wait with a post-chaise at the Park-gate, and attend her himself to a village about ten miles from Dublin, where a cousin of her's would receive and conceal her, till the search that would probably be made for her was over. That from thence she might go very safely to Dublin, and there embark for England. Now this was all she could do; but Paddy had a sister who married some years ago a butler in a gentleman's family that now resided in London, and this woman was settled as a clear-starcher, and lived both comfortably and creditably. "Now Miss, if you please, (continued she) Paddy will write to her to receive you, and though you do not chuse to be known, yet I suppose you would not like to be called by no name at all, so pray tell me who you intend to be?" Honoria smiled at this question, and the manner in which it was made, though she was sensibly hurt at the idea of entering the world under such patronage; but reflecting that she could not possibly escape by any other means, nor apply for a recommendation to any other person, she endeavoured to reconcile herself to her fate, and calmly desired to be mentioned as a Miss Wentworth, a young woman reduced from better prospects, who was under the necessity of leaving Ireland, and wished through her to be recommended to some genteel family as an upper servant.

Perhaps my readers will be surprised that, qualified as she was for any station, she did not rather wish to be a governess, or companion to an elderly lady; this was indeed the height of her ambition, but she was too well convinced a clear-starcher could never introduce her to any situation of that kind; and she could not sufficiently conquer her feelings to apply to any person who had known her in better days. In England she was quite a stranger, and from her change of name hoped to continue undiscovered, till the return of her friend should enable her to fix on some better plan. But she had another, a secret, a stronger motive; if her acquaintance would, which she was by no means certain of, interest themselves for her, and Captain Effingham should revisit Ireland, how could she bear, humiliated and mortified as she was, ever to see him; and still less how could she support his neglect or indifference; but in an inferior station, in a place where she was unknown, their meeting was all but impossible. Fortified by this idea, and the hope that he would perhaps regret her absence, she determined to meet with resignation whatever trials awaited her. It was therefore soon settled, that the next night but one, at twelve o'clock, the gardener should come with the chaise, and steal himself softly to her window to receive her cloaths, which were to be tied up in small bundles. The box which contained the proofs of her birth, the woman was then to take with her, and promised to see it safely deposited in the seat; she then took leave, and got safely out unobserved.

Honoria spent that day and the following in putting every thing in the properest manner, to have the least trouble at her departure. At dinner she was surprised by a letter which the servant told her came from Mr. Cleveland, and at the same time brought a card to Mr. Fortescue, expressing a grateful sense of his kindness, and his grief that it was not

in his power to return personal thanks, being obliged to leave the country on an affair of consequence. The letter to our heroine, contained only a tender farewell, an assurance that however hopeless, his affection for her would only die with him, and the most earnest wishes for her health and happiness; both which, he added, he plainly saw were injured by Mr. Fortescue's injudicious connection. The conclusion of this, by making it impossible to shew it, distressed her extremely; she justly feared it would be supposed they went off together, yet now to alter her plan was impossible; and she resolved no more to give way to reflections, that not only harrassed and tormented, but rendered her wholly incapable of the exertions that were become necessary even to her support.

She sat till after her usual time of retiring, not knowing how to leave Mr. Fortescue, who she still loved and revered, while she pitied the weakness that suffered him to be subservient to such a woman. The tears gushed from her eyes when she took the candle, and in a voice half unintelligible from her emotions, she wished her benefactor a good night, and hastily shut the door, lest their violence should excite a suspicion of the cause.

The house was all silent before twelve; and a few minutes after the clock struck, she heard the gardener cough; this was the expected signal; she opened the sash very softly, and threw out the different bundles; these he soon conveyed to the chaise, whilst she went quietly down stairs, and opening the window of the breakfast parlour, left that house, once her asylum, but now her prison, with too much agitation from the fear of a discovery, to feel that painful regret, that would otherwise have accompanied her departure. Almost breathless with terror, she flew to the chaise, at the door of which she found her good old friend, who impatiently expected her arrival; she took a most tender leave of Honoria, whose thanks for her kind assistance she could scarcely hear for the violence of her sobs. Her husband got up behind the carriage, which immediately drove off. The first stage was fifteen miles: they then discharged this chaise, and took another; by this means avoiding all possibility of being overtaken, as they then left the high road to Dublin, and struck across the country to the village where she was to remain a few days.

Her first sensations were those of gratitude for her escape; but as her fears of a pursuit gradually subsided, she again became a prey to the most melancholy reflections, till she stopped at a miserable hut, which she could not imagine, from its first appearance, was that destined for her reception; the gardener however assured her it was, and whilst they were waiting for the woman to get up and let them in, he indulged the pride of his heart, by telling her, how different it was where his sister lived; that her's was a nice house with sash-windows, and in a charming street where there were hardly any shops; "indeed," added he, "'tis no more like this, than a potatoe is like a horse-bean." I hope it is not, thought she as she entered, and beheld the bare walls and earthen floor of her new apartment. She was received with great respect, and the best the cottage afforded was immediately set before her, but her heart was too full to suffer her to eat. A very decent bed was prepared, and she lay down as soon as her attendant was gone, who promised her his wife should let her know how every thing went on at Wood-Park.

Here she spent all her time in packing her cloaths and valuables in the best and safest manner for so long a journey. The second evening a letter arrived from Mrs. Connor, informing her, "that she might set out when she pleased, without fear of pursuit, for she believed madam was too glad she was gone, to think of fetching her back again; that her old master, indeed, took on sadly, and wanted himself to go and look for her, but that she would not let him, and said, better be rid of such a vile, ungrateful wretch, who she did not doubt was gone off with that wicked young rake, Cleveland." "When I heard this," added the good woman, "I was for going up and telling her before master's face that you had no company at all but yourself, and that if it had not been for her doings, you would not have left all your *frinds* and relations in Ireland, when you have not any in the world: but Paddy said I should only make bad worse, and they would find out we were trusted with the secret, that you would not tell any body of. So my sweet crature, good bye: I hope you will have a safe journey to England, and meet with no storms nor robbers to overturn and frighten you; and I hope you will never meet a worse frind than your loving nurse,

MARGERY CONNOR."

This letter determined our heroine to write a short billet to Mr. Fortescue, and leave it for the post at Dublin; requesting him not to impute her quitting him to a wrong cause, though the real one she dared not reveal; but that she had been so very unhappy for some time past, it inspired her with a resolution to endeavour to support herself. For every act of kindness and attention, she begged he would accept her most sincere and grateful thanks; and wished it might ever be in her power to return any part of the numerous obligations she owed him; and in addition to these, intreated he would take the trouble of enquiring where Mr. Cleveland was, as that would convince him, however unfortunately it happened they should leave the country the same day, that he had no share in her escape.

And now, having satisfied her landlady for her trouble, she sent for a post-chaise, and arrived that night in Dublin; but dreading lest she should meet any old acquaintance, as there was fortunately a packet to sail the next day, she went on board early in the morning; and carefully observing the countenances of her fellow-passengers, rejoiced to find there were not among them any she had ever seen before.

CHAP. VI.

OUR heroine was just turned of nineteen, and her person had acquired all the dignity of woman, without losing any of the bloom of extreme youth. At this time, indeed, the anxiety she had so long suffered had impaired the colour which usually glowed in her cheeks; but while it scarcely lessened her beauty, it gave an additional interest to her countenance. The universal observation she attracted, both confused and disgusted her, and the assiduities of a young officer, who was smart and handsome enough to flatter the vanity of most women to whom he chose to pay any attention, only pained and distressed her; she was happy therefore when the packet arrived at Parkgate. She desired to be informed from what inn the London coach set off, and to that she ordered her baggage.

The stage was to leave Parkgate the next morning: two of her fellow-passengers, the officer, and a young woman, who appeared very little above a common servant, had also taken places; and when she entered the coach, she found the others were filled by an old gentleman and a boy about ten years old, and that they were to stop at the end of five miles, to take up another lady.

It was not day-light when they set off, but when they could examine the countenances of each other, Honoria was particularly struck with that of the elderly gentleman; it bore the traces of a military life, and expressed equal sense, good-humour, and humanity. He had been conversing with the young officer on the occurrences of the last war; this, and the cockade in his hat, convinced her the idea she had formed was not an erroneous one. She learned from himself that he went to Parkgate to meet an only son, who had been with his regiment in the North of England, and was now just embarked for Ireland; that his wife and family were all gone with him, but the eldest boy, whose education he intended to take care of himself, as marching from place to place prevented all learning. The lad seemed very well pleased at the thoughts of going to London, and it was easy to see the grandfather was not a little delighted at the readiness with which he accompanied him.

Major Southmore, for that was his name, was surprized at the extreme beauty of our heroine; he at first supposed either the officer was her brother, or the woman her attendant; but when he found they were not only unconnected, but even unknown to each other, he was at a loss to guess who or what she was. The singularity of a woman so young, beautiful and elegant, being in a common stage, unprotected, unattended, were circumstances he could not reconcile; he heard she was going to London; and there was an air not only of dignity, but fashion about her, that ill suited her present situation. But unfavourable as were his first impressions, they soon vanished: the coldness with which she answered the gallant speeches of the young lieutenant; the modest pensiveness of her manner, that seemed rather to retire from, than court public notice, severely reproved him for forming so hasty a judgment. Yet his curiosity increased with his good opinion, but it arose from no impertinent motive; the interesting dejection of her countenance convinced him she was unhappy, and that conviction rendered him anxious if possible to assist her;

for benevolence was his most striking characteristic, and he flattered himself some opportunity would offer before the end of her journey, to permit him to offer his services.

These contemplations were interrupted by the entrance of the other lady, as the coachman called her, who immediately with a loud and shrill voice, addressed the other female with, "La! Miss Jones, why I should never have thought of finding you here; what, are you going to London? when did you leave Ireland? and who do you live with now?" Miss Jones, a little disconcerted at the discovery of her situation, which she intended to be a secret, replied somewhat peevishly, that her lady was coming to England, and that she set out before to stay a fortnight with a brother, who lived about thirty miles from London on that road. After a few more questions, Miss Wilson, for by that name the other young lady was called, enquired how her sister was, and the answer to this introduced a history, which amused all the company but our heroine; she was however so deeply interested in it, that I shall give it in the very words used by the voluble relater.

"Why my sister," said she, "came up to Dublin with her lady the day before I sailed, and there has been such a piece of work in their neighbourhood, that you never heard the like. You must know, that some time ago, a gentleman who had lost his wife, courted a young lady who had been visiting at their house, and one of the best-natured women in the world, and so he married her; and there his niece, who lived with him, took it into her head, forsooth, to be very angry, and gave herself violent airs, because she used to sit at the head of the table, and had her uncle, as it were, under her thumb: when lo! and behold after all, it came out she was not his niece, but his first wife picked her up in a ditch, tied at the back of a beggar, who was found froze to death; and till this old lady died, she never knew who she was, and thought she should have a great fortune; but her uncle, as she called him, was very kind to her, and did not turn her out of doors, as to be sure she might very well have expected; for you know, ladies and gentlemen, (turning to the other passengers) she had no right to his fortune. Well, so she behaved so pert and so insolent after his marriage, that nothing was never like it; and she wanted to draw Mrs. Fortescue's brother in to marry her, but she could not succeed, for Mrs. Fortescue took care of that, though she treated her like her own child. But this would not do for Miss; so egad a few days ago, she got out of a two pair of stairs window by a rope-ladder, and ran off with a sad wild young man, who has not got never a penny of fortune; so to be sure when he is tired of her, as nobody, you know, will take her, she must go upon the town."

Every body was attending too much to this story, to observe the effect it had upon Honoria, who would certainly have fainted, had she not been fortunately next to the window, and the air being strong and cool, with the assistance of some hartshorn that she had in her pocket, she revived before the comments this recital had excited were over. "Was she handsome?" asked the lieutenant. "I never saw her myself," she replied, "but my sister says there used to be a great fuss made about her by some people," though, for her part, she could not see a bit of beauty she had. The Major smiled, and begged to know her name, if it was not a secret. "Oh, Sir, not at all, returned Miss Jones, she was called Sommerville, but nobody can tell what name she had a right to, you know." "True," answered he; then after a pause, he said, "faulty as she appears, I cannot help pitying her.

