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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BLUE-STOCKING HALL, (VOL. 1 OF 3) ***

Transcriber notes:

Fred. is always treated as an abbreviation in this book with a trailing period.

Some quotation marks were left out of the printing. Preserved as printed.

Numerous misspellings. These were retained as printed.

BLUE-STOCKING HALL.

"From woman's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain, and nourish all the world."

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1827.

J. B. NICHOLS, 25, PARLIAMENT STREET.

PREFACE.

GENTLE READER,

An Author who is only making a *début*, should be particularly careful not to offend against established rules; otherwise you and I might be spared the plague of a Preface; but as I am heartily desirous to conciliate your regard, I will not forfeit any portion of your esteem at my onset, by the slightest contempt of Court. I will therefore say a few words in the way of introduction to Blue-Stocking Hall, though I may find it difficult to tell you more than you will easily find out for yourself, if you take the trouble of reading the following Letters, which sufficiently explain their own story. They are selected from a correspondence which is supposed

to have been spread over a period of four years.

As to my motives (for I observe that most prefaces talk of *motives*) for publishing the letters which I have been at the pains to collect, they are such as we may in charity suppose to operate upon the mind of a criminal, when by the expiatory tribute of his "last speech and dying words," he endeavours, in a recantation of his own errors, to prevent others from falling into similar ones. Besides, we are generally eager to make as many proselytes as we can to any opinion which we have newly adopted; and as my prejudices upon some subjects were very strong before I visited Blue-stocking Hall, I am induced, through abundance of the milk of human kindness, to wish that if my reader entertains any prejudices against ladies stigmatized as *Bas Bleus*, as I myself once did, he may, like me, become a convert to another and a fairer belief respecting them.

BLUE-STOCKING HALL.

LETTER I.

CHARLES FALKLAND TO ARTHUR HOWARD.

My Dear Howard,

Dover.

Perhaps you and I are at this moment similarly situated, and similarly employed. I am seated at a window which opens on the sea, waiting for a summons to the steam-packet which is to waft me over to Calais—while you are, probably, expecting that which is to convey you to Ireland. When I reach France I shall certainly send you a bill of health from time to time; but as few things are less satisfactory than letters *from the road*, I shall reserve my share in the performance of our parting covenant till I am quietly settled at Geneva.

You do not require descriptions of either places or people; because innumerable diaries, journals, and sketch-books, tell you as much as you want to know of all the scenes which it is your intention ere long to visit; and as to men and women, no second-hand account can supply the place of actual acquaintance with the few of either sex that deserve to occupy thoughts or pen. What you *do* desire, and what I have engaged to furnish, is a history of my own employments, pursuits, and impressions; but leisure is necessary for collecting and arranging; and, till I can satisfy myself by sending you such details as I hope may *interest*, you must be content to receive only certificates of whole bones.

Now *you* are to be set down quietly in less than a week at the end of your journey; and before I set sail I shall take the liberty of repeating the terms of our epistolary contract, by way of flapper to your memory, and leaving you no possible excuse for violating the treaty ratified at Cambridge on Monday evening, ere a mutual *Vale* dismissed us on our several adventures.

You see that I have *first* registered my own part in our engagement, and generously bound myself, before I proceed to tie you down.—Now for *your* undertaking. Remember, that when you reach the wilds of Kerry, you are under a heavy bond to devote a part of every day regularly to the task which I have assigned you of narrating, in minute detail, every circumstance connected with the external situation, personal appearance, mind, manners, and habits of your aunt and her family. Aye, there I see you at this instant in a full roar of laughter: so be it.—I am case-hardened; and have so long endured your merriment with becoming philosophy, that I am not to be subdued by a little louder ridicule than you are accustomed to level at my *romance*. Well, I will confess (now that I am a few miles distant from that taunting smile), that my notions are somewhat odd, quaint, old fashioned, or romantic if you will; and in return for this concession, I only ask that you will bear with me, and indulge your friend's peculiarities, as they are at least harmlessly eccentric. The bias of my mind is to be traced without difficulty to the circumstances of my early life, so different from your own, that it would be very extraordinary if much dissimilarity were not discoverable in our ways of thinking. My boyish years were passed in the seclusion of almost perfect solitude, with a mother, whose image lives indelibly engraven on my heart. A child of feeble frame, I was unable in early life to bear the "peltings of the pitiless storm," and from every wind that would have visited my infant form too roughly, did the tenderest of maternal affections shroud, without enervating, my childhood. My widowed mother was every thing to me—my friend, my tutor, my protectress, my play-fellow—my all on earth. In losing her at sixteen, I was left a mere wreck upon the ocean of life; and, while "Memory holds her seat," never shall I forget the sweet expression of her elegant and feminine countenance, as it spoke the language of love, kindness, or pity; nor shall I ever lose the recollection of that fine understanding which sparkled through her eye, in the brightest scintillations of intellectual energy, and acuteness. She was my *Gamaliel*, and no wonder if her lessons, her thoughts, her sentiments, have left traces upon my mind not easily to be obliterated. When I entered Cambridge, I felt no affection for any living creature. Relations I had none, that were not too remote to fill the chasm which death had created in my heart. My guardian, though an excellent man, only put me painfully in mind of my bereavement, when he attempted to condole or advise; and I turned from him, not with disrespect, but in disgust with all created things.

The natural elasticity of youth, and your society, gradually reclaimed me from a state which, had it continued, must have ended in madness, or idiotcy; and I am able now, at the termination of our collegiate career, to think gratefully of prolonged existence, and look back with thankfulness.

Perhaps you have just laid down my letter to exclaim, "Poor Falkland! surely the man is bewildered, or he would not tell me now, as if for the first time, what I have known these six

years." Now, my good fellow, be not so hasty in declaring me *non compos*. You know the general outline of my story, and you are acquainted sufficiently with what you call my romance of character, to find in it a constant fund of amusement when we are together; but you do not know more than this! You are *not* aware that the tree has adopted its decided inclination from that bias which the twig received. Nothing, I feel, can ever make me a man of fashion. Nothing, I *hope*, will loosen the ties which, all unseen as they are, bind me to the memory of her by whose judgment, were she living, I should desire to be directed in all things to which her admirable sense would permit her to apply those reasoning powers which never dogmatized, nor lost themselves in the mazes of imagination.—I admired my mother's taste as much as I revered her virtues—I respected her talents; and since her death have not met with any one capable of interesting me who did not resemble, in some degree, the character which faithful memory attaches to her much-loved image.

Different as has been your path from mine, your affectionate heart has been my best solace; and though you have been trained in the school of modern luxury, which is so little conversant with Nature, the generous impulses of your breast have not been sacrificed, and you are not *yet* spoiled by what is called The World. For being what you are, you are, I firmly believe, indebted in part to original structure; and perhaps, in some degree, to that friendship which has united us both at school, and at the University.—Somewhat older, and much graver than you, I have always been permitted to take the lead, and exercise an influence over your pleasures and pursuits, which, though frequently counteracted, has, notwithstanding, communicated an individuality to one and the other, that distinguishes you essentially from the heartless specimens of human mechanism that pass for men of *ton*.

You know what pleasant day-dreams occupy my fancy—I anticipate nothing less than your *radical reform*, from all the follies which sometimes obscure your good sense; and I look for this change, not as the result of a Hohenlohe miracle, wrought upon you through the intercession of the Irish priesthood, but as the natural effect of living domesticated with such a family as I conceive to be now about to welcome you at Glenalta. I know your charming aunt and cousins only through their letters to you; but by "these presents," I feel that I cannot be mistaken in the attributes with which I have invested them: and, laugh as you like, you know that my castles are all built with materials from the county of Kerry, in Ireland; and I only say, if it be enthusiasm to love and venerate a set of people whom I have never seen—yes, and fully to intend, if life be spared me, to make a pilgrimage in quest of your relations, inspired by as much zeal as ever actuated the followers of Mahomet in their pious journeys to Mecca, why, let me cry with Falstaff, "God help the wicked." A sort of internal evidence quite incommunicable to any one else, assures me, that my fate is linked with that of the Douglas family; and I can give you no better reason for this belief, than the improbability that so much sympathy as draws me towards Glenalta, should be thrown away.

However baseless you may consider the fabric of my visions, you can at least imagine that, while they possess my mind, they are not a little interesting; and therefore I conclude, as I began, by entreating that you will feed my Quixotism with journals containing the most accurate and minute accounts of all that is said and done, planned and projected, at that Ultima Thule, as you call it, whither you are bending your steps.

The gun is fired as a signal for sailing—I see an army of carpet-bags and portmanteaus in full march, and must say—farewell! God bless you, my dear Howard.

Your affectionate
CHARLES FALKLAND.

LETTER II. MISS DOUGLAS TO MISS SANDFORD.

Dearest Julia,

Glenalta.

Your letter, which I received yesterday, reproaches me with silence, and I plead guilty to the charge, though you are very wrong in supposing that my failure in punctuality proceeds from weariness of communion with you. I have very few correspondents, and amongst these few I rejoice to say, that there is not one, to whom I write from any other motive than because I love and value every species of intercourse with those who are really dear to my heart. I know that it is only necessary to tell you, that I have been much engaged, to be certain of your forgiveness; but I should not satisfy myself if I did not say how I have been occupied.

Shut out as we are from the gay world, and living for weeks together without any interruption to our pursuits, even *you* may perhaps wonder that time is not a burthen on our hands. Yet this is not the case; but on the contrary, the day appears scarcely set in before it has arrived at its close. Is this always the effect of full employment, or is it peculiar to the little circle at Glenalta to wish that the sun would stand still, and give more of his company?—I am too little acquainted with people and places beyond my own home to answer the question; and you are not here to do it for me; so now I will proceed with the causes of my long silence.

