

THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY.
VOL. I.

THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY,
A NOVEL.
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OF NORWICH;
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FAMILY; AND MRS. PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS
TO HER DAUGHTER.
IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.
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THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY.

CHAPTER I.

IT is now about four years since that I was unexpectedly summoned into Derbyshire, in order to take possession of an estate bequeathed to me by a distant relation of the name of Underwood.

The young gentleman whom my deceased friend's attorney sent to London to give me this intelligence, was a clerk in his office; and, delivering a letter from him inclosing one from my cousin, written to me in her last illness, he further informed me that it was necessary I should take the most speedy measures for my journey; his master meaning to wait for my instructions in regard to the funeral, believing also that Mrs. Underwood had in her last will left some particular directions relative to it.

Dismissing my courteous informer to the repose he needed, my first attention was given to my relation's letter. In this, she mentions in general terms the reasons which had hitherto precluded her from having had a personal acquaintance with a relation so worthy to succeed her in her property, and in the duties annexed to a competency: this subject was hastily dismissed for one apparently more interesting to the feelings of the writer. She proceeds to inform me, that with an annual income of five hundred pounds, and some cash in hand, she has imposed no conditions save *one*, which she was convinced, from the character I bore, would be cheerfully acceded to, and faithfully observed, on my part. She had left to my care and kindness a young person, who had for some time found under her roof an asylum from the injuries of the world; and for which she had been amply recompensed by a gratitude and affection which had smoothed her passage to the grave. "I can give you," adds the writer, "no stronger evidence of my regard and good will, than by believing that with my little fortune you will adopt my sentiments in regard to an amiable woman, whom I shall quit with the fond hope of meeting her in a better world, and in the persuasion that I have provided for her security in this."

It is necessary for me to inform my readers, that, in my first emotions of surprise, on hearing of my "good fortune," as an accession of wealth is commonly called by those who think nothing beyond it, I was suddenly checked in my gratitude, by the doubt which arose in my mind of there being some mistake in the business, and I began to prepare for a disappointment of those prospects so suddenly presented to my imagination. At length I recollected having heard my mother speak of her *cousin miss Gertrude Underwood*, as of one whom she had much, though unintentionally, offended; and I remembered having seen this lady once or twice, when a little girl; but the reserve and ceremony of these visits had left no impression of affinity or family union on my memory. I recollected also my mother's saying she was glad when she departed; for she knew that *Gertrude Underwood* hated her, and only came as a matter of form. I read my letter a second time: it was signed *Gertrude Underwood*, and she referred to the years which had elapsed since she had seen me at my mother's house. The next difficulty was less easy to conquer. I thought this lady's preference of me seemed to carry along with it an imputation on her justice, and for which I could not satisfactorily account consistently with my own notions of rectitude. Thus to have overlooked the claims of a deserving, and, as it appeared, a distressed young woman, who was the declared object of her love and esteem, in favour of ties of consanguinity so remote, and so feebly sustained by intercourse, as those which subsisted between Mrs. Underwood and myself, surprised me; and I could only perceive a narrow spirit, and a weak dependence on another for the discharge of a duty which it was incumbent on herself to have performed: and with this hasty

judgment in disfavour of the *donor*, the honour and integrity of the receiver was some how or other involved. During my journey, my mind was engaged by reflections resulting from these considerations; and I questioned my companion with much curiosity relatively to the young lady, Mrs. Underwood's companion. He said, "she was a widow, and had a fine little boy;"—my cheek flushed;—"that most people thought Mrs. Underwood had considered Mrs. Paulin as her daughter, she having been so kind to her, and so much attached to the child, who was indeed a most beautiful boy."—"How long has this lady lived with my cousin?" asked I, with an unpleasant sensation which was momentarily augmenting. "About two years," replied he; but she has known her longer; for Mrs. Paulin was at first a guest in Mr. Hampden's family." This was the attorney's name with whom the young gentleman resided. "She is," continued he, "in manners as well as in person, one of the most elegant women I ever beheld." I changed the subject, for it oppressed my spirits, and soon after gave myself up to my own thoughts. I arranged my plans of conduct in a way which soon tranquillized my mind; for, calculating with my new inheritance my own little annuity of two hundred pounds per annum, which I enjoyed for my life, I discovered that I stood indebted to Mrs. Underwood for the ability of exercising a benevolence to which my heart was not a stranger. Absorbed in my meditations, my companion made me even start, when he interrupted my reverie by telling me that he had orders to stop at Mr. Hampden's house, if I had no objection, as both his lady and himself thought it would be better for me to sleep there, than at my own house, till after the funeral. "Shall I meet Mrs. Paulin at Mrs. Hampden's?" asked I irresolutely.—"I believe not," answered he: "she was too much indisposed when I set out for town." It instantly occurred to me, that I should be an intruder on her sorrows; and I agreed upon turning towards those from whom I hoped for some intelligence respecting this lady, who was thus connected with my every thought.

CHAPTER II.

THE chaise soon after approached a handsome house: but a heavy rain which was falling prevented my curiosity from observing the direction of the road, till the young man told me "he had taken the lane, for the sooner we were housed the better." The master of the mansion had used the same precautions, for he was at the moment we drove into the stable-yard dismounting from his horse. With prompt courtesy he received the stranger, and, leading me through a corridor, said it was preferable to the lawn. We found in an elegant drawing-room his wife, who appeared surprised by our entrance. She rose however with alacrity to receive me, saying she was rejoiced to see me sheltered from the weather, but she had not heard the carriage.—"Her gentleman usher can account for that," replied her husband with a smile; "for we met in the back court, and I was too eager in my duty to make excuses for back stairs and passages, or even to think of my own *boots*."—He was rising—his wife prevented him. "Mrs. Sedley will soon be convinced," said she, "that we mean not to treat her as a stranger; and you know the etiquette of my drawing-room has established your privileges of *resting* when *fatigued*, in boots or without them. What a day you have both had!" continued she, ringing for coffee, and stirring up the cheerful fire: "I have had the 'travellers by land and by water' in my thoughts continually." The tone and manner with which this was said pleased me. During our comfortable repast, she asked her husband whether he had found time to see Mrs. Paulin?—"He had taken the farm in his way home, had found her composed, but anxious to hear of Mrs. Sedley's arrival." I observed with seriousness, that I was not less anxious to meet a lady who had engaged my thoughts to a painful degree from the hour in which Mrs. Underwood's letter had reached me. "It has been a matter not only of surprise but also of concern to me," added I, "that my cousin should have delegated the power of rendering justice into any hands but her own, and I cannot account for the omission of an obligation to friendship, by bringing forward my claims to her favour. Mrs. Paulin will, however, I trust, soon understand that Mrs. Underwood's successor is not less anxious to secure independence to her, than to convince every one in the family that Mrs. Sedley is allied to her

cousin in more respects than one.”—“Mrs. Underwood was no *stranger*,” observed Mrs. Hampden, taking my hand affectionately, “to the steward she has appointed to succeed her in her works of mercy and benevolence.” I burst into tears. “I am utterly unable to account for her goodness to me,” replied I. “All she could know of me amounts to no more than that I have been prepared by adversity to meet properly the duty she has assigned me.” “I will have no business brought forward tonight,” cried Mr. Hampden with assumed cheerfulness. “Let us, my dear Maria, persuade our guest to go to bed: it is the best place for her after a journey which has completely tired her; and in order that she may sleep undisturbedly, we will assure her that Mrs. Paulin is in no need of pecuniary assistance. Her excellent friend knew this, otherwise she would have provided for her. She has, however, not forgotten to secure to her the friend she wants; and I warn you, madam, to be on your guard, if you mean to secure your heart for a choice of your own. Mrs. Paulin will serve you as she has done us: common regard does not satisfy her, and she contrives to be loved in a way that does not suit every one.” Relieved by this good-natured explanation, I became more collected; and was soon after conducted to my comfortable apartment by Mrs. Hampden, who, during the many little attentions and precautions of kindness, told me that it would be necessary for me to go to Rickland Farm the following morning, in order to give the requisite orders for the interment.

CHAPTER III.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfast the next morning, I was conducted by my kind host in his carriage to Mrs. Underwood's house. I was prepared for the shortness of the distance which separated the friends, by Mrs. Hampden's saying that she should join us at the dining hour, and that, if it did not rain, she should prefer walking. On some remonstrances on my part, she good-humouredly told me that three or four Derbyshire stiles would never keep her from invading on my privacy; and unless I left her to her accustomed walk, it would be necessary to build a wall of defence around the dwelling to which I was going. On the road I was entertained with an account of the advantages of my newly acquired property. "It might be said to be the most compact thing in the county, for one and the same hedge nearly inclosed the estate;" and, "in this cottage-building age," added Mr. Hampden, "you will rarely see one so commodious or more tasty."

"It was the amusement of your cousin's life to embellish her house and garden; and she happily succeeded in diverting her thoughts from a secret cause of trouble, which for some time depressed her spirits after she came to reside in this part of the world. Her love of retirement, however, was not banished by her renewed cheerfulness. Except ourselves, and one or two more, she admitted no visitors."

The chaise quitted the high road, and entered into a plantation of some extent. A good gravelled coach-way winding round it brought us to the house. It was the modest mansion of competence and taste, and from a gentle swell commanded a view more romantic than extensive. I was called from observing its beauties by the recollection that Death held there his prey; and that my gratitude, unless recorded in heaven, could only reach the mortal remains of my benefactress. Need I pursue this thought? I believe not:—for inconsiderate and unfeeling must that mind be, which in such circumstances would not have offered a tribute to heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

AN aged man-servant received us at the gate. "How are you, Jonathan, this morning?" asked Mr. Hampden in a tone of kindness. He bowed, passed his hand across his eyes, but made no answer. We were shown into a handsome parlour. "I will let Mrs. Paulin know the lady is come," said he, retiring. "Do so," replied Mr. Hampden, "and you may add that she is come to *comfort*." Notwithstanding this assurance I perceived in Jonathan's face no abatement of his melancholy. He sighed deeply, and left the room; whilst, oppressed by sensations which some may think weak and romantic, and others ridiculous, I wished myself in my little apartment in Gower-street, with my fifty guineas a quarter for my wants and whims, and freed from the penalty of heirship charged with prejudices to surmount, and discontents to allay.

The appearance of Mrs. Paulin did not compose my spirits. She was in a deep mourning dress, and with suppressed emotions she welcomed me to Rickland Farm. Before she had finished her compliment her voice failed her, and she covered her face. I was silent, for I was troubled. "I have, my dear madam," said she with more composure, "ventured to hope that, by remaining here in this hour of common sorrow, I might be of some use to the sharers in my affliction, and of some service to you; but it may be that my heart too promptly suggested this excuse for apparent officiousness: the truth was, I could not leave the house whilst my dear friend..." She was unable to proceed.

“Come, my dear Mary,” said Mr. Hampden, taking her hand and joining it with mine, “you must endeavour to console her successor, for she needs support. You are wrong to yield thus to a despondency of mind. An event which in the course of nature must happen to all, ought to find us prepared to meet its visitation; and in a life like that of our departed friend, in which an active course of virtue was closed by a resigned old age, we ought rather to contemplate its recompense than to yield to selfish regrets. You must set Mrs. Sedley a good example; for I suspect that she is not altogether a stoic. But where is my boy?” added he with assumed gaiety. “I must introduce him to my client before I proceed to business.”—Mrs. Paulin’s expressive countenance lost its paleness. “I left him very busy above stairs,” replied she, deeply blushing, “preparing Sappho’s breakfast. We cannot make the poor faithful animal take her food, nor keep from her mistress’s room.”—“We will go to him,” observed Mr. Hampden, leading the way, “and be at once at home.” The apartment in question might have assumed without affectation the title of *the library*; for it was filled with books, and furnished with the varied resources of cultivated leisure. Its principal ornament however at that moment was, in my eyes, a lovely boy about four or five years old, who was stretched on the carpet, and, as it appeared, vainly endeavouring to allure a fine spaniel to a bason of bread and milk; and whilst holding the dog by the collar with all his strength with one hand, he caressed her with the other. “Taste it, my poor Sappho,” cried he, unmindful of our entrance, “only taste it; it is sugared.” The animal, impelled by an instinct more powerful than the soft pleadings of the child, still struggled to obtain its liberty, which the opening of the door gave her a chance of effecting. The child more eagerly held her, and Mr. Hampden assisting him he conquered. “Now coax her to eat her breakfast,” said he; “otherwise she will die like mamma Underwood, and then I should grieve more.”—“Do you not see this good lady whom I have brought to comfort your mamma, and to love poor Sappho?” asked Mr. Hampden: “have you nothing to say to her?”—“No; I have only a kiss for her.” He without the smallest embarrassment presented a face of exquisite beauty, and, having kissed me, begged I would take care of Sappho, who would not leave mamma Underwood’s room. A maid servant entered, and he was invited into the garden to feed the birds.

We now proceeded to the business of the day. Mr. Hampden, raising the seals of a cabinet in the room, produced Mrs. Underwood’s last will and testament, in which he was named joint executor with myself. Legacies to her three servants of a hundred pounds each, with her donation to the poor of her parish, and instructions for her interment, constituted the principal objects in it. A codicil written by herself gave to *Mary Pauline Murray*, commonly called *Mrs. Paulin*, and then an inmate of her house, the sum of five hundred pounds, as a tribute to her merit, and a mark of the affection of the donor. For the payment of these several bequests I found three thousand pounds in the public funds. To these necessary preliminaries succeeded the last offices of humanity to the respectable Mrs. Underwood.

CHAPTER V.

IMAGINE me, gentle reader, quietly settled in my new abode, and on those terms of friendship and intimacy with the Hampdens, which convinced me that they were not dissatisfied with their new neighbour. Sappho, without any imputation on her constancy, found in my love and favour a remedy for her grief. My cousin’s prime minister, Mr. Jonathan, contentedly kept his post with even enlarged prerogatives; for Mr. Hampden finding that I was rich enough to keep a post-chaise, and I, that Jonathan had a nephew who could drive one, and assist him in the garden, increased my establishment by this luxury. Mrs. Becket at the head of the kitchen department found her lady as easy to please as the one whom she still regretted; and Mrs. Paulin, apparently contented with Sigismund’s new mamma, had settled into her usual occupations and amusements. It will easily be imagined how much I was surprised, at the end of a few weeks enjoyments, to be asked by Mr. Hampden whether I had concurred in the

commission which Mrs. Paulin had given him, to inquire whether Mr. Thompson the farmer would let his rooms. "And for whom?" asked I with undissembled astonishment. "For herself," answered he. "But it is, I perceive, as my wife said, one of poor Mary's flights, who, fearing you should be weary of her, has formed the design of breaking her own heart, and distressing yours." I confirmed Mr. Hampden's supposition in regard to myself, and he quitted me, perfectly convinced that I meant not to resign my right to Mrs. Paulin without a struggle.

CHAPTER VI.

I HAD not been without the curiosity so naturally arising from the circumstances I have related concerning Mrs. Paulin. Her designation in the codicil to Mrs. Underwood's will had not escaped my notice. Her youth and attractive beauty neither agreed with the title she bore, nor her love of retirement. That she was unhappy was too apparent, although her melancholy was blended with a composure which neither rendered it obtrusive, nor herself a dull companion. Of her virtue I could have no suspicions; for, had I met her unsupported by her friends, I should have pronounced her an innocent woman. On weighing these observations with others which hourly occurred, I thought she was a deserted wife, and, in consequence of an imprudent choice, was left by her own family to all the bitter fruits of disobedience and a too easy credulity. On entering her room, in order to expostulate with her on the subject of my discontent, I found her weeping. "To what cause am I to attribute these tears?" asked I, sitting down by her. "Are you tired of me? and does it distress you that my claims on you for comfort have too much the appearance of legality? Have not I told you in a thousand different ways, that I consider you as Mrs. Underwood's most precious legacy? I now repeat it in a language you must comprehend: but if you wish to leave me, say so, and choose your abode; for there will you find that my happiness must spring from yours. It is true, I shall regret your absence, and, it may be," added I, smiling, "wish I had not been the heiress to Mrs. Underwood. How little do you know, my dear Mary," continued I, "the being whom you wish to abandon for rooms in a stranger's house! Is it possible that you have not discovered that you are in a home for life, and sheltered in a bosom neither cold nor capricious?" She gave me her hand, and, sobbing in my bosom, thanked me for an explanation she had not dared to request. "And why not, my love," asked I, "if you perceived ambiguity in my proceedings with you?" "I can hardly tell you," replied she, blushing; "but I thought the little curiosity you discovered was an indication that you took no interest in the fate of a young woman who had more names and titles than one; and I have attributed your kindness to me to your regard for Mrs. Underwood's memory. No tongue can describe what I felt on hearing my dear friend's bequest to me read. Though defamed, and rejected by all my relations, I am not afraid of having my story known to you: but you have not asked even Mrs. Hampden a single question." "Say no more," replied I with eagerness: "I wanted no evidence of your innocence beyond my cousin's report and the affection of these Hampdens. Whenever you please to favour me with your confidence I shall be gratified; and in the mean time banish from your mind every fear for the future; *your* child is *mine*, and as a daughter and mother we will share this asylum of peace and contentment." "It is as I thought," answered she, deeply blushing: "you think Sigismund is my son; but indeed he is not, though my life is only valuable to me as it is the means of his preservation. You must be informed of the circumstances of my life in order to account for my attachment to him, and my disgrace with my family: I cannot be easy till you acquit me." "Well," replied I, "this history of your life must be postponed for to-day; Mr. Hampden having promised to introduce a beau at my table. He tells me your favourite major Oldcastle is returned home; and I shall soon discover whether he has not had something to answer for in your choice of the lodgings in question." "I will not deny it," answered she, smiling through her tears, "nor will you be surprised when you see him, that I wished, when no longer the inmate of this blessed roof, to find a father under his. I could live with Mrs. Hampden: but her husband's connexions are

numerous, they receive a great deal of company; and your poor Pauline wishes only to live unnoticed and unknown.” “It is time for my ‘poor Pauline’ to dress for our guests,” replied I in a cheerful tone, “and to believe half her sorrows the effects of too timid a spirit; and also that Mrs. Sedley is not of the number of those whom she wishes to avoid.” Her tears redoubled, but they were tears of gratitude; and I left her to compose her spirits.

CHAPTER VII.

I HAD every reason to imagine that the favour I found in major Oldcastle’s opinion, from the first hour he was a guest at my table, arose from Sigismund’s introduction of me; who had no sooner received his old friend’s caresses, and inquired after *Leo*, a large Newfoundland dog, the major’s friend and companion, than, turning with vivacity towards me, he eagerly recounted my goodness to poor Sappho, whom I had consoled, and who *slept* instead of *moaning* in my bedchamber. “Then she has forgotten Mrs. Underwood,” observed the major with a suppressed sigh. “Oh, no!” replied the innocent child: “we all remember her, and love her for sending mamma Sedley to us.” I soon perceived the effects of this observation. The major relaxed into pleasantness, and displayed the complacency of manners which results from an acquaintance with polished life and cultivated society. When our visitors departed, I observed to Mrs. Paulin, as a proof that I partook of the curiosity common to my sex, that I had found mine strongly excited by the major, and wished to know what had been his motives for living in retirement. “He has quitted the service many years,” replied she, “and, I believe, for some time lived more like a recluse than he does at present. I have been told by Mrs. Underwood, that early disappointments in life, owing to the treachery of a friend, had disgusted him with the world; and that, from an excess of sensibility, he had acquired an asperity of manners which unfitted him for society. Time has confirmed him in those habits, and in a bluntness which few are disposed to tolerate; and overlooking in their turn a man who proudly asserts his independence, and his claims to respect, they settle the account of a merit they cannot set aside, by calling him a *cynic*, and affecting to believe that a heart of melting compassion for the woes of his fellow-creatures is obdurate to the feelings of nature. A similarity in the leading circumstances of their lives soon united Mrs. Underwood and this gentleman in an intercourse and friendship which nothing could have severed but the event that has lately taken place. Her sweet and gentle spirit greatly contributed to soften his severity of manners; for I have heard that he was, on fixing near her, absorbed in melancholy. You will find from time to time his contempt of wealth, fashion, and greatness, break forth: his maxims, as these relate to his judgment of the world, class all mankind in two divisions—the *fool* and the *knave*. I think, however, your vanity will not be humbled by the place you will occupy in his list; for he very benevolently admits all whom he favours with peculiar regard, to take their posts with the former of these epithets.”—Mrs. Paulin paused.—“You have,” said I, smiling, “awakened as you may conceive a *froward child*, whom it will weary you to quiet again. But I have never been perfectly at my ease since I first heard of my favour with Mrs. Underwood. Curiosity has not slept, in respect to those motives which influenced her in the preference of one who I may say was a stranger to her, whilst she had within her reach friends to whom she was closely united. I have been so much engaged in business, and Mr. Hampden has been so often on the wing, that I have not had an opportunity of making the inquiries I wished.” “It is late,” observed my companion, “and my little story may not contribute to your night’s repose. We will have it over the tea-board to-morrow morning.” I submitted, and she retired for the night.

Certain indications, with which I was too well acquainted, gave me to understand that I might spare myself the trouble of seeking my pillow; for my *mind* was not *sleepy*. Time and management had however succeeded in giving me some power of control over those thoughts which had been the frequent

companions of the widowed Mrs. Sedley; and I diverted their approach by thinking of the friend who seemed to be the destined inmate of my bosom. She had that day displayed new talents; for she had sung and played on the harp with powers of voice and with an execution which had surprised me. I recalled to my mind her person, as she gracefully touched the instrument, and a saint Cecilia rose to my imagination. I remembered the impressive tones of her voice, and the joy which animated her countenance on seeing the old major; and I said to myself, "Surely this creature must be an orphan: no parent could reject such a daughter!"—I now wondered that I had not better discriminated the character and lineaments of Sigismund, than to believe that Mrs. Paulin was his mother. She was fair; her eyes and hair were in perfect harmony with the delicate texture of her skin: but nature, in order to finish her work more completely, had deepened the colouring in the arched brow and eye-lids. Sigismund was of a clear brown complexion, with dark hazle eyes, and a cheek of the peach's hue; active, and sometimes unruly: and with a fearlessness of danger, and a trust in every one around him, he exhibited hourly the captivating graces of a vigorous intellect and warm affections.—To these traits of his mind I opposed the meekness and softness of his supposed mother; and again I wondered that I had taken up the idea of their being related; for Mrs. Paulin did not appear to me more than twenty years of age, and Sigismund was in his fifth. The clock struck one, and reminded me that late hours were not in my physician's prescription.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE serenity with which Pauline, for it is time to drop her assumed title, officiated at the breakfast-table the following morning, gave me no cause for apprehension; and no sooner was Sigismund dismissed for a walk than she placed before me a manuscript.—“This,” said she, “was written for the information of Mrs. Underwood, who insisted that I should have it in my own possession, on an occasion which I shall have to mention in the particulars I am about to relate to you relative to your cousin. You will also, my dear Mrs. Sedley, learn better, from perusing my little history, to estimate the value of a gentleman of the name of Furnival, who was Mrs. Underwood’s counsellor in her last worldly concerns, than from the most elaborate praise my gratitude can dictate. This gentleman,” continued Pauline, “to whom I am indebted for more than life, has been for years the intimate friend of Mr. and Mrs. Hampden. He is in the law, and, with acknowledged talents in his profession, he stands unrivalled in the world for his integrity and benevolence. On conducting me to Mrs. Hampden’s, he paid his friends a visit which they had long solicited; and in a very short space of time we were both domesticated, not only in their hospitable abode but here also. From that time Mr. Furnival’s visits have been annually made during the summer vacation. Last autumn, some time before he returned to town, he was with us at breakfast; and according to custom, on our producing our needle work he looked for a book. He was undecided in his choice of our amusement, but at length his eye was caught by one now in his possession: it was an elegant edition of Virgil. ‘How is this?’ cried he, opening it: ‘are you not contented with understanding the greater part of the living languages, that you invade on the dead ones?’ Mrs. Underwood laughed, and replied that he well named Latin authors to her, for it was indeed a dead language to her ear. ‘It is a book,’ added she, ‘which is useless to me; perhaps unfriendly:’—her gaiety sunk—‘but I bought it for the sake of its unfortunate and last proprietor.’ Mr. Furnival was during this time examining the arms, and the name on the title page. ‘I have heard much of this *Philip Sedley*,’ said he: ‘he was a man of singular merit, and unquestioned bravery: of what nature were those misfortunes to which you have alluded?’—‘Not of that sort,’ replied Mrs. Underwood with emotion, ‘that are likely to overwhelm in ruin a man of singular merit or of distinguished courage: but I think you must mean his son. I know he left one to struggle with the difficulties resulting from his father’s misconduct.’—‘Probably,’ answered Mr. Furnival; ‘for it is a recent event which led me to an acquaintance with major Sedley’s name. A friend of mine was employed to settle the terms of a life-annuity for his wife, some few months before he died. He was much pleased and sensibly interested by their manners, and tenderness for each other, and frequently mentioned the widow to me as a deserving woman labouring under a loss which could never be repaired in this world.’—‘Do you not know her maiden name?’ asked Mrs. Underwood with eagerness. ‘Yes; it was, by her register, Frances-Charlotte Walsingham,’ answered Mr. Furnival.—‘I am then right in my conjectures,’ observed Mrs. Underwood with visible agitation, and wiping away her tears. ‘she is my only surviving relation, and the daughter of one I *once* loved. You will not wonder at my tears, Mr. Furnival, when I add, that my life has been coloured by events in which this lady’s mother had too active a part for my peace—and I fear I ought to say for my *forgiveness*. What she thought a duty of friendship, I received as the merciless machinations of a concealed rival to obtain the affections of a man on whom I depended for my hopes of happiness. But we will, if you please, drop the subject for the present.’—‘I have good reason,” continued Pauline, “for saying that Mr. Furnival had instructions for making her will the next day; and that she finally settled her affairs at that time. Thus I have accounted to you for Mrs. Underwood’s conduct, and have only to add, that some little time before her death she employed me in searching in her cabinet for letters. She saw them consumed in the fire; and with a languid smile observed, that love letters of more than thirty-five years date would add little to the annals of Cupid, and much less show her wisdom in having preserved them. I saw that they were signed *Philip Sedley*. She

read to me with attention one or two from your mother, remarking the style and sentiments as she proceeded; and with a deep sigh she added, 'I was every way deceived, Pauline, and, it may be, have harboured resentment where gratitude was due.' She desired me to burn these letters also. From this time she frequently mentioned you, regretting that it was too late for her to unravel an ænigma which had confounded her understanding, although it could not render her unjust to the innocent. Mr. Hampden was informed of her intentions in your favour, and ordered to give you immediate notice of her death. This, my dear madam, is only one trait among many of the heart of a woman, who could not have died in peace with a lurking enmity in her bosom. I have now only to entreat you to read my papers," continued she rising: "they have been hitherto propitious to my wishes; and I trust that truth will establish me in your regard. I am going to seek the truant, and we will bring the major home with us." So saying, she withdrew, and left me to my curiosity.