Poor girl, what must she have suffered, when it was first discovered to her what she was! do you not agree with me, madam?" In a voice scarcely articulate, Honoria replied, "Yes, entirely, Sir." "Indeed, continued he, I think her protectors were wrong to breed her up in style, when they must be so sensible she could never support it: what a pity it was they did not put her out apprentice, or send her to service early in life!" As he again addressed himself to our heroine, wishing to draw her into conversation, she was obliged to reply a second time; and said, "To be sure it would have been much better." However painful this exertion was, and however shocked at a report which she doubted not was a general one, she was too well pleased with his defending in some measure a character quite unknown to him, and which could only proceed from a natural benevolence of disposition, not to prove her gratitude by a particular attention during the remainder of the journey. She endeavoured to amuse the boy, who grew fatigued and sleepy, and this, added to the sense and knowledge she could not avoid displaying in the course of conversation, so enchanted the Major, that he wished most earnestly to cultivate her acquaintance.

The ladies, Wilson and Jones, amused each other with anecdotes of the several families they had lived with: the lieutenant alternately yawned, and ogled our heroine, who was too agreeably entertained by the polite and intelligent conversation of Major Southmore, to attend to any of the party. But as their journey grew nearer a conclusion, her dejection evidently increased. The officer stopped at a town, where part of his regiment was recruiting. One of the two females was met by her brother on the road, who took her with him in a one horse chair; the other found her father waiting for her at the inn; and the joy they both expressed at meeting their relations, made Honoria more sensible of the sad contrast of her own situation. All but her had a home, were blessed with connections, with friends. She sighed deeply at the melancholy reflections which arose in her mind; and the old gentleman, who, excepting the boy, was now her only companion, was convinced she had some heavy, but hidden calamity that preyed on her spirits. He saw her encreasing distress, though he knew not the cause; and judging this was a proper time to offer his assistance, he resolved to lose not a moment, but immediately begin a conversation which might introduce what he had to say, lest the entrance of another passenger should prevent him.

After a few occasional remarks on the places through which they had passed, he asked if she had ever been in London? "No, sir." "Your friends, I suppose, madam, will meet you at the inn?" She believed not. "Permit me then, madam, to offer my servant to see you safe to your lodgings, and take care of your baggage, which, as you are a stranger in London, and must of course be ignorant of its ways, you may be in some danger of losing." She bowed and thanked him; the tears stood in her eyes, and while she strove to conceal them, he again addressed her: "Do not, young lady, think me impertinent or curious, if I say I cannot but see you are in some affliction, and I wish to serve you. Be not offended, if I form a wrong judgment of your situation, nor suppose I am actuated by any other motive than that of restoring the peace, I fear, you have lost." She listened to him in silent and grateful astonishment, and he went on: "I have seen much of the world, and must confess the surprise I felt at our first setting out, and still feel, from observing a young lady of your appearance alone in a vehicle of this kind, going to a city like London,

where, pardon me, I think you can have no friends, at least, who expect your arrival; for who would suffer such youth, beauty, and inexperience, to find her way through the intricacies of that great city, without a protector or even a guide? Now if, as I cannot help supposing from these circumstances, and from your dress and figure, you have eloped from your friends, and are at present without an asylum; and if, as I gather from your dejection, you repent of this rash step, and are willing to return to them, let me intreat you to collect fortitude enough to follow this inclination; and though, as I am a single man, I cannot without impropriety offer you a shelter in my house, yet if you will permit me to write to your friends, and inform them of your situation, and that you will joyfully once more put yourself under the protection you so inconsiderately left, I have no doubt but they will gladly receive you; and in the mean time I will recommend you to the care of a person, whose rank in life will prevent all suspicions of her honor, and of whose tenderness you may be assured.”

Honoria, who had silently wept during the whole of this speech, as soon as she could recover from the agitation it caused, gratefully thanked him for taking so kind an interest in her distress; and she probably would have made him acquainted with her sad story, could she have done it without letting him know she was the same young person whom he had already heard spoken of in so disgraceful a manner; and as it is natural in relating our own history, to suppress those events which appear to our disadvantage, she feared all she could say in her own favour would be counteracted by the opinion he must already have formed. Discouraged by this idea, she only replied, “that he was in some measure mistaken in his conjecture; that she had left what had hitherto been her home, but that to return to it was impossible, for reasons, which however strong, it was not in her power to explain. That probably she had but one friend in the world, and that friend was at too great a distance to assist her at present, though she had no doubt of her favour and protection, whenever she was acquainted with her distress. That she was recommended to a person in London, who though in an humble station, was of a respectable character, by whose means she hoped to obtain a creditable livelihood, till the lady she mentioned should arrive in England. She entreated he would form no unfavorable opinion of her reserve, owned her appearance might justify his suspicions;” but to convince him, as far as was in her power of the truth of her assertions, she gave him the direction she had from the gardener. He took it, and with great surprize, read “Mrs. Middleton, Clear-starcher, No.—, Poland street.”—But the air of candour and innocence with which she spoke, impressed so strongly on his mind a conviction of her worth, that he gave an immediate credit to all she had uttered, and though he silently lamented her fate, determined no more to distress her by useless enquiries and fruitless offers. She however thankfully accepted that of his servant, as she confessed herself entirely unacquainted with the ways of the town, which they were now within a few miles of.

A silence of many minutes followed this conversation, when a general one succeeded, till the coach arrived in London. Here he again renewed it, by telling her, as they were soon to part, he could not resist once more speaking on the subject, he had quitted from the idea it gave her pain; but that if in future, at any time, he could serve her,

either by advice or any other means, he begged she would apply to him, when he hoped to convince her, the esteem she had excited in him was not professional, but real; and giving her his address on a card, requested to know her name, if that was not a secret she might be unwilling to disclose. She evaded a direct answer to this question, by telling him an enquiry at Mrs. Middleton's for Miss Wentworth, would reach her. She added, she could have no doubt of his honor, after the paternal and excellent advice he had already given her, which she should most readily have followed, had his suspicions been true; and that she would gladly avail herself of his generous offer, by an application to him, if reduced to any unexpected distress. The stage then stopped in Oxford-street, and Major Southmore ordered his servant to call a hackney coach, into which handing our heroine, he took his leave, with many sincere good wishes for her health and welfare; and the child, with an affectionate earnestness, begged she would come to his grand-papa's house, as he was sure he would be very glad to see her.

CHAP. VII.

IN a few minutes the coach stopped at the door of a very shabby-looking house, which did not at all answer the description given by Mr. Connor, excepting that it was sashed. Here our heroine's enquiry for Mrs. Middleton brought a dirty girl down stairs, who said she was not at home, but asked her name. On her replying "Wentworth," the girl desired her to walk in, for her mistress expected her. After waiting in the passage, 'till the coachman and Major Southmore's servant had brought her trunks into the house, she followed her up two pair of stairs into the front room, where there was a fire indeed, but so surrounded with muslins and gauzes, which were hanging to dry, that she received very little benefit from it. Here she sat near an hour, when the arrival of Mrs. Middleton changed her situation for the better. She first scolded the maid for not shewing the lady into her parlour, for so she called a back-apartment on the same floor, ordered a fire to be made there directly, and then apologized for the litter she was in, but said, in her way of business it was impossible to be otherwise.

Mrs. Middleton was a woman of good principles, but a cold heart; she usually acted right, from a conviction it was proper to do so, but she had not an atom of feeling. She received our heroine with great respect and civility, but seemed totally unconcerned at the unhappiness which was so visible in her countenance. Indeed every thing here was so different from what she had been accustomed to, that it was not probable her dejection should soon subside. At this time the soothing of an affectionate heart, though from one so much her inferior, would have greatly contributed to alleviate her affliction, and expecting to find this in Mrs. Middleton, she was the more disappointed. She retired early, but not to rest; the small garret which was her bed-chamber, was so striking a contrast to the spacious and elegant apartments at Wood-Park, that every melancholy idea which could accompany the recollection of the happy hours those apartments once witnessed, pressed too forcibly on her mind to be overpowered by sleep. But had her heart been at ease, the various noises in the streets would have kept her awake; she rose therefore in the morning unrefreshed and ill.

Mr. Middleton, who was very curious to see their new lodger, came soon after breakfast: he was the very reverse of his wife; in Mr. Burnaby's hall he was regarded as a wit, and the pert familiarity of his manner disgusted our heroine even more than Mrs. Middleton's frigidity. He gave them an invitation in the name of the housekeeper and his lady's woman, to drink tea with them that afternoon: this Honoria would have declined immediately, had not Mrs. Middleton urged the propriety of her going, as she hoped through their means to recommend her to a service of the kind she wished for; and in this light it was a fortunate visit. Mrs. Smith said her lady had the day before asked her if she knew any young woman who was properly qualified to wait on Miss Mortimer, whose servant had left her from illness, and she was in distress for one to supply her place; and added, that if Miss Wentworth approved of it, she would mention her, or go with her to Lady Mortimer's, in Upper Brook-street, the next day. Honoria gladly accepted the proposal, as she was anxious to leave her landlady, whose character, though estimable,

was far from pleasing. In the morning, according to appointment, Mrs. Smyth attended her to Miss Mortimer's, who was so well pleased with her appearance and manner, that she instantly engaged her to come the following evening.

Perhaps in the whole circle of the fashionable world there were few families so amiable throughout as the Mortimers. Lady Mortimer was an excellent woman, and had bred up her children with a degree of propriety, that insured a continuation of those estimable qualities which made them, even in childhood, the wonders of their acquaintance. Sir Charles was fashionable without vice, and Caroline gay without folly; two very rare instances in this licentious and frivolous age.

Honorina was so much struck by the mildness and good-humour of Miss Mortimer's first address to her, that she entered on her new employment without those poignant and exquisite feelings of distress and mortification she expected, and her behaviour was ever the same. Miss Mortimer had a quick discernment, and soon discovered Honorina had not been educated for the station she now filled, and that her misfortunes had been of no common kind. Convinced of this, though she endeavoured not to penetrate into a secret, that she saw she was anxious to conceal, yet by every method in her power she lightened the burden of dependance.

Honorina was for three months as happy as in her situation she could be; excepting at meals she was constantly in her lady's apartment, and at her leisure hours had free access to a large and well-chosen library. One unpleasant circumstance, indeed, arose from the distinction with which she was treated; it excited the jealousy of the other servants, particularly Mrs. Wilkins, Lady Mortimer's woman; and the dislike she at first conceived from envy of her beauty and superior talents, at last, from her constant refusals to join in their parties either at home or abroad, grew into a settled hatred. But as Honorina always behaved with civility, and, except in this point, even studied to oblige them, she thought their resentment ill-judged, and determined in future, since it was impossible to please, to treat them with equal indifference.

She now wrote to Lady Eustace, acquainting her with all that had passed since she left Ireland; and assuring her, that however painful the thoughts of servitude had been, she had now, from the extreme kindness she experienced from Miss Mortimer, almost regained her usual serenity of mind. That she was supported by the hope of her return to England, and, 'till that event, should remain in her present situation; and therefore begged Lady Eustace not to be uneasy on her account.

It is a maxim that cannot be too early inculcated, that we must not place too great a dependance on the comforts of this life; and of the truth of this our heroine was again convinced the day after she had sent her letter. She was sitting at work with Miss Mortimer in her dressing-room when Sir Charles came up stairs, and entering with a smile on his countenance, said, "Mrs. Kitty, I beg you will exert your best endeavours to make my sister look as killing as possible to-day, for an old admirer and favourite of her's is just arrived in town, and has promised to dine with us." "Dear Sir Charles, tell me who

you mean?" "Why there are two officers, Caroline; one of them, indeed, is a stranger, but the other, your friend, is high in the army, and heir to a noble fortune." "Nay then, brother, I shall never guess, for I know but one red coat in the world who is agreeable, and I am sure he is too poor to be the person you mean." "Perhaps not, Miss Mortimer: what will you say, when I tell you his merit and valour have raised him to the rank of Colonel, and that the death of his cousin, who was thrown from his horse when hunting, has made him his uncle's only heir, whose illness, in consequence of his affliction, is the cause that has recalled him from America?" "Why, Charles, you cannot possibly mean Henry Effingham?" "Yes, Caroline, indeed I do," returned he; then wishing her a good morning, flew down stairs to meet, as he said, his two friends, whom he had promised to attend to the Park.