Our dear friend, and invaluable neighbour, Mr. Otway, has been ill: thank heaven, he is quite recovered now.—This dear friend and your aunt are, I think, the only people on earth who for the last twelve years could have poured the balm of comfort into the desolate spirit of my beloved mother—the latter in becoming a tender parent to you and your sisters has had too much care

connected with her immediate duties to admit of her being often with us; but what she, under different circumstances, *might* have been, Mr. Otway has been; and what can we ever do sufficiently to prove our gratitude, as well as our affection? During his illness, which continued for three months, we shared, not only the task of nursing him with unremitting assiduity, but endeavoured to supply his place by undertaking the labours which, for a series of years, he has imposed upon himself. We took care of his schools, we visited his sick poor, we distributed his benefactions, became his deputies on the roads and in the fields; and resolved that, on his return to his gardens and plantations, he should find all things meeting him with that pleasant welcome which even the inanimate world is enabled to testify, when the hand of diligent affection has taught every shrub and flower to glow with its own emotions!—I know nothing more touching than such a reception, which needs no words to convince the object of our solicitude, how constantly the heart has been occupied in an endeavour to please by the cultivation of whatever might confer enjoyment; and the suppression of all that would be productive of pain.

Though one of the actors in the scene, I will confess to you, that the success of our efforts was complete. There was no arrangement—no display that appeared to solicit thanks for our faithful stewardship; but I never shall forget the happiness of seeing tears, *not* of grief, stealing from my mother's eyes, while our dear friend, leaning upon her arm on one side, and Frederick's on the other—Charlotte, Fanny, and I, bringing up the rear—took his first walk upon the terrace which commands that panorama of loveliness and expanse which you admired so much in your visit at Glenalta, to which my mind frequently recurs as the most joyful period of my existence. In addition to all the blessings of my daily life, I had then the enlivening influence of your presence. The landscape was the same, but you were the sunshine: and while you were here, all seemed "gold and green."—When will you come again, I wonder!—Well, what a wanderer I am! continually deviating from my path, my narrative advances but slowly,—and you are yet to learn, that besides our extra employments at his farm, we have been as busy as bees preparing for the accommodation of my Cousin Arthur Howard, who is expected here to-morrow evening.

People who live in towns, or even in what is called *civilized* parts of the country, have little idea how we poor pill-garlicks labour to perform what they accomplish as if by the stroke of a magical wand. A few words are pronounced in the shape of an order, to one of your fashionable upholsterers, and lo! sofas, ottomans, tables, arm-chairs, and all the elegant etceteras of modern furniture rise up like an exhalation, and are found in their exact places, as if a fairy had arranged them. While country folks, like us, have to wish, and to wait, for many a long day before we can obtain even an imperfect representation of a new luxury. I do not complain of this; for I really believe, that we gain by every difficulty, and enjoy our humble acquisitions, after going through much trouble to obtain them, a thousand times more than the rich and fashionable do their superfluities, which it is only to desire, and to possess; but I state the fact to account for the employment of time and pains in filling up a comfortable bed-chamber and dressing-room for Arthur Howard, whose approach I dread, not because I have any reason to be afraid of him, but because I feel how entirely out of his natural (or perhaps I should rather say *artificial*) element, he will find himself in this peaceful retreat.

I believe I told you in my last letter, that Arthur has been very delicate for some months past, and apprehensions have been entertained that if the change of air to a softer climate than that of Buckinghamshire were not resorted to, his lungs might soon become affected. Poor fellow! He is an only son; and as my aunt could not make up her mind to going abroad with him herself, and she would not consent to let him go to the Continent without her, though in the company of his friend Mr. Falkland, matters have been compromised by accepting mamma's invitation to the *Island of mists*; and truly it would delight us all to cherish this young cousin at Glenalta, if it were not for the painful feeling that he considers it a heavy penance to come amongst his Irish relations. The performance of duty is, however, so agreeable in itself, that if we find our cares successful, and are enabled to return the invalid in good health to his mother and sisters, we shall be amply recompensed. It is but to think of the grateful love which would warm our own hearts (were Frederick similarly circumstanced) towards any friend who might be instrumental in his recovery, to enter *con amore* into the feelings of Arthur's family, and sing a *Te Deum* if we are permitted to excite them. Sickness, in producing a powerful sense of our mortality, often awakens the heart to the *realities* of happiness, by shewing us the utter futility of pleasures on which we had thoughtlessly relied, till evil days came upon us, and our helpless dependence was brought experimentally home to our conviction.

I sometimes flatter myself with a hope that mamma's enchanting influence, Frederick's sweet disposition, and the cheerful aid of the three *handmaids*, may operate a change in Arthur's mind, and reclaim a fine understanding from the blighting effects of cold and selfish fashion. You see that I am castle-building—may it not be in the air!

I am desired by mamma, to say that your dear aunt shall soon hear from her; and you shall have a letter ere long to tell you what progress we make in acquaintance with our guest, who is a perfect stranger amongst the juniors of our house, and only remembered as a little boy by my mother.

So much have I had to say of our *hospital* concerns, that I have not told you a word of a surprise which Frederick and I are preparing for this precious Author of our being.—There is a little solitary spot not far removed from this, the most sequestered, wild, and lovely glen that Nature I believe ever formed. For years after we came to Glenalta, my sisters and I never saw or heard of it, mamma never having mentioned its existence; and its distance placing it without the bounds of our allotted walks while we were children. Frederick was the first who made me acquainted with this tiny Paradise of beauty and seclusion, the story of which I must reserve for my next letter.

Our fond and united loves attend your circle from all here, and particularly your

Faithful and affectionate Friend,
EMILY DOUGLAS.

LETTER III.
ARTHUR HOWARD TO CHARLES FALKLAND.

My Dear Falkland,

Glenalta.

Your letter from Dover has travelled many a mile in quest of me; first into Buckinghamshire, then to Grosvenor-square, "tried" Cambridge, and *non est inventus* being the return made at each of these places, it has followed me into the wilds of Kerry in Ireland. Here I am actually at Glenalta, and as I mean faithfully to perform my promise, and execute the task which you have so solemnly *spread out* before me, in such detail that I am not likely to forget the engagement, I shall *begin from the beginning*, for the following cogent reasons: first, that I may be correct by not trusting to memory; secondly, that I may not be overwhelmed by an inconvenient accumulation of materials, thirdly and lastly, because to vent my spleen in a letter is next to the relief of doing so in a *viva voce* unburthening, disemboing, or whatever else you choose to call this pouring out of my vexations.

After a journey through a horrible country, as naked as if it was but just born, and as comfortless as if it had never been inhabited, I reached at last my haven of rest yesterday evening at six o'clock. You must not expect me to name places which I cannot spell, nor jolt over such roads as I have escaped again with you. This would indeed be "thrice to slay the slain," for I am in a state of mummy this morning. If David had known the county of Kerry, I should believe that it rose upon his mind, when he wrote of the judges that were overthrown in stony places. As I approached within a mile of my journey's end I should possibly have been put into good humour, if my temper had not been previously so ruffled as to counteract the influence of pleasanter impressions. Candour obliges me to confess, that nothing in nature can exceed the scenery of this spot when *once you are at it*; but in my present feelings I doubt whether I would go to Heaven itself, if there were no better road thither than that by which I have achieved my safe landing at Glenalta. Part of my way lay through a morass, technically called *bog* in this country, which brought to my recollection every frightful engulfment that I ever heard or read of. The vast American swamps, the Indian jungles, aye, even "that great Lerborian bog 'twixt Damietta and the sea," so finely touched by Milton, appeared safe and smooth to my imagination in comparison with the dark abysses that seemed to yawn upon me from either side of my gloomy and monotonous path. No, it is not in human nature to recover a man's equilibrium after what I have suffered in less than a week; and therefore the features of this *cul de sac*, which has nothing beyond it but the waves of the Atlantic, will stand but a bad chance of being sketched in any other than *distemper* colouring, if I must *fix* my first impressions. Your orders, however, concur with my bile, and thus duty and inclination happily coincide, which is somewhat uncommon. Well, "through mud and mire, brake and brier," I at last beheld the termination of my woes, and drove up in a post chaise, which I firmly believe sat for its picture to Miss Edgeworth, and found myself in front of a verandah, which, in any other place and any other at time, might have seemed a bower of enchantment; but my eyes were jaundiced, my bones were weary, and every thought was steeped in vinegar, so cross, cold, sour, and discontented did I feel, as the lubberly brute, called post-boy by a strange misnomer, trundled off his jaded horse, and thumping up like a sack against the hall door, gave a knock which might have been heard in Labrador. I expected to have been met and smothered on the threshold by my aunt and cousins, but a servant only made his appearance, and the step was let down; Lewis had descended, and I was fairly on my feet, and trying to pump up a smile upon my countenance, lest its previous expression should stamp my character irretrievably, ere in two minutes I found myself affectionately greeted and as affectionately dismissed to my apartments, for I have got a *suite* allotted to me, and as I was preparing to obey, and retire, my aunt, with one of the sweetest voices I ever heard, begged that I would not hurry myself. "Frederick my love," added she, "I depend upon your shewing dear Arthur his room, and I need not remind you that as he is an invalid, he must not be asked to do any thing in the least distressing, or requiring effort. Arthur, you will I hope feel yourself *at home*, and that charming little word comprises all that I can offer you, and so *much*, that I should weaken its force, if I attempted by any addition to render it more impressive."

When I was dressed, I went down stairs, and opening a door that lay on my right hand, found myself in a snug library and alone. Supposing this to be the room in which we were to muster before dinner, I took up some books which lay on the table, and what should I discover? why, positively that I have got amongst a batch of *Blues*. Full ten minutes elapsed before my rapid survey was interrupted; and in that short period I found the initials of Emily and Charlotte annexed to the name of Douglas, in at least a dozen volumes, one of which was Sallust, a second Virgil, a third Sowerby on Minerals, a fourth some one, I forget who, upon Botany, and so on. I absolutely felt my cheeks glow with shame and indignation. What! set down in a nook of the county of Kerry, in Ireland, without a creature to speak to, who I suppose ever saw "a good man's feast," though I dare say they are not without "bells that call to church;" and to find myself not only shut out from the world, but screwed in a vice as it were, with all manner of pedantry, and required to talk science all day to a set of *precieuses ridicules*! it was too much for *my* constitution I assure you; and with the celerity of lightning I resolved to construct an apology, as quickly as possible, for my speedy departure. The *manner* of disengaging myself from the noose

still remains to be determined, but it is quite plain that at Blue-Stocking Hall, which is a much more appropriate name than Glenalta, I cannot stay.