CHAPTER IX.

I OPENED the pages; and found the first addressed 'To Mrs. Underwood; with the Life of Mary Pauline Murray.'

MY DEAR MADAM,

To have been sheltered from ignominy and protected by your generous cares, when abandoned by my natural connexions, is the grateful theme on which you have commanded me to be silent. I obey; for I know no language which can properly express the sensations of a mind conscious of its innocence, yet branded by suspicion, and which in the hour of its humiliation finds a refuge where its truth is admitted, and its hopes are renewed. But is it not permitted me to enumerate the blessings with which Providence has seasoned this trial of my faith and trust? Has not Heaven, in its mercy, raised up for my support friends who encompass me with their love and kindness? Can Pauline, the cherished Pauline, recollect that she has been insulted and degraded, without paying the due tribute of praise to Heaven for opening to her the paths of peace and safety? I cannot pursue these thoughts. I am overpowered by a gratitude so hourly excited. Your poor Pauline must be silent, and leave to Heaven the care of recompensing her benefactors.

But you wish to have before you the detail of events which you have only heard in part. You wish, ah my revered friend, such were your words! to know *your* Mary Pauline Murray, from her cradle, being certain that from that hour she was destined to be *your child*.

I have, my dear—shall I say—*mother*, often listened with not only attention but assent to your opinions on the influence of early impressions on children, as these regard the moral character and particular biasses of the adult. I think that in the history of my infancy the truth of your observations will be established: and in the errors of my youth you will trace the careless hand, to say no worse of it, which consigned me to the guidance of another, by whom I happened to be treated with fondness, though without judgment. Impressed with this idea you will, I fear, find me prolix if not tedious in my account of the first years of my life. But I feel the necessity of appealing to that candour which will consider the seed that has been *sown* before it pronounces the soil *unprofitable*; and to that charity, which will not condemn the too early shoots to perish, because they came not in season, nor are matured by wisdom. Knowing, as I do, that my mind possesses with its simplicity the rectitude which only requires to be regulated, I disdain a humility which belongs properly to depravity. *Your* Pauline acknowledges no

errors but such as your wisdom will correct, nor any faults that virtue needs to blush at. To her tribunal she hastens, and to her representative she appeals with unlimited confidence.

My parents at the period of my birth had already four children, two boys and two girls: the youngest of my sisters is eight years my senior. An extensive and successful commerce enabled my father to live at his ease, and promised him a provision for his family's future support, although it was not of such a sort as to class him in that line of consideration by which, in such a mercantile town as Liverpool, the more opulent *trader* is distinguished from his neighbour. He was however contented in his station, and constantly engaged in his business, and conceived that his respectability was as acknowledged as his credit was solid. He perceived no defects in an education which had gradually conducted him to affluence, nor could he discover the advantages of a more liberal one, having, as he said, frequently heard these learned gentlemen speechifying in the town-hall to show their wit, whilst they neglected their day-book and ledger; and instead of the *gold chain* they so eagerly sought, they were often entangled where their learning was of little use. According to my father's creed, every man knew enough, who understood his calling; and every man was a good man, who honestly paid his debts, supported his family, and employed the poor. But my father's opinions, though little in favour of a more enlarged plan of education, stood in no need of correction on the side of morality. A plain understanding and his Bible had taught him, that he who neglected his household was worse "than a heathen;" that honesty and industry were the only road to comfort; and that in serving God was comprised serving his neighbour. Thus guided my father was at least removed from the poor man's reproach, although his bosom did not glow with universal philanthropy; and notwithstanding he was not the enlightened guide of his children, they were the objects of his love and indulgent protection. In his hours of relaxation he was easy to please, though despotic in his demands. A few plain friends, a plentiful table, with pipes and tobacco, constituted his social enjoyments; which he rather too often observed that he paid for by working hard; and he thanked God, that neither he nor his children were in danger of being "choked with a baker's or butcher's bill."

My mother was of a more ambitious spirit: she had been a beauty, and was still a very handsome woman. She had prudently given up a train of *admirers* in favour of a man who was willing to marry her although portionless: but she had discovered that my father's generosity had certain limits; and after a few trials she submitted to live in Mr. Murray's "*hugger mugger*" way.

Some years of prosperous returns from a purchase in the West Indies, in which my father had a considerable share, convinced my mother that her husband was not a mean man. No opposition was made to her improvements in the furniture of the house, provided the smoking-parlour was left undisturbed; nor was any article of dress noticed, "if it was good and durable." These indulgences gave place to more ostensible wishes. "Alderman Butterfont's children were educated in boarding-schools; his lady had a country house, and his one horse chaise was laid aside for a handsome coach." For a time these observations were silenced, by my father's saying, in a tone which my mother understood, "It is all true, Becky, but I am not alderman Butterfont; nor will alderman Butterfont ever be the man your husband hopes to be." My expected appearance produced however a compliance in one point, which my mother had given up as lost; her husband having warmly insisted that her girls might make good wives like herself, who had never been in a boarding-school; and as for his boys, he would take care to bring them forward in the learning they would need. But my mother had been unfortunate from the time of my sister Judith's birth, and her health indicated no better success with me. She spoke of the fatigues to which the cares of her family exposed her, and with some tears of her apprehensions. My two sisters were immediately placed in the same school with the miss Butterfont's; and my youngest brother, a

turbulent boy, was sent to the West Indies in order to cure him of his predilection for the sea, or to confirm him in his preference of a sailor's life. This respite from labour, with the gratification of her wishes, was repaid by my being born a healthy child: but my mother was advised by her female friends not to think of nursing me, as it would infallibly destroy her. Instances innumerable were brought forward in support of the opinion that children might do well on panada, and my mother preferred the experiment to having "the plague of a wet nurse in the house." On the third day of my existence, having been starved out of my resistance to the pap-spoon, I was consigned to the care of nurse Nightly, who with a sick and helpless daughter lived in an obscure part of the town. My removal, as it happened, neither shortened my mother's confinement nor corrected my father's opinions in favour of mothers suckling their children; for his wife had a milk fever, and from other alarming symptoms even fears for her life were entertained. Happily country air, with the purchase of alderman Butterfont's villa and coach, who had suddenly become insolvent, so entirely established her health, that before the winter my mother recovered her usual spirits, and was perfectly satisfied that, although she had paid somewhat dearly for the secret, yet it had produced an indemnification fully equivalent to her wishes; for she had learned the direct road to my honest father's compliances, by being on the brink of the grave and remaining delicate.

CHAPTER X.

THE tender cares of my nurse, aided by a natural goodness of constitution, reconciled me to my food. When I had nearly reached my third year, a circumstance occurred which made me of some importance to my mother, and afforded my father an opportunity of displaying his wealth. A lady of the name of Maisin lived in a handsome house in the country near our summer residence. She was the widow of a native of Switzerland, who had passed the greater part of his life in Paris. At his death she returned to England, leaving her only child, a daughter, with the mother of her late husband, for the purpose of finishing her education, and consoling the aged and fond parent for the loss of her son. Mrs. Maisin was remotely related to my father, and on her first return to her own country had applied to him in those difficulties incident to a new establishment. My father had been useful and friendly; but her remoteness from us, joined to a love of retirement and a depression of spirits, had prevented an intimacy. Mademoiselle Maisin was in the mean time engaged, with the approbation of both her parents, to marry monsieur du Rivage, the associate in the banking-house of her father, who, although nearly double her age, had gained her heart. The sudden death of her grandmother prevented the celebration of the marriage; and in order to restore the young and affianced bride to health and spirits, which had been materially injured by her grief, monsieur du Rivage and his sister accompanied her on a visit to her mother. The beauty and accomplishments of this young lady, the gay and amiable manners of her female companion, who, although approaching to fifty years of age, claimed the prerogatives of youth and the respect due to a cultivated understanding, soon rendered Mrs. Maisin's abode the residence of cheerfulness, and the resort of her fashionable neighbours.

My mother, whose gradual progress to gentility, with her claims of relationship to Mrs. Maisin, found an easy access to the gay parties formed for the stranger's amusement, became elated by her intercourse with a family to whom she was indebted for her self-consequence; and availing herself of the feeble interest of her deserted infant, she urged to my father the necessity of my baptism, and proposed to him her darling project of giving an entertainment to Mrs. Maisin's family, which should include all those of their select friends who had noticed them. This permission was granted with his usual indulgence, and even with an injunction "to do the thing handsomely." On this occasion my sisters were sent for from their school in order to be prepared for exhibition, and my nurse received orders to bring

me to Wellsdown, the name of my father's country house, some days preceding the ceremony, that I might be equipped in a style which had not been deemed necessary in "Dock-lane."

The amiable mademoiselle Maisin, with that warmth of affection so congenial to the heart of a being destined by nature for a mother, found in me an attraction which prepossessed her in my favour, even before my christening robe and laced cap were finished. She requested the favour of answering for me at the baptismal font; and my mother, flattered by this condescension, was for a time proud of her little Mary. My nurse, elated by the notice I had gained, was eloquent in my praise, and, without intending it, excited in the bosom of my future godmother an interest in my fate, with a surprise that my mother could so unaccountably give up to another the pleasure of having such an infant in her house. At the font I was presented by mademoiselle Maisin with her name, and my baptismal register made out as Mary Pauline Murray; monsieur du Rivage answering as my godfather.

The ceremony being over, my nurse, regaled with a good dinner and gratified by my father's kindness, returned with her precious charge to "Dock-lane," leaving my mother to the joys of her fête-champêtre.

CHAPTER XI.

WE were, however, both contented; for my happiness was in Dock-lane, and my nurse was loaded with my godmother's gifts—a purse containing no less than ten guineas, a gold locket and beads for me, a new gown for Tabitha her lame daughter, with some muslin for herself, which, to use her own words, was "fitter for a duchess," and which I suspect was appropriated to a being she regarded with an idolatry beyond that which any rank would have produced! It would have been no matter of surprise to me, when qualified to appreciate justly the mind of that friend Heaven had given me, if, in her donations as my godmother, humanity had made them more liberal and extensive; but my nurse talked more of my perfections, than of her daughter's sufferings and total incapacity to earn her bread. This unfortunate creature had been subject to convulsion-fits from her infancy: these, at the age of fourteen, yielded to a paralytic attack which deadened half her limbs, whilst the acute sense of suffering seemed to have acquired force from its concentrated power of acting, and from time to time she was liable to tortures from spasms in her stomach. Her patience and piety were established long before my birth; but young as I was when I last beheld her, I still retain a perfect recollection of her mild and placid countenance, and a grateful remembrance of her kindness to me. Methinks I now see her before me neatly dressed in her humble attire, and hear her voice, whilst with smiles she encouraged her pupil, and, with an animation which spoke the spirit that the ruined tenement confined, would talk to me of Heaven, and the happiness prepared for good people. Her Bible was her consolation, my improvement her amusement, and the labour of her poor feeble hands knitting sale-stockings, for which she gained fourpence the pair; which, as she observed, was a blessing, as this pittance supplied her with a costly remedy for the spasms in her stomach, and thus spared her good mother's purse. My friend Tabitha freely communicated to me her knowledge, and, I scruple not to add, a portion of her own innate goodness of heart; for before I could speak the name of the insect I could have crushed, she had taught me to respect its life and ease.

Enabled by the bounty of my godmother and my father's kindness, my nurse changed her abode for one she thought more airy for me and Tabitha. The allurements were powerful—a little garden in which flourished one large walnut-tree, and a neat cottage, which made one of several built on a piece of ground at the outskirts of the town, and to each of which was annexed an equal proportion of the ground which had been a garden; but, being too much exposed to the depredations of its neighbours, became a

better speculation to the owner by building on it. Our walnut-tree was the gift of fortune, and the envy of our less lucky neighbours. My nurse's taste for flowers soon added to this advantage, and the neatness of our garden attracted the notice of every passing eye. Here Tabitha had her seat, and here it was expected that I should regain that strength and activity which for some months had yielded to the maladies incident to my age, amongst which was the small-pox. Happily, although I had caught the infection in Dock-lane, I had the disease in its mildest form, and the vestiges of it disappeared before my strength was recruited.

CHAPTER XII.

IN this situation I attained my fifth year. Tabitha's knitting-needles were not unfrequently found rusty in her work, for I was become a prodigy of learning in "Cabbagefield-row," and could read as well as my instructress. One sorrow alone hung over this happy period of my life. This was my Sunday visit to my mother: the sight of my white frock and red shoes was the signal for my tears, and my perverseness became, at my father's house, the indication of a stupidity which mortified my nurse and disgusted my mother. In vain was I entreated to repeat the psalm and the collect I could say so perfectly, in vain tempted by promised rewards to tell my father and mother the pretty story of the red-breast. I was stubbornly silent and inactive till the moment of departure, when, with a joy which I took no pains to conceal, I quitted the presence of the fine lady my mother, whose very looks intimidated me, and whose observations constantly discovered some blemish in me.

My nurse, no less weary of these visits than myself, complained, as the winter approached, of the fatigue of carrying me a long mile. Her plea was admitted. My mother's visiting list was increased, my father was in the corporation, and my sister Becky had a lover, and would soon be married. Yielding to these several indispensable duties, my mother increased my pension, and all was complete happiness at "Cabbagefield-row."

The sedentary habits to which poor Tabitha was condemned, insensibly became mine as the winter drew us from the garden. The fascinating stories of Joseph and his brethren, of Naomi and her daughter, of Daniel with the lions, riveted me to her knee; and with a memory which astonished my partial friend, and which often tired her, I exacted in "the thrice and thrice told tale" a precision which admitted of no abridgement. These attainments, and my progress in reading, were the inexhaustible subjects of nurse's conversation, when my wants or her demands led her to my father's house: but as these reports went not beyond the kitchen, my stupidity and sullenness were not forgotten in the parlour.

I was interrupted one morning whilst feeding my robins, by being called into the house, to see a present my mamma had sent me; the footman having at the same time brought a formal invitation to dinner, for the anniversary of the new year, then within a few days: a smart bonnet and cloak with a fine muff were displayed before my eyes, by way of softening to me this bad news; but, turning from the gift with terror, I burst into tears. Nurse, moved to pity, pleaded the length of the road and the hazard of my taking cold; when to her amazement she was told that Mrs. Maisin would take us up in her carriage in her way to my father's and that we were to be sent home in the evening. This silenced nurse, and the servant departed with no very favourable opinion of my docility.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE day of tribulation arrived. I was dressed clinging to Tabitha's knees, and my fine new muff was thrown indignantly on the floor, when Mrs. Maisin's carriage stopped at the door. Nurse, her honest face flushed with the ineffectual labours of the morning, took her seat; and I, awed into silence, with suppressed sobs, blubbered cheeks, and inflamed eyes, was placed in my corner. "What has been the matter with this poor little girl?" asked Mrs. Maisin compassionately.—"Nothing, madam," answered nurse; "only she does not like to be with *strangers*: she is as cheerful as a bird with us; but she will, I hope, remember what she promised Tabitha, and behave prettily now."—"Yes," replied I, struggling with my rising tears, "I will not grieve her." No further notice was taken of my sorrow; but there were

tones of kindness and sympathy in whatever Mrs. Maisin said to me, that beguiled me of it, and by the time I reached my mother's drawing-room I was composed and sociable with my new friend. But the sight of a number of persons collected in the drawing-room entirely intimidated me, and with terror I clung to my nurse. My mother ordered me to make my curtsy to the company; and I burst into tears. "Poor thing!" said my mother to a lady next her, "I doubt very much whether we shall ever make any thing of her: this is always the case when she is noticed."—"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Maisin in a quick tone: "the child is only frightened. Come to me, my pretty Mary." "I would rather go *home*," answered I sorrowfully. "So you shall," answered she, "very soon, if you do not cry." She drew me gently towards her, and I did not resist. "Whom do you love?" asked my sister Becky. "Tabitha," answered I. "And whom besides?" "Mammy Nightly." "And do you love no one besides?" "No," replied I, alarmed by her tone of voice. She laughed, and said I was an "odd little body." During this time a gentleman was examining my wrists and ancles. The pressure of his touch, though gentle, alarmed me, and with an imploring look I asked Mrs. Maisin what he was going to do to me. He instantly desisted, and she again soothed me. I had now finished my visit of ceremony; for my mother rang the bell, and ordered the servant to carry me to my nurse: and, joyous as the vagrant bird which a happy chance has reconducted to its parental nest, I left the room. The kindness of the servants soon banished my timidity. I became sportive and talkative, and, treated with dainties, enjoyed the new year's day. One of the maid servants gave me a little basket, in which was neatly wrapped up a Christmas pie, and some cake for Tabitha. This favour rendered me caressing and grateful, and I told my stories and played off my little talents. I was even sorry when nurse told me that the carriage was ready, and that I was to go home. A kiss offered and received had warmed my little heart, and with a face glowing with contentment I was equipped once more in my new bonnet and cloak: but my basket was my special care, and I took it on my arm. At this moment I was ordered into the drawing-room to take leave. Nurse insisted I should take my muff, and I entered with more courage, being under her protection. I received my mother's kiss: then running to Mrs. Maisin, I told her with infant loquacity what I had gotten for Tabitha; and throwing down the muff on the carpet, I displayed my treasures. My father was pleased: he called me his good little girl, and gave me two half-crowns for my basket. Unmindful of the observation I attracted, I placed myself at Mrs. Maisin's feet, and she gave me paper in which to wrap up the half-crowns in imitation of the pie. But the carriage was now announced, and with a tender embrace I was quitting her, when she said, "Do not forget your pretty muff, Mary."—"You may have it," answered I, "I do not want it; for it will be a long time before I shall come here again." Nurse, ashamed of my disregard of my mother's gift, took up the muff, and retreated with her charge.

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM this time I was visited by doctor Hawksbury, a young physician, who was the gentleman that had examined my limbs so carefully. He had observed they were not strong; and I was placed under his care by my good father. I was now invited to exercise by every toy that could allure me, and a diet prescribed which was not less useful to Tabitha than to myself. My father also came frequently to see me, and I ranked him among my best friends; for he sent me a rocking-horse, and taught me himself to spin a humming-top. I was not mistaken, when in my contempt of the muff I predicted that I should not want it for some time: for the summer passed without any invitation to dine at Wellsdown. This neglect was however amply made up by my father's frequent calls, and his even smoking his pipe under the walnut-tree; and with my Sunday visit to Mrs. Maisin, I had no cause for discontent. The ostensible reason held out by my mother for not recalling me home was my sister Becky's approaching nuptials, and an excursion to Buxton. On the marriage taking place, which was in the autumn, I was remembered; and with the expectations resulting from Mrs. Maisin's commendations of me, I entered the drawing-room

under her protection with more timidity than terror. My sister's lover was present, and she introduced the little rustic to Mr. Budgely, the affianced bridegroom. He was a fat, good-humoured-looking man; and attracted by his notice of me, and his dexterity in conveying an apple from my grasp into the sleeve of his coat, we grew familiar; and all was well for a time, except when I was called to order in my mirth by my mother, who did not like noise. Mr. Budgely taking the hint now told me fine stories of the waxwork in Fleet-street, and unluckily finished by showing me, as he called it, "the way to Lunnon:" which it may be necessary to explain to you, by telling you that this was lifting me from the ground by my ears. The pain occasioned by this trick was too great for my philosophy, and I screamed violently that he had "killed my throat." The poor man, who had not the least intention of hurting, goodnatureedly soothed me. But he was desired to desist; for that my temper was such that kindness would only make me worse. I was sent from the room, and my father followed me. My peace was however made before dinner; but I was on my good behaviour, and remained a fixture till the visit finished.

I need not enlarge, my dear madam, on the natural effects of an infancy thus regulated: nor will you fail to draw from it those inferences which have occurred to myself. My emancipation from my narrow bounds of knowledge was yet deferred. My mother accompanied Mrs. Budgely to town, and she thought I could not be better than where I was. I often think of the gleanings from which I acquired food for my restless curiosity and expanding faculties. Mrs. Maisin passed this winter in Paris, and I was left altogether to Tabitha. She was indefatigable in procuring books from her humble friends; and by her means I became acquainted with "The Mirror of Chastity," "Argulaus and Parthenia," "Valentine and Orson," and "The Life of Doctor Faustus," a famous conjurer. To these marvellous books succeeded a much better, but not less unsuitable one for a girl of my age, whose reasoning powers were yet in embryo, and who had not a single conception which did not spring from her heart and imagination. Mrs. Rowe's Letters from the Dead to the Living fell into Tabitha's hands; and, absorbed in the pleasure they afforded her, I read in this charming book so often that I imbibed a portion of its enthusiasm. The return of Mrs. Maisin in the spring, and my mother's leisure, were followed by my leaving my paradise in Cabbagefield-row. I will pass over my grief on this occasion. The treatment which I received from my mother could not however be called severe; for she was seldom at leisure to correct or encourage me. My sister Judy was become her idol; and my mother saw no advantage in confining a beautiful girl in a school, who had a good chance of making her fortune before she was eighteen. Judith became in consequence her mother's companion, and the sharer in her amusements, before she was sixteen. My enjoyments were so far from being restricted by my sister's leaving her school, that they were augmented. Judith was as fond of reading as Tabitha, and a new field of literary improvement was opened to me from the circulating library. But there is no human pursuit unmixed with disappointment and vexation: my chance of partaking of Judy's banquet depended upon accidents which I could not control. At one time the novel escaped me in the very climax of distress; at another, at the end of the first volume, &c. Teased by these frequent interruptions, my ingenuity found out an expedient, and from the resources of an imagination which from my birth had been exercised I finished the story in my own way; the heroine was raised to the pinnacle of earthly happiness, and her oppressors were covered with ignominy.

CHAPTER XV.

I HAD reached my eleventh year in this state of mental neglect, but as it had occasionally been obviated by Mrs. Maisin: she had taught me a little French, and I had read with her Goldsmith's Natural History abridged for the use of children. She had in vain urged my parents to send me to a good school. But I was become necessary to my father's comforts, and my mother had entirely lost her predilection in

favour of boarding-schools. A serious indisposition with which my father was at this time attacked, rendered me even useful to him; and I heard with exultation the praises of the little nurse from his physician doctor Hawksbury, who was the intimate of the family and my great favourite, he having much relieved Tabitha from the dreadful pains in her stomach. Whether it arose from a jealousy of my growing favour in the invalid's room, or whether from my father's frequently observing that I read the newspapers as well as the town clerk, and could better tell him the meaning of French words than Judy, I cannot say; but I was sent on a visit to Mrs. Maisin's, and Judith took her station in the sick room. The experiment however did not answer, notwithstanding poor Judith had a nervous fever; the doctor could only cure my father; and some offence being taken from my mother's being informed indirectly that the doctor was engaged to marry a lady to whom he had been long attached, he was dismissed, and another physician employed: from that time I saw my good friend the doctor very seldom at our house. The secret however at length reached me; "miss Judith pined for the doctor."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE sudden illness of Mrs. Maisin, which plunged me into the deepest sorrow, became the æra of my rational existence. Although the intelligence of her danger met with no delay, her daughter did not arrive at the house till after she had breathed her last. Neither my father nor my mother had been deficient in acts of kindness to the deceased, and they were at hand to receive the afflicted madame du Rivage, in order to prevail on her to take up her abode with them till after the funeral. This offer of friendship was declined; but my godmother in her sorrow remembered me, and requested my company to share in it. It may be that I was useful to the mourner; for, unacquainted with grief, I had not learned to suppress mine, and I spoke of the loss of my tender friend with all the pathos of nature, and madame du Rivage became fond of a being who was never weary of talking of her mother. The succession to a large fortune, and the business incidental to it, detained my godmother some weeks in England; during which time I was constantly with her. Monsieur du Rivage at this period was approaching his sixtieth year; but he had not accelerated the effects of time by his follies. A remarkably fine person, equal spirits, and a cheerful compliance with the modes and usages of polite life, gave him an air of youth without lessening his dignity. He became fond of his wife's Pauline; and she flattered by this partial favour, amused him by her jargon of French and English, and by a returning gaiety of spirits contributed to divert madame du Rivage's mind from its sadness. "Ma chère mère, et mon père," were grown familiar epithets; and unmindful of the hour which was to separate her from those on whom she leaned for gratifications hitherto unknown to her, she enjoyed the present, and insensibly assimilated her manners to those of her elegant friends. But monsieur du Rivage, now pressed by his concerns in Paris, prepared to leave England, and my regrets commenced: these were so little spared, that I fretted myself ill, and even alarmed madame du Rivage. Her compassion effected my recovery; for I was informed that she had gained my parents' consent to take me to Paris with her. All was enchantment from this hour; and with a tear paid to my good father for his sacrifice, and a farewell visit to Tabitha and her mother, which was softened by the munificence of my godmother, who left a commission with doctor Hawksbury to pay them for life ten pounds per annum, I quitted England with friends never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE succeeding six years of my life were marked by such favours by the great Disposer of events, that, whilst my bosom glows with humble gratitude for the blessings which then surrounded me, my spirits sink at the recollection of those changes which have clouded the bright prospect before me. My intercourse with my father had been punctually kept up; and apparently contented with my happiness, he

employed no arguments for my return home. Monsieur and madame du Rivage had been explicit with him and my mother in their views relative to me; and I was considered by all their connexions in Paris as their adopted child. I have reason to believe that in this preference of me had been included their own plans of future comfort. Madame du Rivage had never had the hopes of being a mother; and her husband cheerfully acceded to a project from which with herself he expected comfort. His fortune was ample, and his few connexions in Switzerland too remote to interest him. A plan of retirement from the fatigues of a banking-house had for some time been the object of their wishes. Both loved the country; both were refined in their tastes, and looked forward to the period when these might be gratified without interruption from the bustle and claims of the world. Their hopes in me were not ill-founded; for, granting to me only a common capacity and a pure heart, they well understood that a pupil of theirs could not be altogether unworthy of them. Gratified by my undivided affection, and constantly occupied in their tender cares of me, I received, on entering into my seventeenth year, a *proof* of their generosity. I was told that madame du Rivage from that time had destined for my benefit a sum of money in the English funds, which had been left to her from an aunt, and which was secured to her particular but unconditional use, by being in trust and standing in her maiden name. Without therefore losing sight of those claims which they conceived I still had on my father's justice, I was given to understand that my modes of life with them had in some measure removed me from the mediocrity in which my father would probably leave his family; and that, in order to provide me with a little independence of my own to manage, they meant to appropriate the interest of this sum to my particular use. My acknowledgments for this favour were followed by my being promised an excursion to England to see my friends, and I learned that during madame du Rivage's absence her husband intended to put in execution his views of retiring from Paris.