Miss Mortimer was too much engaged by the pleasing surprize her brother's intelligence had occasioned, to observe the effect it had on Honoria, who changed colour repeatedly, and endeavouring to suppress her tears, turned extremely sick, and at last fainted away. Miss Mortimer was greatly concerned at her illness, though she fortunately entertained no idea of the cause. After the usual applications she recovered, and, contrary to her lady's wish, persisted in her attendance, nor would accept of any assistance.

When the dinner bell rang she was left to her own meditations, which were more than usually afflicting. In all her distresses her first view had been to conceal herself from the possibility of Effingham's discovery, and she was now in a family where his intimacy was undoubted, and where she was in a situation the most humiliating. But at the same time that she anxiously hoped to escape his knowledge as Kitty Wentworth, she was ardently desirous of knowing whether he ever thought on that Honoria Sommerville, to whom he once offered such humble vows of eternal constancy. The wish of hearing his future intentions, which she supposed it probable she might, banished every idea of leaving Miss Mortimer, which had at first occurred to her on hearing of his arrival; and this she the rather fixed on, from the recollection that it would be easy to escape an interview, as she was constantly in her lady's room. A latent hope also arose in her heart, that he was now meditating a visit to Ireland, and cherishing the idea of the reception he would meet with from her; she then saw his despair at hearing her unfortunate fate; heard him disbelieve the tales invented by her enemies, and thus indulged the wildness of her fancy in a thousand visionary illusions: but too soon these all vanished, and she awoke at once to the painful reality. Miss Mortimer then appeared to her distracted imagination, with all the advantages she possessed of youth, beauty, rank and fortune, and evidently pleased with the renewal of the acquaintance she had formerly so much valued. Was it in man to retain his constancy, when an object so attractive endeavoured to engage him; and was it in woman not to use every art to attach such a heart as Effingham's? Thus she passed the remainder of the afternoon; in the evening she saw Miss Mortimer in high spirits, and charmed with the events of the day: she said nothing that could in any way satisfy Honoria's curiosity, but every smile was a dagger to her heart.

From this time she heard of his almost daily visits, and it began to be whispered in the family, that the Colonel and Miss Mortimer were to be married as soon as his uncle

was dead, whose declining health made it probable, that event would shortly take place. This alarmed our heroine so much, that she seriously thought of leaving Miss Mortimer; conscious she could never support even the approach of a ceremony, which would deprive her of every hope of happiness; and her presence would give her perjured lover the triumph of witnessing her afflicting humiliation. Thus was every fear verified; yet she would still sometimes hope all she had heard might not be true, and this was a little more probable from his absence; for she found he had quitted London with his uncle, who was ordered to Bristol Hot-wells; and she then determined to stay till the intelligence she so much dreaded was confirmed; but in less than a fortnight so many circumstances conspired to convince her of the truth of the report, that she could no longer doubt it.

One morning Sir Charles entering his sister's apartment, told her, Captain Fairfax was just come from Bristol, and would dine with them, and asked if she should be glad to see him? She coloured excessively, and said, any friend of Colonel Effingham's must ever be welcome to her. "Lord Bridgewater," continued Sir Charles, "is just at last," but here is a letter which will inform you of every thing, and satisfy you in every point, if woman is to be satisfied." "Where is it?" cried she eagerly; "how can you trifle so with my impatience?" Honoria sat scarcely breathing lest she should lose a word that might be of such importance to her peace; but she could draw no comfort from any part of the conversation. Miss Mortimer took the letter with a smile, and began reading it, now and then pronouncing a word or a sentence aloud. Of these Honoria distinctly heard, "unconscious beauty, unalterable love;" then she read on a long time in silence, but just at the end again repeated, "An attachment like mine, founded on esteem, and begun in friendship, absence cannot lessen, nor time destroy. I shall soon be with you; Lord Bridgewater cannot exist many hours, yet deeply as I shall regret his loss, I have one consolation which sometimes darts upon my mind, and enlivens the gloom around me. It is, that I shall have it in my power to return to the spot which contains almost all that is dear to your Henry Effingham." She then gave the letter to her brother, who immediately left the room, and she soon followed.

The wretched Honoria was now fatally confirmed in all her suspicions; and the certainty of the Colonel's attachment to her lady, was, she thought, indisputable. Determined to leave her present situation, the next time she saw Miss Mortimer she endeavoured to hint it to her; but her resolution was disarmed by her kind and anxious enquiries after her health; it was indeed every day visibly declining; she had lost in great measure her appetite and rest, and the anxiety which preyed on her mind, appeared too plainly on her countenance.

A fortnight thus passed insensibly away, without her having the courage to address Miss Mortimer on the subject of leaving her; when one morning as she was sitting alone in the dressing-room, her attention was suddenly called from her work by a noise in the street; she turned her head to the window, but the sight of two men fighting disgusted her, and she was going to retire; when an object in a moment not only attracted her eyes, but every faculty was lost in astonishment and despair while she gazed on it. It was really Colonel Effingham, who in crossing the street was stopped by the croud which

had gathered round the combatants. He was very little altered since the time he quitted Ireland, except that his countenance had less of the Adonis, and more of the hero in it; as the bloom on his cheeks was lost in the glow the heat of the climate had spread over his face. But though his deportment had acquired that easy dignity, which distinguishes a man of real fashion, it had not deprived him of the good-humoured vivacity which played over his "features when his heart was at ease." But at this time, the fixed melancholy that apparently hung on him, struck Honoria, who thought it ill suited to a favoured and happy lover. For a few minutes she endeavoured to guess the cause, and was more than half inclined to hope his thoughts might at that moment relate to herself; but a glance at his mourning, which had before escaped her notice, destroyed the pleasing illusion by informing her of the truth. Miss Mortimer stood at the drawing-room window; he looked up at her with an animated smile, and the instant he was at liberty, flew to the door, where he immediately gained admittance.

This was too much for the poor Honoria; she burst into a flood of tears, and leaning her head on the table, gave way to the violence of her emotions. "Is it (cried she, in an agony) that Effingham, who poured out such humble vows to the now forgotten and despised Honoria? Why did he seek to gain my affection by a declaration of his love, so unexpected, so almost unwished-for? It was to him the amusement of a moment to destroy my peace for ever. Why will not my pride support me, and teach me to forget the perjured wretch, who is unworthy of my regard? Yes, (continued she, her eyes still streaming) I will forget, and, if possible, despise him." Yet in spite of all her boasted firmness, her tears flowed without intermission till she was summoned to dinner. To conceal the redness of her eyes, she hastily drew her cap over her face, and went down stairs; her mind still so much occupied with the past scene, that when she opened the door, and saw a gentleman in black, sitting with his back towards her, scarcely sensible where she was, at the first view the wildness of her ideas suggested it was really the Colonel, and possessed with this imagination, she involuntarily screamed, which surprizing the whole party, the gentleman gallantly flew to her, and by enquiring what was the matter, convinced her at once of the folly of her supposition. He was in fact a stranger; she was distressed at his politeness, and saying she had only turned her foot stepping into the room, directly sat down to table, where his officious attention displeased her, as much as it mortified Mrs. Wilkins, who till her appearance had been the object of his devoirs. But how was her confusion and displeasure increased, when she found from the conversation, that he was in reality Colonel Effingham's attendant, and was, as well as his master, in mourning for Lord Bridgewater? From the instant she made this discovery, she could scarcely sit at table, and the freedom of his manners gave her additional disgust. After a thousand gallant speeches, which she answered with great coolness, he began speaking of his master's intended marriage with her lady; then taking her hand, which she withdrew with more haughtiness than was consistent with her present situation, he added, "Suppose, my dear madam, we were to have a double match in the family, and that you and I were to follow the example of the Colonel and Miss Mortimer?" She was unable to answer for some moments from astonishment, which mistaking for confusion, he again pressed her hand, with an air of satisfied importance.

The pride and resentment that swelled in her heart, now rose to her lips; but was immediately suppressed, though not subdued, by the recollection that an unguarded expression might expose her to suspicions that it was now more than ever necessary for her to avoid. She therefore made no reply, but with very visible displeasure, hastily arose and quitted the room, but not without hearing a spiteful observation of Mrs. Wilkins's, who was not only angry at the attention he paid her, but piqued at her indifference to an object she had thought so highly of, and taken such pains to attach to herself. "What, (cried she, as Honoria left the table) Madam is offended I suppose; I warrant she thinks herself meat for your Master, Mr. Peters." Mr. Peters was greatly hurt: he had in common with the rest of his tribe, long entertained an idea that his person and abilities were irresistible, and was mortified at a proof that he had set too high a value on himself. He therefore determined in his turn to pique her, as he vainly imagined a particular attention to Mrs. Wilkins would do, but this he had no opportunity of putting into execution.

The unintentional truth of her speech had the effect on Honoria that might be supposed: she retired to her own room, where the various and unfortunate events of the day so wholly overpowered her, that she could no longer support the conflict in her soul. A violent sick head-ach succeeded; and equally pained in body and mind, she passed the night in a situation, that with all her afflictions she had never before experienced.

When the next morning she waited on Miss Mortimer, her countenance unusually pale and dejected, surprised and alarmed her; and with a tender solicitude she asked how long she had been so ill, and begged her to have some advice, offering to send for the physician who attended the family. Honoria gratefully thanked her, but declined it, saying she believed nothing would restore her but the country air, which from having always been accustomed to, she thought essential to her health. Miss Mortimer then, after expressing her regret at parting with her, enquired if she meant to return to her friends, or whether if an eligible situation offered in the country she would accept of it? "Certainly, madam," she replied, "it is my earnest desire. I have received too much attention from you not to wish for a similar situation, though I can scarcely expect to be equally fortunate. The sorrow I feel at leaving you is such, that nothing could induce me to go, but the absolute necessity of a step of this kind for the restoration of my health, and even the preservation of my life." The energy with which she spoke, astonished Miss Mortimer, who said after a pause, she fancied she knew of a place which would suit her; that she was going out, and would endeavour to learn more particulars, and that if it met with her approbation, she should not want her best assistance in gaining it. Honoria curtsied, but her heart was too full to suffer her to speak.

In the evening Miss Mortimer sent for her into the drawing-room, where she was alone, and making her sit down, addressed her with a tenderness, which in the present weak state of her health and spirits was particularly soothing. "Do not imagine, Kitty, from what I am going to say, that I wish to discover a secret, which you perhaps have reasons for concealing; but I am now, and indeed have long been convinced, you were not educated for, nor born to the station you now fill; and probably I should not be wrong if I guessed your illness partly proceeded from the difference of your present way of life, to

that you have hitherto been accustomed to. Wilkins too is jealous of your superior qualities, and if it were only on that respect, cannot be a pleasant companion, were even her manners better suited to your own; but she is a useful servant to my mother, who would not I believe willingly part with her. However sorry I must be to lose you, I am not so selfish as to wish you to stay at the expence of your happiness, for I have often observed the dejection which has hung on you, and flatter myself the means I have taken may in time remove it. Prepossessed with the idea I mentioned before, I have recommended you to a lady, not as a servant, but companion: the principal thing she wishes you to do, is to write for her; she is an authoress, and is too deeply engaged in philosophical researches, to pay that attention to her writing, which must be done when it is intended for the press. Your employment therefore will be to transcribe fairly what she means to publish, a task neither difficult nor laborious; and as she is really an amiable woman, I hope you will find it an eligible and pleasant situation.

Honorina expressed her grateful sense of Miss Mortimer's kindness, and gladly accepted the offer: how earnestly at the same time did she wish that she had no other sources of uneasiness, than those Miss Mortimer had mentioned! "I forgot (added Miss Mortimer) to tell you that Mrs. Campbell does not live in the country, but at the city of C——, though perhaps you will not make that an objection, as it is an airy and healthy situation, if it suits you in every other respect.

"I am, madam, (returned Honorina) too sensible of the infinite obligations I owe you, not to make every return in my power; and though I dare not acquaint you with all the particulars of my sad story, yet I will so far confess, you have guessed truly that I was not educated for the line of life you now see me in. But disappointed in my expectations of an easy, if not an affluent fortune, by a stroke of adversity more cruel than you, madam, can possibly imagine, I had no resource but servitude; and believe me, Miss Mortimer, my attachment to you is too strong for any trivial cause to separate us: and I would submit to the undeserved ill-treatment I have experienced from Mrs. Wilkins, to remain in your service, had I not reasons for leaving London, too powerful for even your goodness to counteract."