My aunt's letters never threw light upon the accomplishments of her daughters, and as one does not take much interest in the occupations of the elders in a family, her own literary propensities would not have annoyed me at all, particularly, too, as I might probably find able assistance in Frederick whenever I had a mind to laugh at learned ladies. But to my narrative,—the first who entered the room was Fanny, the youngest of the family. She is about fifteen, strikingly pretty, with almost the funniest expression of countenance that I ever saw, and thank Heaven, of an age to be treated as a child. *She* will, I see, be my sheet anchor while I am obliged to tarry on this coast. My aunt and her *Aspasias* followed before I had time to utter a sentence, and Frederick brought up the rear. In the moment of his entrance, the servant who was at his heels, announced dinner, and while we were crossing the hall, my aunt said, "You were in the library while we were waiting your arrival in the drawing-room, so we missed the pleasure of your company, my dear boy, for I know not how long. Arthur, I know how disagreeable it is to be watched with too great anxiety, so to day you shall eat and drink as you find that you *can* do; and if there is any thing that you are in the habit of taking, or any thing that you would like to try, I can promise you the aid of three of the kindest nurses that ever took care of an invalid. They have had great experience, and will be delighted to be useful to you." I thanked her, secretly resolving to give my fair cousins as little trouble as possible, and down we sat to dinner, which was not a bit like what I supposed it would have been, but actually *got up* in excellent style. We had two nice little courses of capital materials that might have done credit to the London market; admirably dressed, served up quite in a civilized manner, and, would you believe it, not a word of *azure* during the repast. Don't fancy me, however, the block-head to cry roast-meat before I am out of the wood. Indigo itself could scarcely have found opportunity to display its tints in the midst of all the inquiries for mother, sisters, uncles, aunts, that happily filled the intervals of carving and eating. In all my life I never felt so much indebted to my relations before; and when the ladies got up to leave the room, not a word had escaped their lips which was not delivered in their vernacular language; and by the bye, I will tell you what appears to me very extraordinary, that not one of this family speaks with that horrible accent, vulgarly called *brogue*. No, positively they all express themselves remarkably well, and what is also strange enough, they are very elegant, and modern in their appearance. In short, I should not be ashamed of the *coup d'oeuil* of the house and its inhabitants, were it not for this cursed *blue* which will burst upon me in a torrent to-morrow, and be no doubt the more impetuous in its flow, for having been dammed up during so many hours.

When left alone with Fred. who seems a very honest sort of fellow, I found that he was a sportsman, I suppose in a coarse way; but still here is a resource, and he tells me that he has excellent greyhounds and setters; that game abounds in these mountains; and that there is good fun to be had at small cost of labour. *Tant mieux* for an invalid. We sat for an hour without drinking much wine, from which I am under orders to abstain till this plaguy chest of mine is well, and to which my companion seemed to have no natural propensity. We then joined the party in the drawing-room, and there I found Emily writing music, Charlotte tuning a harp,—yes, a very fine one too, Fanny rolling a ball for a beautiful little spaniel, and her mother smiling at its gambols.

There was nothing appalling here, but the evening was young; however, here was a *new* resource, and with grateful alacrity I hastened to beg for a soft strain of Erin. Certainly I am lost in astonishment. Do you know that these girls sing like syrens? Nothing can be in finer harmony than their voices, and some of the simple Irish airs which were sung this evening, have so completely taken possession of my mind, that I shall dream of nothing else. Why will women be so absurd as to mistake the true feminine character, and, despising the sceptre which nature has placed in their hands, relinquish a legitimate and undisputed empire, to engage in the silly project of conquest over regions which will never submit to their arms?

Were it not for the farrago of Latin, Greek, botany, chemistry, and the devil knows what, with which my ears are to be assailed, how readily should I bear testimony to the charms which sweet music and good manners possess; and when I consider (and I really speak impartially), the fund upon which the Douglas girls might fairly *trade*, I am at a loss to perceive the motive for all this nonsense of learning. If they were ugly or old, or surrounded by professors, there might be some reason for experimenting in literary lore, and hoisting a blue flag; but young, pleasing, singularly elegant, with heavenly voices, what is it that the fools would be at? I suppose that my poor aunt, whose affliction I fancy made her a recluse for several years, has insisted upon making scholars of the sisterhood, because Fred's tutor, who of course was some antiquated piece of furniture, had time to spare, and probably knew about as much of life and manners, as Noah did in the Ark. If this be the case, I shall soon find out all about the matter, and my visit here may be a blessing, as I shall take the very first opportunity that offers of opening aunty's eyes to the impolicy of her conduct, by assuring her that men of the *present* day dread a *blue* more than a scorpion, which argument, I believe, never failed yet with a *mamma*; and as to the poor girls, it will be easy to work upon their minds without being ungallant. To be sure they cannot unlearn all that old domine has crammed into their noddles, but if they are frightened into a careful concealment, there is not much harm done; for if after they are married, they can put their boys through the Latin grammar and Selecta, the employment will not be disagreeable to them, the children may benefit, and if they should settle in Ireland, I mean in the country, no body need be the wiser for their latinity. Fanny is young enough to snatch from contagion, and with her merry phiz, she ought not to drudge over *Hic hæc hoc*. I could not help thinking of Marmontel's description (is it not?) of *Agathe* in the *Misanthrope*, when I looked at her, "*La plus jolie espiegle que l'Amour eut*

jamais formé," and as I applied these words, I resolved to save her if possible.

Well, tea, coffee, and milk-cakes, as good of their kinds as you ever tasted, succeeded by the harp and piano-forte, left me no time for a game of chess to which Frederick had challenged me on entering the room. At ten o'clock a tray made its appearance with some really fine fruit, and the best milk I ever tasted; nothing could be more easy, cheerful, and pleasant than our little party; and so entirely were books left out of the evening's amusement, that what I had seen before dinner was never remembered till I reached my own room; we were as gay as larks, and even danced some quadrille figures. Here again surprise is no word to express what I felt at seeing my cousins acquit themselves with a grace that would actually be quite *distingué* at Almack's. A little *fashion* might be added, but nothing can be better than the flexibility and perfect ear which accompany every movement of these mountaineers. So far so good, but old Solon used to say "the end is not come yet," and I felt all the prudence of suspended judgment conveyed in his *laconicism*, when on the removal of the tray, Frederick placed a large book before his mother, and having rung the bell, I found myself presently engaged,—yes, actually engaged in family prayers with no less than six domestics and an old non-descript with grey hair, who hobbled in leaning upon a stick, and for whose accommodation Fanny placed a cushion; all ranged along the end of the room: it was a complete *take in*, and I never felt more awkwardly in all my life. However there was no escaping, and I had nothing for it but submission. My aunt, to do her justice, gave us a short prayer, and I cannot say that there was any *cant* in it; but conceive the bad taste of following this part of the ceremony by reading a chapter in the New Testament, and during the time, sitting "hail fellows well met" in the midst of the servants, who took to their seats as naturally as if they had been born to five thousand a year each.

Now my good friend, *you* stand up for these exhibitions; but to see the gentry of the country thus brought on a level with their footmen; and to see a girl of Fanny's appearance fly to help old Lawrence, whose stick slipped as he was about to retire, I must ever think revolting to common sense, and I went to my room determined to hasten my departure as much as possible. Of course I conclude that my antediluvian relations go through this religious mummerly twice a day; and though you know that I am not of the infidel school, I hate piety in such clothing as I find it dressed in here; and as I equally dislike old fashions and *new* lights, I shall get rid of the one and the other as fast as I can. I must not offend people, however, who are kindly inclined to me, and therefore you may address one letter at least to this place. Good night, and believe me, in a confounded cross humour,

Truly yours

ARTHUR HOWARD.

P.S. I mean to send you my next packet on this day week.

LETTER IV.

MRS. DOUGLAS TO MRS. E. SANDFORD.

My dearly loved Friend,

And are you really once more in your own Derbyshire, enjoying the blessing of rest after all your wanderings? My heart flies to bid you welcome at Checkley, where your presence, I doubt not, was long desired and affectionately greeted, though not perhaps with such energy as is conveyed in our Irish "Cead Millagh farthagh." But how doubly blessed is your return, and how largely has a merciful Providence repaid your labours, and compensated for every privation that you have endured, by restoring the sweet Agnes to perfect health! You are a mother, in almost every sense of that comprehensive title, to three dear and doubly orphaned girls, who now employ your whole attention; and though you have been spared those anxieties, incident to the relation of parent, which belong exclusively to the tender years of infancy, you can sympathize in all the solicitude to which the unfoldings of youth give birth; and thus a new bond has arisen to link our souls together.

Now that the peril is past, that which was toil while actually present, becomes pleasure when viewed in the distance; and thus it is that the great Dispenser of Good rewards the patient performance of duty.

You longed to be at home, and you are safely lodged within its delightful retreat; while your girls like bees have been collecting honey from every flower to enrich their hive, and no longer indebted to "books and swains alone," for their knowledge of the world, can talk of Switzerland, and Italy, and France with all the many who have visited their shores. *My* holidays are yet to come; but do not be frightened; I am not thinking of the Continent—I am only running forward with my mind's eye to the happy accomplishment of our mutual wishes in the meeting at this dear spot of which your promise holds out the exhilarating prospect. My children seem to feel that months are years, till August comes and brings the Sandfords to Glenalta.

But dearest Elizabeth, I am not answering your question: "Will you help me with your experience in this weighty task which I have undertaken, and give me your advice upon the important subject of female education, as I proceed in an endeavour to fulfil the part which I have engaged to act?" Yes surely, my friend, I will gladly afford you every aid in my power to bestow, but you will not expect more than I can give. You must not look to me for that which I have never found myself, namely a plan or system by which I could work under the guidance of another mind without exercising at every moment whatever penetration the Almighty had conferred upon my own. This, whatever be its measure, has been employed night and day in scrutinizing the individual varieties that presented themselves in the several dispositions of my children.

You know the little history of their infant years, and that they were ever with me. You know also of the frightful chasm in my life, which succeeded. I dare not even now look back upon that period, nor is it necessary; for you have nothing to do with the first years of childhood: but till this moment I never told you of the *heart-sting* by which I was roused from that torpor which had diffused a species of Upas shade over my character for some years.

While I was buried in my cottage near Linton, in Devonshire, I was attacked by low fever which threatened my life. It was not contagious, and therefore I was not debarred from seeing my children. Frederick, the eldest, was then twelve years old, and one day when he and his little sisters came to kiss and say farewell before they took their walk, I perceived my dear boy's cheek wet as it touched mine, and almost in the same instant that the tiny group hurried from my room I found a scrap of paper lying on the pillow upon which my head was reclined. I opened and read the following artless effusion addressed

"To my beloved Mamma.