Elated by the hope of seeing a parent endeared to my memory by a thousand acts of kindness, and to whom duty gave claims I had no inclination to reject, I lost no time in communicating this joyful intelligence to my father. His reply to this letter was as usual affectionate; but it wore an air of dejection which touched my heart. "He hoped he should live to embrace his child. But his comfort was, she stood secure in the love of those who would never abandon her. He had been *poorly* for some weeks; but my letter had cheered him, and the sight of me would renew his days." Alas! I had not the last embrace. A letter from my mother's attorney announced his death to me within three weeks after the date of his letter. A copy of my father's will soon followed, in which madame du Rivage's adopted daughter had been entirely overlooked: a codicil added in my father's hand-writing, and annexed to the will a few days before he took to his bed, is prefaced in words to this effect: "In order to provide for any exigency of fortune which may occur to set aside the hopes and prospects of a child I consider at this moment as being amply provided for by those who have cherished her as a child, I leave to my wife ten thousand pounds, in order that she may be enabled the more effectually to assist her children, or *any individual child* who may need her cares and support." My father had disposed of the remainder of his property by bequeathing legacies of five thousand pounds to each of my brothers and sisters. The house at Wellsdown, with the farm of about two hundred and fifty pounds per annum, had apparently been left as my mother's future provision, till this codicil was made, and for the execution of which my father's property in the West Indies stood charged. Monsieur and madame du Rivage were in the first instance surprised by the extent of my father's fortune, and in the second much offended by his forgetfulness of me. My mother's letter was not better calculated to please them. It contained a detail of the grievances to which she had been exposed by the favour and confidence of her deceased husband; her eldest son thinking he had been unworthily treated; and she herself thought that the will was in some respects defective for Judith, who her father must know would have an unlimited power to do what she pleased with her money. Rings were the compliment sent with this letter, with her "love to Mary." A postscript

was however added, that “she should be glad to hear from me.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THIS event and its consequences set aside the intention of seeing England: but it hastened madame du Rivage's measures in regard to her gift; and she gave instructions to her mother's solicitor and her law agent for the transfer of the stock into my name, appointing him and doctor Hawksbury as my trustees. This detail, my dear madam, is necessary to my narrative. But I now hasten to events more important to me than the loss of a fortune I had never thought of, or the accession of an income for which I had no use, and which it was determined should be left to accumulate in Mr. Furnival's hands.

The disastrous epoch of the French revolution was now commenced. History had prepared her crimson page; and want of bread had introduced tumult and discontent. This dawn of "Gallic freedom," as it was called by some, and of "Gallic atrocity" by others, could not be viewed with indifference under either of these aspects; for both the enthusiast and the enemy of innovation equally felt themselves impressed by a sense of danger which menaced them. Monsieur du Rivage had long foreseen the storm; but, engaged in very extensive connexions, he had been unable to secure his retreat from the commotion. He was the friend of liberty, but perceived not her approach in a reform which levelled with so much fury every established regulation of order and justice. He continued to act with his usual reserve, admitting to his table only those to whom he was attached; and amongst this number were few who were active in the reigning politics of the day.

In the number of our guests was admitted an English gentleman of the name of Middleton, who had not only claims on monsieur du Rivage's attention as his banker, but also from the particular recommendation he brought with him. The first time I saw him was on our leaving our summer residence for Paris; and monsieur du Rivage, in his introduction of him, sufficiently indicated the manner in which his wife was to receive him. We had that day at our table some persons who made light of the popular phrensy, and gave the most brilliant colourings of hope to the termination of a contest in which millions would find freedom. Mr. Middleton with youthful ardour supported this opinion. Monsieur du Rivage checked the enthusiasm: "I wish," said he, "the event may be found answerable to the hazard, and that those who have contributed to unshackle the multitude may live to see order spring from disorder. But there rests the danger."—"And there also rests the triumph, my good friend," cried Mr. Middleton with energy: "death cannot defraud those of glory, who have commenced the work of liberty." Monsieur du Rivage smiled, and, as I remember, told him he was misnamed, for that instead of Augustus Middleton he ought to have been called *Algernon Sidney*. The conversation changed for one more pleasing to me, who well knew my mother's dislike of politics.

It appeared from his conversation that Mr. Middleton had accompanied an English family to which he was nearly allied, and who were then near their departure, or set forwards towards Italy; and that, enamoured with the dawn of Gallic liberty, he chose to remain at Paris till a friend, whom he daily expected from England, should join him; when they meant to follow the party in their route, who having two ladies in it, found Paris in too great a ferment for their courage or amusement.

The domestic comforts which Mr. Middleton found under our roof soon rendered him a frequent visitor. My dear mother's health was the too-well grounded pretext held out for the retirement in which we lived; a friendly and unceremonious circle amused her dejected spirits, and it was never complete without Mr. Middleton.

To the youthful heart of your poor Pauline he had been irresistible from the first hour she beheld him. The manly graces of his person, the energy of his mind, his various accomplishments, with the independence of an understanding which placed him above the vanity of displaying them, won on my fancy. I compared him without ceasing with the young men who courted my notice; and I pronounced without a blush, that I could only *love an Englishman*. It is true, this confession had no witness; nor did I acknowledge to any one that on one point Augustus Middleton gave me offence. The correct gaiety of his manners, his unrestrained good will and easy politeness, mortified me; for these plainly manifested that I had nothing to hope. I believe my mother suspected that I was in danger of imitating my sister Judith; for, unaccustomed to concealment with her, I permitted her to perceive that something disturbed me, whether Mr. Middleton was present or absent. One evening she with assumed cheerfulness observed she was afraid that nervous complaints were infectious, for I had many symptoms like hers. I blushed, and said it might be, for my health depended on hers. "Better so," replied she smiling, "than that it should like your poor sister Judith's depend on a love-sick fancy, which will cheat her of every chance of a remedy. I often think of that poor girl," continued she, "who was, without dispute, a beautiful one, and was not unamiable in her temper: but, from her youth, Judith has preferred the complaints of unrequited love and despairing constancy to the title of a wife. Not that she has preserved her first love," continued she, laughing, "from the censure affixed to our sex; for I know she has transferred her wounded heart no less than three times since doctor Hawksbury's cruelty. But she has so ingeniously contrived to fall in love without hope, that I think I may predict she will never marry. Her last three years' flame was a married man, whose wife was supposed to be consumptive; but the lady got well, and, to her husband's great contentment, presented him with a son and heir. Doctor Hawksbury," continued madame du Rivage, "in writing me this account, informed me that her health was injured by these extravagances of an idle imagination, and that she was in a constant nervous state. She forgets that her nightly vigils and daily dreams will not *detain* the charms of youth, or add usefulness or respectability to her character when these are fled. This is amongst many others," pursued she, "one of those errors to which young women are liable, and which, in the first instance, neither implicates the purity of their hearts, nor their principles; as it frequently arises from a sensibility of mind which needs only regulation and judgment. Remember, my Pauline, that human life is not a romance; nor is it the less happy, or the more barren, for not being strewed with the flowers which a youthful fancy thinks necessary for its decoration: keep therefore a strict watch over your imagination whilst you are young. It is, my child, a fair gift when under the control of reason and experience, and is the source of our most refined pleasure; but in our sex it wants no adventitious supports; it requires the *curb* rather than the *spur*. We cannot oppose to its encroachments that ambition nor those active pursuits which engage the other sex, and which are calculated to control, or at least to divert, its activity. Many of us, I doubt, are disqualified by education to balance its suggestions by the force of a vigorous and imperative reason; but we can all of us, Pauline, find a refuge in the simple line of duty, and in the restraints wisely imposed by our religion. Guarded by this armour, we shall be safe amidst danger, and neither lavish our affections nor give our confidence on the mere report of imaginary excellence or imaginary preference. Were I a man, I should carefully avoid a woman whose heart had been frittered away by disappointed passion, or chilled by unrequited love. Preserve yours, my dear girl, for the man on whom you will have a legal claim for protection and love; preserve it as the temple of those affections which as a wife and a mother will secure your tranquillity, and from which will spring unceasing motives for the performance of your duties. Be content," added she smiling, "with that repose which results from a quiet state of mind, and the innocent pursuits of an unruffled temper, although your life may not furnish the incidents proper for a novel, nor your love adventures excite that compassion which much oftener wounds than soothes the feelings of a woman of true delicacy." In recalling these admonitions to my mind, I am aware of the conclusion which they must make against a pupil thus instructed and guarded. Alas! madam, I had been the child of imagination from

the hour I could speak: and I now became a dissembler; for I eluded my revered madame du Rivage's observations by an assumed gaiety, and an indifference to Mr. Middleton which sometimes approached to neglect. I was unhappily soon furnished with an apology for my dejection and pale cheek. The continual alarms which followed the fall of the Bastille seemed to have altered the equal and hitherto firm mind of madame du Rivage. Her terrors were beyond all description; and the safety of her husband became a more serious evil to him, than the dangers she so prophetically dreaded.

In this state of nervous irritability she remained for many weeks; and we saw scarcely any one except her most intimate friends. Mr. Middleton still kept his ground; for he was become necessary to her husband's amusement as well as her own. But it soon appeared that the philosophical admirer of the new order of things had changed his opinions; and in his conversations with monsieur du Rivage he constantly urged him to remove his family from France, predicting at the same time the hazard of remaining in a country rapidly advancing to anarchy and ruin. About this time also we saw less of him, he being, as he said, much engaged with some English friends who were on the point of leaving France. His return to our domestic circle was unaccompanied by his usual cheerfulness or health. He was pale, complained constantly of fatigue, and with a dependence on our good nature frequently indulged in a pensive silence little calculated to amuse the invalid.

One evening, after more than a fortnight's desertion of us, he dropped in on our solitude. Your poor Pauline received him coldly. My dear mother, observing his altered countenance, welcomed him with cordiality, and began to question him in regard to his health. He replied that he knew of no *bodily* malady. "I am not your confessor," answered she, smiling; "but, if I were, I should ask you whether the malady were not in your mind, and one you may not have had the wisdom to escape." He rose from his seat, and with visible agitation traversed the room. "There is not a calendared saint," said he, taking madame du Rivage's hand, "to whom I would so soon unbosom my griefs as to you. Judge of my condition, when I tell you that I am upon the brink of destruction; that I believe you could save me; yet I dare not ask your friendly interposition. A false principle of honour, and a mistaken sense of duty, impose silence: and I must obey."—"I wish," answered my mother, "that you had left Paris with your friends."—"Wish!" repeated he in an agony: "it was my ultimate hope to have done so. But a fatal infatuation prevented my plans. It seems to me," continued he, "to prevail in proportion as the danger here magnifies. Why do you not persuade your husband to leave this devoted country?" My mother took the alarm instantly. "Good God!" cried she, "another tragedy has been perpetrated!"—"No," answered he, recollecting himself; "I have heard of nothing *new*; but I should be happy to know, before I left Paris, that you were determined on quitting a residence which will ruin your health by perpetual alarms. My good old uncle," continued he with more composure, "has been affected with a portion of your panic, and, having seen from afar more of the hazard of my remaining here than I do myself, has travelled to Nice in order to reclaim a nephew who has been seized with the mania of *French liberty*. That delusion has however passed away. But unfortunately my uncle, in his cares for me, forgot his age and infirmities. He is very ill; and to-morrow at an early hour I quit Paris. But I shall return hither the moment I am assured of his safety. With what joy should I find you ready for your flight from this miserable country when I return! I must now see monsieur," added he, rising; "and when I have finished my business in his office, I must return home to prepare for my journey." He took my hand. "Second me in my advice, my dear Pauline," said he: "prevail on your mother to seek peace and health in England, or in Switzerland." He immediately left the room, and I burst into tears. "Middleton has met with some recent disappointment," said she with calmness; "and because his mistress has probably more prudence than himself, he has taken offence at that deity, before whom he bowed a few months since with ecstatic adoration. These warm and ardent spirits never know a medium: it is all hope or all despair with them!

But, my dear child, we are under the protection of an overruling Providence, and guarded by a man as much, nay more interested for our safety than his own. My husband cannot quit Paris with quite the same ease as a young man who has nothing to do but to order his *chaise de poste*, and to avail himself of an unlimited credit. I hope he will say nothing to monsieur du Rivage. He wants no advice to excite in his mind precautions for our safety. He has vexations enow, without being harassed with my apprehensions," continued she, weeping. "My husband's purse has hitherto been judged an equivalent for his more active services. He would not remain a week in France, could he quit it with honour; but du Rivage will never make a shipwreck of a good conscience to save my life, or his own." I succeeded in composing her fluttered spirits, by agreeing with her, and making light of those evils she feared.

But it was not possible to be deceived. Those events, which in rapid succession banished the misguided inhabitants from Paris, and which so totally excluded security and the home-felt joys of domestic peace, appeared to rivet monsieur du Rivage to his desk and the capital. The fluctuation of specie, the dread of impending insolvency, and the hazard of being thought wealthy, by turns harassed his mind: to these troubles was added the decline of his wife's health; and I perceived daily that his own was yielding, and that his cheerfulness was assumed.

CHAPTER XIX.

MADAME du Rivage's physicians advised her to return to La Fontaine, the name of our country retreat; urging to monsieur the necessity there was for her being beyond the reach of the *tocsin*, and the rumours and distractions of the city. The sinking and at intervals passive patient made no objection to this measure; and early in May we were settled in our retirement, with an old and faithful servant and the gardener and his wife. Monsieur du Rivage having given us two days of his time returned to Paris, reminding his wife that a few short leagues only would be between them. We had been accustomed to see him depart. But, good God! what a difference was there in our farewells! His solicitude for our comforts, his reiterated promises of seeing us again in a few days, appeared to us only to indicate the apprehensions which he concealed: and heavy at heart I followed his steps with my eyes, secretly foreboding that I should see him no more. Judge, madam, of the condition of a people, to whom such fears at length became so familiar as in many instances to deaden the sensibility of their minds!

Our habitation was more elegant than spacious; it was situated about half a league from the great road between Estampe and Paris. The domain annexed to it was small, but sufficient for all the purposes of modest luxury. It had been expressly chosen by monsieur du Rivage, as a retreat necessary for him, and which would call out neither malignity nor curiosity. Its principal beauty was derived from its vicinity to the duke de Fouclaut's house and grounds. Immense sums had been lavished by him in rendering this chateau and its gardens an object worthy of his elaborate taste; and L'Eclair was justly admired as a terrestrial paradise, in all points save in the primitive innocence of its proprietor.

Our garden, and a wood of some extent belonging to the duke, separated us from his house: and our noble neighbour had with much courtesy sent monsieur du Rivage a key to a little wicket which separated us from the wood, with a compliment, that we might not only consider the wood as an appendage to our garden, but also every part of his grounds. Monsieur du Rivage, contenting himself with returning suitable thanks for this favour, had cautiously availed himself of the privilege it gave him, and we never opened the wicket except when L'Eclair had no guests. The motives for these precautions were no secret with me; for monseigneur's character for gallantry and extravagance fully justified the reserve with which monsieur du Rivage shunned a neighbour whose cash account would have been as unprofitable as his intimacy might have been dangerous to his family.

From an old female domestic who had lived in the late duchess de Fouclaut's service, and who was the intimate friend of our good Catharine, I learned many particulars relative to this family; for madame Claudine took delight in telling me stories of her dear children, as she called the duke's son, and a daughter, at that time of my age and in a convent at Paris; Sigismund having been sent when a mere child to a great-uncle's at Vienna.

In describing the infant traits of her idol, mademoiselle Marianne de Fouclaut, the good Claudine would measure me with her eye, examine my hands and hair, and then with fond delight describe the paragon of beauty her dear Marianne. "She ought to be taller than you," would she observe, "for her parents had noble persons; and although she has not your complexion, she is as beautiful. But, ma bonne enfant, never be vain of your beauty. Madame la duchesse was the most beautiful woman in France, and one of the most unfortunate wives!" Then gazing on my face she observed, "that her Marianne's eyes were dark brown, like her sainted mother's." The common tribute which these conversations exacted were tears, and a silent ejaculation to Heaven, whilst wiping her dimmed spectacles. Sometimes my

curiosity was excited by Claudine's news of the duke's being at L'Eclair, and with bitterness she would describe his associates. These were generally such as placed me on my guard; and I never saw the duke but once, and that at a distance. He had two elegant females with him. I sheltered myself at Claudine's house, a neat little farm, which was her property, and was managed by her son. She told me that I had done wisely; for the two opera girls had no chance for future favour, but that of the duke's seeing no newer face. I took this caution, and heedfully guarded mine from his view during his short visits at L'Eclair.

CHAPTER XX.

ON our reaching La Fontaine with my dear invalid, Claudine came to visit us. She was shocked on beholding the ravages of sickness in the emaciated form of madame du Rivage: but with an address which marked her judgment she applied comfort and cheerfulness to her despondency; and her assiduities were so affectionate and useful, that my mother was unhappy if Claudine was prevented from her daily visit. Some weeks passed under the anxiety of seeing my mother's advances to her grave.

The malady under which madame du Rivage laboured was of that sort which no medicine could reach. Whether some unsuspected disorder lurked in her veins, and poisoned the springs of life, it is not for me to determine; but of this truth I am certain, that the train of ideas produced by the state of public affairs greatly contributed to destroy her. Her ordinary dejection and silence now and then yielded to transient intervals of cheerfulness: but she became a shadow; and sleep was a stranger to her eye-lids, except when procured by opium. One object of terror occupied her imagination, namely, fears for her husband's life. One day, distressed by my inability to sooth her, I urged our returning to Paris, and thus preventing monsieur du Rivage's frequent, and to her dreaded, journeys to us. She shook her head: "No, no," said she wildly; "he will escape without me." Then bursting into tears, she more composedly said, "I will have no more sleeping potions: they will distract me. Do not weep, my dear child; I cannot bear to see your tears. My malady increases my sensibility; and every proof I receive of your and my husband's affection only makes me more impatient *to die*. I know what detains du Rivage in France. It is his wife: he thinks that *she* could not have sustained the loss of her usual indulgences. Alas! it is now too late to convince him how little poverty would have been regarded by me, when compared with what I have endured for some months! But let us not talk of the past. Swear to me, that when I am no more you will conjure your father, in my name, to fly from this wretched country. You will find, Pauline, in that cabinet a letter addressed to Mr. Furnival. He is a man whom you may trust; and I wish you to go to England. The little provision you will find there, will enable you to give bread to your father. Urge this to him; and let him not lose his life by his cares to save a shipwrecked property whilst there is one plank to support him. He is buoyed up, my child, by a sense of honour, and fallacious hopes. I am and have been long of this opinion; but he has one comfort: you will never abandon him; and God will reward you for your attentions to a man who has been a parent to you." I will omit the warm effusions of my heart, and quit a subject for which I am still unequal.

CHAPTER XXI.

DURING a fortnight which monsieur du Rivage gave to his own sorrows and mine, after the death of his beloved wife, he frequently adverted to the embarrassment of his affairs. "Could I," said he, "retire from this country without injury to others, I would, and should long before this have quitted it at the hazard of begging my bread. But, my dear Pauline, I am responsible for the widow's mite and the orphan's little portion. It has been my principal concern of late, to acquit myself faithfully of these obligations; and I

have the consolation of knowing that I have saved many who would have been ruined by my more precipitate measures. I stand secure, however, no longer than whilst I am in a condition to be fleeced. They have, in consideration of my usefulness, permitted me to maintain my credit; but the exorbitancy of their demands on that credit must end in my ruin. I have regulated matters as well as I can for my emigration. You must be content to remain here till you leave France. I have reduced my establishment at Paris, and shall make this house appear as one to be let, or sold. Should I have the good fortune to dispose of it, you must shelter yourself with Claudine. For it is better that you should not appear again in Paris.”—This conversation ended by supplying me with money, and informing me that he should send for all the most valuable articles of furniture. These arrangements took place. Catharine and myself took possession of the rooms which looked into the garden; and the house was shuttered up in front, and appeared on sale or in want of a tenant.

CHAPTER XXII.

MY dejected mind for a season brooded over this scene of desolation: gradually it reverted to past illusions. Augustus Middleton's image became the solace of my thoughts, and my harp was tuned in order to practise the music he had given me. Claudine with unceasing goodness visited us; and my dear father's letters and visits spoke only of comfort. The king's arrest at Varennes and his confinement were now terminated by an atrocity never to be cancelled from the annals of France; and struck with horror at the deed, I began to pray fervently for my own escape from a country grown hateful to me. To add to my troubles, poor Catharine sprained her ankle, and was lame. Secure from danger by the duke's absence, I took my usual walk to Claudine's alone; for at her house I learned the rumours of the day. I was the more alert, from not having seen my good friend for near a week. At some little distance from her door, I saw her in earnest conversation with a very elegant young lady, whose appearance excited my curiosity; but a black lace veil so entirely excluded her face from my view, that I could not catch a glimpse of it. She held an infant in her arms, and caressed it fondly from time to time. At length, reluctantly giving the child to Claudine, they parted; Claudine taking the path to her house, and the lady that which I was in. I curtsied in passing her. She returned the compliment with grace, but hurried on.

On entering the house, Claudine received me with cordiality, and immediately introduced to me her daughter, madame Meunier: "And is this angel boy," cried I, "your grandson?" "No," replied she: "it is a nurseling Jeanneton has the care of."—"Was that his mother," asked I, "whom I passed, and whom you were talking with?"—"That was mademoiselle de Fouclaut," answered Claudine: "she is at the chateau." My alarm prevented my perceiving Claudine's embarrassment. "Good Heavens!" cried I, "I wish I were at home." "Be under no fears," replied Claudine: "there are no opera girls at the chateau: you are safe enough." Reassured on this point, I now gave my attention to Jeanneton: she was pleasing in her person, notwithstanding an air of melancholy, and the reserve of her manner. She was modestly dressed in the Parisian fashion, and in her replies to my civilities discovered neither rusticity nor an ignorance of politeness. "I dare say you thought I was dead, ma chere mademoiselle," said Claudine with cheerfulness; "but I have been much engaged in preparing for my guests; and I hope," added she, "to be repaid for my trouble, and to send home my daughter in better spirits than I find her. Poor Jeanneton never conditioned to be a soldier's wife," added she, "and she pines at the absence of her husband, who must do as he is ordered, and rank with the rest of the *free* men of France, although he likes a uniform still less than his wife: but we must submit; and trust to a ruler who can say to our new masters, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no further.'" Madame Meunier checked not her tears. "Your mother's consolation and this sweet boy will be useful to you," said I compassionately, "and the country air will restore your health, and confirm the hopes of the child's parent."—"I hope so," answered she with emotion; "it will be my pride and glory to rear him for their comfort and joy; for they have been my benefactors." I discovered before I finished my visit that she had lost her own infant, and in nursing the little Sigismund had found a comfort beyond her hopes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT soon appeared that mademoiselle de Fouclaut as well as myself found an attraction to Claudine's in the little Sigismund, for I several times met her returning from the house: she was always alone, and shunned, as I thought, my observation. I mentioned my opinion to Claudine, adding a wish that she would relax from her dignity, and invite me to walk with her. "Poor lady!" answered Claudine, profoundly sighing, "she has no more pride than her mother. But she dares not make acquaintance with

you, nor speak to any one. It is owing to the good nature of her duenna that she is permitted to leave the chateau.”—“Surely,” said I, “her convent was a more eligible prison than the one you describe?”—“Assurément,” replied she; “for there she had Jeanneton and the whole community to love her. But she has been from thence some time, and has lived at her father’s hotel in Paris. I always suspected a snake in the grass when I heard of his kindness to her; for I say, Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? When I see that, I will believe that the duke can act like a good parent. It is all now come out why he was so kind: he wants to marry her to a man as old as himself, and who he fancies will not disgrace him because he has money. Ma foi! He would judge right, were he to marry him himself; for vice cannot sink beneath its level. But for the daughter of the noble and virtuous house de l’Ormesson! My blood, mademoiselle, boils at the idea. I do not know which to reprobate most, the meanness and barbarity of the duke, or the insolence of the old baboon, who dares to sit in the presence of this angel! I knew him when her domestics would not have spoken to him. She may thank our new law-makers for this lover!” Well knowing Claudine’s political creed, I contented myself with pitying mademoiselle de Fouclaut, and again expressed my wish to be known to her. I will try what I can do,” replied Claudine: “you would be a comfort to her: but we must manage with mademoiselle Babet, her keeper. The fool courts me, in order to find favour with Simon, my son, and I have given him his cue. I cannot help laughing, to see him act his part.”

Day succeeded day, and I gained no ground: twice or thrice I met mademoiselle de Fouclaut; but she passed me always veiled, with hurried steps; and disappointed in my wishes of becoming her consoler, I became her censor; attributing her reserve to pride, and to a contempt of my proffered kindness. Claudine seemed to have forgotten her commission; and I sometimes thought that Jeanneton received my visits as an intrusion; for she left the house with her little charge, not unfrequently in five minutes after I entered it, under the pretence of giving him air at his usual hour.

A short visit from my dear father for some days turned the channel of my thoughts. He looked thin and pale, and I found that he had been indisposed. I was now informed that I was to hold myself in readiness for the arrival of an English family from Bourdeaux, with whom I was to make my way to England. My reluctance to losing sight of him was overruled by the arguments he used; and convinced that he could with more safety execute his purpose of emigration without me, I consented to his plans. He asked me some questions relative to the letter his wife had written to Mr. Furnival, and gave me another for that gentleman from himself, cautioning me to be careful of them. His provision of assignats appeared to me super-abundant, and I told him I should not want any. “You can give them me at Paris,” said he thoughtfully, “in case you do not; but it is not certain when I can visit you again: it is better for you to have too many than too few; and it is not decided what day my friend Wilmot will come for you.” The caution which had induced him to destroy every letter and paper he could find in the house, and his being unattended, completed my consternation; and unable to conceal my alarm, I implored him not to leave me. “You distress me, my dear child,” said he, moved by my tears, “by a request which it is impossible for me to comply with. Be assured, Pauline, that my thoughts have no object so near to them as your safety and preservation. Summon up your resolution to meet the difficulties of the hour, and confidently trust that I act with prudence. You will find your clothes at the hotel, whither the Wilmots will conduct you. It is not improbable that I shall be in England before you. Let this be your comfort, and look forwards to the hour of our reunion. I will in the mean time rest on the assurance of your safety, and the assistance of the Almighty.” He tenderly blessed me, and hastily mounted his horse.