Miss Mortimer's curiosity was the more excited by this speech, but suppressing it, she told her, she would accompany her to Mrs. Campbell's the next morning; when that lady approving highly of her appearance, agreed to give her a handsome salary, and engaged her to go down with her to C—— the following week. Honorina was much pleased with Mrs. Campbell, but distressed how to dispose of herself in the interim, as she could not without the utmost pain stay in Brook-street. She therefore begged Miss Mortimer's leave to quit her the next day; her request was complied with, though with great regret; and she became once more a lodger of Mrs. Middleton's. But in the morning before she left Lady Mortimer's, a message arrived from Mrs. Campbell, desiring she would send her trunks, as she meant all their principal luggage should go that day, as they were to travel post in her chariot. Honorina was very well pleased with this scheme, as it saved her the trouble of a second removal. Her cloaths were all packed, and she sent off almost every thing but the box and its contents, which Mrs. Fortescue had given her, with

the proofs of her birth, from which she never parted, and of course took it with her to Mrs. Middleton's.

Miss Mortimer had requested to see her before she left town; a request she could not refuse, but dreaded to comply with, from the fear of meeting the Colonel; but recollecting his visits were seldom early, two days before that fixed on for her journey, she set out at ten o'clock in the morning. This was the first time she had been out of the house since she left Brook-street; and as she thought it more possible to pass unnoticed among the multitude in Oxford Road, than through Hanover Square, she chose the former. She had not however gone far, before she was alarmed by somebody's pulling her gown, but turning round, was immediately relieved by recollecting Charles Southmore, her little fellow-traveller from Parkgate. He said his grand-papa was just behind, and wished to see her. The Major soon overtook them, and expressed his happiness at again meeting her; enquired with a friendly solicitude after her health, and shook his head at her answer to that question. "Will you permit me (said he, as he walked up the street with her) to ask whether you have succeeded in the plan of life you formed?" "In some respects better than I expected, (she replied) but I am now going to leave London, as I hope the country air will re-establish my health:" she then gave him a short account of what had passed since her arrival, except her real reason for leaving Miss Mortimer, and learned to her great surprize and satisfaction, that Mrs. Campbell was related to him. He said she was a very good woman, and had but one fault, that was vanity; which was so common in authors, that one who was perfectly free from it would be indeed a *rara avis*: he bade her remember Gil Blas and the Archbishop of Grenada, and then took his leave with repeated offers of service: There was a frankness and attention in his manner, that pleased and flattered her: he seemed the only being in Europe, Miss Mortimer excepted, from whom the intended connection must inevitably separate her for ever, who took an interest in her fate, and to whom she could apply for advice or assistance. With a heart a little lightened by the reflection that she had met a friend where she had no reason to expect it, she proceeded to Brook-street, where she arrived safely in Miss Mortimer's dressing-room, without encountering the interview she so much dreaded. Circumstanced as she now was, nothing was to her of equal importance, to remaining undiscovered by Colonel Effingham. It gratified her pride, and soothed her feelings, to reflect that he thought her ignorant of his inconstancy, and was himself unconscious of her humiliation.

Miss Mortimer received her with great tenderness, and told her that if her new situation did not prove so agreeable, as however she hoped it would, she begged her to consider their house as an asylum at any time. "Perhaps, (added she, blushing) I may not myself be a great while longer a resident here, but my mother's esteem for you almost equals my own, and wherever I am, no alteration in my way of life can make any change in the sentiments of regard I shall ever retain for you, and of which, I hope, I shall have it in my power to convince you." This hint of Miss Mortimer's did not contribute to Honoria's ease, yet she thanked her with tolerable composure for every instance of attention, and with every expression of gratitude took her leave.

Returned to her dismal home at Mrs. Middleton's, she passed the remainder of the day in gloomy reflections on the various occurrences of her life. Her landlady was too busily employed in her occupation, to interrupt the train of ideas that succeeded each other in her mind, which was at last wholly engrossed by a thought, that suddenly struck her, of the impropriety of keeping a locket, the gift of a person, whose heart was already, and whose hand was so soon to be devoted to another. Whilst tormented with the uncertainty she was in, and unable to decide whether she had best return or keep it; the lateness of the hour obliged her to retire; the same idea still followed her, and prevented her from rest. The pleasure she had received from wearing it, had long been lost; yet she could not think of parting with it without exquisite pain.

Her mind still continued in this unsettled and agitated state, when every recollection was lost in apprehensions for her personal safety, by a violent smell of fire, and a thick smoke that suddenly penetrating into her room, almost suffocated her; and her fears were immediately confirmed by a violent knocking at the door of the house, and a cry of fire, which was succeeded by loud screams from almost every one of the inhabitants. On the first impression of terror she had sustained, she began dressing, but on opening her chamber door, the sight of the flames terrified her so much, she thought of nothing but flight; and wrapping a cloak round her, was at the bottom of the stairs without being at all sensible how she came down. The croud that now pressed in, for some moments prevented her from getting into the street, but terror gave her unusual strength, and she soon made her way through every obstacle. A decent-looking man, who had been alarmed with the rest of the neighbourhood, met her at the door, and judging from her appearance she was one of the sufferers, humanely offered to conduct her to his house, which though only in Great Marlborough-street, was too far off to be in any present danger. This offer she joyfully accepted, and was received by his wife with great civility and attention; he then went back to Poland-street; and she continued a long time in the utmost anxiety for the fate of her landlady, and the other inhabitants of the house. At length she was a little relieved by the return of Mr. Gibbons, followed by a servant in livery, both of whom had been assisting to remove the goods and extinguish the fire; which they assured her was got under, and though the house was almost consumed, yet every thing of most value was saved from the flames.

In the confusion and alarm she had been in, till this moment her box never occurred to her, but now recollecting it she hastily exclaimed, "If my trunk is lost, I am undone for ever. Will you be so good as to enquire, that I may not be in suspense?" The servant, for Gibbons had left the room, offered to let her know immediately, if she would describe it to him. She said it was a small portmanteau, with the letters H.F. upon the lid in brass nails. He shook his head, and replied, he feared there was none saved which answered that description; but as the goods had all been carried into another house, he could inform her with certainty in a few minutes. In a quarter of an hour he returned, and assured her it was not to be found; and as they had made a very diligent search, but without success, there was no doubt but it had been burnt. Gibbons also giving the same account, she had no hope left of ever recovering it, and gave way to the grief this unfortunate loss excited. She was now totally deprived of all possibility of ever arriving at

the knowledge of her parents; Mrs. Fortescue dead, and the weakened state of Mr. Fortescue's mind, putting it almost out of his power to assist her, even if he should retain the inclination.

After a short time, however, she recovered, and considering how little probability there was of ever being called upon to produce these tokens of her birth, when every enquiry of Mr. Fortescue's, and Mr. Richardson's, had failed at the time she was found; resolved not to murmur, but return thanks to Providence for preserving her life, and rejoice that, excepting this, she had lost nothing of consequence. Her cloaths and valuables were all sent to C——, and the money she kept was in her pockets, which she had fortunately put on before the alarm was given.

Mrs. Gibbons supplied her with a gown for the present, and in the morning when she had in some measure rested from her fatigue, she called to see Mrs. Middleton, who was still in an agony of grief; she informed her the flames first burst out in the room in which she always worked, and was occasioned by her leaving some muslins too near the fire, which she had not quite put out. She added, the lodgers on the first and ground floors escaped easily, and had saved almost everything; but that not awaking herself till the alarm in the street, she ran down stairs with scarcely any thing on, and almost all she had left was consumed. Honoria attempted to comfort her, by saying she was not the only sufferer, and mentioned her own loss; but Mrs. Middleton said, "people could talk indeed very well when they did not feel, and she had no notion of Miss Wentworth's grumbling, when all her boxes were gone to C——, except one little trunk." "Indeed, Mrs. Middleton, (she replied) I do not murmur, though the loss of that little trunk may be of infinitely greater consequence to me than any thing else in my possession." She then handsomely paid her for the time she had been her boarder, and took leave. She sent a note to Mrs. Campbell, informing her of the unfortunate accident which had obliged her to remove, and requesting to be taken up in Great Marlborough-street; where the next morning at eight the carriage arrived, and at nine, accompanied only by Mrs. Campbell, she quitted London.

CHAP. VIII.

MRS. CAMPBELL was a widow about the age of forty: fortune had blessed her with a handsome jointure, besides a large sum entirely at her own disposal; and nature had given her a fine person, upon which time had committed fewer depredations than usual at her years, and a very good, though common understanding. But all this did not content her; she sighed for literary fame, and without a spark of genius, or even animation, had actually attained some little degree from the few works which bore her name.

At nineteen she was of that class of women, who “have no characters at all,” and, at her father’s request, gave her hand without any reluctance to Mr. Campbell, who was forty years her senior, and a whimsical, though learned old gentleman. As he took her without a fortune, and settled a very good one on her, he thought himself intitled to her implicit obedience, and for the twelve years that he lived, she submitted, with a patient insensibility, to an almost total confinement and unwearied attendance on him. Her principal employment was reading to him; and though at first she had no pleasure in it, as his choice of books was not calculated to amuse a female mind, that ’till then had never been accustomed to literary pursuits, yet by degrees she took a pride in the idea, which he endeavoured strongly to inculcate, that her time was devoted to learning and philosophy, whilst so many of her sex were trifling their hours in frivolous dissipation and useless amusements.

After a few years she began to contemplate with scorn the gay world, and look forward with restless impatience to that period, when she hoped to shine herself a bright star in the hemisphere of literature. The rudiments of the French language she had learned at school, and with the most unwearied diligence attained a perfect knowledge of that and Italian. With Mr. Campbell’s assistance also she had made some little progress in Latin, when his death, though it interrupted that study, left her at liberty to pursue the bent of her inclinations by commencing Authoress. She was now two-and-thirty, and almost immediately left the retirement where she had been so long secluded, and settled at C——, her native place; but not, as she declared on her return, to mix in public amusements or card-parties, but to devote herself to philosophy, and the study of human nature.

It was well known that Mr. Campbell, though sensible and learned, was indolent to an extreme; and though he would not give himself the trouble of publishing, he had written a number of detached pieces, and left some very valuable, though unfinished, manuscripts: these, as his Lady was sole executrix, all fell into her hands, and the ill-natured world did not scruple to affirm that she made a good use of them. Certain it was, that among the works she had published as her own, there were some, in which was either a strength of argument female writers seldom attain, or a brilliancy of ideas which all who knew her thought her incapable of, and not unfrequently the conclusions were vague and unconnected, and couched in a style totally different from the beginning. These slanders, as she called them, had reached her ears, but raised no other emotions in her breast, as she

told an intimate friend, but contempt at the envy of the world. She was indeed so highly flattered by the applause of a few, whose interest it was to gain her friendship; and so lost in a delirium of vanity, that it was scarcely in the power of any one to destroy the pleasing illusions which floated in her mind.

During the first five or six miles of their journey, the conversation turned on general subjects:—then, after a long pause spent in preparing the speech, Mrs. Campbell addressed our heroine in the following manner:

“Prepossessed, Miss Wentworth, as I am, not only with your appearance, but manner and conversation, and regardful of Miss Mortimer’s high recommendation of you, a young lady of superior talents, and whose judgment may therefore be relied on more safely; I have no doubt but you will prove a companion equally agreeable and useful; and I likewise flatter myself you will not find my house an unpleasant situation. There is a large and genteel society at C——, but the inhabitants are mostly irrationally devoted to cards. I visit all the principal people, though I avoid as much as I possibly can, those parties where that bane to all refinement of ideas, and elegance of expression, is introduced. At home I always receive my acquaintance in select circles of fourteen or fifteen at a time; and at some of these meetings you will enjoy that true attic salt of conversation, “that feast of reason and that flow of soul,” so often spoken of, but so rarely experienced.