And wilt *thou also* fall asleep?
And must we never cease to weep?
And can'st thou breathe a long farewell
To those whose little bosoms swell
With love, that would thy sorrows cheer,
With grief, that finds no solace here?
Oh take us to the realms of light,
Or stay awhile thy spirit's flight
Tho' angels beckon: hear our prayer,
Nor leave thy children to despair!"

This first lisping of an almost infant muse produced an electric effect, and seemed the proximate instrument to inspire a degree of resolution which till then had been denied to my prayers; for God does his work in our hearts by secondary means and not by miracles. From that hour my mind appeared gradually to receive strength. I began to feel that solitude was too selfish an enjoyment; that I had *active* duties which claimed a share of my thoughts. I prayed earnestly, I exerted myself unceasingly, recovered health, and then determined on the great sacrifice of re-visiting Glenalta. The anguish, which that effort cost me, it would be as impossible for me to express, as it would be painful to you to conceive. Enough of this! Your request for assistance in your new character has led me back through a labyrinth of past time, and my pen has almost unconsciously pursued the train.

The excellent tutor who was procured for me by my invaluable friend Edward Otway, seemed as if formed expressly for my purpose. I could not have borne the society of any mortal who expected to be made a companion, nor could I have allowed my children to associate with a person who did not deserve to be made a friend. Mr. Oliphant, old enough to be my father, yet cheerful enough to be the play-fellow of my children when he was not their teacher, religious, benevolent, learned, simple in his manners, enthusiastic both in acquiring and imparting knowledge, and never desiring other company than that of his pupils and his books, was the man whom I found at Lisfarne under the roof of my friend, and waiting the arrival of my family at Glenalta. A few dreadful struggles over, we commenced upon the "noiseless tenor of our way." I read every volume of which I had ever heard upon education, and found instruction in a short paper upon the subject, written by the late Mrs. Barbauld, whose pen was called upon to direct the conduct of a father and mother who found themselves the parents of a darling only son, and possessed of such affluence as to induce them to give a *carte blanche* for whatever might be suggested as most likely to succeed in making this object of their common affection all that they fondly desired to see him.

Her letter in reply to their solicitations for advice, was published many years ago in a periodical work entitled "The Inquirer," and contains more strong good sense in a few pages than I have ever met with in the many ponderous quartos which maternal anxiety induced me to wade through. Mrs. Barbauld tells her friends *to be* themselves in daily life, in all their habits of speaking and acting, *that* which they desire to impress upon their son. The quantity of Greek and Latin, logic, and mathematics, which he might attain in the progress of his studies, or the place in which such knowledge should be acquired, she wisely leaves in a great measure to other advisers; and resting on what is surely of far higher consequence in the human compound, namely the principles, the sentiments, the opinions which it is desirable should actuate the conduct of the future man, she admirably remarks that the *moral atmosphere* by which youth is surrounded, is the real teacher—not the tutor or governess who lays down precepts in the closet.

We are told in holy writ, that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light," and we may fairly draw a similar comparison between the young and the more advanced of our fellow creatures upon earth. The whole *strength* of a child lies in his sagacity, which accounts for all the acuteness employed by young people in observing looks and actions, and in developing the secret motives of those in whose conduct they are interested. In low minds this acuteness degenerates into cunning, but in all children there is a quickness of intellect, a readiness in deducing effects from causes, and marking inconsistencies between theory and practice, which ought to operate as a powerful incentive with those who undertake the care of youth, to make singleness of heart and a broad bold integrity the rule of every act in life. It is in vain that we talk of the beauty of truth, while we employ dissimulation in our intercourse with society; or descant on the advantages of occupation, while our own days are passed in idleness and sloth. *Words* go for very little, whilst it is what we are *doing* that secretly determines the bias of our children either to imitate or avoid. Powerfully impressed with this leading truth, I

endeavoured to act upon my conviction. My rules were simple, few, and determined. I avoided as much as possible the multiplication of *decrees*, and, where it was practicable, rather sought to shew my little flock the path in which I wished them to walk by accompanying their steps, than to point out by prohibition that which was to be avoided. The success with which a merciful Providence has blessed my humble efforts is not granted to all in the same *degree*; but all must try for the goal, though it may not be given to reach it in every case. The original structure of the human mind is after all the great thing, and our best endeavours can but improve or restrain; but will never *create*. That belongs to higher influence. You know my feelings, and how much I prize one unselfish movement of the heart above all the intellect that ever adorned the greatest philosopher; and therefore it is that I have tried with such incessant care to cultivate the affections of my children. Here again nature must co-operate; for there are characters so phlegmatic, so cold, so inclined to contradiction, that no kindness will warm them into confidence and love. But though we do not make sufficient allowance for the vast variety of constitutional temperament, and too frequently expect equal results from different soils, which will always disappoint our hopes; a careful study of the materials upon which we are to act, and a judicious application of culture according to the *grain* and *character* of those materials, will seldom fail of repaying our labours by such harvest as it is reasonable to anticipate.

I have, you see, only attempted here to give you a loose sketch of my ground plan. You must ask specific questions, to which you shall have the best replies in my power to give: but if I go on tacking my thoughts together *generally* upon the subject of education, I may be giving you what you do not want. Tell me, then, all your difficulties as they arise, and as far as my experience can remove them you may rely upon my inclination to assist your virtuous resolution of supplying a parent's place to your poor brother's orphans.

The many volumes devoted to the subject of education are frequently written by people who have, like the spider, spun out the web of their theories from within, and then applied those tissues to creatures of their own imagination, fitting and conforming the one to the other as nicely as Cinderella's slipper was found to suit the princess for whose foot it had been made. Such books remind me of a fine contrivance which should be devised with mathematical precision by one wholly unacquainted with practical operations. The machine is set going, and the influence of friction alone, upon which our philosopher had never calculated in his closet, is sufficient to overset the entire speculation.

I must now employ the remainder of my paper in mentioning the arrival of my nephew Arthur Howard. His health is far from being robust: but I flatter myself *already* that our balmy breezes from the sea, and fragrant gales from the heath-covered mountains, which nearly surround this little glen, have been of use to him. Nothing could be more delightful to my heart than his perfect recovery, if I might hope that, with renewed health, he were to inhale amongst us some better notions (for I cannot dignify his nonsense with the title of *opinions*) than the silly society of his poor mother, and those vapid votaries of fashion with whom her hours are passed, have infused into his youthful mind. Arthur is not more than twenty, and has so good an understanding, combined with a remarkably open, candid nature, that I cannot bear to think of his being misled by vanity and folly. He is very engaging, though in the high road to be spoiled, if we cannot, by some necromancy, contrive to make him love our peaceful pleasures at Glenalta.

It is to me a source of great amusement as well as delight to be a silent observer of the group by which I am encircled. I had prepared my dear Frederick and his sisters to find their cousin frank and amiable, but sadly led astray by the tyranny of fashion; and it is really more interesting than I can express, to behold the sweet assiduities of these beloved children in administering to his wants, endeavouring to promote his amusement, and softening his prejudices by the most endearing kindness, and gentle, judicious opposition. So nice is the tact which singleness of heart, and affection inspire, that I have not had once to animadvert upon any part of their manners towards our young guest since he came amongst us, and as all their innocent projects for his reformation, and delicate remarks upon the progress or failure of their little schemes are imparted with the glow of confiding sympathy to me, I am charmed with the discoveries which I am thus enabled to make in the dispositions of my children, through circumstances calculated to place them in new lights to my view.

My mind undergoes variety of emotion in considering Arthur, whose conflicts of spirit I can clearly penetrate. Sometimes diverted beyond measure by his rising indignation, I can scarcely preserve my gravity when I see his choler ready to burst into furious invective against the many pursuits in which my girls are occupied *so new* to him; then checked ere it has exploded by some sprightly sally on their part, or by his own evidently growing attachment to their pleasant society. Emily reasons with him, Charlotte expostulates, and Fanny banters so playfully with her cousin, that her merriment seems always with a magic touch to restore his temper to its equipoise. Arthur you know has been bred up in the school of *the world*, and holds all its doctrines with tenacity. Accomplishments make up all his idea of female education. To sing, play on the harp and piano-forte, speak French, and know enough of Italian to quote a line from Metastasio, are the utmost extent to which he would permit a woman's lore to extend. Any thing more than this, every degree of literary information beyond the poems of Lord Byron or an Album, is voted *blue*, and Arthur's eloquence is in continual exercise upon the absurdity, inutility, and vulgarity of *learning in a lady*. His tirades are met with such perfect good humour, and he is so frequently indebted to those resources in his cousins which he affects to despise for varying the pleasures of his day, that I prophesy a change in his opinions, but it will not be wrought all at once. We must patiently endure some more reproach, ere our young man of fashion will declare himself a convert, but such is the charm of *mind over matter*, that I think we shall conquer in the end.

My dears all unite in most affectionate loves to you and yours with my Elizabeth's

Attached friend,

CAROLINE DOUGLAS.

Mr. Oliphant returns from his northern trip next week.

LETTER V. ARTHUR HOWARD TO CHARLES FALKLAND.

My dear Falkland,

Here comes the day for sealing my promised packet, which you will find to contain the last week's register of matters and things as time glides on at Glenalta.—Well; shall I begin by giving you this day's impression, or travel, like a crab, backwards, in order to get forward? As the latter will be in the Irish style, and also conformable to my promise, I suppose that I must give it the preference. To return then—I made up my budget on Wednesday night, went to bed, tossed about rather feverishly for an hour or two, partly from this plaguy cough, which was, I conclude, excited by my journey, and partly, no doubt, from the irritation of my temper. Sleep, however, that "sweet restorer," as *our* poet so beautifully calls it, came ere long to my aid, and my eyes were closed until they opened at once upon Lewis, and the most brilliant sunshine I ever beheld!

"Lewis, I will get up before the family are stirring—I want to look about me, and see something of this place before breakfast." "Lord, sir," replied my squire, "the people of this house I believe live without sleep, at least if I may judge by what I have seen as yet. I was up myself at half past six, and the young ladies were coming then from the sea when I went down stairs. They are off upon some other prank now, for I saw two of them on donkies, and Mr. Frederick is, I know not where, but certainly not in his room, for the door and windows of it are wide open."