Exhausted by my tears, and oppressed by an intense head-ach, I yielded to poor Catharine’s advice of walking in the garden; and taking the path to a small elevated summer-house which

commanded the road, I entered it, and seated myself at the window with that lassitude which seeks relief from every surrounding object: although hopeless of diverting my melancholy thoughts, I found a momentary solace in opening the sash, and contemplating the view it afforded. I had not enjoyed this respite many minutes before I heard the trampling of horses, and soon saw a party of the national guard advance, escorting a carriage. "We are lost!" cried I with frantic terror, and darting from the summer-house, "we are lost! and my father has been arrested!" Impelled by my terror, and the sense of self-preservation, I rushed forwards to the wicket-gate in my view, and with a force which danger lent me I broke the rusty and slight bolt. Hope now directed my fleet steps. "I might be sheltered in the chateau; I would implore a refuge there." Judge of my surprise, when I beheld mademoiselle de Fouclaut with no less terror of countenance hastily advancing to meet me. "Heaven has not deserted me," cried she with agony. "But to what cause am I to attribute seeing you here?"—"The soldiers, the guards seek my life!" answered I panting. "Oh save me! They are in the house! In pity save me!"—"You are deceived by your fears," answered she calmly. "The victim they seek is before you. As you wish for peace on earth, and for happiness in heaven, hear me! Take this casket, and return to your habitation. It is no time for me to say more," added she, placing it in my hands. "Farewell! We shall meet in a different hour." She turned from me with emotion, and waving her hand said, "Fly from this spot." I stood notwithstanding motionless for some minutes, gazing on the beauteous phantom as she swiftly made for the chateau. The deadly paleness of her countenance, the fixed despair of her tearless eyes, with the tones of her voice and the impassioned energy of her words, struck me with the awe impressed by some heavenly visitation; and I looked to the casket in my hand for a conviction that my senses had not deluded me. It restored me to recollection; and concealing it I retreated, securing the gate as well as I could, and took the path home with a perturbation of spirits which retarded my steps. I had never before this extraordinary interview seen mademoiselle de Fouclaut without a veil. Her graceful stature and elegance of form had not escaped my observation; but I now recalled to my mind a face of unequalled beauty. She wore a white robe, and had evidently quitted her room in haste; for her head was uncovered but by the dark and abundant tresses which nature had bestowed. No time can erase from my memory the eyes I then beheld! nor have I ever seen any to equal them; although Sigismund's sometimes recall them to my remembrance.

My slow approach to the house was observed by Catharine, who although still lame, and obliged to walk with a crutch, met me near the hall-door. Her quiet aspect reassured me, and I quickened my pace. "Be under no alarm," said she, "on seeing two or three of the Paris guards within; they are on duty at the chateau, and have nothing to do here but to pay their *compliments*. One amongst them does me the *honour* of remembering me; and I must," added she, winking, "be civil to such *friends*." "I need not appear," observed I, trembling. "Indeed you must," answered she, "and fearlessly too; for my *good friend* has inquired for mademoiselle Pauline, and I came to look for you."

Timid, and still alarmed, I followed her slow steps, and found three men sitting in the hall with some wine and bread before them. I instantly knew one of them, from his having almost daily brought to our house in Paris pastry from a patissier's shop near us. Concealing my surprise at the metamorphose which a blue coat and a national cockade had made in a lad whom I had a hundred times seen, in a white apron and tucked up sleeves, bringing almond pastry for our table, I civilly performed the honours of a house in which there was little for luxury or even hunger. I apologized for the scantiness of their entertainment; observing, that two solitary women needed not "une grande cuisine;" reminding Catharine at the same time of some potted meat, which she instantly produced. "Comment!" cried the young pastrycook, with a familiar and awkward attempt at gallantry, "N'ai-je pas le bonheur de faire mes devoirs à mademoiselle Pauline? et assurément cela suffit pour me rendre heureux." He now with all due observance of etiquette introduced to my *favour* his two companions, who with more modesty bowed in

silence. “Que je suis heureux, mademoiselle, de pouvoir vous faire ma cour!” exclaimed the maker of tartlets, applying the meat to his bread: “I was told that you had quitted France.”—“No, monsieur,” answered I confusedly. “Since the death of madame du Rivage I have been unwell, and have been endeavouring to regain my lost health here.” He acknowledged I was become thinner and paler than when he last had had the *felicity* of seeing me. “Mais mademoiselle étoit toujours charmante.” I stopped his eloquence by inquiring what had occasioned his visit into our neighborhood. “Nothing that will call upon us for courage,” replied he: “it is an easy duty—only to convey mademoiselle de Fouclaut to her father and her lover de Béne, who are now safely lodged in the prison of the Abbaye.” I could not suppress my tears. “Why should you grieve, ma chere mademoiselle?” asked poor Catharine, alarmed for her own safety as well as mine. “Thank God, we have nothing to do with ‘la noblesse!’ and these our great neighbours,” added she, turning with familiarity to her *friend*, “have taken good care to let us know it: for, although we are, as one may say, next door neighbours, they never deigned to notice us. I have heard that the duke’s daughter is a perfect beauty; but I never saw her: and my young lady and I have been curious to no purpose; for I fancy she has never been out of the chateau since she came.”—“She is indeed beautiful,” answered one of our visitors, who had hitherto been silent. “I saw her once at her father’s hotel in Paris, and in my life I never beheld so charming a creature! The domestics told me she was as good and amiable as she looked. I cannot help pitying her,” added he: “she is the victim of a father who has ruined himself by his baseness, and her innocence will not save her.” “What, you think her innocent?” observed the pastrycook with a consequential air. “But where is the plot without a woman? No one shall persuade me, that she would have consented to marry ce scélérat de Béne without good reasons. She could not be ignorant that the laws of tyranny were abolished, and that she was free, with all France.” “Well, be this as it may,” answered the man, “I know enough of you, Etienne, to maintain, that if you had ever beheld this angel, you would, like myself, rather face a troop of grenadiers than see her in the hands she will be in before sunset.” This tribute to humanity, with the compliment annexed, called forth the sympathy of *citoyen Etienne*, and with more expletives and stronger asseverations than were needful, he declared that he would die in the cause of beauty and of his country: then heroically drinking off a glass of wine to my health, he rose, and retreated with his comrades to join in the tumultuous cry of “Vive la nation!”

Let it suffice, my dear Mrs. Underwood, we saw from our half-closed windows the carriage pass, in which was the ill-fated Marianne, with Babet her governess and one of the national guards.

To what purpose should I endeavour to detail the horrors which assailed me, on this and other similar occasions, during a period unexampled in modern history? The revolution in France is not a subject for my pen. I am unable to lose sight of “partial evil in universal good,” were it even proved to demonstration that such had been the balance in favour of that liberty which sprang from the blood of millions and the despair of the good and innocent. It has been fatal to my happiness, and I mean not to mention it but as it is connected with the story of my private sorrows.

On retiring to my room for the night, I yielded to the impulse of curiosity, and with a palpitating heart I opened the casket. Removing the manuscript, which first appeared, with some letters tied up and directed “For Sigismund,” I proceeded to examine a shagreen case evidently made for a picture. It was indeed a portrait! and the faithful representation of the one indelibly fixed in my heart. It was Augustus Middleton whom my eyes beheld, the same noble, serious aspect, the same pensive and penetrating eyes! Yes, it was that idol which my imagination had erected as the supreme object of its hopes and fond faith! It was of larger dimensions than usual for miniatures, and encircled by costly diamonds: the reverse

contained the initials of his name and a lock of his hair mixed with pearls. It was ticketed, and I read “Augustus Middleton, the father of Sigismund Middleton.”

Your hapless Pauline stood this pang!!!

Three or four rouleaus of louis d’ors, with the articles I shall briefly mention, finished my examination of those proofs of the child’s birth and claims which are now in Mr. Furnival’s hands. A coral necklace with a ruby locket, marked “The gift of madame la comtesse de Verneuil to her goddaughter Marianne de Fouclaut.” A miniature richly ornamented of Béatrice de l’Ormesson, mother of Marianne de Fouclaut, and duchess de Fouclaut. The portrait of a beautiful English female, marked Charlotte Aimsworth. A diamond hoop—and a wedding-ring. Several strings of large pearls, with a number of unset gems of considerable value, as I am now informed. Diamond rings, with a watch and trinkets; and finally a diamond cross inscribed with my name, and a gold snuff-box with madame Meunier’s, and intended as gifts for us. In this enumeration I may have been wanting in precision: but my pen had been sufficiently exact had it altogether omitted these evidences of Sigismund’s extraction; for the certificates of his mother’s marriage and his own baptism are what Mr. Furnival principally values. The marriage certificate is signed by a priest of the name of du Clos, who performed the ceremony. The witnesses, Nicolas and Jeanneton Meunier, and an English signature of Frederick Boothby, esq. The baptismal evidence is signed by du Clos and the Meuniers.

I shall now pause. You will have with this my translation of Mrs. Middleton’s appeal to me. Read it, my dear and sympathizing friend; and you will not blame me for the interest I feel in preserving a child thus bequeathed to my care; for whom I have encountered disgrace and reproach, and for whom I would meet death without shrinking.

THE
MEMOIRS OF MARIANNE DE FOUCLAUT.

I KNOW, mademoiselle, from whence my hope must come; and with conscious truth and integrity do I look for help from on high, and a refuge in the grave. Yet nature has pangs that are beyond the power of human fortitude. Who can speak peace to the anguished mother's spirit, which trembles with direful forebodings? Alas! with more! the dread of *certain* destruction to the helpless being to whom she gave life? Oh! let me reach the cordial Heaven presents in mitigation of the sufferings it has inflicted! Let me hasten to the hope it allows me, before *reason is cast from its seat!* The wretched wife of Augustus Middleton, your countryman; of that Middleton who enjoyed the friendship of madame du Rivage and her amiable Pauline, is the suppliant who now implores your pity for her child, for Augustus Middleton's *son!* Succour him, Pauline! save him from impending destruction! For thou canst. Oh! let my pleadings reach thy gentle bosom! Be the guardian angel of my innocent helpless child! The sheltering hand which is at this moment his only prop and stay, may be, *will be*, involved in my ruin; and his life will not be spared by an enraged and disappointed *father*. The climax of my fate rapidly approaches. I am prepared to meet it, and to brave without a murmur the horrors which await me.

I have shunned you, mademoiselle. Yes, I have denied myself the comfort which my soul has languished to taste! Like the bird, who seeing the enemy near its nest, instinctively takes every direction from it, in order to divert the foe from its precious young; so have I avoided an intercourse which might have led my oppressors to my child's asylum. Alas! to be known as Marianne's friend would be a *crime*; to love her, *destruction!*

I have no doubt the faithful Claudine has frequently mentioned to you Marianne de Fouclaut; nor should I be surprised to know, that she has awakened in your bosom a portion of that sympathy which belongs to the character she so much delights to place before me as the object of her admiration and esteem. But it behoves me to leave in your hands a particular detail of my life, with the circumstances which have conducted me to the precipice on which I now stand. You will, yes, mademoiselle, you will be the guardian of my Sigismund; and it is necessary you should know his wretched parent. The time may not be remote when Middleton will bless you for his son; and should he still be obdurate, preserve my manuscript for my child, and teach him to respect his *mother*.

I shall commence my history by a brief account of my infant years, at which period I lost my mother; and was, with a brother older than myself, consigned over to neglect. Our father's profuse dissipation had not only exhausted in a great measure the means by which he supplied the fatal indulgences of his unchecked passions, but had also so entangled the funds provided for us, that he thought of the only expedient which remained, to prevent, *not our ruin*, but the retrenchments which were become necessary to support his own style of magnificence and his pleasures. A second marriage was projected. But my father's title was found no equivalent for the price which he exacted for it; and one or two disappointments of this kind convinced him that his quality could not allure such an alliance as his poverty needed, and as his pride could accept. He therefore gave himself up to a liberty which imposed no restraints, and continued to defraud his children of their rights. My brother and myself resided at this chateau with an establishment reduced to two or three necessary domestics; the good Claudine and her husband having the superintendance of the family, and authority in all that related to us. Left to the enjoyments of health and sportive gaiety, treated with the fond and faithful love of these

excellent people, we had, it may be, advantages far beyond those attentions which a fastidious greatness could have bestowed; for with innocence we enjoyed the privileges of Nature, and knew no cares nor wants in the simplicity she prescribes. I soon lost my dear brother and playmate: at the repeated entreaties of our great uncle who resided at Vienna, he was sent thither; and I have never been able to learn more of his fate, than that on the death of this relation he entered into the Spanish service, and went to Mexico. My father never named him without indications of a resentment which I feared to provoke. I loved this brother tenderly, and I gave my infant his name of Sigismund, not daring to call him *Augustus*. Some time after my brother's departure, I became subject to restraints unknown to me under the tender Claudine. A woman called mademoiselle de la Croix came to the chateau; and I was told that she was not only to govern me, but the family. Claudine, with cool contempt and an invincible perseverance, opposed her authority; and, being supported by the other servants, she disgusted de la Croix with her post. Her complaints to my father were, I presume, the cause of his visiting the chateau; and the contest for power was finished by his removing me and "ma gouvernante" to a convent in Paris; Claudine and her husband retiring to their farm, in which she now lives.

Young as I was, I soon perceived that I had gained little in having exchanged the simple lessons of Claudine, with her perpetual accounts of my mother's virtues and conduct for the instructions now within my reach, and which I shared with the other pensioners without distinction but as to age. Here, whilst sickening over the flower I was embroidering, I traced in imagination my rambles with Claudine, and the happy hours in which she helped me to cultivate my parterre at L'Eclair.

The Lives of the Saints, with De la Croix's Lectures on La Civilité, began to affect my health and spirits; and I lost my relish for the few amusements within my reach, when I was delivered from the control of a woman, who, although in a subordinate capacity, contrived to tease me into a dislike of her.

The husband of the hitherto supposed mademoiselle de la Croix suddenly appeared, as a fortunate adventurer, from the East Indies; and whether affection or conscience were the motive for his seeking a reunion with his wife, I cannot say; but she became reconciled to his opulence, and left me to the sole care of the abbess, who appointed a lay sister called Maria to attend to my personal wants. This woman was extremely good-natured, and I was now in danger from too much lenity; for it was impossible, according to la soeur Maria, "to refuse so amiable a child any thing." And having found favour with many of the girls, I partook largely of their clandestine course of reading, and found a full indemnification for the risk I ran with themselves of detection, in the indiscriminating delight with which I read every book of the prohibited kind that came into the hoarded treasures of my companions. I was nearly fourteen when the number of the pensioners was augmented by the arrival of miss Charlotte Aimsforth, who was at that time nearly sixteen. She was a Roman catholic; and the intention of her parents was confined to her acquiring more facility in the French tongue, as well as in the Italian. Her education, indeed, wanted no advantages, for it had been liberally attended to at home. But as some prejudices favourable to a Paris convent of the very first class had been entertained by her mother, she was sent thither for a year, in order to finish her course of studies with the polish of Parisian manners, Mrs. Aimsforth having formed the design of going into Italy, and taking her daughter in her *route*. From the first hour we met we might be said to be friends: and Charlotte, pleased with the fondness and docility of her pupil, took pleasure in instructing me. The idleness of the child soon gave place to an ambition of imitating miss Aimsforth, and learning English became the supreme object of my wishes. Eighteen months elapsed in this course of real improvement; for happily, as I then thought, Mrs. Aimsforth's visit to the continent was deferred for a year longer than she had projected. During this period my confidence and trust in miss Aimsforth became boundless, and were repaid by a zeal for my

improvement which did honour to her principles and understanding. My father's neglect of me was a source of uneasiness which augmented as my reason enlarged; and I poured out my complaints of his unkindness into Charlotte's ear with all the pathos of an injured child. His visits were seldom, and finished by settling with madame the abbess for my maintenance, which was strictly limited to *the needful*. About this time I was confined to my room for some days by a slight fever. My father was apprised of my indisposition. He sent me a physician; but he was on the eve of a journey, and had not time to see me. This intelligence was prudently softened to me, for I was not told that his absence would be for some months.

My recovery was followed by rapidly growing tall; and the abbess, fearing a consumption, relaxed in her discipline, encouraging me to use more exercise, and giving me ass's milk. Thus I became the care of my friend Charlotte; and with a mother's care did she watch over me! The spring was now advanced, and my indisposition forgotten, when one morning, whilst running a race in the garden with one of my companions, I was suddenly stopped by hearing la soeur Maria call me. This good creature was no less distinguished for her embonpoint than her good humour; and I, willing to spare her fatigue, with an Atalanta's speed directed my steps towards her. "Monseigneur is in the parlour," said she, "and asks for you." I too well knew the shortness of his visits; and passing the tortoise pacing messenger, I gained the apartment in a minute. Panting for breath, my hair in disorder, and my cheek heightened by my exertions and joy to a colour remote from sickness, I appeared before him, and timidly welcomed his return to Paris. He gazed on my face with an air of surprise; then taking my hand with kindness, he asked me whether I was indeed the poor little sick girl of whom he had heard? I replied that I was "indeed his Marianne, and perfectly recovered." "You are grown," observed he, surveying me with earnestness; "you are much improved in your person, my dear girl." He kissed my hands, and examined them. "Mademoiselle est charmante," observed madame Miron the abbess, "elle croit tous les jours dans l'esprit et dans les graces." "I am delighted with her," answered my father, "but not surprised. A pupil of madame Miron must needs have wanted capacity had she not improved with such a model before her." Madame bowed with an air not remote from gratified vanity: "Oh! pour cela, monseigneur..." My father interrupted her by asking me how I filled up my time. I detailed to him my avocations, not forgetting my proficiency in music, and my knowledge of the English language. Miss Aimsforth's kindness was not omitted, nor did I fail to speak of the favour I enjoyed with the good madame Miron. "You will grow too fond of your convent, Marianne," said he, smiling: "I do not intend you for a recluse. But, situated as I am at present," added he with gentleness, "I am glad to find you so happy in retirement. It will not be convenient to me to remove you to the hotel till next winter. But it is time for you to be on a different footing in this house from that of a child. You will have the goodness, madam," added he, "to provide for mademoiselle de Fouclaut an apartment suitable to my present views. I shall send for a female attendant, and her masters in future will give her more of their time." He now requested to see my English friend; and wild with joy I flew to summon her. The modest and dignified Charlotte received his compliments with ease; and I believed with astonishment, that a man whose face I had scarcely dared to look at could so suddenly become pleasing. He passed an hour with us; and then, requesting an audience with the abbess, quitted us with gaiety and fascinating politeness.

Elated by condescensions so unexpected, delighted by a kindness and generosity beyond my most sanguine hopes, I forgot that I had ever thought my father neglectful of me. My happiness admitted of no alloy, the idea of pain or trouble would have checked the tide of pleasure too much; and with undissembled exultation I told Charlotte that my father was "proud of his daughter." She smiled, but made no reply.

In the evening of the second day after this interview my dear Jeanneton arrived at the convent loaded with gifts for mademoiselle de Fouclaut's friends. A kind letter from my father directed me in the application of them. A gold snuff box for madame Miron, chocolate and confectionary in abundance for sister Maria, with a neat purse containing five louis d'ors: the first of these articles was ostentatiously displayed, the latter passed more secretly from my hand to hers. An elegant silver work-basket in fillagree for Charlotte Aimsforth, decorated within by trinkets of female use; a watch with costly trappings for "his Marianne;" and a purse containing more gold than she had ever seen in her life. I was soon after settled in my peculiar apartments, and enjoyed the privileges of a young woman of quality.

My father's visits became frequent; and in proportion as his favour appeared I was anxious to please him. He loved music, and perfectly understood it. I was indefatigable in practising, and ordered my master (for such was now my power) to give me double lessons. I sang to the duke, and he praised my voice and execution. I danced to amuse him; he was enchanted with my person; "for it was like his sister's."—"Do I not resemble my mother?" asked I: "Claudine used to tell me I was her very image." "Not in the least," answered he; "you have her voice, but your traits are exactly like those of your aunt Louisa." He appeared agitated, "I hope your fortune will be more propitious," added he. "She died at nineteen." I was silenced. "I shall bring with me," continued he, "at my next visit, an old admirer of poor Louisa's. He wishes to see you, and I desire you will attend to your toilet." He named the day, and changed the conversation by asking me, "how long miss Aimsforth would remain in the convent." I answered, that she was in daily expectation of hearing from her family, and of the precise time when they would be in Paris in order to visit Italy. "She is a handsome young woman," said he coldly: "but I think she is losing her time strangely here." He proceeded to inquire what books I read with her. I mentioned some celebrated English authors. He smiled, and replied, she would be "une précieuse," and, like most of her country women, fit for the fate that awaited them—a life passed in "sober sadness." I laughed in my turn, assuring him that miss Aimsforth was the most cheerful young woman in the house; and that she was the animating source of our rational amusements, for there was nothing she did not know. "She will never know the science which is the most useful to her sex," replied he, rising; "nor would it much avail her in her own country." Again I was silenced; for I could not comprehend what my father meant; and he left me soon after, with his accustomed kindness. I had, however, sufficient discernment to perceive that my friend appeared less accomplished in my father's eyes than in mine; but attributing this to Charlotte's reserve when in his presence, I suppressed this proof of his unfavourable opinion in my account of his visit. The introduction of monsieur de Béne to the ill-fated Marianne followed. He appeared to me to be older than my father, and his dress, which was *outré*, heightened the defects of his person. He was, I thought, the ugliest man I had ever beheld, and a complexion naturally yellow, or produced by climate, gave him a sickly and cadaverous look which disgusted me. His compliments and gallantry diverted me notwithstanding, and my father's cheerfulness rendered me unrestrained. My aunt Louisa's beauty became the channel through which monsieur de Béne paid his adorations to mine. "He thought he beheld her before him," and I then thought that he had been a pretender to her favour. "Marianne's voice will more powerfully bring your divinity to your remembrance," observed my father with a smile. "Do you think you are equal to the experiment?" I was implored to sing, and I went to the harp. Ecstasies followed, and my father appeared pleased with my exhibition. On the departure of my guests I went to my friend Charlotte's room. Some letters brought by the post a short time before my entrance were yet before her. Occupied with the impressions which monsieur de Béne had left on my mind, I began to relate to Charlotte his extravagant speeches, and to draw from his singular countenance and manners a picture too ridiculous for my own gravity or hers. She laughed immoderately at my folly, for I *acted* monsieur de Béne as well as *described* him; when suddenly checking her mirth, she with assumed seriousness made me a curtsy, and congratulated me on

having gained a lover. "Let us see," added she, taking up one of her letters: "in less than a month you will be madame de Béne; in less than a month my mother will be in Paris. What an admirable substitute will you make for her duties! She hates public amusements; but under the eye of such a duenna as yourself, and under the wing of such a time piece as monsieur de Béne, she will leave me to the pleasures of Paris, for a time at least." My mirth vanished; and, forgetting monsieur de Béne, I said with consternation, "Then we are at length to be separated!" My tears flowed; and Charlotte sympathized with me. She endeavoured also to comfort me, and, in order the more effectually to succeed, showed me the prospect of a winter filled up with happiness: "Read my letters," added she, "and let us give care to the wind at present."

Mrs. Aimsforth in her letter specified the time when she meant to be at Paris. She added, "Your father's lawsuit, which is decided in his favour, will still detain him in England for some time: I mean therefore to pass that interval at Paris. Your brothers think you will have no objection to see more of it than your convent. Mr. Hamilton, either anxious to see you or the Louvre, &c. will be in my suite. I need not point out to you more explicitly his intentions, nor our concurrence in them. Those obstacles which stood in the way of his virtuous and decided preference are removed; and his fate now depends on you." "You mean not to be cruel?" said I, returning the letter. "No," replied she, smiling: "I admit the truth of the proverb, 'Old love is not easily forgotten;' and Hamilton gained mine before I left off my frocks. He is four years older than myself, and has been constant to his first flame. But I shall have a spare beau on my hands," pursued she archly, "that will tease me to death, for he is unlike every thing *comme il faut*. I wish," added she, laughing, "that you had not seen the irresistible monsieur de Béne. You might have helped me to humanize my cousin." "Is he as handsome as monsieur de Béne?" asked I with concealed curiosity. "You will see him," answered she; "and you must consider him, as he is considered in England by this time, as a sort of phoenix, doomed to perpetuate his race after the fabulous manner of that bird; for he is now four-and-twenty, and has never been in love; pretending as an excuse for his frigid heart, that it is not his fault, but that of our sex." She continued to give me a sketch of her cousin, which evidently marked her affection for him, and concluded by saying, "that she knew well to whom she stood indebted for her prospects of happiness with Mr. Hamilton." I listened with avidity to these commendations of Augustus Middleton, and my heart received impressions in his favour before I beheld him. In the mean time my father announced his intention of removing me from my convent. De Béne was not mentioned, and I forgot him. My friend and myself were hourly engaged in planning schemes of pleasure and delight for the ensuing winter; and we were actually speaking of this *wonderful* cousin, when she was summoned to receive her mother and her family, who were with madame Miron. My mind followed her; but I had now a tender father, and, with some composure, I practised a lesson on my harp. Charlotte entered, her face glowing with contentment. "Her mother wished to see her dear Marianne." "Oh! I cannot appear before her in this deshabelle," said I, with a palpitation at my heart which I could not account for—"there are your brothers—" "There is no one but Augustus," replied she; "they are gone with Hamilton to a banker's near us; and he will not know whether you are in a court dress or in a robe de chambre." I had no reply, and I followed her. Mr. Middleton was standing when I entered. You have seen him too often, my dear Pauline, to render any description of his noble person necessary.

My reception from Mrs. Aimsforth was more than polite, it was gracious and affectionate. Charlotte with gaiety presented Mr. Middleton to me. "This is the *cousin* of whom you have heard me speak," said she: "he is come to Paris, to learn to be a beau garçon: favour him with your notice; he is harmless, and will not disgrace us at the back of a chair at the theatre." This attack on his gallantry was received with much more spirit and animation than I had expected, and for nearly an hour I listened to a

conversation of ease and gaiety; Mrs. Aimsforth during a part of this time being engaged in settling accounts with the abbess, and fixing the hour for her daughter's removal on the following morning.

The entrance of Mr. Hamilton and Charlotte's brothers renewed the ceremony of introduction, and a whisper from Mr. Hamilton determined Mrs. Aimsforth to take her daughter home with her. My spirits now fled; I could not forbear weeping. Madame Miron reminded me, that I also should soon quit her house, and that she should soon have to regret the absence of two of her children. Charlotte comforted me more effectually by telling me that she would visit me daily till I was at the hotel.

In vain did I endeavour, when left to myself, to recall to my mind the persons of the two young Aimsforth's, or Mr. Hamilton's. Augustus Middleton's every look and gesture had filled up my fancy, and I followed its impressions, by engraving on my heart an image never to be erased till it ceases to beat.