“But, alas, my dear Miss Wentworth, envy and jealousy are the weeds which grow with greatest luxuriance throughout the garden of the world; and as it may reasonably be supposed that a genius like mine has many enemies, in fact I have in the whole city but two real friends, to whom I can at any time unbosom myself, and upon whose faithful breasts I can repose with unlimited confidence. As you will probably see them both frequently, I will describe their characters to you. Mr. Hunter formerly practised the law, but the profession at length disgusted him, the tautology wearied his spirits, and the perplexities and quibbles hurt his feelings. He retired upon a handsome fortune to C——, where he now lives in scientific ease, and philosophical tranquillity. Convinced of the superiority of his understanding, I have frequently submitted my works to him to be revised and corrected; but after frequent perusals, he has always done me the honour to return them without alteration, and an assurance they wanted none. Indeed I never knew a man of such deep observation, and just discernment in my life.”

Honorina with the utmost difficulty restrained a smile at the modest conclusion of this elaborate speech; but her mirth was quickly lost in confusion, when Mrs. Campbell continued:

“Apropos, Miss Wentworth, have you never read the little volumes I have sent into the world?” Now unfortunately for our heroine, in the days of her prosperity several of them had accidentally fallen in her way; but little thinking she should ever become acquainted with the authoress, or be distressed by an enquiry of this kind, she had, after reading a few pages, thrown them aside, as neither interesting nor instructive. However,

perplexed at this question, from the difficulty of a reply, which would be consistent with her strict attention to veracity, and yet not offend Mrs. Campbell, with inimitable presence of mind she answered, "My situation of late, madam, left me little leisure to attend to my favourite amusement; but if on my arrival at C——, you will gratify me with a sight of them, I will endeavour to profit by your indulgence." Mrs. Campbell, with a visible satisfaction in her countenance, promised that they should all be carried to her own apartment, where she might peruse them when she pleased; and then continued:

"My other friend, Helena Winterton, is the only child of Dr. Winterton, a prebendary of C——. Though from the attachment we bear each other, we are undoubtedly kindred souls, yet there is not the least resemblance in our manners or conversation: she is devoted to the Muses, I to philosophy and history: whilst she is turning over sonnets and love elegies, I am deeply engaged in Plato or Plutarch. She is romantic to an excess, and animated to a degree of enthusiasm, whilst I, you see, my dear, am solid and steady. Perhaps the difference of our studies has contributed to increase the natural dispositions of our minds. The work in which I am now chiefly employed, and in which, Miss Wentworth, I shall want your principal assistance, is a translation from a Latin book, entitled, 'An enquiry into the influence of climate upon human nature, and how far the minds of men are affected by the different modes of living in different countries.' To which I mean to add, 'A dissertation on the North American savages, and a parallel between the natives of Otaheite and the New Zealanders, and the Goths and Vandals.' This I am sensible will be a work of much labour; but I am convinced, and indeed Mr. Hunter assures me, I shall be amply repaid by the reflection of having opened to the world a new source of information, for which it can never sufficiently reward me."

Here she ceased, and impatiently waited Honoria's reply, who could only say "she would omit no endeavour to be serviceable to her, in any way she should please to command." A long silence then succeeded: Mrs. Campbell was disappointed; she expected to be flattered, but this was a meanness Honoria could not condescend to; she therefore took out a book, which our heroine was not sorry for, as it gave her leisure to indulge her reflections. But she was really concerned at the visible mortification, and almost displeasure which sat on her countenance. Alas, thought she, how true was Major Southmore's observation, and how kind the hint he gave me? must I lose the advantages I hope to derive from her protection, or keep them at the expence of my candor and veracity? I shall never be able to submit to the expressions of admiration she will undoubtedly expect from me, yet will I by diligence and attention endeavour to please, and substitute activity for adulation.

Whilst she was thus trying to reconcile herself to the employment laid out for her, without giving up in the least degree those principles of integrity that had been so early instilled into her mind; a thought occurred to her, that she might regain Mrs. Campbell's smiles at an easy rate; and taking the first opportunity of putting it into execution, when her learned friend laid down her book to pay a turnpike, asked if she had not at that time any of those volumes with her, the perusal of which she had promised to honour her with? this question instantly restored her good humour: she replied in the affirmative, and

ordering the postillion not to drive on, alighted, and actually stood in the road, till the footman had taken a small box from the seat which she unlocked, and giving Honoria two pocket volumes, re-seated herself in the carriage, and they pursued their journey. Our heroine apologised for the trouble she had occasioned, but Mrs. Campbell declared it was a pleasure, and this truth her looks confirmed.

The remainder of the day was spent by them both in reading; and Honoria was so agreeably surprized to find a work of entertainment and information, when she expected something either frivolous or heavy, that she had no difficulty in complimenting her friend, who was so charmed with her observations, that they quite obliterated her former coolness from her memory, and late in the evening they arrived at C—— in the utmost harmony with each other.

This work was entitled “Observations made in a Tour to the South of France and German Spa,” and contained not only a variety of elegant and just descriptions, but some very brilliant remarks and general satire. Honoria was astonished at the difference of this and the former production she had met with in Ireland, and had not her name been in full length on the title page, she could scarcely have given her credit as the author. Yet as she drew near the conclusion, she could not reconcile some apparent inconsistencies and strange deviations from the natural beauty of the language; sometimes for several pages the style was laboured and diffuse; this puzzled her extremely; for observe, reader, she had not yet heard the opinions of the inhabitants of C——, and was wholly a stranger to the literary attainments of the late Mr. Campbell.

CHAP. IX.

ON the instant of their arrival Mrs. Campbell dispatched a note to her beloved Helena to acquaint her of her return, and request to see her immediately, but to her inexpressible mortification, the messenger came back with Dr. Winterton's compliments, and was sorry to inform her, Miss Winterton was at Dover, where she would continue several weeks. Her regret, however, was soon forgot when Mr. Hunter arrived, who expressed his extreme happiness at once more beholding her, in terms of flattery so gross, that it did not please her more than it shocked Honoria, who was hurt that any woman of common understanding should be the dupe of such servile adulation and artful professions. It did not require all the penetration she possessed to see through the thin veil of Mr. Hunter's designs; in a very few days she discovered his intention of making an interest in her favour, to secure to himself the possession of her hand and fortune; for the latter he had a sincere and ardent affection, an affection not to be lessened by absence.

He was about her own age, and as she said had been bred to the study of the law; but quitted it for very different reasons from those she assigned. Licentious and extravagant in the early period of life, he neglected his profession, and spent all his time in the pursuit of every fashionable folly; the consequence of this was, he soon consumed a genteel, though not a large fortune, which, together with the advantages which might have arisen from his practice, would have supported him with comfort and elegance. Though sensible of his approaching ruin, he had not courage to retract till every thing was gone, but a small estate that was only his for life. He had so long avoided all business, that attention to it, now his spirits were dejected, and his health impaired, would have been irksome, if not impossible; and as he had formerly by mere negligence lost several causes, he justly feared he should meet with no employment, even if he attempted it: he therefore determined to retire on his small income to his native place, where he had not long been, when Mrs. Campbell's fortune inspired him with a wish to recommend himself to her favour; this he easily effected by an entire subservience to her opinions, and in a very short time he was regarded by her as a most esteemed and disinterested friend. By perseverance he hoped to gain more, but had art enough not to let her see his intentions too soon lest she should disapprove them, and forbid him her house before he had secured her heart. Honoria, whilst she regretted his designs, was too conscious of Mrs. Campbell's foible to attempt opening her eyes to them; she saw Mrs. Campbell was infatuated, and paid the utmost deference to his understanding, which was however rather superficial than deep.

Our heroine entered on her employment with an alacrity which charmed Mrs. Campbell, no less than the fineness of her hand, and the correctness with which she wrote. She first transcribed an essay on the lives and writings of the French authors of the last century. This was soon finished, and Mrs. Campbell was during this time shut up every day several hours in her study, busy at her translation; but one morning she received a note from Mr. Hunter, requesting she would for that day give up her pen, and condescend to join a party, which he was to conduct to a beautiful spot about ten miles

from C——, where they were to have a cold collation, and a band of music, and return late in the evening. She hesitated, though she ardently wished to accept it; but having determined to finish the first book of her work, which she had promised Mr. Hunter he should peruse the next day, she knew not how to comply. At last, from a conviction of the goodness and gentleness of Honoria's disposition, and a firm reliance on her honor, she resolved to trust her with a secret, which she had hitherto so carefully kept from her knowledge.

Sending for her into the library and locking the door, that their conference might not be interrupted, an action which startled, if it did not absolutely alarm our heroine, Mrs. Campbell then addressed her with the utmost earnestness.

“May I, Miss Wentworth, rely on your honor for not revealing the secret which I mean to entrust you with, and which it is of the utmost consequence to me to have for ever concealed, as the disclosure of it would inevitably ruin my fame, and destroy every hope of happiness I have ventured to indulge?” There was a solemnity in her manner, that almost terrified Honoria, who at first hesitated whether she ought to promise to conceal a circumstance, which from the earnestness of Mrs. Campbell, she doubted not was of high importance. It did not occur to her, that her fame could be injured, or her happiness destroyed, by any thing but the disclosure of some hidden act of imprudence, if not of guilt; and the first thought which struck her was, that she had somewhere a living instance of early frailty, whom she wished to introduce into the world under a feigned name. After a few minutes reflection, she replied. “If, madam, by concealing what you require of me, you can assure me I injure no one, I will faithfully promise whatever you wish.” “That (returned Mrs. Campbell, with a smile) I will immediately convince you of; and leading her to the writing table, took up a folio she had been transcribing from, and put it into her hands. Here, my dear girl, (she continued) you see in fact an old and forgotten translation of the Latin book of which mine is but an improved copy. I accidentally found it among some old books of Mr. Campbell's, which were thrown into a chest as mere lumber; it is, I doubt not, now out of print, and therefore my plagiarism will never be discovered, if you do not betray me.”

Honoria, whose natural vivacity when unclouded by present misfortune, was extreme, was highly diverted by Mrs. Campbell's secret, after all the frightful ideas she had conjured up in her mind; and at the same time distressed how to prevent her from observing the effect it had on her; but that lady was too much agitated to attend to any thing but the ready and willing promise she made, never to reveal the truth. Mrs. Campbell then confessed her knowledge of Latin was not sufficient to enable her to translate with the least degree of exactness; and that she was glad to make use of this old book, from which she had only to write it in modern and elegant language. “The world,” added she, “will not know the assistance I have met with, and the credit will be all my own. Now, my dear girl, as I have an engagement, which will detain me probably the whole day, I wish you to copy this, and, as I have done, modernize the language. I want to have the next chapter finished, as Mr. Hunter is to see it to-morrow, and give me his opinion; and I beg you to take particular care when you leave off, to let the original

remain on the table, but lock up the old translation carefully in my desk." Honoria assured her she would pay the strictest attention to her commands, and instantly sat about her task; whilst Mrs. Campbell went to dress, which she had scarcely concluded, when the carriage arrived at the door, and Mr. Hunter waited to hand her in.

Our heroine was not more astonished than amused at this ridiculous discovery; when she had written the chapter, she began reading the first part, and was surprized at the confusion and perplexity of the style, and the stiffness of expression which reigned throughout.

When Mrs. Campbell returned, she was charmed with Honoria's performance, which indeed far exceeded her own, and from that day determined it should be her whole employment. In a few weeks Honoria made a considerable progress; and though a little disconcerted at the idea of being instrumental to the deceit that was to be put upon the world, yet reflecting it was a harmless one, she pursued her work with diligence and activity.

Thus constantly and innocently, if not usefully employed, she by degrees regained that tranquillity she once feared was lost for ever. The rectitude of her resolutions to forget Colonel Effingham, was rewarded with unexpected success: she not only banished him from her thoughts, but carefully avoided every thing that could recall his image to her mind; considering it as not merely dangerous to her peace, but even criminal, as she had every reason to believe him the husband of another. She took her locket from her neck, and wrapping it in paper, laid it at the bottom of her portmanteau; and almost rejoiced that the volume of translations from Metastasio, had been burnt in her trunk, where she had put it for safety, though at first she regretted it with tears. Nothing could tempt her to look at a newspaper; she was even so determined on this point, that Mrs. Campbell one day asked her if she had any friends abroad; but being too much engaged in her own affairs to attend to those of another, she was satisfied merely with her replying in the negative, and enquired no farther.