I jumped up, and at eight o'clock sallied forth in quest of adventures. The Glen, in which my aunt's dwelling is situated, is most assuredly quite lovely; and this time of the year is so charming in itself, that it is provoking that all things here should not be in harmony. Just conceive a set of Blue Stockings in a scene fit for nothing but love-music and romance,—faith it is mortifying; not that I am near so angry as I was when I last wrote. No; they are all very prudent, I must own; but the accursed thing is *there*, and only waiting for an opportunity to overwhelm me;—but to my diary.

I had not gone ten yards from the hall door, along a winding pathway that leads through a wood to the sea, when, fascinated by the beauty of every thing around me, I thought that I would run back for my sketch-book, and try if I could not at least take *notes* of the view near the house, particularly as I shall leave it so soon, before I joined the family party. Just as I regained my own room, I met pretty Fan, looking like a rose-bud. "Fred. and I have been searching every where for you, Arthur, to give you your little *dose* of milk warm from the cow, which I am determined shall cure your cough, and make you as fat as my Flora." So saying, off she skipped, desiring me to wait for her return, and in a few seconds she came back in the character of Hebe, bearing a goblet of high-frothed milk instead of nectar, not for Jupiter, but your humble servant. Never having been paid such an attention in all my life before, I felt rather at a nonplus. Not a line from Scott, Byron, or any of our British bards!—no, not even the "Thought upon new milk," at which you and I have laughed in the Rolliad, came to my relief. Not intimate enough to be thus served by a princess of the castle, without returning *some* acknowledgment, and nothing either chivalric or poetical starting to my *rescue*, I was completely *at fault*, and looked, perhaps for the first time, something like Simon Pure. Fanny, however, did not seem to observe any thing but the main point of whether the draught were honestly dregged to the very bottom.—"Drink it all; the conserve of roses, I dare say, will reward the last gulp,—there, that is a dear boy—it will do you good;" and away flitted my nymph of the mountain, saying, as she sped along, that she would come and walk with me in a moment. Scarcely had I lost sight of her, before she was back again; and all animation, with youth, health, and good humour, she ran up to me and said—"Old Lawrence does not treat me so formally as you do; *he* does not look surprised when I offer him a glass of milk; but smiles kindly, with a 'bless you, missy,' as my reward."

"What," answered I, "have you been meting out your favors this morning to a set of pensioners, amongst whom I have the honour to be classed? If that be the case, *my* gratitude might be taken from the general tribute, and hardly missed."—"Oh, then, I see how it is," replied my little coz, "you are offended at me for having taken care of a helpless old man in company with a smart and fashionable young one; but you will not be angry when I tell you, that this dear old soul is the precious mother's foster-father." "And pray, my amiable Fan, what is the meaning of *foster*-father, for in my life I never happened to hear of such a relation."—"Well, you astonish me, Arthur; I find that you have a great deal to learn. Old Lawrence, or Lorry, as you will soon be taught to call him, was husband to mamma's nurse. Nanny is dead, and much did we grieve for her; but it is a great consolation for her loss, that we are enabled to make her excellent and aged partner so happy and comfortable as he is at Glenalta. Remember, too, that the blessed sun does not shine less brightly upon you, dear Arthur, because it warms our poor old man: and when you think of this, you will never grudge him a share of Drimindhu's milk."

"And who, may I ask, is Drimindhu?" rejoined I. "A favourite cow. Our Kerry cows are beautiful, and not unlike those of Alderney; but Drim is my own property, and her milk is better than any other; at least, *I* think so, or I would not give it to you and Lorry. Have your sisters *pets* of this kind at Selby?" "No, indeed, *my* sisters know very little of cows; and I question whether they ever heard that it is these animals which supply us with milk. Louisa and Adelaide live for a great part

of every year in town, and when they go down into Buckinghamshire, or to Brighton, or elsewhere, they ride and drive, but never take any part in domestic affairs."—"Well, then," answered Fanny, "I am sorry for it—they lose a very great pleasure by not cultivating a love for the country and its pursuits. The act of loving is so delightful, that it always seems like the soul's sunshine; and I never understand the character of the Deity so well as when I think of Him as a God of Love."

Though I could not refrain from smiling, I felt for the time that Fanny's view of things was very contagious. The splendor of a May morning, the freshness of Nature, and the concert of singing birds, had put me into a disposition to be pleased, and the simplicity of this dear little girl had all the stimulating effect of novelty on my senses.

At this moment, turning round a wooded knoll which we had been skirting while thus engaged in a sort of conversation so unlike what I had ever been accustomed to, a group of three donkies appeared in view. "Here they come," exclaimed Fanny; and, darting with the fleetness of a greyhound, she flew to meet her sisters, who were attended by a peasant-boy, carrying a basket before him. Nothing could be more picturesque than the scene, and it was much heightened by the approach of these rustic equestrians. While I was moving towards them, a fine pointer passed me by at full speed, and a tap on my shoulder announced Frederick, who came running across the grass to join the party. A few moments brought us together, and, to my amazement, the brother and sisters met with as much demonstration of gladness at sight of each other as Louisa, Adelaide, and I could have mustered after a year's separation. The effect was pleasant; and, if *sincere*, this affection which the people here discover towards each other has something very *comfortable* in it; but it is only calculated for this sort of place, and, like hospitality, naturally flies into these recesses of the earth, where the objects are scarce upon which one's practice can be exercised. Politeness is necessary to a *certain* degree in the world, and even *that* may be overdone; but beyond this how little of the heart does one see brought into play, and indeed on a great theatre the thing would be impracticable, if it were not such a bore as to render an attempt to love every one that a man meets as absurd as it is impossible. But I digress.—Large coarse straw hats shaded my pretty cousins from the sun, which shone brightly. The eldest has a peculiar expression, made up of the intellectual and pensive, which is singularly agreeable, though her features are not regular enough for what requires no periphrasis to describe, but is at once called beauty. Charlotte is very pleasing also; her countenance is less strongly marked than Emily's by reflection, but it is quick as lightning—and full of sensibility; while Fanny's face exhibits a mixture of all the varied characteristics of both her sisters', or may perhaps be more properly denominated a mirror, in which every movement of *their* minds that makes it way to the surface, is shadowed with fidelity.

All were in a hurry to get home lest my aunt should be kept waiting a moment; and so quick were the subsequent operations, that Frederick has assisted the two damsels from their donkies, the riding costume was *doffed*, as if by magic; and ere it seemed possible to have gone through half the preliminary work of preparation for breakfast, a bell tingled, and hastily pocketing my sketch-book, I quitted my station near the house, where I had lingered to make a memorandum of the spot, and was met at the door by Fred. who stopped my entrance, saying, "Arthur, my mother fears it may not be agreeable to you to attend family prayers; and, as you are an invalid, I am desired to say, that you are not to consider yourself bound to our hours, or observances; therefore, my dear fellow, as you have of course said your own prayers, do not think it necessary to join us; but Lewis has been asked, and as it is pleasant to be *sure* of religious instruction for the servants, I came to mention the circumstance, lest you should want your *valet*."

Now the fact was, that though you know I *do* say my prayers generally, and think the practice a right one, I had not knelt down on that morning. The stimulus of a new place, the vexation of the preceding evening, and a sort of restless curiosity to look about me, and make my observations while I had an opportunity of being alone; all excited me to quit my room as fast as I could, and I did so without a syllable of devotion: behold me, then, again caught in the trap; and having blundered out something of being "very happy, &c. &c." Frederick led the way, and in a small room where there was no appearance of eatables, I found Mrs. Douglas and her daughters.

My aunt, who is about forty, is a heavenly looking being, without being handsome in the *common* sense of the word. Her character of countenance, manner, dress, is entirely and exclusively *her own*, without conveying in any thing the idea of eccentric. Her smile is lovely, and seems to warm into life and serenity whatever it rests upon.

"At length her sorrows drew a line of care
Across her brow, and sketch'd her story there.
Years of internal suffering dried the stream
That lent her youthful eye its liquid beam;
A mild composure to its glance succeeds,
The gayest look still spoke of widow's weeds."

The exquisite lines, written by I know not whom, from which I have made this extract, seem to have been drawn for my aunt. The portraiture is perfect; but I must not forget that we are all *fasting*. I was received with "welcome, *my* Arthur," which I do not know *why*, gave me a lump in my throat—a mixed sensation of pain and pleasure, which I have very seldom experienced. The servants, neatly dressed, and decorously arranged, lined the room. Fanny placed old Lawrence's cushion, and a psalm, which was read by Frederick, was succeeded by a prayer from his mother, pronounced with such a thrilling pathos, that I felt it "*knock* at my heart," as our friend Russell said one day of an Irish melody. I admire not only my aunt's selection, but since she *must* have family devotion, her judgment in limiting the time which it occupies to so short a period. Nobody

seems either tired or inattentive; but the petition is so simple, so energetic, and so reasonable in point of duration, that really one cannot say much against the practice, after all: custom, too, familiarizes one in a day or two to kneeling down among the servants, so that on the whole I have no right to complain; and as I shall not describe our *genuflections* again, you may fancy me performing my matins and vespers with monastic regularity. The Roman Catholic servants here attend as punctually as the Protestants, and of their own free will, as my aunt dreads hypocrisy, and therefore deprecates the idea of *compelling* her household to a mere lip-worship; but *her* prayers include all who require divine assistance, of whatever kind; and the people seem to feel that she is truth itself.

Well, we went to breakfast, and a very nice one it was. The soil of this country and its humid atmosphere appear favourable to grass, and all the dairy department is much better managed than in England, at least as to the excellence of the milk, cream, and butter, when brought upon the table; for I do not profess to be acquainted, as yet, with the manipulations which they undergo.

"My children, have you been fortunate in your ramble this morning? What plants have you brought me?" asked Mrs. Douglas. I now expected a first dissertation upon stamens and pistils—felt myself starching my countenance involuntarily into a most repellent expression, and was hastening to swallow a bit of toast that I might turn to Frederick while the Linnæan lecture continued, when Emily quickly, but joyously answered, "Oh, I am delighted to tell you, that we found every thing you want except the club-moss."