At my father's next visit I spoke of my friend's departure from the convent, of her approaching nuptials, and my wishes to be enlarged in my turn. He smiled, and with gaiety said he was rejoiced to find that I wished to mix with the world. "You must however," added he, "have patience for a week or two. I am going into the country with my friend de Béne, and you will be better here till my return." "May I not be permitted to receive my friend?" asked I timidly. "Certainly," replied he; "and should her mother wish you to pass a *private* day with her, you may go: but it is on condition that it be a select day." Madame Miron, before whom this indulgence was granted, bowed in token of acquiescence, my father hastily quitting us. I will, my dear mademoiselle, abridge my account of the hours which rendered a month a space of time that appeared momentary, and for the result of which you are prepared.

My faithful friend Jeanneton had motives at this period which influenced her to count as tardy these hours of my felicity. Her mother's commands, and her affection for me, had delayed her marriage with monsieur Meunier till such time as my emancipation from my convent should take place. Meunier was become impatient of the frequent delays which had been opposed to his hopes. He lived in the duke's house under the particular protection of the major-domo, who had invariably served and bewailed a master to whom gratitude had attached him. On my return home from Mrs. Aimsforth's one evening I found Jeanneton weeping; and knowing the precise situation in which she stood, I consoled her, adding that I was in daily expectation of seeing the duke; that madame Miron had received a letter from him, and I was to be prepared for instantly leaving the house at his expected visit. "Yes, yes," answered she, "I know all that, and much more, my dear Marianne." Her tears redoubled. "Your English *friend* has acted wisely in never appearing here," added she, "since miss Aimsforth's departure, and you must not say a word to your father of any company you have seen at Mrs. Aimsforth's beyond the ladies of the family. It would displease him, and perhaps make mischief between him and monsieur de Béne."—"Monsieur de Béne!" repeated I: "what has he to do with my concerns?" "Ah! ma chere demoiselle," answered the weeping Jeanneton, "you will be his wife in a few short weeks." Let it suffice, I was told that my destiny had been for some time determined; and she had the intelligence from her lover Nicolas Meunier, that the marriage ceremony would immediately follow my removal from the convent. You will not be surprised that my English *friend*, with Charlotte, should be the sharers of my distress at this moment. But I was unprepared for any better excuse with the abbess for my dejection than the real plea of indisposition. Her kindness led her to invite Mrs. Aimsforth to visit me, and she came alone. A kind and soothing prelude led to the object before her. "I know not," said she, taking my hand, "in what light my present interference may be regarded by superficial inquirers; but I act a part which appears right in my own judgment. Augustus Middleton loves you, mademoiselle. His family and fortune, his character

and religion, with those talents for which he is deservedly distinguished, would at any period sanction his avowed pretensions to your favour; and the duke de Fouclaut might without any degradation of his rank think himself happy in his alliance with Mr. Umfreville's nephew. But your father's views are well known. His ambition and necessities have only his beautiful daughter for their prop. He is embarked in the political career of the duc d'Orleans, and is said to be playing a game of extreme hazard; in which he looks to de Béne's wealth and influence for an escape. This man is of mean origin, vulgar and illiterate. By cunning, and subtilty in mischief, he three or four years since returned from Martinico laden with wealth; and, gratified by your father's condescension in courting his intimacy, was for a season the duke's fawning sycophant; when having discovered his motives, and yielded to his necessities the supplies he requested, he now exacts a homage for his gold, and requires the hand of his daughter, in the expectation of raising a family to succeed him who will have no reason to blush at their extraction. Your father's late indulgence and liberality, with de Béne's visit here, confirm this report, which is not to be disregarded. Augustus wishes to be the deputed guardian of your youth and innocence, my dear girl. I will engage for my Marianne's welcome in England. Mr. Umfreville lives only in the hope of seeing his heir married; for he fears not his choosing an *unworthy* mate. What shall I say to him?" added she, smiling. "I am rather disposed to carry home with me a favourable report of my talents as a *match-maker*: for I love Middleton as my child; and, as a mother, I do assert that the woman of his choice shall have my protection." I sunk into her arms, and weeping said that Augustus was necessary not only to my safety but to my existence.

I now found, my dear Pauline, that I could reason. My father's plans were before me; and I recalled every indication of them which had hitherto passed over the surface of my unsuspecting mind. I indulged without restraint the sentiments of a tender and grateful heart. Mrs. Aims worth's discourse and Augustus's love were barriers which could not fail to defeat my father's cruel purpose, and comforted by hope I regained my composure.

In a few days I was settled in the magnificent but solitary apartments of the hotel which my dear mother had formerly occupied for one or two winters. The first use I made of my authority was, to give orders for Jeanneton's marriage-fête, which Blanchard our maitre d'hotel rendered splendid; for he loved her and Nicolas. One of the guests, under the assumed character of Jeanneton's cousin, gave it charms for me: and Jeanneton's wedding-day was a happy one! My next indulgence was, being attended by my father to visit Mrs. Aims worth. We found Mr. Hamilton and her two sons with her, and all was ceremony. She mentioned her purpose of quitting Paris, observing that the political ferments not only made it unpleasant but insecure. The duke answered, that such disorders were unavoidable, and would for a time too much engage every one to admit those pleasures which were annexed to a time of repose. "I have avoided," added he with an embarrassed air, "every habitual indulgence of my taste for society; the noblesse in France are at this time watched with a jealous eye; the more unobserved we are, the better; and I have only to regret that Marianne will find that she has exchanged one prison for another, and a father's cares for those of her good madame Miron."—"I shall never be unhappy with my father," said I with eagerness, "nor was I so in my convent when assured of his tenderness." He smiled, and, turning to mademoiselle Aims worth, asked her whether she had given me a predilection for a life of retreat, glancing his expressive eyes on Mr. Hamilton. She blushed; and her mother, by mentioning the arrangements for their proceeding to Italy, and the day they intended to commence the journey, seemed to have relieved my father; for he became gay, and, as he could be at pleasure, pleasant and entertaining.

My purpose of a steady rejection of the hated de Béne was regulated by Jeanneton. She cautioned me to act on the defensive; Nicolas was to direct every thing; and hope detained my Augustus in Paris.

The Aimsworths were no sooner on the road than my father entered on his projects. He asked me the reason that my friend had not taken the name of *Hamilton* in Paris. I replied, that she preferred delaying the ceremony till they reached Avignon, where they meant to stay some time.—“Then you may, after all, be a bride before her,” observed he with great gaiety; “for de Béne will not lose a moment when he knows you are here.”—“De Béne!” said I with terror. “Even so,” replied he sternly: “this is no time for *choice*. De Fouclaut is governed by *necessity*, and his daughter *must* share in his fate.” He rose, and left the room. I saw no more of my father till the next day, when he introduced a gentleman who I afterwards discovered was the duke d’Orleans: I performed the honours of the table, and, abashed by the scrutiny with which he examined me, I retired immediately after the servants withdrew.

I have not the intention, mademoiselle, of detailing to you the domestic life of the *leader of a faction*; for such was my unhappy father: his time was engaged in perpetual hurry and fatigue, his hours were irregular, and his conduct and steps mysterious, rarely going out attended, entering by private doors, and at all hours of the night, and very often sleeping from the hotel. If I did not regret the convent, the reason is obvious; for it is very certain that my life had little to make me fond of the world. One day I was summoned into his apartment. He was stretched on a sopha, his face bruised, and he appeared exhausted by fatigue. I discovered my surprise, and asked whether he had met with any accident. “A *trifling blow*,” said he, rising, and looking in the glass: then laughing at his rueful figure, he observed, “he hoped de Béne had escaped better than he had done, for otherwise he would be a lover for Hecaté rather than his Marianne.” He drew me towards him, and tenderly embraced me. “My dear father!” said I, “send me to the convent again. Do with me whatever you please, but this man’s name is horror!”—“Which you must strive to conquer,” answered he with firmness; “for there is no alternative. But my head aches, and coffee will do me more service than conversation.” I was dismayed; for I thought he looked cruel, and his dark eyes ferocious. I served him with the coffee, in profound silence, he deeply musing; when suddenly stretching his limbs, which seemed stiffened by pain, he asked me whether Jeanneton had taken as great a dislike to de Béne’s face as I had done. “I do not know that she ever saw monsieur de Béne,” replied I, terrified by the question; “at least I am certain she never spoke to me of his face.” “Why, I hear,” replied he, “that she is weary of her easy servitude with you. Blanchard tells me, Nicolas has asked for his dismissal, and is going to turn marchand de bas et de gands. I suspect his jolie petite femme to be the instigator of this plan, thinking her *talents* are lost here.”—“You are mistaken, I believe, monseigneur,” replied I with more courage. “She has mentioned her husband’s intentions; he thinks he has met with an advantageous offer, which will fill up his vacant hours; but he has no thoughts of removing his wife: it is, as I understand, a partnership, in which another person will occupy the shop and its accommodations. Jeanneton would never consent to leave me: nor does her husband think of leaving the hotel; but only to have employment during your frequent journeys.” This explanation sufficed; the duke observed that he was satisfied; and Jeanneton had nothing to do but to make her court to monsieur de Béne, for the continuance of a station which she had found an easy one. I was permitted to retire, on his saying he was sleepy.

I know not, mademoiselle, of any better apology for those expressions of harshness which have, and may still drop from my pen when employed on the subject of my father’s conduct. It may not be improper to delineate a man who, from the ties of nature and the obligations of duty, has a claim to my respect. Alas! Marianne needed no incitements to love and obedience: her heart still fondly cleaves to her father, whilst her reason condemns him. Few will dispute the endowments the duc the Fouclaut has received from nature; but fewer still will be disposed to believe, that in a mind so versatile, and in a course of frivolous not to say debasing pursuits, there can be found an extent of genius, and a persevering spirit which needed only more noble objects to render him a distinguished member of

society. Vanity and unopposed passions have degraded his honourable feelings; profusion has rendered him sordid; a desperate fortune has given to personal bravery, I may say *hereditary courage*, a contempt of danger and a temerity which nothing can check. Consummate in finesse, fascinating when he chooses, and proud of an ascendancy over others, which he believes they are born to feel, he has been from his youth upwards the dupe of those whom his judgment despises and his pride scorns: impatient of control and furious in his anger, he can at his pleasure make the stubbornness of his will bend to his projects of ambition and schemes of power: and had the duc de Fouclaut been consistent in any character, he might have succeeded in gaining the confidence of that government which he now labours to overthrow; but pleasure allured him, and *inconstancy* was proverbial with his name.

My personal attractions pleased him, and it may be that for a time he yielded to the feelings of a heart prone to the admiration of beauty, a tribute which he himself mistook for the pure sentiment of nature. His elaborate praise of my person has often confounded me, and my blushes have checked his warmth; but I was soon regarded as of more importance than that of merely flattering his taste, and to effect his designs he taught me to love a parent who was bartering away my peace.

The date of my marriage certificate will convince you that love was inventive, and that Marianne had interchanged vows which no power on earth could set aside. More than three months had elapsed since I had lost my title to the name of de Fouclaut. My father's perpetual engagements abroad were not neglected. Jeanneton's "cousin" was a welcome guest; and Blanchard, believing his tale of his being in the service of an English gentleman, who was for a time on an excursion, gave him a general invitation to his table. To say the truth, it little corresponded with the antient magnificence poor Blanchard had witnessed at l'hotel de monseigneur; for all wore the signs of fallen greatness within. Neither carriage nor horses, not a supernumerary servant; a garden, which was extensive, become a wilderness of weeds! these were the indications of ruin I had to contemplate, instead of those delights which Charlotte and myself portrayed in the convent. To this melancholy picture I had also the terrors and alarms you with all the inhabitants of Paris shared, and for my peculiar portion, the troubles which *even love* could only mitigate.

Augustus never ceased to urge to me the necessity of leaving my father's house. Sometimes he spoke of madame du Rivage, imploring me to throw myself into her arms. He expatiated on her merit, and omitted not that of her Pauline, the daughter of her adoption. At another time I was informed that he had prepared me an asylum, to which I might retire on the first signal of danger. Monsieur du Rivage was yet detained from his purpose of emigrating; but he was certain it was his intention, and that he would serve him, in providing for my safety, when he removed his family. I promised him that I would obey him; but urged in my turn the expediency of remaining with my father till necessity, or his persevering in favour of de Béne, should justify the measure, and the hazard of his search and resentment.

A few days of calm succeeded, when I was ordered to attend my father in his library. De Béne was with him; but I experienced, mademoiselle, the efficacy of Claudine's lessons; I recollected my mother, and my nerves became firmer. My father with much form handed me to a seat, and thus addressed me: "You are called upon, Marianne, to vindicate the honour of your father. Have I not informed you that it is my purpose to unite you to this gentleman? Speak; and recall to your memory the precise time when I signified to you my purpose." "It is," said I, fixing my indignant eyes on the wretch before me, "more than four months, monsieur, since my father acquainted me with the interest you had gained in *his good opinion and favour*. I contented myself at that time with simply marking my

reluctance to a plan, in which neither my inclinations nor judgment had been consulted. I well know the obedience which parents exact in this country from their children, on the point immediately in question; but I appeal to you, monsieur, has not this law been reformed by your assistance and my father's? I am, with all due respect both to you and my father, determined to marry no man who has not a better claim to my favour than that which arises from my supposed incapacity of judging, or resisting persecution. I am the daughter of *Beatrice de l'Ormesson*," said I, rising with spirit, "and I will imitate her in her truth and virtue. I reject the hand you offer, monsieur, because I should fail in the obligations annexed to receiving it. As the friend of monseigneur," added I with augmenting terror, on observing the rage which swelled his features, "I shall esteem you, and as a man of honour I entreat you to pardon a frankness which I have been thus called upon to maintain. Indeed I cannot love you."

My father sprung from his seat. "This insolence is too much to bear," exclaimed he with ungovernable fury. "Ungrateful and perverse idiot as thou art! I will teach thee to know de Fouclaut, and to tremble before him, and the man of whom thou art unworthy." He dragged me with rude violence into the interior room, and, shutting the door on me, bolted it. The courage which had sustained me yielded to this violence. I fell on the floor, and, overpowered by my feelings, wept bitterly. My father's threats and exclamations reached me; and I heard de Béne say, "I am satisfied. Do not urge matters with too much severity: she will soon see you will be obeyed." He took his leave, appointing to meet him at the usual place of rendezvous. Judge of my astonishment, when on hearing my father's returning steps, and thinking all was lost, I beheld the duke enter, with a countenance impressed with solicitude and tenderness. "Are you hurt, my dear girl?" said he, raising me up gently, and placing me in a chair. "My dear, my precious Marianne! speak; say you forgive me. I could not act otherwise than I did. Let me make my peace, and relieve your spirits from dreading your father. Listen to me, and pity me." I fondly clung to his bosom, and wept. "The firmness and noble disdain you have shown before me, and your rejection of a man so unworthy of you, have convinced me that you may be trusted. It is foreign to the present purpose to detail to you those circumstances which have placed me in a state of dependence on this *reptile* de Béne; let it suffice that I am in his power. His insolence has looked to you for the acquittal of those services which he has tendered me. My necessities were some months since pressing; he supplied me with another loan, and we became more intimate: he expressed a wish to see you, and I readily gratified it. I had now to oppose your youth to his pressing overtures of marriage; and he seeing the subterfuge, grew angry. I was obliged to compromise matters, and I engaged not to oppose his addresses. Proud of my concessions, he spoke of his approaching happiness to the duc d'Orleans, giving him such an account of your beauty as excited his curiosity. He requested permission to see you, and you have not forgotten the only guest whom your father has received since you have been here. You were no sooner retired than my friend reproached me with the folly and forgetfulness of myself, in granting to de Béne even the hopes of an alliance with my family, and, extolling you, said it was degrading you to be known to a *de Béne*. I urged my necessities: 'You may purchase gold wherewith to balance his account,' said he: 'I will hear no more of this marriage. The time is not far remote when I shall be in a situation to take care of mademoiselle's fortune. She may aspire to the highest views for an establishment. Deserve as you have done the gratitude of your future prince; though a *Bourbon*, I am grateful.' I urged de Béne's influence, and the mischief he could effect by his desertion of the glorious cause in which we were engaged. 'Leave him to my management,' replied he, 'and do you continue to amuse him. Although I know the scoundrel, and that his zeal is to gain his own ends, he is too useful to mine to be discarded. He is in some secrets, as you well know, that must not be blazoned; but I shall crush the reptile when I have done with him. In the mean time I will leave him no leisure to persecute you, or to insult your daughter by his pretensions.' In consequence of this conversation, de Béne has been detained at Toulouse for a considerable time; and he will, with myself, return thither, charged with monseigneur's commissions. De

Béne has discovered that the duke had visited you; and is jealous of him. He has reproached me with having failed in my word, and sworn bitterly that he would be revenged. It is in his power to take away my life, Marianne, and in a moment to send thee from this sheltering roof. Fool that I have been," continued my father with extreme emotion, striking his forehead, "to be thus leagued with a villain!" My secret trembled on my lips. "Let us fly this wretched country," said I fondly. "Name it not," replied he: "I am embarked, and must abide the storm. It will soon pass, and de Fouclaut will then show himself a man not to be overlooked." I was silenced. He continued to give me instructions for this plan of duplicity and intrigue. "You must affect to have received some injury from your fall," said he, "and be prepared to see me again the *tyrant*." He rang the bell, and ordered Jeanneton to attend. When she entered, he with sternness commanded her to assist me in gaining my apartment, and to remember that it was his pleasure I should remain in it. We withdrew, I supporting the terrified Jeanneton.

The detail of what had passed appeared to Jeanneton an interposition of Providence in my favour: "We should gain time, and all would be well." Her prudent cares prevailed. She insisted on my being bled, and going to my bed. These measures being conformable to the duke's intention, I complied with them. The report circulated in the family that I had hurt my side by a fall, and was much indisposed. I soon discovered the advantages which resulted from my feigned indisposition. I began to dread my father's observation; and even my husband became a convert to Jeanneton's opinion, that no steps could be taken for my removal with so much safety to my health, as well as security, as after my father had left Paris.

During a month, in which my illness was magnified, I enjoyed my retreat with hope, and some cheerfulness; my paleness and fallen cheek imposed on the duke, whose visiting hour was commonly in the morning before I was up. He attributed this change to my want of exercise, and promised me to hasten the time for my enlargement. My blushes were noticed; but he had taught his child duplicity, and with a sigh I talked of his long absence. "My return," said he, "will be in triumph; the contest for power will be finished, and a Bourbon qualified to reign will be on the throne. But you must receive a visit from de Béne; he must be treated with gentleness."

Stung by the imposed violence on my principles of rectitude, this information really affected my health, and I became feverish. My father, unmindful of this circumstance, led my lover to my bed-side, who finding me languid and pale, dismissed as I suppose his suspicions, and with apparent sincerity lamented his having been the cause of my suffering—finishing by declaring his disapprobation of my father's resentment, and repeating his awkward vows of love and adoration. I mildly thanked him for his preference, but implored him to consider my rejection of him, however *improperly* made, as the result of those opinions which I held indispensable in the engagement which he solicited. "I am ready to acknowledge your claims to consideration, monsieur," added I. "I grieve that I cannot accede with readiness to my father's wishes; but I cannot deceive you. I must esteem the man to whom I pledge my faith. Leave me with this declaration," added I, weeping, "and to the hopes of a father's returning favour. Be assured that I do not blame you for an instance of that momentary severity which my unguarded frankness produced in him." The duke rose, and with haughtiness bade me not forget the lesson. "I am no trifler," added he, "and expect that my daughter should be something superior to a romantic puling girl." De Béne took in good earnest the alarm. "You will again terrify her," said he, drawing him away: "she is ill, and must not be agitated. Farewell, mademoiselle! I go with the precious hope that the time may arrive when you will *esteem* de Béne." I bowed my head, and they retired.

The following morning my father left Paris with his *friend* for Toulouse. Once more my Augustus had access to his Marianne. I was now advancing in my pregnancy, and Augustus determined on remaining at Paris till my delivery; I pleading that my father's life depended on my remaining where I was, and urging the wickedness of leaving him to a fate he might shun, by yielding to my arguments, and availing himself of an asylum at once honourable and necessary. About this period Mr. Middleton received the intelligence of his uncle's illness and extreme danger at Nice. Doctor Wingrove was with him, and also Mr. Aimsworth. The good old man had avoided France; but had trusted that his influence, joined with that of the Aimsworth family, would prevail on his nephew to quit it, and to secure to me a place of safety in their tender bosoms. Let me hasten from the remembrance of his pleadings of love! My heart sickens! De Béne had my father's life in his hands. He was remote from me, and I could not assent to leaving him with his abhorred de Béne. Oh! fatal was the moment which spared me the guilt of placing in this assassin's hands the dagger for a father's bosom! It has reached my own, and he has armed others to reach him! Never for a moment have my husband's prophetic words ceased to sound in my ears: "I yield," said he, fondly clasping me in his faithful arms, the big drops of anguish bedewing his face and mine. "May your sacrifice be acceptable in the sight of heaven! Should we never meet again, may its recompense be your consolation!" "We shall meet again," exclaimed I frantically; "and a father's blessing shall reward you for a father's life and joy." We parted, Pauline! Yes, we parted, and Marianne lives to recall the pang, and smile at the death which menaces her! The largeness of the sum of money he left in Nicolas's hands seemed a presage of his lost hopes. A letter announcing his safe arrival, although it mentioned the approaching dissolution of his uncle, calmed my spirits, and Hope once more plumed her wings. Soon after his departure, Blanchard desired to be admitted to an audience. He had received letters from the duke. "Monseigneur thinks this establishment useless to him," said he with visible distress, "as his return is deferred, and he is obliged to go for some time to Nimes and Bourdeaux. I have orders to shut up the house, and to send you to the villa near Fontainebleau with madame Meunier and Nicolas; the duke believing that you will prefer being in the country during his absence. I am to go to the Normandy estate, and look into matters there." This reprieve lightened my spirits. I cheerfully replied, that I languished for the country. "So I perceive," said he, looking pitifully in my emaciated face; "but why not go to l'Eclair? My master has surely forgotten the neglected state of la Rondeau: you will be miserably accommodated there. But these perilous times, my dear young lady, are such, that safety is the first boon we now ask of heaven. But I will do what I can for you, my dear lady, and will send some moveables to the villa. He gave me the duke's letter, and withdrew.

My father's style was changed: I was *commanded* to retire to la Rondeau, and to remain there till he could join me, and still further retrench his household. "Confine your walks to the garden," added he, "and forbear going to mass. We are at a crisis which calls upon us for sacrifices. Let me find you in good health, and cheerfully disposed to meet my commands." I was tranquillized, by thinking with Jeanneton that this letter had been framed to please monsieur de Béne. Our removal from the hotel followed, and I was not sorry to escape Blanchard's eyes. At la Rondeau we discovered the obligations in which we were indebted to this good domestic; for, had he not foreseen and provided for our wants, we should not have had a bed for our repose. But I had now no wants; for a letter from my Augustus reached me, breathing comfort and faithful love! "Mr. Umfreville was thought in no condition for hope. Yet in the midst of his family he had experienced a consolation which appeared to smooth his passage to the grave. That he frequently mentioned me, and listened with satisfaction to his nephew's fond praise of his Marianne; that he sent me his blessing, and commended my discretion in not hazarding a journey in the critical state I was in; having been convinced by Mrs. Aimsworth that my father would with joy acknowledge an union of such manifest advantages to himself."

The only being I saw at la Rondeau was a girl, who in her varied occupations took care of her grandfather, an infirm man who lived in an apartment remote from mine, and whom I rarely met. Jaqueline was good-humoured, and not displeased to have some one to talk to. Jeanneton and she were soon friends, and the confidence she shared was returned; for Jaqueline mourned for an ungrateful lover, and Jeanneton mentioned her poor lady as one who had a severe father. My kindness in no wise lessened the poor girl's sympathy. I believe I might have trusted her further; but I contented myself with deploring my hard fate, and regretting that I should soon be left alone for some days, Jeanneton being under the necessity of going to Paris in order to prepare for her expected confinement. "And why cannot you go with her?" asked the innocent girl: "I am sure I will never betray you; and as for my father, you might be gone for a month, and he never the wiser. He is now a cripple with his rheumatism." "I think you might venture," observed Jeanneton. "I shall not perhaps be absent a fortnight, and I am certain your health will be ruined by the life you now lead." You may easily judge of the result: I was conveyed to Paris with Jeanneton; and, to use Meunier's words, "safely lodged under my *own roof*." My Augustus had provided me with every comfort. He had foreseen his Marianne's *every* want! and opposite my bed I found his picture—the resemblance striking. He was gracefully bending before the bright figure of Hope, who with smiles pointing to heaven presented him a tablet, on which was written "*Les fideles peuvent attendre le bonheur*." The little journey, with the perturbation of my spirits, accelerated, according to Jeanneton's calculation, my confinement: but my infant was vigorous; and in ten days his languid mother returned to the villa, Jeanneton believing that the continual dread of my father's return retarded my recovery. The hazardous experiment turned out in my favour; in this quiet abode and purer air I recruited beyond her hopes. And Jaqueline, who had been alarmed by seeing me look so pale and thin, was convinced of the truth she had often heard, "that there was nothing like the country for health." Satisfied that my child was safe, and in the hands of an English woman whom Nicolas had chosen for the trust, I indulged for a short period in those hopes so essential to my well-being. But I was disappointed in my expectation of letters, and again my spirits sunk.

I was soon after surprised by my father's and monsieur de Béne's arrival. My first welcome was returned by a silent embrace on the part of the duke; his lips trembled when he pressed my cheek, and his tears bedewed them before my own could escape their bounds. De Béne was stately and cold, and my trepidation was augmented by seeing the gloom which hung on both their countenances. The evening passed in a reserve and constraint which no one endeavoured to conceal; and we separated early. I was now determined to inform my father of my marriage; and after an unquiet night, I rose early, and went into the garden in order to gain strength for the conflict. The duke was there before me, and I saw him traversing a walk with unequal steps. On turning, he perceived me, and, beckoning me, I joined him. "This is well," said he; "I want to have some conversation with you *unnoticed*." He led to an arbour near, and seated himself. "My question, Marianne," said he with emotion, "is not *now* what it *must be* an hour hence. I do not ask you whether you are prepared to marry de Béne or not; but I ask you, whether you can see your father die on a scaffold? There is no alternative," added he sternly. "Tears and lamentations will do no good. You must be a Fouclaut, and submit to fortune. Were the first monarch on earth to solicit your hand at this moment, I could not give it but with the loss of my honour and my life. I am entangled beyond the power of retreating; you are a beggar, and I am ruined. I would fly; but de Béne holds me in his toils, and the snares of death encompass me. Speak, Marianne," added he: "your wretched father is your suppliant." I was unable; for, unequal to the conflict, I sighed and fainted. On recovering, I found that my father had assumed a different air. "You will quit this house tomorrow," said he with unfeeling calmness. "Jeanneton's condition will not permit her to attend you to l'Eclair; but you will find a woman there not less qualified for her office, and one whom de Béne likes better. He is suspicious not only of my sincerity but of Jeanneton's discretion—on what ground I cannot discover.