Till her arrival in England, Honoria had seen no more of the world than an annual visit to Dublin of six weeks or two months could shew her; and as they lived wholly in the country for the rest of the year, this time was usually devoted to amusement. It is well known that in the gay world there is little discrimination of character; a thoughtless insipidity generally reigns, or if there are any striking traits, they are wholly absorbed in that rage for dissipation, which universally prevails in the metropolis of almost every kingdom. Excepting her own family, Colonel Effingham, Mr. Cleveland, and Miss Meriton, were the only persons of her acquaintance who had any claim to a superiority of understanding. Miss Mortimer had indeed a most excellent one but with her she lived in a state of such inferiority, that she could derive few advantages from it. Here the case was totally different; Mrs. Campbell, who was from the first highly prepossessed in her favour, introduced her to every body as her visitor, and treated her not like a dependant, but an equal; and her own elegance and good sense confirmed the happy impression her

appearance gave them at first sight, and ensured her a long continuance of the respect and admiration of all the inhabitants of C——.

Mrs. Campbell, though really not a sensible woman, had persuaded people to think her so, and it was now become the fashion to consider her as such; and consequently her house was the resort of all the literati: and though among them there were undoubtedly many strange and even absurd characters, yet Honoria gleaned something from every one; those who could not instruct, amused her; she could smile at a singularity which however she would never ridicule, nor did she ever suffer a folly or a foible to obliterate from her mind the amiable and respectable qualities of any one. Thus for some time glided away the hours of our heroine with tranquillity, if not with happiness.

Among the variety of acquaintance she had made here, there were but two for whom her heart felt any degree of attachment: these were Mrs. Markham and Miss Onslow; the former was an old lady of eighty-four, in whom piety without austerity was so blended with cheerfulness, that whilst the most rigid revered her character, and esteemed her an object of the highest respect; the gayest sought her society, and even delighted in it. Miss Onslow was heiress to a very large estate, and had been committed to this lady's care by her daughter, Mrs. Ashbourn, who with her whole family had attended her husband a few months before to the South of France, for the recovery of his health. She was extremely amiable and well disposed; but her vivacity was almost unbounded, and her giddiness often led her into errors that her reason condemned. Mrs. Markham, charmed with Honoria's manner and conversation, encouraged the intimacy which soon took place between them, in the hope that her thoughtless charge would copy so excellent an example; and in a short time she devoted all her leisure hours to this family.

One evening as she was sitting with them, and expressing her sentiments on a particular subject with a serious earnestness; Emily Onslow, after listening some time with a fixed attention, suddenly exclaimed; "My dear creature, where, in the name of fortune, did you learn philosophy? pray tell me, that I may have a lesson?" "I hope, my dear Miss Onslow, (replied she with a half smile, a tear at the same time instant starting to her eye) that you will never want it: my master was adversity, and a severe one he was, believe me. Heaven preserve you from the ills I have suffered." She spoke with a force that astonished them both, and pained Miss Onslow, who little thought her speech would recall any unpleasant remembrance, and severely chid herself for being, though innocently, the cause of her emotion. Mrs. Markham observed, "Miss Wentworth's philosophy did her honour; that to suffer was the lot of many; to bear the evils of life with fortitude and resignation in the power of few; at least (added she) there are few who exert the power that Providence has given us all." She then turned the conversation from a subject which she saw was distressing, and the rest of the evening was spent in a more cheerful manner.

CHAP. X.

THE next day Mrs. Campbell received a message to acquaint her of Miss Winterton's return, but being at that time busily engaged with her pen, desired Honoria would write a note to say she would call on her in the evening, as particular business would detain her at home the whole day. In a few minutes the footman came back with an answer, which Honoria was desired to read; and it fully confirmed her in the opinion she had long formed of the writer: It was as follows:

“At seven o'clock then exactly will Helena expect her beloved friend; and till that time will impatiently exclaim with her poetical namesake,

*Haste, twilight, haste, to shroud the solar ray,
And bring the hour my pensive spirit loves.”*

“This,” said Mrs. Campbell, observing Honoria smile, “is her usual style; yet believe me you will find her pleasant and entertaining, though somewhat singular in her manner and opinions.”

Our heroine from every thing her friend had told her, expected to see a sprightly young creature with all the animation of youth; how then was she astonished and disappointed on arriving at Dr. Winterton's, when Helena made her appearance, to find that her age exceeded Mrs. Campbell's by several years; a superiority however, that by her dress and manner she seemed wholly unconscious of; the latter affectedly gay, and the former a white muslin round gown tucked and flounced: a lilac sash, and a chip hat with ribbands of the same colour tied under her chin, which by no means adorned a countenance pale and sallow. A muslin handkerchief in the fashionable style open before, with a deep tucker, which yet concealed very little of a bosom, that neither in quality nor hue resembled snow. She was tall, slender, and had really a fine shape; and when first Honoria saw her she was talking to Mrs. Campbell with her back towards her, and from her person and dress, which almost appeared like a frock, she actually supposed her not more than sixteen; till turning round she instantly convinced our heroine, that she had guessed near thirty years too little. Miss Winterton behaved to her with great civility, and made strong professions of friendship, which Honoria received with politeness, but incredulity.

After an hour or two spent in conversation, in which Miss Winterton bore the chief part, and which the old Doctor, with the peevishness too incident to age, often interrupted with “Pshaw, Nelly, how can you be so silly? why you have talked of nothing else all the day!” After repeated remonstrances of this kind, which she paid little attention to for some time, but at last whispered to her friend that she would call on her the next morning, and give her a regular account of what had passed in her late excursion; of which, continued she, you have now a very imperfect idea; and soon after Mrs. Campbell took leave.

Miss Winterton was the next day punctual to her appointment; and not regarding Miss Wentworth, who she said was too amiable herself, not to pardon the effusions of a too sensible heart, began with a deep sigh:

“Oh, my dear Campbell! but for the hope of enjoying your society, with what regret should I have left Dover! I declare I think I was never in my whole life so happy as in those few fleeting weeks passed under the hospitable roof of Mr. Audley. All the family are agreeable, but George and Charlotte are my favourites; and of their merit you will judge next week, for my father requested they would return with me, but that being out of their power, they promised to follow in a few days. George blows the flute divinely; we had such evening concerts! and do you know I bought a new guittar for the purpose? and every morning he accompanied me for two or three hours, to make me perfect in my evening’s lesson. Then he had such a fine voice, and the best choice of songs imaginable: he scarcely ever sung any but Jackson’s, and ‘If in that breast so good, so pure;’ and ‘How oft, Louisa,’ and, ‘Ah cruel maid,’ but he only sang that once, when I had just finished, ‘Thy vain pursuit, rash youth, give o’er,” so I directly struck that out of my list. I remember the night before last, when he heard the carriage was ordered at six o’clock the next morning, he looked very melancholy indeed, and desiring Charlotte to sit down to her piano forte, began ‘The fatal hours,’ and with so much expression, I could scarcely stay in the room without tears: as soon as he had finished, to divert my chagrin I took my guittar, and played, ‘Gentle youth,’ from *Love in a Village*; when I had done, he opened the book, and from the same opera sang, ‘Oh how shall I in language weak!’ These little incidents, my dear Campbell, discover the secrets of the heart more plainly than a thousand gallant speeches. Have not you found it so, Miss Wentworth?” Honoria sighed and coloured, but made no answer. “Ah, (cried the fair Helen) I like that blush and that sigh; I hope you are in love, Miss Wentworth, then I shall make you my confidante; for really Mrs. Campbell is so wholly engrossed by her philosophy, that I dare say she does not know what the tender passion means.” “I hope I never shall, (replied she with much gravity and a little sarcasm) since in my opinion it is a knowledge which generally tends to make people ridiculous.” Wholly unconscious that this was directed at herself, she answered, “Oh fie, Mrs. Campbell, why you are a perfect barbarian; how rugged is the soul unharmonized by Cupid, and music is the food of love.” “Very true (returned Mrs. Campbell) but though food is necessary for a person in health, it often contributes to increase a fever; and in the state of your mind, Miss Winterton, a little less nourishment of that kind might have kept your delirium from its present height.” As she spoke with a half smile, she left her friend at liberty to take this speech in jest or earnest, and she wisely chose the latter. Yet a little disconcerted at her coolness, she soon took leave, with a particular address to Honoria, and a request to see her as often as possible.

This conversation convinced Honoria, that Mrs. Campbell had more judgment than might have been expected from her own conduct. She pitied the folly of Miss Winterton, and with as much bitterness as was consistent with her gentle spirit, abhorred the deceit that she had every reason to suppose was almost universal in the other sex: Colonel Effingham’s inconsistency had first impressed her mind with their caprice; Mr.

Hunter's officious attentions confirmed her opinion of their duplicity; and she had not a doubt but Mr. Audley was acting the same part with Miss Winterton.

Mrs. Campbell, though blinded by self-partiality, could easily discern that credulity in another which she was not aware of in her own conduct, and understand all this perfectly, said she to Honoria as her friend left the house: "Mr. Audley, though a man of fortune, has several children to provide for; George is intended for the church, and I dare affirm all this court to Helen, is to obtain her father's interest, who has many friends among the first people: and I suppose the flattery he so liberally bestows upon the daughter, is to be rewarded with a good living, and then she, poor creature, will be deserted. I am shocked absolutely at the ingratitude of the men, and hurt beyond measure at the vanity so prevalent in our sex, which really encourages young fellows to be impertinent. I am certain George Audley cannot be more than twenty, and Helen is my senior, by many years; is not that a terrible disparity, Miss Wentworth?" "Oh yes, madam, terrible indeed, (said our heroine)." "Now (continued Mrs. Campbell) if a man of sense, learning and accomplishments, is attached to a woman past the follies of childhood, and of an age suitable to his own; and if that attachment is founded on esteem and a knowledge of her superior abilities, why then you know, my dear Kitty, a choice so prudent on both sides, would make a connection equally advantageous to both; and that is quite a different thing; is it not?" "Yes, madam, (replied Honoria, who thought this was the best opportunity she might ever have to give her opinion on the subject); if their fortunes are equal, but if the gentleman has none and the lady a very large one, pardon me for saying I should be very fearful the greatest attraction was in the estate." "Pooh, idiot! that might be the case indeed, if the lady had not self-attractions; but when exclusive of fortune she possesses numerous advantages, she must be a suspicious wretch truly, to imagine a man independent of the world, a man of refinement and sensibility, was guided by such mercenary motives." And then with a look of more displeasure than she had worn since their journey, she quitted the room, and left Honoria, well convinced that her hint, even gentle as it was, had, by hurting her vanity and self-love, infinitely discomposed her. But a few hours reflection determined her not to let Honoria see she was disturbed, as she flattered herself she only spoke her sentiments casually, and without any reference to herself; and under this idea appeared at dinner as usual, placid and unconcerned.

The next visit to Dr. Winterton's, after the arrival of his guests, convinced them both their opinions had been erroneous. Mr. George Audley treated the fair Helena with a ludicrous familiarity, little calculated to gain the heart of a woman of delicacy, but which her excessive vanity imagined was the effusions of an ardent passion. In fact, far from having any design upon her, his behaviour was merely the effect of an ungoverned vivacity, that delighted in the ridiculous wherever it was to be met with; and as he had never before seen a character so strongly tinctured with it, he resolved to lose no entertainment it was in her power to afford him; and to this end took every opportunity of drawing her out, as he called it; and in this his sister joined with an eagerness, which immediately lost her the good opinion of Honoria, to whom even the foibles of a friend were sacred; and Miss Winterton's regard for Charlotte Audley was sincere and evident;

our heroine was even angry with herself for being tempted to smile, yet now and then she could not possibly avoid it.