Much pleased, as well as surprised, I ventured now to hint about the botanical books which I had glanced at, adding, "I thought that you were all learned in botany as well as the whole circle of sciences." A hearty laugh went round the table, and Emily replied, "We know a few plants, and it is very amusing to go in search of them in our mountain walks."—"And pray," I asked, "have they not all long Latin teeth-breaking names? I dare say you know some scientific title for club-moss." "I *do* know another name," said Emily, "but the English is always the easiest and pleasantest, when one does not want to be precise." "Then, Emmy, we may set about our recipe to-day, I think," half whispered little Fan. Growing bold, now that I had broken the ice, I proceeded to say, "So then you are *doctors*, too. Upon my word, it is somewhat formidable to come into the midst of an academy in this unprepared manner. You should all put on wigs, and write treatises; and you should inform your friends what course is necessary to be read before they come to examination."

What answer I should have received to this sally, I cannot tell, for in the moment of uttering it, the door opened, and my aunt's dear friend, Mr. Otway, made his appearance. The vivid joy with which he was greeted was quite unlike any thing that I had ever seen, before my acquaintance here; but it was neither noisy nor overwhelming, and though certainly very *unfashionable*, I could not for the life of me help feeling how very delightful it must be to excite so much lively emotion of a pleasurable kind by one's presence. Mr. Otway's presence was welcomed with rapture by the whole group, though in the expression of each *bien venu* there was something individually characteristic. My aunt's reception of a person for whom she feels affection, is touchingly kind; and while the bright glow of hospitality lights up her whole manner and appearance, the gleam is accompanied by a sort of tender melancholy, which would evidently conceal itself were it possible, but which, when interpreted, seems to say, "there *was* a time when you would have been doubly welcome, for then I was not alone."

Her smile brings that beautiful image in Ossian to my mind, which you and I have admired, "It was like a sun-beam on the dark side of a wave." Fanny's exclamation, upon Mr. Otway's entrance, was, "Oh, dearest *Phil*. can this indeed be you?" To expound this extraordinary salutation would have been difficult when first I heard it; but I am now enabled to say, that this gay assembly christened him "The Philosopher," because of his extensive knowledge, to which all the family are in the habit of appealing as to a great bank of deposit; and it appears, that no letter of credit drawn upon it has ever been dishonored. *Phil*. then, is short-hand for philosopher, and my ear is now familiar with this playful abbreviation.

The first effervescence over, I was presented to, and met with a cordial shake of the hand by Mr. Otway, to whom I must now introduce you. He is about five-and-fifty, tall, and striking in his appearance, with a fine forehead, remarkably intelligent eyes, and splendid teeth. His manners are easy and polished: and though the first *coup d'oeuil* was a little in the Robinson Crusoe style, yet, when he put off a large and shaggy looking cloak, laid by a prodigious staff, like that of a watchman, which he held in his hand, and got rid of a cap, the laps of which were folded over his cheeks when he first came in, I perceived that he was a remarkably well-looking man; perhaps I should say *distingué* most decidedly, and thereby hangs a tale, for my evil genius was at hand, and I got into a scrape on account of him ere an hour elapsed after his introduction; but not to anticipate, it seems that a long illness had confined him for some time, and this was the first visit that he had made on foot, which was the reason of his being unusually muffled, and also of the more than common happiness expressed at sight of him. He sat only a few minutes, but promised to dine on the following day; and immediately after his departure my aunt, addressing herself to me, said, "Arthur, my love, we are a home-spun set of people here, very unlike the world to which you are accustomed, and instead of passing our mornings in amusement, we go to our several occupations till two o'clock, at which hour you will always find luncheon in the breakfast-parlour, and your cousins ready to ride or walk; but as you must not be expected to drop all at once into our old-fashioned ways, Frederick and Emily shall be your companions to-day, Charlotte and Fanny to-morrow. In this manner, you will be acquainted with our walks, and introduced to our sunny bowers. When Fred.'s next examinations are over, he will be a free man; and in the mean time you will, I know, bear with our stupidity."—So saying, she pressed my hand, and left the

room, followed by the younger girls.

"Shall we walk or ride to-day?" said Emily. "We are your attendant knights," answered Frederick, "and wait your decision." "Oh, oh!" quoth I, "Sir Charles Grandison upon our hands:" I did not, however, say so *aloud*; I thought it better to feel my way a little, and only replied, "Certainly."—Emily, with perfect ease, rejoined, that she thought we might perhaps do both, and, turning to her brother, added, "Suppose that we take him first through the Glen, then round the coppice to Lisfarne Wood; and after luncheon, if Arthur is not tired, we may ride up the mountain, and shew him the bay." Matters were arranged in a moment, and forth we sallied, Frederick presenting one arm to his sister and the other to me. "Pooh! what a piece of ceremony you are," said I. "How so?" eagerly asked Emily; "Fred. is so affectionate, that he *cannot* be formal: his heart always serves with him in the place of etiquette, by suggesting all that the most genuine politeness could dictate: his attentions are not confined to strangers; but, unlike those of cold mannerists, are bestowed upon the people whom he loves best."

This savoured of a *sting*, and I felt my colour rising; but in a second I found that none could have been designed; indeed, how should it, for they knew nothing of my conduct with my sisters, and therefore could never have intended a stab in the dark. "Plague on these *retirements*," thought I to myself, "where there is no standard for good manners but people's own crude notions of what is right and wrong! This ponderous machinery of morals, brought to bear upon every trifle, is as difficult to be at ease with, as the heavy cross-stitch, long-backed chairs of antiquity which are just suited to such *buckram*, and it is a pity that the furniture at Glenalta is not in *keeping* with these straight-laced puritans who are its inhabitants."—Thoughts are rapid, and these flew over my mind so fleetly as not to be fashioned into any sort of utterable form, when the gay cheerfulness of my companions dispelled the passing cloud, and we took a delightful walk, which was enlivened by a great deal of pleasant conversation. We talked of Killarney, which they tell me I must visit when I cease to *bark*. We planned some boating parties, which, by the bye, will be just the thing, and kill two birds with one stone; for the physicians, my mother tells me in her last letter, desire me to go upon the water, and as I like it excessively I shall have the credit of being a very docile patient. They tell me that there are some curious remnants of antiquity, which I am to see; and, in short, we cut out work enough to occupy some time, which, if I can spin out in this back settlement of mankind, *tant mieux*.

Well, but now for my scrape, and a *devil* of a one I can tell you it was. While we were jogging on as merrily as possible, Fred. made a hop, step, and jump into the bottom of a ditch, "Emily, what is this?" as he snapped at something growing near the bottom. I do believe, answered she, that it is a leaf of the *parnassia*; but to make *sure*, we will keep it for dear Phil. This unlucky Phil. was my stumbling block. "By the bye," I said, "he is a very fine looking man of his age," and totally forgetting where I was, Old Nick put it into my head to add, "pray, is he one of aunt's aspirants?" If I had fired a pistol at Emily, she could not have been more amazed. For a second she stood motionless, and then burst into tears. I begged a thousand pardons, and asked how I had offended, while Frederick, exactly as if he had been her lover, pressed her hand with the most affectionate solicitude, and leading his sister towards the bank, we were all seated by a sort of tacit consent in a moment. A silence while you could reckon ten, ensued, and I felt foolish enough, as well as vexed, at such a *contre tems* in the midst of our good humour. Again I mentally cursed botanists, philosophers, and *precieuses*, though I must own they were not to blame upon the present occasion, when it was my own confounded folly in forgetting what a *Ninette à la Cour* I had to deal with that produced this vexatious *kick up*. But while I was biting my lip, and thinking what I should say *next*, Emily brushed off her tears, and seizing my hand in the kindest manner, gently implored my forgiveness, as if *she* had been the offender, and with as much *naïveté* and tenderness, as if she had never read a word of Greek or Latin in her life, said with energy, "Arthur, will you pardon me. I know that you could never have meant the least degree of unkindness; I was very foolish not to recollect in the instant when you spoke, that you were only jesting; but I am so jealous for my beloved mother, and feel such love and respect for her valued friend, that unaccustomed to any other sentiments than those of reverence and affection, I was quite unprepared for your joke, which I know you will not repeat: say that you forgive me." I felt really grateful for this good-natured address, because I had certainly distressed her, and I therefore said very sincerely that I was sorry for having inadvertently touched a chord that vibrated so sensitively, adding, "but you do me only justice in believing that nothing was further from my intentions than to wound your feelings. I live in a world where such things are said every day with impunity, and in fact (if you will not be angry with me for *explaining*) I meant simply to say, that Mr. Otway and my aunt seem well suited to each other. She is still a very attractive woman, and he seems to feel that she is so. Now dear Emily is not this 'the very head and front of mine offending?'" "I will try and not again expose myself," said Emily, "by giving way to impulses which should be under better control; it is very wrong, as well as silly I know, to judge all things and people by the same standard; and therefore I ought to have remembered, that the gay circle of fashion in which you live, must of necessity be governed both in habits and opinions by a rule as different as possible from any that guides our simple hearts in the Kerry mountains. Now then, here is my bargain,—I will not be angry any more, and you will not draw conclusions, till you are better acquainted at Glenalta. When you are, you will not be inclined to repeat the *treason*; you will then see clearly how much you mistake the characters of the persons who surround you: when the subject may be more interesting than it can be while you are a mere stranger here, I will give you a sketch of Mr. Otway's history; till then, you are to be a *calm observer*."

All this was said with an air that partook of playful and serious; and while it conveyed the most cheerful pardon to me, intimated as clearly, that the error I had committed was not a slight one.

Frederick gave an encouraging look at his sister, and merrily turning to me, finished, by saying, "We shall all be intimate by and by, and see each other as we really are; till then, we must obey our little mistress." Frederick and Emily appear quite devoted to one another. We recovered our fracas very speedily; and after a walk through some of the most beautiful scenery I ever saw, returned home. Just as we were leaving a coppice that joins with the shrubby grounds, a poor woman without shoes or stockings, and one of the most grotesque figures I ever beheld, popped upon her knees while we were crossing a stream; recollecting suddenly that I was now in the island of saints, I expected to hear an *ave* at least from this poor disciple of St. Patrick; but with uplifted hands, streaming eyes, and county of Kerry *whine*, she invoked the "'blessed Virgin' to shower down her best gifts on Emily's head" "Oh Miss, *mavourneen*, Jem is well again, and going to work; and I made bould to come over the mountain with a bit o' fish and a little hen for ye." "Eileen, I thank you heartily," said Emily, "and am very glad to hear that your husband is better; but where are your shoes and stockings?" "Honey, I left 'em at home, a fear I'd be wearing 'em out too soon; but the flax you gave me is a'most spun, and when I gets the price of it, I'll have another pair of stockings, and then, plase God, I'll not come to your honor any more bare-footed."