Your good sense will point out to you the conduct you ought to pursue in regard to a man whom you will find it necessary to treat with respect; and whom it is for your interest and my safety *necessary to please*. I will do all in my power to retard the sacrifice which I exact. Whilst I can prevent it, you shall not be precipitated into an engagement which my soul abhors as much as yours. But, I repeat it, he has my life in his power, and has already betrayed the duke of Orléans to a faction which will be his ruin. I leave you, Marianne, to your prudence and *duty*." Thus saying, he withdrew, and I remained stupefied.

Jeanneton found me in this state; and on seeing her near me I gave loose to my tears. She silently permitted them to flow, then with her accustomed tenderness mentioned her mother. "She will be near you, my dear lady," said she, "and my brother will be ready to execute your orders—your Jeanneton with your child prepared to receive you. Sink not under apprehensions which will destroy you. We shall have letters from Mr. Middleton; and you know Nicolas. Condescend to perform the part imposed upon you by a parent who considers you only as the instrument of his intrigues, and who in his wild (and may I not be permitted to say wicked?) projects of ambition and disloyalty forgets you are his child. Dread communicating your secret to him. You must oppose prudence to his cunning; and, when driven to the last extremity, frustrate his plans, and be just to Mr. Middleton's by escaping: for in what code of laws will you find, my dear Marianne, any obligation which binds you to fulfil engagements which had their rise in deceit and baseness, and which are at this moment enforced by necessity, and a cowardly anxiety for his own escape from a danger which he has voluntarily invited, and madly drawn on himself? Only be firm, and preserve your health. My dismissal is even favourable to you; for I shall cease to be suspected; and it is my decided opinion that your father is not to be trusted at this hour."—"Alas!" replied I, "what have I not to dread! It is now above six weeks since I heard from Augustus! I know not if he lives!"—"You do not consider the obstacles which retard the regularity of the post," replied she: "nor of Nicolas's resolution to convey you to Nice as soon as I am in safety, and in a condition to attend you. Trust to God, and to friends near you; and again I entreat you to temporise with de Béne, and to be on your guard with your father. You will soon see your faithful Claudine, and she will be your consolation; whilst I shall be with your child." My spirits thus composed, we returned to the house. My presence was not commanded till the dining hour; and the pretence of preparing for my journey gained me permission to retire. The gentlemen were apparently at their ease, and monsieur de Béne again the modest lover and the sycophant.

The following day I quitted la Rondeau with my father and the despicable de Béne, Jeanneton remaining there till her husband appeared, in order to conduct her to her comfortable home, and my precious treasure. We travelled in de Béne's carriage, and his manners became respectful and attentive to me. My father's, on the contrary, were cold; and he looked gloomy, and talked very little. After dinner he somewhat relaxed from his taciturnity, and I listened with some curiosity to a conversation in which I had no share. It referred to political events and political men; and both agreed in condemning monsieur le duc d'Orléans. "He was a fool and a poltroon—the slave of an ambition too great for his talents and dastardly soul." They execrated his measures, and pronounced that he would be the ruin of many better men than himself. To this discourse succeeded de Béne's boastings: "*his* wisdom had foreseen all the evils resulting from *such a leader*—*his* wealth and influence had been abused; but *he* stood secure." And with an overweening pride he gave *de Fouclaut's daughter* to understand that her future condition would be brilliant.

It appeared, on our reaching l'Eclair, that we were expected guests. I was received with much ceremony by une petite bourgeoise who was stationed in the salon for that purpose. She was not uncomely in her features; but, dressed as she was in the grotesque remnants of her own wardrobe, and

the spoils taken from those of a superior class to her own, she attracted my curiosity and surprise. A very fashionable robe, but too strait for her size, pinioned back her arms to painful constraint; this was of rich pale violet-coloured silk. A petticoat of muslin, soiled and coarse, was trimmed with fine Brussels lace. Her coarse and stagnated arms were adorned with bracelets and rings little suited to the pearls in her ears and round her neck. She had adorned her head with a pure democratic spirit, for she had followed no edict but that of her own will. Feathers, flowers, ringlets and beads composed an assemblage of ornaments, which I conceived it must have taken hours to arrange. The manners of this young woman, who appeared to be thirty, perfectly agreed with her incongruous dress. They exhibited by turns a natural vivacity, with an acquired pertness and assumed ease: then, checked by my silence and my father's stately reserve, she discovered an awkward embarrassment which I pitied.

Our repast soon succeeded to mademoiselle Babet's first compliments. My father taking my hand, with a face demonstrative of the passing thought, placed me at the head of the table, monsieur directing the young lady to the seat next to me. She was however useful to me; for she observed that I looked unwell, and asked me with good nature whether I did not wish to retire to bed. Grateful for my escape, I followed her. She conducted me through the great salloon, and I saw that it had been recently stripped of its ornaments: not a picture remained, nor any vestige of its costly furniture. "I hope you will like *our* bedchamber," said she, opening the door of an apartment in which were two beds; "I thought you would prefer a companion, to sleeping alone in this great empty house." I thanked her with coldness, but observed that I admitted no intrusion on my hours of repose. She coloured; and I, recollecting my part, added with a languid smile, that the buzzing of a fly prevented my sleeping; and that, although I wished to be near her, I preferred a room to myself. "It shall be as you like," answered she; "I do not wish to be troublesome, so that we are *but sociable*." She instantly led me to the next apartment, and I was contented. She with more loquacity than I desired, but with a kindness I could not find in me to repress, assisted me to undress, and, having performed this friendly office, left me to my repose. In the morning, without any previous signal, she entered the room, inquired after my health, and asked me whether I chose my chocolate in bed. These civilities were intermixed with a familiarity and freedom which surprised me. I requested she would let my father know that I wished to see him. "The gentlemen are in the garden," replied she, opening the sash, and loudly calling "Monsieur, your daughter wants to speak to you." How powerfully are we under the control of early habits! My weak pride and fastidious delicacy were offended by an intrusion on their accustomed demands of deference and respect; and with a childish disgust at manners which a better experience of life would have taught me to overlook as of no importance, I yielded to a resentment unworthy of a sound judgment or a firm temper.

My father instantly obeyed this unusual summons, and on his entering mademoiselle withdrew sans cérémonie. With some emotion I begged of him to instruct me in regard to the full extent of those humiliations to which it was necessary for me to submit, being at that moment unprepared to meet with an associate so unsuitable as mademoiselle Babet, or to tolerate in an attendant a familiarity at once vulgar and impertinent. I spoke with a portion of my father's pride: he felt the appeal; but, suppressing the resentment which it would in any other situation have excited in his haughty mind, he told me with much calmness, that I was under a mistake in supposing the young woman was a domestic. "Her father is a respectable man," added he, "and a useful member of a club under de Béne's influence. She is in a word, Marianne,"—his face became pale and his voice sunk,—"like yourself, a *guest* under this roof. Like your father, you must bend before you can recover your proper place. Once more I repeat it, your father's life is at stake. We shall leave you tomorrow; our embassy is of direful import!" He checked himself, and proceeded to inform me, that the girl had good-naturedly observed to de Béne, that she had no doubt of your liking her when you knew her better; for she was not made to be the tormentor of any

one, advising him to gain your love by dismissing his jealousy. She has acutely discovered that he is jealous; and so have I, and what is more, that he entertains suspicions which he dares not avow, nor can I even conjecture on what ground he has entertained them. Be this what it may," continued he, "policy on my part, and submission on yours, are the only means left of averting the evils we dread; and I must shorten a conversation which may give umbrage to de Béne."

At dinner I took occasion to lament the unquiet state of the nation, and observed that, as we were two unprotected women, I hoped mademoiselle would be of my opinion, and confine our walks to the garden. De Béne praised my prudence; and Babet, with a loud laugh, said she would abide by such conditions no longer than whilst monsieur de Béne was absent; for, having no fears of being molested, and loving liberty, the garden would soon lose its charms for her. At length the evening released me from the restraints of the day. My father, on rising to retire, coldly observed that he should be up too early in the morning to see me; and de Béne, with much ceremony kissing my passive hand, withdrew with him for the night, saying that he had yet letters to write.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EXHAUSTED by my exertions, and sunk to despair by the corroding reflexions which my husband's silence perpetually supplied, I remained till day-break without closing my eyes. I heard the gentlemen depart; and nature, solaced by the hope of a respite from suffering, sunk to the repose she needed. On awaking, I found my watch sounded ten, and I mechanically put my hand to the bell-string, but as suddenly checked it: the idea of my forlorn condition rushed into my mind; and I felt that using the powers nature had given me to serve myself, was the slightest evil I had to sustain. My toilet finished, and my features composed, I made my way to the room in which we had supped; but in passing a smaller apartment I discovered Babet quietly knitting. She was surprised at seeing me. "How is this?" said she, rising, and placing my chair. "I have been on the watch for the sound of your bell this hour. Surely you did not ring; or it is out of repair?" "I thank you, mademoiselle," answered I pensively, "for the kindness of your intention; but I mean to wean myself from a weak dependence on others, in services I can perform with my own hands. It is time I should forget the woman of quality," added I smiling, "and on this point at least I find the task easy."—"How idly you talk, mademoiselle!" replied she, cheerfully preparing the coffee: "the wife of citizen de Béne may expect to see duchesses behind her chair, or kneeling to tie her slipper."—"I would rather be the lowest menial on earth," replied I, "than live to see the hour of such elevation over those with whom I have classed."—"I am not surprised to hear you say so," answered she, "for I pity them, and have yet to learn to insult a fallen enemy. I am not ill-natured, mademoiselle,.... but let me see you eat something." I was subdued even by this touch of commiseration; my tears flowed; and poor Babet looked compassionately: again she pressed me to take some coffee, and I tried to oblige her. "That is right," observed she; "we shall soon be friends, I see. I am not a fool, mademoiselle. I saw you as an offended woman of quality yesterday, yet then I pitied you; today I see you as an unhappy girl, and I pity you still more. I am not much flattered by monsieur de Béne's preference of me for the post I am in, nor well pleased with his manner of proceeding: yet I must perform my task; for my father's bread depends on him. I was told that I should meet here his affianced bride, who for particular reasons would live privately at l'Eclair till his return from his journey, when the marriage would be solemnized, and an establishment formed in which I should be considered. In the mean time I was not to be looked upon as a domestic, the lady wishing for a companion, and my cheerful temper would content her."—"And so it does," replied I with eagerness, and seizing her hand, "for you have a good heart, and refuse not compassion to the wretched!"—"But you are wrong to be wretched," answered she: "an old husband is not, to be sure, exactly what one likes; but you will learn by

experience, that it is possible to be comfortable with one who is wealthy. You have managed badly to rouse his jealousy. Here is a letter he left for me; read it," added she, unmindful of my consternation, "and let it direct you to be more on your guard." I took it with eagerness. It was from de Béne to her, and written the evening he left the chateau. In this he informs her "that I had a concealed lover, of a rank too degrading to be mentioned to the duke, whose violence would be fatal. She was ordered to watch me with unremitting vigilance, and to keep my letters for his examination. That he still loved me; and, trusting to my gratitude, would not only shelter me from the ruin which awaited me, but from disgrace." I returned the letter, and with scorn observed, that nothing surprised me from a man who could persist in his pretensions to a woman who had repeatedly told him that she could not love him. "This calumny," added I, "serves only to render him more contemptible. It is my father's pleasure to sacrifice me; but I shall have a friend whose power he cannot control: death will shelter me." "And why not secure de Béne," asked she with gay levity, "from the hazard of marrying a girl who hates him, and who is young enough for his granddaughter? But we have had enough of weeping for one day; and you now understand me; I must have fair play: be easy, only remember we must have no intriguing nor love-letters. I am honest, mademoiselle; and I expect you will be so whilst I have the honour of attending you. I wish to be useful to you, and I beg you will allow me to serve in your apartment: for the rest, we must do as well as we can; there are books in the library, and a harp expressly sent here for your amusement by monsieur de Béne. His confidential domestic told me that his master adored you; and that he has been generous to your father. I shall neither confine my walks to the garden nor treat you like a prisoner. You will like madame Claudine, our neighbour, and we shall do very well together."

Claudine now appeared in the court, and with alacrity the loquacious Babet rose to meet her. My emotions were suppressed, when with her present of *crème de mousseline* for mademoiselle Babet she was introduced in form to me. The dear woman became pale, and, sitting down, said that she had given an ugly wrench to her ankle. Babet instantly offered to examine it, but this was declined; and she appeared to have forgotten it, in her remarks on the poor young lady's apparent bad health. On rising to take leave, Babet insisted she should not move till the evening. "Your son will know where you are," added she smiling, "and it is not proper for you to walk without support." Unable to endure the restraint I was under, I left them, to examine the books; and to my surprise, when I joined them for dinner I found Simon with them as neat as a lover. My condescensions charmed Babet; and nothing loth she left me with Claudine, for a walk in her lover's company. You may judge of our mutual feelings. But she implored me to practise self-command, and to hope that all would be soon well. "You must, my dear lady," added she, "oppose prudence to injustice, and management to cunning. The young woman whom de Béne has chosen is good-natured: but she must not be trusted at present; nor do I think her sufficiently prudent even for her own safety. She is thrown out of her element here; and she finds my son Simon a better gallant than none. He understands very well the part he has to act; and Babet is amused with his compliments, without perceiving that he is laughing at her; for, between ourselves, she is not a wife for him: nor will you wonder, when I tell you that Babet is more delighted with the new laws in regard to matrimony than with all other reforms."

A correspondence was thus opened to me; and I heard of Jeanneton's safety and of my infant's welfare: but the cordial my sinking spirits needed was yet withheld, and all was cheerless. Soon after Jeanneton's confinement she lost her child: and Nicolas was by means of a friend given to understand, that it behoved him to seek his safety by engaging in the army for more remote service than the capital. The information was of too serious a kind to be disregarded; and he entered as a volunteer in the regiment which his friend commanded as colonel, and whose nephew was particularly attached to Nicolas. Poor Jeanneton had only to lament his absence; for the fond and faithful husband concealed

from her the real motives which had governed him, pleading only the necessity of so doing. His absence was however the completion of my wretchedness. Hope was extinct, and a fatal idea too powerful to be removed took possession of my mind; for I still firmly believe, mademoiselle, that my husband is no more. Augustus Middleton could neither be *base* nor *cruel*. As well could I be taught to doubt of my own existence, to believe that honour and truth are names without meaning, as to suspect that virtue which I had revered as the basis of my Augustus's firm mind. But I *was abandoned*; and although my nature recoils with horror, whilst the suspicion passes to you, the Aimsworth family were my husband's heirs. Oh pardon me, Heaven, if I err! and let pity heal the wound of offended friendship and vilified honour!!

Claudine, alarmed by my condition, advised Babet to allure me from my apartment, in which I passed hours in a state of torpid inactivity. Jeanneton's arrival with Sigismund saved my life, and reinstated my fluctuating reason. My child became the object of my cares; and Babet, pleased with the augmentation of her society by the arrival of Simon's sister, left me without constraint to the diversion which the child had given to my melancholy.

Sometimes I walked to the farm; but more frequently Jeanneton passed the day with me at the chateau: and from what I could observe, Simon had assumed the lover so well, that he was become one in reality. He strenuously maintained that Babet was an honest girl, and that I might trust her: but her connexions with de Béne were urged by Jeanneton; and Claudine trembled at his name, suspecting he had been the enemy whom Nicolas had been warned to shun. I listened to her plans and project with more avidity; for Claudine appeared more anxious to preserve Sigismund than for my deliverance. "Were he in safety," said she, "I would appear; and your father would listen to me, or I would lose my life." "But de Béne..." replied I weeping.... "is a tyger," answered she with eagerness, and with an emotion which surprised me. "But were your child beyond his reach, I could tame him." In vain I urged her to explain herself more fully. She refused, saying that she referred to events which had occurred many years back, and which she meant not to bring forward unless urged to the last extremity of her patience. She had, however, said enough to alarm me for the life of my child, and she instantly perceived it. Your intervention was pointed out, and a detail of your precise situation followed. Claudine entered warmly into those plans of caution which I have followed, agreeing with me that the fate of her family depended on the removal of the child before my father's and de Béne's return; which we had reason to expect would not be delayed much longer. I immediately began to write the particulars of my disastrous life, for your perusal and the future information of my unfortunate son. Simon has drawn the bolts of the little wicket. The casket is prepared, and my sainted mother's secret gift will supply her wretched grandchild with bread. Claudine, the faithful Claudine, has, by her care, a second time saved the hopes of the house of Ormesson. Angel of mercy! for such my soul believes thee, receive my fervent prayers before they gain the throne of grace. Join to them the solemn purpose of protecting innocence. They will ascend, Pauline, and heaven will applaud the deed...

Babet has this morning received intelligence from her father, that she is to prepare herself and her *prisoner* to leave l'Eclair, the duke and monsieur de Béne being unable to quit Bourdeaux. Clément, monsieur de Béne's private secretary, is ordered to conduct to the *impatient lover* mademoiselle de Fouclaut and her faithful Babet. The poor woman is inconsolable; and I dare not tell her what might more alarm her. But I am collected, Pauline; and I say to you, that mademoiselle de Fouclaut will not go to Bourdeaux.

I now hasten to the conclusion of my business in this life; to-morrow morning I shall see Claudine, I shall see Jeanneton, I shall embrace my precious child! Simon is prepared with a note for his mother. She will inform you of the hour you will find me near the little wicket: I think it better to meet you in the wood, than to hazard being seen in your house. You have only one week to wait for Marianne's *last adieux*...

Gasping, fainting, frantic with terror, I am once more seated in this abode of misery. Babet has left me *to sleep*. She thinks a bull has terrified me. No, Pauline, the fiercest of its kind in mad fury is mild and placable to the monster who pursues me! But let me pause.

Returning home from Claudine's this morning at an earlier hour than usual, having promised Babet to breakfast with her, I perceived a man sitting under a tree in the path before me. The stranger's appearance had nothing in it wherewith to alarm me; yet I hesitated, and irresolutely advanced, hoping to see him quit his post. He probably saw my diffidence; for he rose, and entered the thicket, and I stood till I saw him mounting the hill which lies between us and the hamlet. On reaching the spot he had left, I saw he had dropped his pocket-book, in which he was writing when I first perceived him; and assured that he was a harmless traveller, I was prompted by the wish of restoring his property. I looked to the road he was in. He had gained the ascent, and was looking at me. I instantly held up the book. He clasped his hands together, bowed, and disappeared. Surprised by his behaviour, I opened the book, judging from its bulk that its contents were few and unimportant. Two leaves appeared, and I saw with consternation the address to myself, and I read what follows:

"Fly, leave l'Eclair, thou most innocent, most abused of women! Thy deliverer is in the village; he will wait to see thee pass the inn. Trust him; for he is faithful, and has in Paris a sure refuge for thee. Before sunset thy escape will be impossible. Thy father will be a prisoner in Paris. De Béne's hour of retribution is come; he is also in custody. Fly, and fear not. Destroy this intelligence. I wait to receive thee, with a certainty of saving the life I have brought to the brink of destruction. O let me thus expiate my crime!"

I stood motionless for some time. Then tearing the paper into atoms, I rolled it in the dust with my foot. The wind had removed a fragment. I know not wherefore I took it up; for it appeared a blank to my eye: yet I did, and, turning it, read the name of *Clement* written with ink; the other part was written with a pencil. The toil is frustrated! De Béne will miss his prey. Marianne is the care of Providence! I will not leave l'Eclair, but will now watch the appearance of my child's saving angel! Claudine will be with you, and twelve is the appointed hour. One farewell must part us, and Marianne Middleton will be soon at peace!! I hasten to meet your embrace, and *to die*...

CHAPTER XXV.

IN the first impulse of my sympathy and compassion, I would, had I been left to their government, have followed the wretched Marianne to her prison, and there ratified the solemn vow my lips had uttered, to devote my *life* to her child's preservation. It is however registered in *heaven*, and Pauline is satisfied.

I lost no time in visiting my precious charge: and leaving to your imagination the first interview with his friends, as being too painful to detail, I will proceed to inform you of the measures we pursued. Jeanneton went immediately to Paris, in the hope of being useful to her lady. Sigismund remained with Claudine, waiting for my departure from La Fontaine, when she was to join her daughter. I found

Jeanneton and her husband had concurred in the same opinion with Mrs. Middleton, as this related to her husband's death, and the conduct which had resulted from that supposed event, on the part of the Aimsworth family. Having no arguments of sufficient weight with which to combat these opinions; and being equally biassed with themselves in favour of Mr. Middleton's honour, I took up with these prejudices, and silently pronounced the Aimsworths culpable of the meanest designs; and the *real* heir of Mr. Middleton regarded as a friendless orphan, whom it was their interest never to acknowledge.

Day succeeded day without other consolation than such as monsieur du Rivage's letters afforded me. The Wilmots were arrived in Paris, but had not fixed the time for their quitting it. This interval of suspense was soothed by Claudine's conversation, and the increasing fondness of *my child*; for such did I call him *then*, and such will I call him till my "voice is lost in death."

Claudine, who relieved her dejected spirits by perpetually recurring to the subject of her distress, left my curiosity nothing to wish for, in regard to a family to which I was so peculiarly connected by the circumstances I have related.

It may not be improper to detail to you my sympathizing friend Claudine's narrative of events respecting the family of the unfortunate object of your commiseration. It is interesting: and if it does not beguile you, as it did me, of some of those hours of painful suspense I passed, it may divert your thoughts from resting on one example of suffering innocence left to struggles beyond its strength.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“I MUST begin my story,” said Claudine, “with an exploit of my forefathers. One of them, then a vassal, and living with an ancestor of mademoiselle de Fouclaut, saved his young master’s life in a battle fought under the great Condé. The hazard of his own life, and the astonishing bravery he showed, were not overlooked by his noble father, the duke de l’Ormesson. He gave him this land; and his name was exchanged for that of *Bon Valet*. Not only were these honours granted him, but a picture was drawn of the transaction, and I have seen it in the great gallery at the castle hundreds of times. These favours retained the grateful and faithful dependent at the castle: he died there, and was succeeded by a son as honest. My mother at her death left me a young girl under the same protecting roof; and it was my pride, and is now my glory, that the blood of *Bon Valet* has never degenerated. On the marriage of mademoiselle de l’Ormesson, the heiress to the wealth, the honour, and the virtue of her noble house, her mother retired to a beautiful villa near Toulouse, I remaining with her daughter, then duchess de Fouclaut; and I shall never forget my good lady’s words when she left l’Eclair. ‘I leave you with comfort, my dear Béatrice,’ said she to her weeping daughter: ‘you have near you a faithful friend. Remember, she is the child of your nurse Chrétienne, and the descendant of *Bon Valet*.’ My blood, mademoiselle, rushed from my heart to my face, and I envied not my noble patrons their titles. This farm was, at the period I am arrived at, on lease to a good tenant, who for his pleasure and convenience, being a wealthy bourgeois of Paris, rendered the house what you see it. With my lady’s consent I married a man who was not less honest than myself, and the duke was pleased to make him head gardener. Two years passed away; these winters my lady spent at Paris, and I was left dame des affaires at the chateau. I soon saw Paris did not improve the duchess’s health or spirits, and that the adoring husband was left there.

“The mask gradually dropped, and the duke became jealous of one who loved his wife better than he did. He found the lease of my land was expired; and he urged me to sell it to him, saying it interfered with his improvements. ‘So did poor Naboth’s with his lord’s, monseigneur,’ replied I smiling; ‘but you are too generous not to accept of his words, which are mine also: The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee! an inheritance,’ added I, ‘that will teach my children’s children to be faithful in their duty.’ ‘You may perform that duty,’ answered he, ‘more effectually by residing near madame de l’Ormesson, and I will give you a farm there, more advantageous to your family.’—I was firm in my refusal, and the duke showed that he was offended; for from that time my poor Augustine’s ‘right hand appeared to have forgotten its cunning;’ nothing he did was right; and we quietly submitted, till my dear lady hinted, it would please her to see us comfortable at our farm. I saw how matters were going on, and for the sake of peace we retired to an abode in which *we* found her. Soon after, she lost her mother, who by the way forgot her daughter too much, in the solicitude for her own salvation; but she was never herself from the time she became a widow, and buried her eldest daughter. My lady had been a wife three years when her son Sigismund was born. What a change followed that event! Continual demands on her purse for the expenditure of the house at l’Eclair, whilst the mines of Peru would not have sufficed for the duke’s hotel in Paris! My lady lived like a recluse; by the months together, we saw nothing of the duke. We in this time had two children, Simon and Jeanneton; but our curé’s mother took a fancy to my girl, and I was left at liberty to attend my dear lady. The curé was as fond of our Jeanneton as his mother, and she was at length an inmate of their house, and the pride of their hearts; for she was as ready to learn, as they were to teach.

“But to return. I now perceived the visits of monseigneur were more dreaded than desired; for my lady was either coaxed or menaced to give up rights which she ought to have steadily preserved for her children. But she loved too tenderly this ungrateful man, and a return of kindness from him subdued on her part every resolution and resentment. The birth of Marianne was followed by exactions which roused the spirit of the gentle duchess. She firmly refused to sign a deed, which would have made her children beggars; and she had now *cruelty* to sustain. Her health, unequal to the inquietude of her mind, daily sunk; and the physicians declared she was in a consumption. I was again stationary at the chateau, and beheld her hourly sinking under a dejection of spirits beyond the aid of medicine. Patient and gentle, she still supported the fatigue of rising and changing her apartment, this being recommended. The duke, struck by the danger of losing her, *or with other views*, became again the fond husband, in every one’s eyes but *mine*; for I well understood that he had gained his purpose, and that my lady had at length signed the deed, which left her children and their property to his management. This had been the cause of her illness; and well it might! However, all was attention and tenderness from this time. I had as usual attended her levee one morning, and seen her on the sofa in her dressing-room. She desired me to place a devotional book within her reach. I did so, and by it her salts, with a cordial, the greater part of which she had already taken. ‘That is well,’ said she, looking at it, ‘I think it has done me good; for it takes off my faintness.’—‘Will you take it now?’ asked I. ‘No,’ replied she with more than usual cheerfulness; ‘I have had some refreshing sleep this morning.’—I withdrew as usual when she was engaged at her devotions; and seeing two of her women stationed in the antichamber, I went forwards to my own room, in order to change my clothes. In less than an hour I was hastily summoned. ‘My lady was expiring.’ On entering her apartment, I found her retching with violence, her countenance of a livid hue, and bedewed with cold sweats; her brows contracted, and her eyes half closed: she was supported in the duke’s arms, who *appeared* in a terror perfectly corresponding with the cause before him. ‘What was the potion,’ exclaimed he, ‘I found in this accursed glass,’ dashing it with fury from the table, ‘and which my wife desired me to give her when she became faint?’ One of the women answered, it was a portion of the same cordial which the duchess had taken in the night, and for several days. The dying saint opened her eyes, and faintly said, ‘Give me more of it.’ She was obeyed, and, receiving the medicine, remained for some time undisturbed; and at length sunk into a sweet slumber.