They walked in the garden before supper: the moon shone very bright, and Mr. Audley taking Miss Winterton's hand drew it resolutely under his arm, and ran with her down a gravel walk, where he detained her a considerable time. When they returned, Charlotte exclaimed, "Upon my word, Helena, you are very polite to leave us in this manner to entertain ourselves, whilst you are flirting with my brother!" "Cruel, unkind Charlotte! to throw the blame on your friend, when you know it was entirely his fault." "Well then, George, if you plead guilty, at least make an apology to the company." "I will offer only this, (he replied, then taking the lady's hand, and pressing it to his lips, repeated,

*"Such Helen was, and who could blame
the boy?"*

Miss Winterton smiled, and made a curtsy, which so completed Miss Audley's amusement, that she burst into a violent fit of laughter, and throwing herself upon a seat, asked our heroine, in a whisper, 'how it was possible for her to keep her countenance, when so ridiculous a scene was acting before her?' Honoria coldly answered, "that she received little pleasure from the mortification of others." "The mortification! why, my dear madam, do not you see how she enjoys it? why, I assure you, she fancies he is in love with her, and when she was with us, would sometimes try on two or three different caps in a morning, before she could decide which she should appear in; and has worn her hair in ringlets without powder, ever since my brother told her she looked like a divinity." "However happy she may believe herself now, madam, (replied Honoria) the disappointment will be proportionably great whenever she discovers the deception which has been put on her, and the ingratitude of those whom she at present esteems as her best friends." "La, you are so grave (said Miss Audley); why I was never so much entertained in my whole life, as whilst she was with us at Dover. I used to laugh from morning till night, and so would you too, could you have witnessed the droll scenes I have been present at; but after supper I will make him sing, and if you do not smile then, why you must have been educated in the cave of Trophonias." Honoria finding her incorrigible, gave up the point, and remained silent.

During this conversation, the two subjects of it had been walking at some distance from them on a grass plat. Mrs. Campbell had never joined their party, being engaged with the old Doctor in his study. A summons to supper then recalled them to the house; after which, Charlotte did not forget her request; it was immediately complied with, and Mr. Audley fixing his eyes steadily on Miss Winterton, began, "When absent from my soul's delight," she took a white handkerchief from her pocket, and leaning her head on her hand, continued in this pensive and elegant attitude till the conclusion, when she bowed to him, with a look which convinced them all, she considered it as peculiarly addressed to herself; and he received her thanks with such a mock gravity, that in spite of her determined firmness, completely triumphed over Honoria's muscles. Charlotte

nodded at her in a manner that seemed to say, "Was I not right?" and Honoria blushed at her weakness in having given an involuntary, though apparent, approbation of a conduct, which in reality excited nothing but disgust. The old gentleman was happily not a witness of his daughter's folly; he fell asleep almost as soon as the cloth was removed, and continued so till Mrs. Campbell's carriage was announced.

During their ride, these ladies expressed their mutual grief and astonishment at such an instance of weakness on one side, and impertinence on the other. Yet they both agreed Mr. Audley was most excusable of the two. He was very young, had been educated at Oxford, and was now only absent from it, whilst the vacation lasted. A thoughtless boy, little accustomed to the society of women, could not have an idea how deeply even Miss Winterton's heart might be wounded, by a knowledge of his real sentiments, which she must at last discover; his amusement was all he at present had in view, regardless of the consequences. With Charlotte it was far different; she was several years older than her brother, and though her friend's age rendered her less an object of pity, yet even the respect due to her own sex should have taught her the impropriety of her conduct. Mrs. Campbell confessed she was ashamed of the terms of regard in which she had mentioned Miss Winterton to our heroine, "but, indeed, Miss Wentworth, (added she) when I saw her last, she was a rational creature, a title which, I blush to acknowledge, she has now lost all claim to."

CHAP. XI.

IN compliment to her guests, Miss Winterton made a number of parties and excursions round the country, to which Mrs. Campbell and Miss Wentworth were constantly invited; and though the former generally declined them, being still deeply engaged with her pen, yet she always insisted upon Honoria's accepting them, as she thought air, exercise, and amusement, contributed greatly to the recovery of her health and spirits, which she saw had been much injured, and was pleased and flattered that her residence with her had so good an effect on both. Her person was indeed considerably improved, she had regained the fine bloom which was natural to her complexion, and her eyes once more sparkled with their usual lustre. It was impossible to behold a more captivating or interesting object; an object indeed too attractive ever to escape unnoticed; and had Mr. Audley been inclined to keep up the farce with his fair Helen, as he called her, the continual presence of such animated beauty, and enchanting vivacity, must have conquered his resolution. But this was by no means the case; he was really extremely weary of her folly, and had not Honoria's irresistible attractions induced him to prolong his visit, he would soon have quitted the Doctor's hospitable roof: but he felt himself charmed with her conversation, and wholly unable to tear himself from her. In all their little parties she became the chief object of his attention, but the change, though visible to every one else, he continued to hide from Miss Winterton; and this he could easily do, as an extravagant compliment or a gentle pressure of her hand was at any time sufficient to put her in spirits for the whole evening; and she was fond of retiring from the company with her beloved Charlotte; and, chusing the most solitary walks, would talk of the charms of a rural life, and speak of her deep and delicate attachment to her brother; and this Charlotte constantly cherished, to heighten, as she said, their amusement.

Our heroine was a long time unconscious of his partiality; perfectly free from all kind of vanity, she suspected not the motive that induced him to be always at her side; 'till one evening a scheme was proposed to spend the next day at Margate. Mrs. Campbell promised to join them, and it was settled in the following manner. She offered to take any two of the ladies in her coach, as Mr. Hunter, who had lately had a slight touch of the gout, was to have the fourth seat: this Charlotte Audley instantly accepted, but Miss Winterton declined it, saying she should beg Mr. Audley to drive her in his phaeton. "My dear creature, (exclaimed he) do you think me a barbarian? why I would not for ten thousand pounds be accessory to your going in an open carriage; with such a cold as you complained of last night, it is madness to think of it." She thanked him in the most expressive manner for his solicitude for her health, and said, "she would most certainly be guided by him, if Miss Wentworth would give up her seat in the coach, and was not afraid of the phaeton." "I shall be very willing to resign my place to you, Miss Winterton, (replied Honoria) as, with Mrs. Campbell's leave, I shall stay at home to-morrow." "No, indeed, (they all exclaimed at once) that must not be; if you cannot go to-morrow, the party shall be deferred, for you positively shall not be excused." "If that is the case, (said Honoria, smiling) I will certainly accompany you then, and shall be obliged to Mr. Audley for a place in the phaeton." "I cannot have a higher pleasure, madam, (replied he)

than that I am now in expectation of; the happiness of your company:" this he spoke in a low tone of voice, not to be heard by the rest of the party.

Early the next morning the carriages arrived, and they set out in the manner proposed. Mr. Audley was determined not to lose so favourable an opportunity of expressing his sentiments, and began in a high strain of compliment, which Honoria receiving with a smile of incredulity, he said, "Cruel Miss Wentworth, you affect to disbelieve me." "No, really, Mr. Audley, I do not *affect* it." "Why surely, madam, when I speak in so serious a manner, you cannot suppose my words contradict my sentiments." "Pray, sir, what can I suppose, replied Honoria, when I have so often heard you address the same to another with equal earnestness?" "Miss Wentworth, (said he) why surely it is impossible you could ever imagine I was serious in any thing I ever said to Miss Winterton." "I should be sorry, Mr. Audley, to find you were not, (answered Honoria) for what dependance can be placed on a man who trifles with the feelings of a heart too probably attached to him, and who, unconscious of deceit, listens with an amiable, though perhaps simple credulity, to every thing he utters, and honours it with implicit belief?" "My dear madam, (said Audley) upon my soul you take this matter in too serious a light. Miss Winterton cannot really think I am in love with her, for though confoundedly silly, she cannot be so insensible as that. No no, she only likes a little flirtation, that is all." "I fear that is not all, sir, (rejoined Honoria) but can your conscience acquit you of taking pains to gain her good opinion?" "Oh yes, that it can, indeed, said he; when I began my attack, I thought she must be affronted, but she took it all in such good humour, that I was tempted to renew my fine speeches; and it afforded so much entertainment to my sisters to remark her ridiculous behaviour, that they encouraged me to go on; but I declare I believe you are right, and I do assure you I will be more careful in future; nay, if you chuse it, I will not speak a word to her all day, no nor the whole week, if you will repay me with your smiles." "I do not mean, sir, (replied Honoria with much gravity,) to bribe you to mortify her; I wish you to behave to her with all possible politeness, but not to make her, as usual, an object of ridicule; and believe me I speak from no motive but humanity, and have not the least wish of transferring your attentions to myself, nor the least idea of rewarding you, were it even in my power, for what I look on merely as your duty: forgive me, Mr. Audley, for speaking so plainly." He replied, he thought himself obliged to her, and promised a gradual reformation.

He then endeavoured to make her listen to the subject next his heart, but his endeavours were ineffectual. In a manner the most decided, she forbade his entering on a topic that she said would not be merely disagreeable, but would render his company so extremely unpleasant to her, that in future she should take every method to avoid it. The calm dignity with which she spoke, awed him into silence, and convinced him obedience to her commands was the only chance he had of obtaining her favour. But not being of the tribe of sighing and weeping lovers, though extremely charmed with the justness of her sentiments, no less than the beauty of her person, and quite of the opinion of the old poet, that

"Sure if looking well can't move her,

“Looking ill will ne'er prevail,”

he determined to rally his spirits, which were a little hurt at her absolute rejection of his devoirs, and try all in his power to entertain her; and in this he succeeded so well, that before they arrived at Margate, he once more flattered himself she would not always continue inexorable. In fact she was greatly pleased with his conversation; he possessed an uncommon share of wit and humour, which when directed at proper objects, was particularly amusing. But though her imagination was delighted with the brilliancy of his ideas, and the vivacity with which he expressed them, her heart was not interested; it was in the power of one only to light up the smile of true and unmixed satisfaction in her countenance.

When they alighted at the inn, they found some of the other party rather out of spirits. Mr. Hunter and Mrs. Campbell had been wholly engrossed by each other, and conversing upon subjects wearisome, if not unintelligible to the two ladies; one of whom was dull for want of the mirth her brother and friend usually afforded her, and Miss Winterton bitterly repented having given up the seat in the phaeton, as Mr. Hunter's presence prevented her from feeling the only consolation she could know, when separated from him she loved, that of expatiating on his virtues.

“Oh!” exclaimed Helen, as soon as they were seated, “how insupportably tedious has this journey been! did you not think so, Mr. Audley?” He affected to misunderstand her, and looking at his watch, answered coolly, “No really, we are, I see, some minutes within the time I thought it would take up:” he then looked at Honoria as if to claim her approbation, which however he did not meet with, for too solicitous to gain it, he over-acted his part, and intending only to behave with indifference, he often deviated into something very like contempt.

An alteration so strange and so sudden, surprized Charlotte, and almost petrified her poor friend, who declared to her she could no way in the world account for her brother's coldness; he could not be jealous, as to the best of her knowledge she had not even smiled on any man since his arrival. This was enough for Miss Audley; it gave her a long and hearty laugh, and amply repaid her for the stupid hours she had passed.

In all their walks, George still continued to pay his chief attention to our heroine, who, angry with him for not keeping his promise, and terrified to death lest his negligence should be imputed to her, was at the same time conscious she had acted from a right motive, and the rectitude of her intentions in some measure supported her spirits.

As they were walking in the rooms before dinner, Honoria, wishing to avoid him as much as possible, left her party standing at one of the windows, and going up to the subscription book, amused herself with reading the list of names: that of Burnthwaite in a few moments struck her eye as not wholly unknown to her, though she could not recollect where she had met the person who bore it; when turning hastily round, she was startled at the appearance of a gentleman in regimentals she was too well acquainted with, who on

seeing her, exclaimed in an accent of surprize and pleasure, "Miss Sommerville! Is it possible that I have the happiness of meeting you at Margate, when I little imagined you were in the kingdom?" The voice and manner of the officer, immediately brought to her remembrance the very Mr. Burnthwaite, whose name on the book had puzzled her. He belonged to the same regiment as Colonel Effingham, but arriving at L——, a few weeks before their embarkation, was less known to the family at Woodpark, than the rest of the corps. He was, however, no stranger to the character for hospitality Mr. Fortescue bore in the neighbourhood, and for which he had ever since retained the highest respect; it was with much concern he heard the account of Mrs. Fortescue's death, which Honoria could not inform him of without tears. Unwilling to dwell upon a subject that he plainly saw affected her, he turned the conversation to Miss Fortescue's marriage, of which also he was before ignorant. To his enquiry how long she had left Ireland, she only replied "a few Months, sir, and I am now staying with a lady at C——." "I hope, madam, if you remain at Margate, (said he) you will permit me the honour of paying my respects to you."—"I came only for the day, sir, (replied Honoria) and shall return this evening." "I suppose, Miss Sommerville, (answered Mr. Burnthwaite) you have seen Colonel Effingham since his arrival?" She coloured extremely at a question so mortifying and distressing, and which recalled so many painful ideas; but gathering courage she evaded a direct answer, and only said, "Has he been long in England?" "I have myself left London several weeks, and am now out of the way of meeting many of my old acquaintance. I landed myself not more than a fortnight since with the regiment," said Mr. Burnthwaite, "but the Colonel had leave of absence to attend a sick relation to whose fortune he was heir; I came but three days ago to Margate with a party of gentlemen, and esteem it a particular favour of fortune, thus unexpectedly to meet Miss Sommerville." Honoria then curtsied and wished him a good morning, being obliged, she said, to join her friends, who would wonder at her absence. Mr. Burnthwaite bowed and took his leave, not daring to follow her; as so far from offering to introduce him to them, she had evidently avoided it; and he had ever been accustomed to think of the Wood-Park family with too much respect, to obtrude himself uninvited on any part of it.