How strange is this sort of thing! and yet this creature, scarcely human, had a kind of natural grace about her which I believe to be the offspring of enthusiasm: she was not at all abashed by my presence, but tripped lightly along with us, as if assured that she was welcome to Emily, who seemed her principal object, though turning to Fred. presently, she exclaimed "Och, then Maisther Frederick, how low my poor Jem was the last day that your honor comed to see him! sure he called to little Tade, and tould him to bring down the priest, and not tell me, a fear I'd be fretted; and sure enough, Father Clancy come to us afore night fall, and said a dail over him in gibberish like, that Jem did'nt know a word of; why then, ever since, he's growing better every day; God bless Father Clancy, and the physicks that I gets from Miss Emly."

I was much amused: this was worthy a place in Miss Edgeworth's Absentee; but we were now opening a little wicket into the shrubbery, and Eileen stopping, told Emily that she would go round, it not being fit for "the likes of her to come in front of the house." Emily's answer was, "you should come this way my good Eileen, if it was the shortest, but you shall go round by those trees, because you will get rid of your load directly by doing so, and I will go with you to keep Carlo from barking at you." How new to me is all this attention to the feelings of mere peasants; and yet my mother's family are all zealous reformists, and of course talk much of the people. The reason no doubt of all this is to be found in the total ignorance of the world which prevails here. We had now come within a few paces of the verandah, when Fanny, with a delighted face, flew up to her brother and me, "Pray do look! the warm sunshine of this day is bringing out my *grubs*, and I shall have butterflies before the usual time." "Aye, Fan, said Frederick, but you will not prevail on this day's warmth to last, and your early butterflies may be killed by frost, if you force them out before their time." This was a new idea, and abated Fanny's joy, who now ran off to consult her mother and Emily upon this matter of importance. I find my obedience to your commands, will involve me in quires of paper, so if you do not desire a stationer's bill of large amount to be brought in to you, upon your return, you must let me *skip* now and then, after giving you these *peeps* into character.

Imagine now a nice luncheon furnished with fine apples that have outlived the winter, milk, honey, and sandwiches. Suppose us all met, and an arrangement entered upon, for the mountain ride. Charlotte, Fanny, Fred. and I, mounted, and my aunt setting out in a little donkey cart with Emily, upon some of their inventions. We took a charming ride, and I certainly feel this air quite a balsam in itself. These dear little girls; think of their having prepared Iceland moss, and made up the finest stuff you ever tasted for a cold, which they have left in my room. At every turn I find some mark of kind attention, and all this without fuss, or the slightest demand upon my gratitude.

Brother and sisters were gay and agreeable during our excursion.

Frederick is a very fine fellow, with excellent abilities and noble spirits; and in short, what with sunshine, soft air, fine views, and good society, I came back to Glenalta in monstrous good humour, notwithstanding that I was put in mind of my morning's annoyance by the sight of *Phil*. driving up to the door in a gig just as we reached home. The bell rang, (for I do assure you that we do things here *secundum artem*, and dress for dinner), and we separated after greeting Mr. Otway *en passant*. A very good repast, at which Eileen's fish made a figure, as also some extraordinary sea-kale which is a matter of rivalry between the houses of Glenalta and Lisfarne, Emily trying one mode of culture and Mr. Otway another, came to an end in due season without the least *stagnation*, such as one so often witnesses in the country.

Mr. Otway is decidedly a very superior man, his conversation displays extensive information, and, what is singular enough, though I am given to understand that Killarney is *now* the limit of his excursions from home, there is nothing awkward about him. He is accounted by all, except this family, a great oddity, for he does not mix in society with the neighbourhood, and is given to solitary walks and musing, which people, less cultivated than he is, do not understand. He is not an idler however, as they tell me that his life is a continued series of active beneficence.

When the dessert was put upon the table, and the servants gone, we drew our chairs very snugly round a blazing billet, which the evenings are just chilly enough still to render as comfortable as it is a social sight; and just as we had formed a crescent about the fire, that sly-boots, little Fan, looking over at me, with the most innocent archness imaginable, made an appeal, for which I was not quite prepared, and addressing herself to Mr. Otway, suddenly asked him, "What is the meaning, dear Phil. of calling people Blue-stockings, whose stockings are really white?"

Mr. Otway smiled, and answered, "Blue-stockings, my Fan, is a vulgar slang for learned ladies."

"Why not for learned gentlemen too?" replied Fanny.

"That is more than I can tell you, unless for the reason, that those who have given this nickname to your sex, are of the other themselves, and there are not many men who like ridicule, when it is brought home."

"Then I am to understand that the appellation Blue Stocking implies a taunt."

"Certainly, a learned lady is the terror of all ignorant men, and to cover their own idleness, or incapacity, they never fail to under-value what they do not possess, particularly if they find knowledge and ability in those, whom, *as females*, they consider their inferiors; but you ought to apply to your cousin, who can give you the latest *edition*. I am an old square-toes you know, and words change their meaning every day. Howard, *unde derivatur*, modern Blue-stockings if you please?"

I felt a little awkwardly, but answered, "Mr. Stillingfleet, I believe, is the origin. At least his Blue-stockings at Mrs. Montagu's *soirées* are the only parentage that I have heard of for the term, and you have defined it."

"Well," said Fanny, "this is odd enough, for it appears that a gentleman wore the blue-stockings, which are transferred to the ladies; but now Phil. I want to know why learned ladies are disliked. I always thought that people were esteemed in proportion to their knowledge, if they made a right use of it."

"*There*," answered Mr. Otway, "you have yourself told the whole secret; *if they make a right use of it*. Now it has happened that some ladies have made a *wrong* use of their talents and attainments, and thus have drawn reproach upon the whole sex to which they appertain."

"What *is* this wrong use which which has been so heavily punished, may I enquire," interposed Charlotte, while my aunt, Emily, and Frederick, seemed quite delighted with this curious catechism.

"The word *display*, includes the whole charge," said Mr. Otway. "Some women have foolishly destroyed the ease of society by an unseasonable introduction of their acquirements, and a pedantic exhibition of the variety and extent of them in pompous expression, unsuited to mixed companies, and uncalled for by the occasion."

"But why visit the faults of a few on the whole sisterhood," interrupted Fanny, with eagerness, "Mr. Otway?"

"Because men are very uncandid in their judgments, and find it easier to get rid of a vexation by annihilating the cause, than by regulating the effects."

Emily here begged to know "whether men were never vain-glorious, and if they were, why they too were not nicknamed."

"In fact," said Mr. Otway, "dunces and fools hate in men, as well as women, whatever they cannot understand or appreciate; and the terms Bookworm, Philosopher, Quid-nunc, &c. are frequently employed to designate persons of superior erudition; but men are simply avoided as *bored*; women are contemned as rivals."

At this moment I chanced to look at Fanny, and saw a tear gliding down her cheek. In the instant of being observed, she started up, and throwing her affectionate arms around Mr. Otway's neck exclaimed, "Oh never, never, will I call you Phil. again, which is the short name with us for philosopher. Why did you not tell me before that it was a term of derision? I love you as our dear friend, and I thought it the most delightful thing possible, to know so much as you do, and to be so like the Encyclopedia as you are."

It was not in nature to resist this sally. We all laughed heartily, though I saw a responding tear glitter in my aunt's eye, and Mr. Otway impressing a parental kiss on Fanny's cheek, explained in a few words, assuring her that however he might feel undeserving of the title which she had bestowed upon him, yet, as being her gift, it was so valuable that he would not exchange the appellation of *Phil.* for the most beautiful name in the English language.

Fanny's gaiety was immediately restored, and as the conversation hit my fancy very much, I was glad that Mr. Otway resumed it by saying, "the reason why display of a little learning is not so common amongst men as women, is not that they are less subject to vanity than the latter, but because *their* vanity is differently directed. Learning being the business of *all* educated men, there is nothing on which to plume themselves in knowing a little Greek, Latin, and mathematics. Every school-boy does the same, and it is only pre-eminence in these studies which renders a man remarkable. Now *real* knowledge, extensive learning, and powerful intellect, of the highest class, preclude boasting for two reasons, first because I believe that it may be asserted of such minds, that they are most sensible to the great truths of religion, which, above all monitors with whose influence we are acquainted, inspires genuine humility; and secondly, because it is the nature of knowledge to render those who have made the greatest progress in its attainment most keenly alive to the deficiencies of all human intellect. 'A little learning is a dangerous thing,' and flippancy is ever the offspring of superficial information."

"Now unfortunately some of the female sex having just tasted of the Pierian springs, have become stimulated to intoxication, without proceeding to the sobering draught recommended by the poet. Then, as a woman's education does not *usually* comprehend either classical or scientific literature, a very slight proficiency in either will make a great shew, just as a solitary candle will

do in a dark place; but there are silly people to be found in every country as of every age, and *both* sexes." "Pray then," said Emily, "would not the abuse of learning be remedied in a manner *kind* as well as efficient, by making knowledge fashionable, rather than by condemning half the creation to ignorance? If girls were *generally* allowed to acquire more information than it is customary to teach them, there would be an end of what you call blue-stockings, and women would not boast of a little reading any more than they do of drawing or music."

"You are perfectly right, Emily," answered Mr. Otway, "the best gifts may be abused, and the improper use of any good that we possess can never be considered as a sound argument for relinquishing it. Neither do men argue in this way when the question relates to money, power, rank, or any of those advantages which they *desire* to achieve. Now, my own opinion is, that much of the unhappiness of married life, as well as the insipidity of mixed society, results from the present style of female education. Accomplishments are ornamental, yet they are only the acanthus that decorates the pillar, not the pillar itself. The most empty mind, the worst regulated temper, may be the portion of a young lady who plays and sings like a professor, who draws and models, who can take casts, and sculpture marble. All these things, however pretty, occupy neither the highest nor the best powers of the human mind; and, generally speaking, they are pursuits which *suppose* exhibition. There are few who cultivate them on their *own account*; and thousands arrive at excellence in several branches of polite education without natural taste, merely to attain certain ends, and when they are compassed, the scaffolding is thrown aside altogether; the fingers are given a holiday, and the unfurnished understanding stands confessed in all its vacuity. If the vessel be not valuable from what it contains, it naturally follows that the external fashion will determine its estimation; and thus a short-lived grace comes to be the pearl of price; and when the bloom of youth is past, there is no fund to support the long evening of life. A sleepy animalized existence at *home*, or a perpetual search after excitement abroad, succeeds. Both sexes degenerate, society grows more vapid, and more vulgar, every day, till reduced to its coarse elements of mere sensual attraction, folly ends in vice, and things are worse and worse, till some new impetus arises to change the entire system. If companionship be the charm of social intercourse, why should not both sexes cultivate those qualities and attainments which, besides being most intrinsically excellent, promise durability?"