“I was now informed that monseigneur had found the duchess on her knees in prayer; that gently remonstrating with her, that the posture did not suit her feebleness, she yielded, and confessed the exertion had been too much, requesting him to give her the cordial prepared for her. She took it; and the duke conversed with her some time, when the nausea suddenly coming on he called for assistance. The following morning she had apparently gained on the latent foe; and the physicians from Paris declared her not only free from danger, but also flattered us, that nature thus relieved would effect a still more desirable state of health than the patient had for some months enjoyed. I was not deceived, mademoiselle. About two months after this incident, every one was prepared for her death. I was sitting in her room one night, when she thus addressed me: ‘To say, my dear and faithful Claudine, how truly I love you, is not now needful: God will recompense you for your goodness to me. But you have duties yet to perform for your dying friend. Take this sealed packet, and promise me, without opening it, to place it in the hands of the person to whom it is directed. I have already given a duplicate of it to monsieur le Pere Gardien: he will confirm this when he comes. He also is informed of the casket of jewels which you have in your keeping. They are destined for the future provision of my daughter, by a parent who has weakly signed her ruin, as far as relates to this world’s wealth. She is indebted to you, Claudine, for this bequest; and to her grandmother for a fund which will secure to her bread in a convent. You knew the duke better than I did,’ continued she, weeping: ‘love had not blinded you, nor could a mistaken duty have betrayed you to *rob* your children.’—I made no reply. She continued—‘Yet I think that, when I am

departed, de Fouclaut will be kind to these precious remains of a woman he can *never* forget.’ She paused, and was in mental agony, and in a broken voice said—‘O pardon me, Saviour of the world, if I wrong him! and as I hope for thy redeeming grace spare him! if . . .’ I could hear no more, her sobs rendering her words inarticulate. ‘I have one hope still remaining,’ continued she with recovered calmness: ‘I will probe his heart before I depart hence. He shall see the victim whom he has immolated praying to *her God*, and *his God*, for his happiness and reformation. You will be *faithful*,’ added she, fixing her eyes on my face; ‘you will respect the father of my children. I ask not what are and have been your thoughts of the sudden illness which surprised you. Dismiss them; and remember that Sigismund and Marianne will want your tenderness.’

“The duchess lived ‘to probe the heart of her destroyer,’ for such was the duke in my opinion. He quitted the dying angel in frantic sorrow, and from that hour she calmly met her friendly conqueror.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

“FOR many days,” continued the good Claudine, wiping away her tears, “the duke was in a high fever, and his physicians had fears for his life: but, with a vigour of constitution which equalled the demands of his unbridled passions and cruel nature, he escaped—if to live for accumulated guilt can be called an *escape*.” She devoutly kissed the cross in her bosom.

“My cares during this period were given exclusively to the dear children. The pompous funeral was too much for me to witness. At length I was summoned to the duke’s apartment. I trembled on approaching him to that degree, that I could not stand. He observed my condition, and with kindness said, ‘sit down, my good Claudine: we have, I see, been mutual sufferers in the late melancholy event.’ I burst into tears, and they relieved me. ‘I wish,’ continued the hypocrite, ‘to talk with you relatively to my dear children, and to thank you for your kind services to them during my illness.’ I bowed, and said I had been comforted in the performance of my duty to them. ‘I wish,’ replied he, ‘that I could find consolation. My reason points out to me arguments for patience and resignation, which my feelings yet weakly reject; although it is certain that death is a deliverance from a suffering body and deranged mind.’—‘Deranged!’ repeated I with astonishment. ‘You have been misinformed, monseigneur. Madame was sensible to her last sigh. I never witnessed so calm and collected a mind in an hour of such conflict. Le Pere Gardien will tell you the same, as well as the physicians and her women. No no,’ added I, ‘madame la duchesse died as she had lived, like a saint!’

“‘Insanity is not always raving,’ answered he, ‘nor are the ideas of a distempered brain always incongruous. It frequently happens, that only on certain incitements, and under certain impressions, the disordered fancy can be detected even by the most skilful observers, and those medical men.’—‘I know nothing of this,’ answered I; ‘but I know that all the doctors in Europe could not convince me that my dear lady’s reason was disturbed.’—‘What! because your fanatic priest told you she died saying her prayers?’ said he sternly. ‘But tell me, woman! have you not proofs of her insanity, in the suspicions which led her to use such precautions as showed she thought her children unsafe with her *murderer*? Answer me,’ repeated he in a rage, ‘what have you done with the papers she committed to your care—your secret commissions?’ God was with me, mademoiselle. ‘They are in safety,’ answered I with a strength not my own. ‘Hear me, monseigneur. I am neither your accuser nor your judge. I know my dear

lady died praying for your happiness here and hereafter; I know she loved you tenderly and faithfully; and I know no power on earth can make me forfeit my word to her, or be less faithful to her commands than I have been. The contents of the packet she delivered to me I am unacquainted with. It is at this hour in honest hands in Paris, and there it will remain; for Claudine is resolute in duty.' He was utterly confounded, mademoiselle. I proceeded: 'Monsieur le Pere Gardien had the same instructions with myself. He is a good and pious man, and I presume to say he has conscientiously performed his duty. My lady said to us *both*, that they were papers of consequence to her children, and before me she requested the good father to renew his promise of sending to her uncle at Vienna the papers he had received from her. I remember what passed. 'You know the motives which govern me,' said madame; 'the safety of my husband will be assured.' Fear not your poor Claudine, monseigneur,' continued I, weeping: 'I have joined with your departed saint in imploring blessings from heaven for you. I have witnessed the agonies of her soul, from the dread of having harboured a suspicion of your honour and humanity. Permit me to advise you to drop this subject for ever, and leave to the great Searcher of hearts your *innocence*, and her offence. Show to the world that your wife is justified in having chosen the father of her children for *their guardian*. You are no stranger to her wishes in regard to my services. These I offer you, monseigneur; and I will teach your children to love you.' The duke appeared lost in his own reflexions; the big drops of sweat bedewed his pallid face, and I remained silent. 'I will trust you,' said he, at length rising from his seat; 'I believe you are honest.'—'I dare not be otherwise,' replied I, 'for I fear God.' I kissed my cross. 'Be it so,' said he. 'I commit my children to your care. This measure is no less for their well being than my own honour. Le Pere Gardien dares not profane his vow, and the ravings of a distempered brain must be erased from my remembrance. I am innocent of this act of atrocity. I wish I stood as clear from offences of less magnitude. But I have been too profuse, Claudine; retrenchments must be made.'—'There cannot be a more generous intention,' replied I with eagerness, 'nor a more suitable hour. Your children are infants, and before they will be of an age to claim your consideration all will be well.' He failed not in his plans of reform at l'Eclair. But you know from his injured daughter the manner in which we lived at the chateau. We were however happy till that saucy minx de la Croix arrived; and I then showed the duke I was still a *Bon Valet*. From the time I returned to my peaceful home he never noticed me, and when I lost my dear husband he passed my door with the wretch de Béne and his crew. Poor Marianne thinks politics and her father's necessities alone have placed him in that man's power; but I know better. The duke's life was in his hands before he went abroad as an adventurer. And I know who sent him thither. But these are old stories,' added she, checking herself. 'sufficient for the day is the evil thereof! When le Pere Gardien was on his dying bed, he sent for me, and desired I would give a sealed note to his successor in case of his death. His name was du Clos. 'He will understand from its contents,' added he, 'that you are Claudine, the late duchess de Fouclaut's faithful attendant. If he shows you this ring, deliver up to him the papers your lady left with you.' Monsieur du Clos did succeed le bon Ambroise, and I gave up my trust to him.

"I suspect," added Claudine, "he was ordered to send them to Vienna to Sigismund's protector, who was a knight of Malta, and his great uncle by the mother's side. This introduction," continued Claudine, "to monsieur du Clos, who was till then curé of a large parish in Paris, and has been since in want of bread, and either emigrated or concealed, led us to be good friends, and he often came to see me. He was pleased with his reception, and we frequently talked of the duke and his poor children. It is needless to say, du Clos knew more of him than was good; and from the time of our first troubles he told me that he would bring down destruction on his own head and his innocent daughter's. Nicolas thought of this good man, when our lady was prevailed upon to give her hand to Mr. Middleton. Du Clos united them, and he said he had done a work of which he should never repent; for that Mr. Middleton was a

man of honour, and merited the first woman in France. Poor soul! I trust he will not live to recant this opinion.”

I was curious to learn more of monsieur Meunier, and I asked whether she had not some fears in giving her daughter to a man in the duke’s suite. “Bless you, my dear mademoiselle,” answered she, “Nicolas was never a domestic to him, or any man. Monsieur Blanchard brought him up from his cradle, and gave him the best of learning, intending to place him in a good post under the late government; I believe, part at least of the money was paid for the place: but the troubles of the times came on, and poor Nicolas was disappointed, and Blanchard’s money lost. I have had a friendship of many years with Blanchard,” continued she; “for I know he has been a faithful servant, although to an unworthy master. He loved my poor lady; and he is a good man. Nicolas only lived at the hotel till something could be done for him; he is a worthy creature, and no wise fit for the duke’s service: but he took a fancy to him, and Nicolas had his measures to keep; and Jeanneton was near his heart. I never was more astonished in my life,” continued Claudine, “than when Blanchard came to tell me that the duke wished for my Jeanneton to attend his daughter at the convent, for he had never noticed me from the hour I left l’Eclair. I was sensible France could not furnish her with a more suitable attendant, and that was enough for me. She is indeed, mademoiselle, all you think her; and instruction has not been lost on her: but she is now unhappy; and God only knows what will be the end of our cares.” I endeavoured to comfort poor Claudine; but my own anxieties hung on my spirits.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ONE day, soon after this conversation, I received a letter from monsieur du Rivage: it was written in English, and brought me by a man who acted as porter at the banking-office. I was informed that Mr. Wilmot would be with me in two days; and Jaques would take care to convey my trunks to Paris, after conveying Catharine to her friends at Estampe. You may imagine that orders so succinct surprised me. I questioned the messenger with caution; and he answered with caution. ‘He believed la Fontaine was disposed of. He understood monsieur Wilmot was on his way to England; his master was well; but too much engaged to come for me himself.’ Not daring to pursue my inquiries, I prepared for my journey, and Claudine for hers, to Paris, with my Sigismund.

The appearance of Mr. Wilmot had nothing in it wherewith to attract or repress confidence. He was a man upwards of fifty, and was civil and simple. On the journey I talked of my father. He answered with reserve, “that he ‘wore well’ for a man of his years; that he would have done well had he ‘wound up’ ten years sooner. For his part, having only one child, a daughter, he was determined on leaving France; he had for a long time seen the storm approaching, and had prepared for it; his property was in the English funds; but he had hopes of recovering some debts due to him in Paris; and he had of course been trying what he could do.” These observations and replies to my questions silenced me; and my companion slept undisturbedly.

Mrs. Wilmot received me with much kindness, and I soon returned to the subject which so immediately interested me. I was alarmed by not meeting monsieur du Rivage. She conducted me to a bed-chamber, and, after some formal prelude, told me that my father had happily escaped from Paris; and, giving me a letter from him, withdrew, saying that she supposed I should like to be alone. She was not mistaken: for judge of my consternation by the detail of my father’s letter!

Monsieur du Rivage, with the anxiety of the tenderest of parents, fully explained the motives which had governed him in his resolution to entrust my safety to Mr. Wilmot, a man whom he had known some years, and whom he had importantly served. His difficulties had at length placed him in the predicament he had long foreseen. His integrity in having paid to some persons their own money, and who were marked as the victims of the ruling faction, had rendered him obnoxious and suspected. He saw his life was in their power, and had taken the only means of preserving it, *a flight*; which if happily effected would unite us in London. He had sent at different times, and with the concurrence of Mr. Wilmot, my clothes, with every article of fond remembrance belonging to my dear mother, to Mr. Wilmot's correspondent in Paris, directed to his care, with the name of 'Mary Murray.' Mr. Wilmot had for me madame du Rivage's jewels, which were charged with my expenses till I should be with Mr. Furnival. Mr. Wilmot had also in trust for me his gold snuff-box, in which was madame du Rivage's portrait. I will abridge the remainder of a letter, which in vain contained every argument of hope and consolation; for it was plain that my father, considering the perils to which I should be exposed, had given up a comfort the dearest to him in life, in order for my greater security.

Mrs. Wilmot at length interrupted my sorrow. She informed me it was absolutely necessary that I should appear cheerful, and as an English lady on her way to her parents; that monsieur du Rivage had left my instructions with her, and I was not to see any of my former Paris connexions, nor repeat his name. "You are in perfect safety with us," added she, "and we have no doubt of seeing our good friend in London." "You have for me, I find," said I weeping, "my dear father's snuff-box: will you indulge me with it?" "Tomorrow will be the same," replied she; "and your eyes are now swelled with weeping, and may be noticed. My daughter will be home soon, and may bring some one to sup here. You had better make yourself *a little smart*." Unwilling to offend, I changed my travelling dress for a gown, she assisting me with evident curiosity. Whether the sight of lace and muslin produced any effect, or that she sympathized in my dejection, I could not ascertain; but she civilly apologized for her daughter's absence, saying that Anna had been tempted to the national assembly to hear citizen Chaumier's speech, with others from the first orators. "She left with me a message for you," added Mrs. Wilmot laughing, "which is quite in Anna's way. She bade me tell you, that she would certainly denounce you as being an aristocrate, if you retired before she came home." My spirits were not quite prepared for *badinage* of any kind; and I could with difficulty force a smile for this.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IT had been with some surprise that I had perceived the magnificence of Mr. Wilmot's accommodations. His manners and his lady's did not exactly correspond with the first hotel garni in Paris; but during the time we waited for miss Anna's return, in order to sup, I learned that he paid no more for the apartment than a cabaret would have cost him ten years back. "So it was an ill wind which blew no one good." At length, weary with waiting, he insisted on the supper being served, observing that it was ten to one whether Anna would not sleep at madame Broudier's. The mother finding it in vain to oppose this opinion, we sat down to a good supper, Mr. Wilmot observing to me, that nothing was spared by living shabbily on a journey. We were in the enjoyment of the repast, when miss Wilmot attended by a handsome young man entered the room. She lavished on me a frank and familiar welcome; and placing herself at the table with her gay escort, they ate with an avidity which might have surprised me, had I not heard they had been the whole day in a tribune, so engaged with oratory as not to have had time to think of food.

For a time, little was said that could divert my attention from miss Wilmot; who in a mode of dress, which had sprung from freedom, appeared to me to have forsaken modesty with loyalty; for I could not recollect having ever seen at Versailles any lady so *undressed* as miss Wilmot. Nature had not been liberal in giving height to this young lady; but with embonpoint she had delicate limbs, and a complexion of dazzling transparency; fine and nearly flaxen coloured hair, good teeth, and an expression of spirit and animation rarely found with fair women. She wore rouge, and probably her eyes were indebted to it for a portion of their brilliancy; and although her features were not regular, nor her person faultless, she had pretensions to beauty, which with more modesty few would have disputed. She appeared to be one -or two-and-twenty years old, and to have acquired a power with her parents which astonished me. Monsieur Broudier, le bon citoyen, appeared perfectly at his ease; and, without paying much attention to Mr. or Mrs. Wilmot, went over the subject of the debates with the young lady with much fluency. I listened with amazement to her ready replies; and whilst she descanted with eloquence on the merits of the speakers whose cause was *liberty*, I viewed the snow white arm extended to enforce opinions which made me shudder. I thought I beheld an enemy to tranquillity not less to be feared than the glorious Chaumier of whom she said so much. I was silent and depressed. This young woman's manners disgusted me; and the violence of her invectives against some miserable and misguided men under sentence of death shocked me. I pleaded fatigue, and rose to retire. "I have promised for you, miss Murray," said the wonderful miss Wilmot, her face relaxing into sweetness and smiles: "my friends are dying with impatience to have another Anglaise in their circle; and should I break my word, Broudier will tell them that I dread your attractions and the loss of my own honours." A look of intelligence passed from monsieur Broudier, which was understood. "This gentleman's sister," continued she, "gives an early déjeuné tomorrow to the most celebrated patriots in Paris. You will meet Chaumier, and we shall attend him to the Thuilleries. The modérés will be annihilated tomorrow." I made my excuses, and pleaded my want of spirits, and my eyes betrayed me. "My dear girl," said miss Anna with a look of more compassion than I expected, "Freedom is my divinity. Do as you please; only lay your commands on Broudier, to give a bad report of you to his sister, or I shall be chidden." He bowed with politeness, saying she had taught Philippine to be incredulous to any report of an *English woman*, that spoke not of her merit. I retired, and my night toilet reminded me of the scanty drapery become the mode in Paris during my retreat at la Fontaine.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE following day was given to the better arrangement of the contents of my trunks. They had been sent to the hotel; and, as it appeared, I could not have found a more agreeable amusement for Mrs. Wilmot. Her curiosity and remarks diverted me. My laces, or rather the laces of my dear benefactress, called forth her admiration in ecstatic terms. Silks and satins were unfolded and measured, with advice how to manage them; then entered an account of her own bargains: “she had bought sets of damask table linen, not a pin the worse for wear, for a mere song: she had, however, been teased to pick out the ducal coronet with which they were marked: it had been a job that hurt her eyes, for they were as fine as a cambric, though only sixpence a napkin.” I sighed, and said the task would be too difficult for mine; for I should think of those who had been despoiled of them. “Poor creatures!” replied she, “they are to be pitied: but if I did not purchase their property somebody else would.” I was answered: and she next began the history of the beautiful madame Broudier’s hotel, *her* influence, her *power*; and the magnificence of her fêtes. We were, I found, under this lady’s protection, and our safety assured by her power with citizen Chaumier, who was her slave. “Has not your fair daughter some claim to our gratitude?” asked I, smiling. “Madame Broudier’s brother appeared to me to have lost his liberty, and to hug his chains.”—“Dear me!” replied she, “one would not think you had lived in France. Every man must be gallant, whatever happens. Anna is a favourite at his sister’s, and of course she must be civil to him: but Mr. Wilmot knew the two brothers when they had not twelve hundred livres of their own in their shop. No, no, we shall choose an English husband for Anna. She is a handsome girl, and with a good fortune need not fear. I do not trust to all I see here,” added she: “things may turn out differently from what is expected, notwithstanding all Anna says; but I never contradict her, being no politician.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN the evening the triumphant miss Anna again amused me. She was attended by monsieur Broudier. Her conversation now pleased me, and I was struck by one observation that she made. Broudier with some humour mentioned a lady who had been with the party, and whose coquetry had amused him. "No revolution," said miss Wilmot, "can effect a reform in that point amongst your countrywomen. I cannot precisely define the difference between a coquet of the old school and the one who worships at the altar of Reason. But I see as many now as I ever did, and I sometimes think that, with all the advantages on the side of reason, we cannot yet boast of our triumphs over affectation. To say the truth," continued she, "I am more disposed in favour of the coquet of St. Cloud than the coquet of a jacobin club, and, like the good man of the house, more disposed to tolerate the gambols of a lap-dog than the rough sport of the ass who imitates him in his approaches to me." To this remark I was induced to yield an assent, which my longer acquaintance with her has confirmed; for I never saw a woman more remote from coquetry than miss Wilmot; and to this hour I lament her deviations from the character in which she must have been an object of esteem. I was frequently surprised by the solidity of her conversation, and led to admire the sweetness of her temper; and not less frequently was I startled by the opinions she supported, and the unexampled contempt she openly avowed of her parents' understanding and rules of conduct. Irresistible by means of a frankness so genuine as at once to make its appeal to the heart, I insensibly viewed her more favourably than at our first interview, and with augmenting good will I returned her overtures of friendship with more cordiality than I believe she expected. On the fourth day of our acquaintance she gave me a card of invitation to sup at madame Broudier's; and in order to induce me to accept it, she told me it would be gay and brilliant. I begged to be excused. "This is my wise mother's doing," said she laughing. "She has taught you to believe, that no modest woman visits my friend Philippine, because she lives with the man whom she loves. But be assured you will find in her circle not only the chaste but some of the first women in Paris for talents." She proceeded in logically proving that madame Broudier's situation needed no apology on the side of unsophisticated virtue, for that her life was regulated by the innate feeling of her heart; and that was pure and generous. I pleaded my father's injunctions not to visit my former acquaintance; and evading an argument which would have criminated the propriety of madame Broudier's conduct, I succeeded in the refusal of her politeness without offending her warm advocate.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE appearance of Sigismund with his protectors soon followed my arrival in Paris. Miss Anna, who was enjoying the comforts of a muslin handkerchief, and nursing a sore throat caught in her zeal for liberty, saw my expected guests descend from the carriage; monsieur Meunier, en habit militaire, as an officer attending them. My eagerness in obeying the summons was not unnoticed either by the mother or the daughter: "Who are those people?" asked the curious mother. "My friends," replied I, "my country friends!"—"Do not detain miss Murray," said Anna laughing: "moments are ages in some calculations." I stayed not to calculate. My introduction to Nicolas preceded all other inquiries; for my fond hopes regarded him as the harbinger of glad tidings from Mr. Middleton. He shook his head despairingly, and I found nothing to comfort me in regard to his unhappy wife. 'The public fury was pointed against her father, and his colleague de Béne; they were in the Abbaye, and mutual accusers of each other. Marianne's fate was deplored.' Meunier next spoke of his favour with his colonel Vieuxbois, and the friendship of his nephew, to whom he had owed the permission of seeing his wife. "My friend and captain," added he, "saw the state of my mind; and I believe he saved my life by his kindness. I am,

however, unable to do any thing for my dear lady," continued he, "and my honour is engaged to return with the answer to the dispatches which I brought to Paris, and which were the pretence for my journey. I am now a pleader for my poor Jeanneton, mademoiselle," continued he. "She is determined to go with you and Sigismund to the port from which you embark, and you must indulge her. Your friend's connexions with Chaumier will render this easy to you, and you will want her services on the road." Jeanneton's tears prevailed, and I engaged to speak to miss Wilmot, and let her know that the child's nurse would accompany me to Havre, the port to which I had learned we should be destined. He smiled, and observed that miss Wilmot had powerful protection. Our conversation finished by again and again adverting to the mystery in which Marianne's fate was enveloped. Meunier again confirmed my suspicions of the Aimsworth family, declaring it could not be otherwise, and recommending to me the utmost caution in my measures, as these would relate to Sigismund's safety. "Till the duke's fate is determined," added he, "I shall keep my lady's apartment, and the money of hers which I still have in my possession. I may be yet the means of saving her, and her asylum shall not be given up." I commended this plan; and with tears and sighs our conference ended, by making the necessary arrangements for the future measures we had before us.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE reception my friends gave me on my reappearance did not surprise me. "Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the lively Anna, "what a woe-begone face! Is he gone for ever? My dear Pauline, why was not I permitted to see this *Mars* of yours, and to witness the tender adieux, as well as those ladies he brought with him? It would have been a useful lesson to me, who am deplorably deficient in scenes of pathos and sentiment."—"You are in a fair way of improving," said I, smiling through my tears, "and will soon show your master that you can weep. But my distress has for its source a more melancholy cause; for, in love, hope rarely forsakes us." She became attentive, and the mother curious. I proceeded, and detailed briefly the situation of the mother of the child they had seen, with my engagements to convey the infant to his father's family in England. The wife of the gentleman you supposed my lover," added I, "has determined not to lose sight of her precious charge whom she has reared, till I quit France. Her mother concurs with her in this design, and the husband urges it as a duty incumbent on her, and which will relieve me of much fatigue on the road. I must now petition you, madam," continued I, "to favour me in this work of mercy, and to interest Mr. Wilmot in a cause not only of humanity, but on which depends the future security of an innocent being."

"I am not only astonished, but grieved, mademoiselle," replied Mrs. Wilmot with an inflamed countenance. "*To me* this appears a very improbable tale. Does your *father*, as you call monsieur du Rivage, know this child's parents?" "He knows his father," answered I with courage, "and would sanction me for saving the offspring of a man whom he highly esteems."—"But how did it happen that he knew not of your engagements with the child's mother?" asked she. "Monsieur du Rivage never mentioned to us the probability of our being burthened with an infant on our journey. I do not believe Mr. Wilmot will consent to taking him."—"Then I must remain in Paris," replied I, "till I can find an opportunity of less difficulty for quitting it: for nothing shall tempt me to leave him behind me, nor any danger terrify me from the performing my solemn engagement to his imprisoned mother of seeing her child secure with his English friends."—"You seem to have courage for the undertaking, young lady," observed she, rising; "and, for so young a *mother*, more than many could display."—"I am not offended by your insinuation, madam," returned I with resentment; "for I should despise the woman, who, if in her power, would not be the mother to a child under the dreadful circumstances in which this stands." Mrs. Wilmot retired with a malicious smile, and the sounding door showed her displeasure by a report by no

means necessary to its closing after her.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

“BRAVO! bravissimo!” exclaimed miss Anna, grasping my hand with force. “The wife of Sabinus, the heroic Eponia is before me! I see her in the timid, blushing Pauline! But fear not. We are not all of us of the dastardly blood of a Vespasian. I shall speak to Broudier, and you shall be satisfied. My poor mother is one of those women who, entrenched in the frozen armour of chastity, would be contaminated by an acquaintance with charity. But my father enjoys with his ignorance a quiet spirit. You must be content; and leave to my mother her opinion, that you are a frail sister or an imprudent wife. As to my father, I shall manage him with other arguments.”—Prepared as I had been from miss Wilmot’s conduct towards her parents, and grateful as I was for her generous purpose, I could not help remarking the extreme contempt she had shown for her father and mother, and I entreated her not to forget, in her kind considerations for me, the *respect* due to her parents. She laughed heartily: “You are an incomprehensible girl,” said she. “What with your simplicity, and acuteness, I find you fascinating. You have a mind, Pauline, which cannot remain long shackled, witness the spirit of your present engagement. Tell me: do you find in my mother any qualities to respect?”