Our heroine was particularly rejoiced at her fortunate escape, as had he addressed her before any one of her party, a discovery of her change of name would have been unavoidable, and of course attended with the reasons that made her wish for concealment; and at this time the eclairsissement would have hurt her feelings and her delicacy more than at any other; for she feared Mr. Audley might suppose, if he knew her to be a poor dependant, that the advice to which he had paid too great attention, was dictated by the most interested motives.

How bitterly at this moment did she regret the false pride that induced her to alter the name by which she had so long been known! Situated as she then was, this meeting convinced her it might again happen with some other of her former acquaintance, and though it could never reduce her to the necessity of advancing a falshood, it might oblige her to make a confession both disagreeable and mortifying, and perhaps convince her friends that she had some deeper reasons than she dared acknowledge for the apparent duplicity of her conduct.

Harrassed by these ideas she pressed Mrs. Campbell with an impatience by no means natural to her to quit the rooms; but that lady, who was engaged in an argument with Mr. Hunter, paid her no attention, and they still continued walking up and down, when Mr. Burnthwaite entering, to the infinite distress of our heroine, advanced towards them with a paper in his hand, and addressed Miss Sommerville with a bow. "Encouraged, madam, by the known benevolence of your family, I venture through your means to recommend this petition to the notice of your party." It was in behalf of a poor widow, whose husband had been drowned, and who was left with a large family. She took the paper, and giving it to the rest, they all immediately drew out their purses, and gave half a crown each, the sum which they saw by the names already down had been usually subscribed. Mr. Burnthwaite bowed his thanks, and running to fetch the pen and ink, said, to the inexpressible consternation of Honoria, "Now, ladies, compleat the goodness of the act, by adding your names to the list of the generous contributors." They immediately assented, and Mrs. Campbell, Miss Winterton, and Miss Audley, having written theirs, gave the pen to Honoria, who pale and sick with apprehension, desired the gentlemen would write first: they complied: she then took the paper in her hand, which trembled so violently that they were all alarmed, and Mr. Burnthwaite said, "you are ill, madam: permit me the honour of setting down your name:" she bowed an assent, wholly unable to speak. Mr. Audley and the rest were too much concerned at her illness to observe that Mr. Burnthwaite wrote Miss Sommerville. He then folded up the petition, and putting it in his pocket, came up to enquire how she was? Her terror was now subsided, and having drank a glass of water, she declared herself perfectly recovered, but begged they might return to their inn: and no one making objection, they wished Mr. Burnthwaite a good morning, and left the rooms. Every step they took lessening our heroine's fears, abated her disorder, which she said was a sudden giddiness in her head, to which she was often subject. It also gave her an excuse for not going out the remainder of the day. Mr. Audley was extremely anxious to continue with her, whilst the others were finishing their walks, but with a degree of resentment in her countenance at the proposal, she not only absolutely forbid him, but said if any one offered to remain with her, it would oblige her to walk, though much against her inclination.

It must here be observed, that Mr. Burnthwaite's apparent charity arose from a strong desire to know who the party were, to whom she was so unwilling to introduce him, and he could think of no other method to gain his point: it succeeded very well, and fortunately, without his having the least idea that her illness arose from an embarrassment of any kind. When they left him, he meditated how he could contrive another interview, when a summons from a lady, to whom he paid his devoirs, put every thing else out of his head, and engaged him for several hours, happily for our heroine, as the next meeting might have discovered the secret she so earnestly wished to conceal.

The party soon returned, all but Mrs. Campbell, displeased and fatigued; Miss Winterton particularly so, for vain had been all her endeavours to recall Mr. Audley's attention. The carriages were ordered directly, and determined to make one more effort, Helen asked Honoria if she had any objection to change places with her, as she found the

closeness of the coach affect her in the morning, and thought the phaeton would revive her. Mr. Audley started, and Honoria, glad of an opportunity to convince her that she had no wish to attach him to herself, instantly replied, "I shall be much obliged by the exchange; I have many reasons for preferring the coach, and my poor head is, I think, yet scarcely well enough to be trusted in an open carriage." George, though extremely disconcerted at this proposal, could make no objection, and they set off.

He knew Miss Winterton was naturally fearful, and resolved to frighten her a little, to prevent her in future from honouring him with her company; and whipping his horses, they were soon a considerable way before the rest. In vain did Helen entreat him to drive gently; he assured her he was only impelled by fears for her, as the clouds were gathering fast, and he apprehended a heavy shower: she thought this a good reason and submitted in silence; but her terror prevented her from making those gentle reproaches for his negligence, which the hope of having an opportunity to introduce had induced her to leave the coach.

They were more than half way home when it began to rain with great violence, and she was almost wet through; afraid of catching cold, she entreated him with such earnestness either to wait a few minutes, or return and meet the coach, where she did not doubt but they would make room for her, that he could not refuse; but whilst debating the point, they heard it coming, and Mr. Audley, to save the trouble of turning his horses, determined to wait till it came up: but when it was within one hundred yards, as he was looking round, he saw it suddenly overturn, and heard loud screams from the ladies. Alarmed for all, but particularly anxious for Honoria, and not knowing what he did, he immediately jumped from the phaeton, without thinking of the condition in which he left Miss Winterton, or even putting the reins into her hand, and ran towards the coach, where, with the assistance of the servants, he soon released the ladies, who though extremely frightened, were not hurt. Mr. Hunter had, indeed, suffered severely from the pressure of his foot, which not entirely recovered from his gouty attack, had been inflamed by the exercise of the day, and was, of course, more susceptible of pain.

On examining the coach, they found one of the wheels had been so much injured by the fall, that it was impossible to proceed: the rain had fortunately lessened, but the evening was drawing to a close, and whilst they were uncertain on what to determine, the postillion said he believed there was a farm-house about a quarter of a mile off, if they crossed the fields, and he could shew them the way; in the mean time, Mr. Audley, he added, could go home in his phaeton, and send a carriage from C——, and, till that arrived, they might remain at the farm. They were all rejoiced to find there was an asylum so near, and agreed to follow the postillion, when they were astonished by Mr. Audley's servant, who returning from the spot, where his master had left the phaeton, informed them no trace of it was to be seen. Mr. Audley then, for the first time, recollecting the situation in which he had left Miss Winterton, felt ashamed of his carelessness, but not letting them observe his confusion, he gaily said, "Helena was in the right to make the best of her way home."

In a few minutes they arrived at the farm, where they were received by the mistress with great hospitality: she condoled with them on their misfortunes, and ordering a fire in her parlour, soon seated them all comfortably round it, and giving the servants some of her best ale, they set off for C—— to bring carriages, and learn some tidings of the fair fugitive, as her faithless swain humourously called her. Mrs. Hopkins apologised because she had no wine to offer them till her husband came home, but said she could make them some tea; this they thankfully accepted, and were drinking it, when she was called out of the room; but soon returned, begging they would permit her to bring in a poor lady, whom her husband had met with in his way from the fair, for whom there was no room by the kitchen fire: they immediately assented, and desired she might come in directly and partake of their refreshment; but what was the astonishment of the whole company, when, supported by the farmer, they beheld their friend, Helen, enter without a hat, and her muslin dress clung together by the rain, and almost covered with dirt! She expressed no less surprise than themselves, but intermixed with resentment towards Mr. Audley, for leaving her in so forlorn a state. He entreated her to pardon him, and said his carelessness was owing to the sudden impression of terror he received on seeing the coach overturn on account of his sister. Miss Winterton shook her head, as if she doubted his motive, and then at the request of the whole party, proceeded to inform them of what had befallen her since they parted.

“The moment George jumped out of the phaeton, (said she) the reins, which he neglected to give me, fell on the horses, and it was totally impossible for me to regain them; they set off the same pace they had been accustomed to, but my screams, I suppose, frightened them, and they began a gallop. I should certainly have been thrown out, had I not taken fast hold. They ran on in this way for some time, and I continued screaming, when fortunately I met this good farmer and his servant coming from C——, who stopped the horses, and enquired what was the matter. I begged he would take me out, and then I told him the story; he offered to let his man drive me to C——, but I positively refused to get into the phaeton, nor can I ever mount one again, I am sure; and then he said he would bring me behind him to his house, and his man should take the carriage to C——, and let my father know the accident I had met with, and that I should not return to-night. This offer I gladly accepted, but as he had no pillion, we had not gone half a mile before I slipped off, and in a very miry place, which made me in the condition you see.”

Here she concluded her relation, which afforded infinite amusement to some of them, and George whispered his sister, “he hoped the hard rain and the slough would cool the old maid’s courage.” Honoria, who saw him laugh, reproved him by a look that expressed so much dignified contempt at his conduct, that it awed him into good behaviour. Miss Winterton then declaring she had suffered so much from fatigue and terror, that she could not possibly return that night, they all agreed to stay, if Mrs. Hopkins could make up two beds for the ladies; this, she said, she could easily do, as she had several apartments neatly fitted up for lodgings, which had been let that summer to a family who only went a fortnight before. This was very agreeable intelligence, and they

all retired early, weary and harrassed with the occurrences of the day, though they had not equal reason to complain with Miss Winterton.

When they arose the next morning, they found an excellent fire in the parlour, they had quitted the evening before, (as though not far advanced in September, the weather was uncommonly cold) and a good breakfast, consisting of the best produce of the farm. Several children also came round them, and amused them with their innocent prattle. But Mrs. Campbell and Miss Winterton were shocked at the barbarous vulgarity of their names; and whilst they were consulting how they should reward Mrs. Hopkins for her trouble, it occurred to them, that exclusive of the present gratuity, it would please her highly if one of them was to offer to stand godmother to her next child, for she was then very near lying-in, and give it a name after their own fancy. Mrs. Campbell took it upon herself to stand, but insisted, that the ladies should each chuse a name for the child if it was a girl, and the gentlemen should it be a boy. Mrs. Hopkins being called in, received the proposal with the utmost gratitude, and made not the least objection to its having four names, if they would be so good as to set them down, for else, she said, she could never remember them. Mrs. Campbell then chose Cleopatra; Miss Winterton, Delia; Honoria, Henrietta; which she endeavoured to think was in compliment to her friend Lady Eustace, not daring to own even to herself that another person was in her thoughts; and Miss Audley, who loved no body so well as herself, Charlotte.

The gentlemen were then to fix. Mr. Hunter begged Mrs. Campbell to determine for him; she assented with a smile of pleasure at the compliment, and wrote Numa Pompilius. Mr. Audley requested Miss Wentworth would do the same for him; she objected for sometime, but at last being teized, with a deep sigh said, Henry. Miss Winterton pouted that he had not left it to her choice, which Mrs. Hopkins perceiving, said as the first gentleman had given two names, there was no reason why the other should not also, if Miss Winterton liked to fix on another, and George seconding the request, not to appear too obdurate, she chose Corydon. The names were then read over, and given to Mrs. Hopkins; they ran thus; Cleopatra, Delia, Henrietta, Charlotte; and Numa Pompilius, Henry, Corydon. She curtsied and thanked them for the honor they had done her, and was then handsomely paid for her trouble, and Mrs. Campbell desiring to hear when she was brought to bed, they prepared to set out, Mr. Audley observing to our heroine in a whisper, how the parson would stare when the child was carried to church. They arrived at C—— before dinner, and excepting slight colds, none suffered but Miss Winterton, who was confined for a week.

END OF VOLUME I.