I hesitated. “Allowing she is a weak woman,” replied I at length, “yet as a mother, she is even in this instance governed by motives which I must respect. She is anxious for a daughter’s good report, and considers herself as the guardian of that being for whose errors she thinks herself in a peculiar manner responsible. I hope, when she is more cool, to convince her that I have claims to her good will, and that Sigismund is entitled to her commiseration.”

“Oh, for heaven’s sake leave her to her banquet!” cried miss Anna with levity. “There is nothing so delightful to her as her own system. You have left the narrow path of her prejudices; and were she to see you, like another Elijah, mounting up to heaven, she would not be converted into an opinion that there can be any road to it but her own. Leaving therefore *respect* for a woman whom my reason *cannot respect*, I, like a good daughter, have repaid her cares of me by making her *fear* me. And if you are just, you will balance the account fairly between us. You will agree that, as matters are settled, it was necessary for my existence that I should have a mother. Instinct prompted mine to feed and clothe me. The love of dominion, and vanity, prompted her to make of me a slave and an automaton. For years I was mentally and corporeally kept in the stocks, and was not permitted to breathe but at her command. I have broken my chains, Pauline, and now I take the reins, and will prevent my good mother from disgracing me.” Her face glowed, and, fearful of offending, I remained silent. “I see,” said she with a bewitching smile, “your dissent from these opinions; but you had a madame du Rivage for your mother. She did not, like mine, exercise over you, when a child, an authority and a discipline better suited for a dancing dog than a rational being. She taught you to respect her, by exhibiting the virtues she inculcated. Your reason sanctioned the deference you paid her. You knew she was wiser than yourself. But mine has discovered the fallacy of an usurped authority, and a weakness, which was better qualified to be directed than to be obeyed.”—“I will not dispute with so powerful an opponent,” answered I, “and you have told me that freedom of opinion is one of the rights of man...” “Even so,” cried she, interrupting me with an air of triumph, “and *of women* also, thanks to our glorious patriots! Liberty, Pauline, knows not the distinction which arbitrary man has imposed on his equal. One and the same imprescriptible law of reason governs her children.”

I have, my dear Mrs. Underwood, been diffuse in pourtraying to you a character I believe as new to you as it was to myself: but whether it proceeded from my simplicity, and the effects of Tabitha’s

lessons in my infancy, or whether from my not having had the honour of knowing madame Broudier's circle, I cannot now determine; but certain it is, that I still cleave to the commandment of honouring my father and mother, at least as far as the concealment of their foibles goes. My friend miss Wilmot had, I found, been for some time favoured with instructions which never reached me. Monsieur Broudier had been a clerk in her father's business. His beautiful sister, the wife of a shopkeeper at Bordeaux, had, by her *talents*, drawn to her house those who noticed the peculiar address and zeal of her husband. He became useful to his party, and in his sudden elevation removed to Paris, under the favour of the *great Chaumier*. Monsieur David Broudier followed his brother's fortune; but he had generously smoothed the path of his late employer's retreat, and had been highly useful in collecting outstanding debts. Anna, on her reaching Paris, was received with joy by her old acquaintance madame Broudier; and giddy with the homage she received under a roof too magnificent for real worth, she had enjoyed her pleasures and finished her education; Wilmot passively yielding up his daughter to the public gaze and comments, in consequence of monsieur Broudier's good offices and influence.—This account of the Wilmots is necessary to my history, which I will now resume.

The all-conquering miss Wilmot reduced her mother to listen with a cold assent to my tale. Mr. Wilmot satisfied himself with reminding me, that it would lessen *my ear-rings* considerably, for I should find another carriage chargeable.

This was made easy; and Anna took care of the necessary passport for Jeanneton. It contained ample provisions for her security in her return to Paris; for she was recommended to the different municipalities in her route, as a woman entitled to their particular care. On reaching Havre de Grace poor Jeanneton's spirits failed her; and I participated with her in her distress. Anna, whose generous cares it was impossible to resist, was the witness of our grief; and, with a confidence that time has justified, I mentioned Sigismund's mother's name, imploring her to exert her influence in order that she might have the consolation of knowing that her child was in safety. She became pale, and made no immediate answer. "We importune you with our sorrows," said I weeping. "You compassionate us, my dear Anna: but what would be your feelings did you know this unfortunate lady?" "Not more acute than they are at present," replied she musing: "but write a note; I will send it to Broudier: he will manage it. I am going to write to him: Jeanneton has only to leave my letter at his sister's hotel."

I instantly wrote as follows: "Be comforted: your child is on his road to his family in England, fondly, faithfully cherished in the bosom of that friend to whose care you have consigned him, and who will shelter him till death, or till his future fortune renders her useless. In heaven will she answer for the trust: there we shall meet. Farewell." Hope sometimes whispers, that my note reached her, and that, like a ray of light, it has shed on her gloom a transient beam of joy. But, alas! I know not her wretched fate; having had no letters from Paris for some months. Jeanneton, in one that she wrote me, and which came to my hand by Hamburgh, mentions her safe return, and her having delivered miss Wilmot's letter into monsieur Broudier's hand. He took it, and, looking at the address, said it was well, and passed into the house with haste.

Miss Wilmot in our conversations encouraged me to hope it was delivered; but she observed that there was hazard in the attempt; and that she had reasons for believing that Broudier had enemies—which would add to the difficulty—though it was certain with her that he would leave nothing untried to oblige her.

We found, as we expected, a neutral vessel ready to receive us; and Mr. Wilmot, ever provident in his cares for himself, had, as he conceived, prudently secured the cabin accommodations, and provided for a sea appetite. We were summoned at a very early hour on board the ship, and had to encounter a wind more boisterous than suited us. Occupied with my innocent charge, who by no means relished the bustle, and fearing his taking cold, I made my way into the *steerage*, or the lady's cabin, as the man called the place, in which were some beds. I instantly secured myself in one of them, well contented to be in safety from the motion of the vessel, and at leisure to feed my froward Sigismund. He recompensed me by falling into a sound sleep; and oppressed by fatigue, I disposed myself to follow his example. Mrs. Wilmot's clamours prevented my tasting this repose. A gentleman had rudely taken possession of her bed in the state cabin, and Mr. Wilmot was very ill in the other. 'She should catch her death by staying on deck; and she never knew such shameful behaviour.' The ship-steward assured her that all the beds were of equal goodness, and that his captain had judged the ladies would prefer being together without constraint. She was obliged to submit, and he helped her to mount into a nest similar to mine; where rocked to slumbers, we both forgot our cares.

The intrepid miss Anna, during this time, was enjoying the novelty of the scene around her with unsubdued spirits; and, by her ease and familiarity with the sailors, amusing them as much as herself. She had, to use her own words, hardly recovered from the ecstasies of seeing the sun rise, when a lady, who had till that moment been concealed behind the close-drawn curtains of a four-wheeled carriage secured on the mid deck, called to some one to release her from her confinement; and the captain, a fine young fellow, eagerly pressed forwards to receive her in his arms. "I was not surprised at his gallantry," said Anna on joining me. "She is handsome, and not thirty, and is richly dressed in a style that is captivating to some, and suspicious with me. I have left her," continued she, "under the tender cares of monsieur le capitaine, who is now at her feet: and if there are charms in *un pied fort mignon garni d'un sabot de soye brodé*, he is a lost man. Do leave this horrid place," added she: "you will be amused on deck; for this lady has, I will be sworn, received her education dans le boudoir d'une fille figurante." I begged her to leave me for a time to my indolence and Sigismund's state of quietness; and she withdrew to comfort her father, who was dreadfully incommoded by sea sickness.

Sigismund, after his comfortable nap, was good-humoured and playful; and the steward civilly offered to carry him up stairs to a sailor, who would nurse him as carefully as I did. Relieved from him, I employed the interval of ease, by rectifying the disorders of my hasty morning toilet, and I was combing my dishevelled locks when Anna again appeared to hasten me.

"Never mind your hair," said she laughing: "it will make no figure with the beautiful tresses of the princess on deck. But to console your vanity, I must give you an item of her head. I told her, on returning to the snug corner which I had quitted some time since, that I had been to visit the sick. 'You would pity,' added I, 'the discomfited sufferers as I do, but I could scarcely keep my gravity on seeing their rueful faces,—they brought so forcibly to my mind Don Quixote and poor Sancho his squire under the potent effects of le précieux baume de Fier à Bras.' 'Good Heavens!' cried she, entirely ignorant of my allusion, 'what madness has seized Mr. Whaley to take a quack medicine, knowing as he does the weakness of his constitution! I must go and prevent his repeating the dose: I would not for the world lose him!' I reassured her," added Anna, "and told her he would need no more, for the best of all possible reasons; and that I had been dismissed as an intruder. She now found that my father was his companion in suffering, and, calling to a black servant, bade him bring her his master's liqueur chest from the carriage. She was obeyed; and having tasted of three or four different sorts, she commissioned him to

carry to the gentlemen in the cabin the costly appendage of luxury, saying: 'Be sure, Juba, to tell my husband that I sent it, and that he must take some eau de la reine.'

"I am convinced," continued Anna, "that this enchantress is in the road to fortune; for the man whom she called her husband asked me after his dear Constance,—his dear madame Verneuil."

Thus prepared, I followed Anna to the quarter deck. We apparently interrupted an interesting conversation between the lady and our gallant captain, who reluctantly gave up to me his seat. I was surprised by her beauty. She was fair and blooming; and her hair, which was singularly redundant and of light colour, wantoned in the breeze which swelled our sails, and gave to her charms more eclat than I expected. Her manners were frank, and she saluted me with much gaiety, and, laughing at her maid-servant's woe-begone looks, displayed a fine set of teeth, though not much compassion—for the poor girl was extremely ill.

At this moment Anna with the honest seaman approached us. Sigismund, contented with his rough-featured nurse, and delighted with air and sunshine, had refused Anna's invitation to come to her arms. "Well then," said she in a caressing tone, "let this pretty lady kiss your nice strawberry, Sigismund." The smiling cherub yielded to a request which in his mind was associated with the idea of playful indulgence; and miss Wilmot presented the alabaster shoulder on which nature has impressed a red mark, which you have, my dear Mrs. Underwood, kissed a thousand times, and as often acknowledged its resemblance to a strawberry. The lady's cheek was instantly suffused with a deeper hue. "Ciel!" exclaimed she, "c'est lui! C'est mon nourrisson! C'est Meunier's Sigismund! Où est sa mère?"

You will judge of my surprise. But prejudiced by Anna's report of this woman, I was reserved in my reply, and only said, that his mother not being able to accompany her child to England herself, I had been entrusted with the care of him to his father's family, who resided in England. And I instantly asked her, when she had seen madame Meunier. "Not since I quitted her," answered she with coldness and hauteur: "they were people not likely for me to meet under any other circumstances of fortune than those which conducted me to seek a temporary refuge from the dangers which menaced my life, as well as my unfortunate husband's. The marquis was one..." She drew forth her handkerchief, and, covering her face, added... "whose loyalty was fatal to him."

I felt neither disposed for more conversation with madame nor with Mrs. Wilmot, whose curiosity was becoming troublesome to me; and saying 'Sigismund was hungry,' I withdrew. The *ci-devant* marquise soon forgot her husband's loyalty, and with eagerness asked Mrs. Wilmot my name. She replied, "Murray."—"What, Mary Pauline Murray?" said she. "Well, it is wonderful! But these sorts of secrets will escape!"—"There is none affixed to my friend's name," observed Anna: "She goes but by *one*—and under that has enjoyed the esteem and protection her virtues will ever command."—"I mean not to contradict your assertion, madam," answered the lady: "she may be all you think her; and it does not necessarily follow, because I believe her the mother of that child she has with her, that she should be an unworthy companion for you. She may be a married woman. However, it is proper for me to account for my knowledge of a business evidently intended to be concealed; and after what has passed, I beg your attention to what I have further to say of this young woman's concerns.

"I was, in consequence of my husband's arrest, obliged to conceal myself, being in no condition to share with him in the horrors of his prison, as I was in daily expectation of being a mother. This event

took place immediately after I had found a shelter; but you will not be surprised that an infant born under these circumstances of terror and affliction was short-lived. The person in whose house I was concealed was connected with Meunier, who wanted a nurse for the child I have so unexpectedly met here; and my timid protector giving me to understand that he feared I had been traced to his house, and partly explaining the recompense connected with Meunier's negotiation, I was prevailed upon to suckle the infant in return for that asylum I needed. My friend conducted me to a neat house in la Rue St. Honoré, where we found Meunier alone, and who was actually feeding the child in order to quiet it. I entered on my post, and succeeded better. He left me, saying he was going for the domestic, but should not be absent an hour. He was punctual; for I had not finished Sigismund's toilet before he returned with a decent-looking woman, whom he presented to me as one who would obey all my commands. Then having mentioned the traiteur whom he had engaged to serve our table, and leaving money with Catharine, he retired. I soon found my companion was no more in the secret than myself. We however amused our curiosity by surveying the house, and examining the delicacy of the child's linen, who appeared to be twelve or fourteen days old. My alertness and healthy countenance, I believe, satisfied Catharine's scruples, and silenced her suspicions of my being the mother of the child. We were mutually surprised by seeing the elegance of the apartment which was over the one evidently destined for family use. In an alcove was a bed of rich pale green silk fringed, and made up in the first style of the mode, the hangings and window curtains of the same costly materials; carpeted with no less expense: but I was soon engaged by a picture which filled the pannel over the chimney, that fronted the folding-doors of the alcove. It represented the most perfect figure of a young man on his knees, grasping with exquisite expression the drapery of an ascending female figure, who with the attributes of Hope was hovering over him, and with a gracious smile held a scroll in her hand, on which was written, 'Je suis à vous: les fidèles peuvent attendre le bonheur.'

"I had now been more than a month in my peaceful sanctuary, when Meunier told me that his wife would be with me in two days, and that our nursery would be complete, for she had promised him a little playmate for Sigismund. Catharine had orders to prepare the room of state for his lady; and with many apologies, he gave me to understand that the boudoir annexed to the apartment would be too near his wife for me to remain in it with my charge, as he might disturb her. I was of course left to my choice of two others; and, making my election, removed my things and Sigismund into it. A large *armoire* filled up one side of it; but it was handsome and convenient, and I began to furnish the shelves and drawers. One of the latter had some impediment within, which prevented its sliding. I found it was a book; and opening it, I was not displeased to find it in my mother tongue, which twelve years disuse had made me fear I should forget. The book was in verse, and entitled 'The Triumphs of Temper,' and on the title-page was written 'Mary Pauline Murray. The gift of Pauline du Rivage.'

"I have the book still," added she with a careless air, "somewhere amongst my clothes; for it was useless to the people in the house, and I liked the story. I shall not after this account add any thing," continued she, "beyond the termination of my humiliating office. Meunier's wife arrived, and was soon after delivered of a son. But we were not made for each other. She lost her infant when a month old; and on her observing that I was a young *nurse*, I told her she could not do better than take my post, for which she was better qualified than myself—for that I could not live without exercise and air; and frankly owning that I had received offers of pressing kindness to join a friend who resided at her chateau, I wished to leave my prison. She made not the least objection; but with more generosity than I expected supplied my purse, which, to say the truth, needed replenishing. I have never seen those people since, and, in the events which have taken place since in my situation, should have forgotten them, but for this incident."

“Well, Anna,” asked Mrs. Wilmot, “what is your opinion of your *favourite* now?”—“Exactly what it has always been,” answered she, rising with carelessness. “I know she is engaged in a work of mercy which few are qualified to perform, and fewer still to comprehend as one in which she glories. She has well studied ‘The Triumphs of Temper,’ however, and is now preparing for the Triumphs of *Virtue*. But not being uncharitable myself, I will believe this lady will have pleasure in hearing that miss Murray has not been known to the Meuniers, nor ever beheld this child till within six months; when his mother appeared, and consigned him into her hands. It may not be displeasing to madame to know also, that this mother’s accommodation in Meunier’s house had nothing in it to surprise *her*; for that she was a woman of the highest rank, and the wife of one of the richest commoners in England. Sigismund’s first *nurse* therefore has no reason to think herself degraded by having administered to his wants; nor can I think her asylum *the worst* she might have found for herself.” “Certainly not,” observed the lady with an acquiescent air. “People of the first quality in France have been driven, by the monsters now in power, to extremities which happily I have escaped; and as the *wife of Mr. Whaley*, and in England, I shall endeavour to forget the past; for it is my maxim to drive away care.”

My appearance finished a conversation which had changed Mrs. Wilmot’s suspicions into certainties; and had so much offended Anna, that but for me she would have been rude. She joined me in a spot remote from her mother and Mrs. Whaley; and turning to the friendly being who again was near to take the child, she chatted with him about his wife and a little boy he had left at Boston, who was “as like master as two sea biscuits.” “Were he with you,” said Anna, “you might make a profit of him: the old gentleman in the cabin would give something for such a boy as this, or yours.” “Oh! let his young madam alone for that business,” answered he, winking significantly: “our captain is a very *friendly* man; and has been ‘hail, fellow, well met’ for ten days with them before they came on board.”—“She is very handsome,” observed Anna, surveying her: “your captain is in some danger.” “Not a jot,” answered he, discharging the contents of his mouth: “he loves a girl that is as modest as she is *vartuous*; but when a young fellow is axed, why to be sure it can’t be expected he should say nay. But, Lord help her! she will be forgotten the moment he claps his eyes on Sally Trueman, though I heard her with my own ears tell him, that he would always find a welcome at her house if fortune should ever conduct him to Liverpool. She is a *true* one, I will be sworn,” added he; “and as to her skin, ‘tis like all the rest. Look at your own, miss, and then judge. Lord! I know these sort of sharks in the twinkling of an eye! they are all alike! Now how should it be,” continued he, taking another quid, “that madam there and yourself should not see she wears false colours? It surprises me; for it is as plain as a pike staff that she has more colour than her own. I always suspect one that never changes. My Peggy’s veer with the compass when I am about to leave her; and she is as fair as alabaster, and has a colour like the rose in June, when our sails are furled. Poor soul! she is pale now, and will be so a long while!”

The honest sailor was now called away; when, with more than a usual portion of her wonted spirit, Anna vowed she would put madame’s rouge to the test before she lost sight of her. In vain I argued and entreated. “She shall restore the book,” cried she, leaving me, “I am determined. I like courage and spirit in a woman, but I am at war with impudence.” It appeared, however, that Anna was defeated in her design. She found her mother and Mrs. Whaley had changed the subject of conversation: “probably,” added Anna, “because they had no more to say on it. My mother was eloquently descanting on the bargains she had met with in Paris, and exactly calculating the profits which would have accrued to her could she have persuaded her husband to have consented to her buying a set of table china worth a guinea each piece, and which she could have had for a bundle of useless assignats, then only waste paper. ‘Were they not beautiful, Anna?’ asked my mother, with a fond regret of the lost bargain. ‘They

were manufactured at Séve,' continued she, 'and perfectly white, except the gilt edges and the arms of the family to whom they had belonged.'—You had better say no more of them, my dear madam," observed I, maliciously smiling: "you forget what you heard, that they were the property of *monsieur le marquis de Verneuil*, who with his lady emigrated to London: and who knows but they may discover the Holland sheets you have in your trunks, and reclaim them as stolen goods? I saw my arrow had not been sent for nothing," continued miss Wilmot; "and addressing the disturbed Mrs. Whaley, I proceeded in my appeal to her feelings, by a pathetic description of the cruelty and injustice which had opened the door to the pillage of those unfortunates, who, it might be, were wandering in want of common necessaries. I dare say," continued I, "*your hotel* has furnished some of the good bargains offered to us. 'Sans doute,' replied she with evident confusion. "Our poor friend du Rivage," observed I to my mother," saw his goods and chattels exposed to sale before he left his hiding-place; and had he looked narrowly amongst his books, poor as he was he would have given six sols for Pauline's 'Triumphs of Temper,' for the sake of her, and his wife's name." Madame only smiled, but I understood her. "I find by your servant, madame," continued I, "that you are going with Mr. Whaley to his seat near Liverpool: you will have consequently an opportunity of obliging my friend by restoring to her a book of no value to you; but to her inestimable, as being the memorial of her more than mother. Any one will direct you to her family, who live near Liverpool, and who are well known." She bowed, and said she would endeavour to remember it, should the book again fall in her way. She immediately called to the captain, and begged his assistance to the cabin. "I shall not trouble you with the altercation between my mother and myself," continued Anna. "I quitted her, by telling her that I had never seen the part of a woman of fashion so vilely played; nor a female adventurer more decidedly marked."

CHAPTER XXXV.

DURING the bustle of leaving the ship, which fortunately for some of us had gained her port after six-and-thirty hours of their suffering, I was casually placed near Mrs. Whaley. For some minutes she did not deign to speak to me: but at length subdued by the innocent smiles of Sigismund, she said, "Come, young gentleman, give me a parting kiss for old acquaintance' sake." The child received her salute. "I hope, one day," observed I with cheerfulness, "that you, madam, as well as myself, will have more unequivocal proofs of Sigismund's gratitude than the offering of good will which he now so readily gives to kindness."—"He is a fine little fellow," replied she, looking at him with curiosity, "and I am glad to see him with a mother who appears to have the feelings of one, and who prefers him to the opinions of the world." I coloured with resentment, and replied, that in being useful to Sigismund I was without apprehensions for my reputation, and proud of the distinction of being chosen by his virtuous mother as capable of supplying her duties to a child of such importance to a noble family.—"You are a perfect heroine, miss Murray, I perceive," answered she with a contemptuous smile: "but I know the world."—"So it appears," retorted I, quitting her side, "and more of it than it is likely I should know."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ON landing, Mrs. Whaley with much formality took her leave of Mrs. Wilmot, and, with her suite, repaired to an inn remote from ours. I now discovered that Mrs. Wilmot intended to put my patience to the test, and, by her neglect, to signify to the people in the inn that she had no more concerns with me than if I had been a pauper. Anna, with more tenderness than I expected, attended her father, who was really in a state to need her cares. I therefore without delay sought for my own comforts: and my rhetoric, and the appearance of my friend the honest seaman, produced their effects; for the landlady knew him, and desired his sister would come to attend my little boy. I was thus established in the rights of an English woman, and finished the evening by writing to Mr. Furnival, and preparing him for his young and unexpected guest.

In the morning I presented myself in the apartment destined for our general use. Mrs. Wilmot was alone, and waiting her husband's and Anna's return from the custom-house. "Mr. Wilmot was well; but she had the headache." The brevity of her responses silenced me; and I very quietly prepared Sigismund's bread and milk. "Where is your little boy?" asked she. I answered, and added that I had gotten an attendant for him. "I am glad to hear it," replied she; "for his noise is insupportable at times. I find," added she, "Mrs. Whaley's servants are to go to London to-night in the stage coach from this inn. I dare say they would be civil to you on the road: indeed their lady engaged they should, in case you were in it; and that they should see you safe to your friend's house. We could then take a chaise instead of a coach." "That you may do at any rate, madam," replied I, stung to the quick by her unfeeling proposal; "but neither monsieur du Rivage nor my guardian Mr. Furnival would acknowledge their Pauline in the company of *Mrs. Whaley* or her servants." I instantly quitted her, and, meeting the mistress of the house, desired her to show me to a sitting-room. She courteously took the child from my arms, and led the way. I next informed her, that not being yet decided, whether it would not be proper for me to wait for my friend's arrival, I wanted money, and, giving her some louis-d'ors, requested she would exchange them for their value in English currency. She civilly engaged to do so, and, on my further request, said she would send for her niece to amuse the child. In a word, I was installed in my own apartment and privileges when Anna returned, and was writing again to Mr. Furnival when she entered the room. I related in simple terms her mother's proposal, adding, that as I was in England I had no doubts of my

safety, and should quietly wait for Mr. Furnival's instructions. She swelled with passion. "This is the mother," said she, "you bade me to *respect!*" Then laughing immoderately she with fury rang the bell. The servant appeared. "Let some one tell my father that I dine here," said she. "For God's sake," exclaimed I, "consider! do not offend your parents."—"I do consider," said she with calmness: "nor will I quit this room without you. I know, miss Murray, the promises these parents of mine made to your anxious and miserable monsieur du Rivage, and I know these promises bind my father not to lose sight of you till you are under Mr. Furnival's roof. I have only to remind them of the price they exacted for their services," added she, relapsing into a rage. "Will you tell me that I am failing in my duty, by counteracting a conduct at once despicable and dishonest? Will you tell me, that my principles of honour and rectitude are violations of duty to my parents, when from persisting in them I oppose their meanness?"—"It is that unfortunate child," replied I, weeping, "which has led Mrs. Wilmot to her present harshness." She took the child, and, with an emotion which surprised me, burst into tears. They were the first I had seen her shed. "Poor innocent!" said she with melting tenderness, "thou art not friendless. But how many like thee need a Pauline!" She paused, and, checking her tears, sang to him "*ca ira.*" At the supper hour Mr. Wilmot appeared, and, with some confusion of face, pressed us to return to the drawing-room. His daughter fixed her eyes upon him. "I have hired a good coach," continued he; "and if miss Murray thinks another good night of repose will enable her to travel in the morning, I think of setting out at eight o'clock." Anna's smiles returned. She threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him. I followed in the train of peace, and Mrs. Wilmot appeared to have forgotten the stage coach. The gaiety of Anna, with an excellent supper, smoothed even her mother's brow, and she confessed Mrs. Whaley had the appearance of a *gay* lady.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MY reception from Mr. Furnival banished for a time every care. Simple and unaffected goodness relieved me from the embarrassment of introducing his young guest. I was prevented from speaking. "We will talk about him," said he, kissing him, "when we have provided for his wants. We did not exactly know his age. You must get him a good girl to play with," added he, turning to his housekeeper. "Dawson will not neglect him, my dear child: though I am an old bachelor, she has seen a cradle before now in her master's house." The good woman smiled. "If," said she, "we had all you have rocked to peace, sir, we should long since have rivalled the Lying-in Hospital: but this young gentleman shall share my bed to-night and to-morrow. The lady shall choose his nursery." I blushed, and she withdrew with her contented charge, who had wonderfully improved since he had commenced traveller, and forgotten the faithful face of Jeanneton. You have seen Mr. Furnival, my dear friend, and I check my pen. But your Pauline cannot forget a reception which in one hour gave her confidence and hope. His unaffected manners and cheerful ease banished from my mind the painful sense of having appeared before him in a character liable to his suspicions as well as to Mrs. Wilmot's; and after an early supper I attempted to introduce my little story. "To-morrow," said he, placidly smiling, "you shall tell your adventures. I will trust to-night to your fatigue for the safety of my silver spoons. Retire, my child, and sleep, with the assurance that I am not one to judge any cause before the pleadings come on. As madame du Rivage's Pauline I receive you, and with a welcome that needs no professions." He rang the bell, and, with an emphasis on the word, desired Mrs. Dawson to attend *miss* Murray to her room.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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