"Arthur," said my Aunt, "you must represent *the world*, and reply to Mr. Otway." "Well then, with deference to his opinion," said I, "let it be remembered that there is no necessary connection between the amiable qualities of heart which we admire in woman, and book knowledge. On the contrary, I should say that reading is a selfish pleasure; shut up in a library, surrounded by grammars and lexicons, people are not likely to improve their tempers half so much as in the endeavour to please by proficiency in music, dancing, drawing, sculpture, and all the list of elegant accomplishments which every mother in the fashionable world procures with the utmost anxiety for her daughters. In fact, the *establishment* of a girl who has no fortune, absolutely depends upon her power of attraction; and when you reflect that men seek society to unbend their thoughts, and to get rid of the studies, as well as the cares which oppress them in the several walks of busy occupation, whether in the field, or the closet, the senate, or the court, I cannot help feeling that matters are very happily adjusted in the division of labour, which the general sense of mankind has adopted, and that women have no business whatsoever with any thing but the *agrémens* of life, and should leave to us the whole toil of reading and thinking."

"Well I am sure," said Fanny, "the motive is so kind that the arrangement *ought* to be a good one. What do you think, Mamma?" "My love," answered her Mother, "I shall lie by and be a listener. The argument is in very good hands, and I shall keep my opinion in reserve, for a *single combat* with Arthur, when he is inclined 'to fight the battle o'er again.'"

"We will take Emily's judgment upon this question," said Mr. Otway: "Emily, what think *you* of the gallantry which Fanny conceives to be deserving of such praise?" "Indeed," ingenuously answered Emily, "a kind motive, I should say with Fan, is so sweet, that it inclines one to find fault with great moderation; but, however amiable the desire to save our sex all trouble, I must own that I do not at all admire the expedient, nor think that it seems to be a judicious one. Reading is a great pleasure to me, and if books were denied me, I should feel a void in my life which I do not believe it would be easy to fill; besides, the day is so long, if one rises early that I do not see why there should not be time for many things as well as music and drawing."

"Come, come," said Mr. Otway, "it is not generous to profit by the simplicity of our panegyrists. If the motive for denying, or, at least, *grudging* to women the advantages of a sound and a literary education, be analyzed, I fear that it will turn out but little creditable to our sex, and the proof that it is so, may rest on the circumstance that the cleverest and really best informed men are those who encourage female ambition to soar above the common standard. *These* men delight in superior talents, and cultivation wherever they find them. They are not afraid of rivalry, and their minds are too large to take pleasure in any supremacy which is produced by exclusion. The lazy, and the tyrannical, would fence in their privileges, and not permit to women a participation in what they choose to call their inherent rights; the former to save themselves the trouble of acquiring knowledge, and the latter because they would depress and enslave the sex to which they would allot no higher calling than that of administering to their amusement? Is not this a *true bill*?" I could not deny that there was some force in the statement, but urged the *general* voice as being considered the best criterion of what is good in itself, and then advanced the necessity of making some difference between two sets of beings destined to such dissimilar offices. "Men are born to action. They live in public, they preside in the councils of nations; they provide for the families that look up to them for protection; they labour in the field with their hands, and in the closet with their brains. When the toil of life is suspended, they desire

relaxation, and to be gratified by the charms of beauty, grace, sweet music, and good manners."

"And these are all compatible with much higher and more dignified powers, and purposes," rejoined my antagonist. "Some writer, whose name I forget, has said, 'tell me your amusements, and I'll tell you what you are.' There is a great deal of wisdom in the idea, and it holds good in forming an estimate both of nations and individuals. The love of gain, the dread of poverty, desire of fame; in short, a thousand motives may, and do, constrain men to engage in pursuits which make the *business* of life. A set of shoemakers, or a privy council, merely *as such*, are brought to a level with each other, the one party as tradesmen, the other as ministers, and the only difference that we perceive in contemplating the *body*, in either case, resides in the superior or inferior skill of the workman or the statesman, compared with his fellows; but when the low occupation of the one, or the high employment of the other, is brought to its close, and the *man* retires from his labours to unbend in the enjoyment of the social hour, it is *then* that we find of what materials he is made."

"We will suppose first of the humble artizan, that one takes the fruit of his toil to the public-house, where it is spent in company with the idle and the vicious; that from thence he proceeds to the pugilistic ring, and gambles away the remainder of his earnings, while his mind is brutalized by the nature of the sport, and his wife and children are left to starve. *Here* you have no hesitation in condemning such an appropriation of time and money; nor do I believe that you would find any greater difficulty in bestowing your praise upon the industrious father who, gathering his children round the evening fire, can participate with the goodly partner of his cares in the task of rearing a young family to virtuous principles and prudent habits as his best happiness. Trust me, my young friend, that in the higher classes of society we may trace as much variety of character as in the humbler walks; and vice is both as vulgar, and unholy, when varnished over by fashion, as it is in those situations that present its deformity to view unveiled by the gloss of rank and fortune. Why should recreation be found only in the inanity of sloth, or the stimulus of dissipation? Is such recreation worthy of a rational creature? I do not mean to say that music and merriment are not very agreeable, but are these less pleasing because they are not the *sole* resources? Here are my dear little nurses, whose kindness during a long and painful illness I shall never forget. Do you think that I dreaded poison in my cup, because Emily can translate Lucian, and Charlotte is not perplexed by a quotation from Virgil?"

"Pray, pray, dear Phil." exclaimed Fanny, "say nothing about Greek and Latin, lest Arthur, adopting the language of fashion, should call the peaceable inhabitants of Glenalta, Blue-stockings." "Indeed but I will," quoth Phil. "and, as I design to enlist Howard as the champion of his cousins, I think it fair to tell him all that he will have to defend."

Here was a pretty loop-hole for a civil speech, such as I did not neglect, but declared my readiness to enter the lists, provided that I was not to be considered a Don Quixote, prepared cap-à-pé, to fight the battles of every distressed *Blue*, who might chance to be attacked by an uncourteous enemy. "But, my good Sir," said I, "since we have gone so far in this discussion, let me soberly and seriously ask what is the *use* of learning in a woman? Is she handsomer, more lively, more attractive, for having her head crammed with strange languages? If I am to be a champion, I must begin my service by what may appear perhaps rather ungallant, though I hope that the present company will acquit me of any design to do otherwise than afford my *best* service, provided that you succeed in converting me from opinions which I have been brought up in a belief are founded in nature and good sense."

"My dear fellow," replied Mr. Otway, "do not profane the names of nature and good sense by identifying the one or the other with fashion. I would appeal to your understanding, and if that is not convinced of error, I would leave you to the prejudices which you have imbibed. Let us then now fairly meet each other. You ask, will women be made more beautiful, more lively, more attractive, by being more instructed? Perhaps I may encounter a laugh, if I answer yes; first, I always consider intelligence as the greatest beautifier of a face, which, if handsome, is lit up by an additional ray in every new exercise of the mental powers; and if ugly is at least prevented from being stupid by cultivation. But this will not satisfy you, because I assume the very thing that you deny; so I will ask you, have men a *right* to consider women as objects merely of gratification to their eyes and ears? Are not women endowed with sense and feeling; with high powers of intellectual energy, and immortal spirits like men? Were these gifts, think you, conferred for nothing but to be employed in the arts of catching butterflies? No, no—

'Domestic bliss, that like a harmless dove
Can centre in a little nest,
All that desire would fly for through the world,'

is improved by all that gives variety and interest to the social union of two souls destined to find the principal portion of their happiness *at home*. The merely fashionable accomplishments can last only for a season, and that very season which least requires their aid, for youth and sprightliness are so full of elasticity and joy, that were music, painting, &c. banished from the world, there is a halcyon hour in the life of all, in which their aids would not be missed, because they are not wanted; but the summer-fly, which gaily flits in the warmth of a meridian beam, ought not to be our model. Life, like every four and twenty hours, has its morning and evening, then its night. Do not start, I am not going to give you a homily; I would only call an intelligent mind to a quiet investigation of truth, and farther ask, when time steals the bloom from beauty's cheek, and the song, which once charmed the ear has died away—when the fairy fingers have lost the ease,

'Which marks security to please?'

When the nymph is changed into the matron, and the sylphid form of eighteen is transformed into the "mother of many children," pray what becomes of companionship which had rested its sole support on the evanescent perfections of youth, the very nature of which is to pass away like a morning dream? Would it not be wiser first to consider the human species as formed for a world beyond this, in which it is appointed 'to fret our little hour,' and to make a vital sense of our *ultimate* destination, the *primum mobile* in every scheme of existence? This is the grand, the principal, the master-link of all earthly union, because it does not end here, but binds the faster as terrestrial things wax nearer to a close. Upon this broad base would not rational creatures, who are expressly fashioned for each others' society in this world, naturally be led to cultivate in common the greatest degree of intellectual perfection? Do you believe that the distinguishing, the ennobling boon of reason is granted to *both* sexes, to be only exercised by a very limited number of *one* sex, and lavished in thoughtless waste by all the rest? Never entertain such an idea of the Creator, who has made nothing without its end, purpose, and design. I do not expect you to become a convert in the twinkling of an eye, but I feel as if we should one day have you added to our ranks, a staunch partisan of better views than those which you have learned to advocate."

"Before you conclude," said I, "your introductory lecture upon *Bluism*, you must hear my creed, such as I brought it to Glenalta. Do not suppose that I think it possible for a society to be held together without the bond of religion. Whatever errors I might have been inclined to fall into, had I been left to myself, I have a friend, and that a youthful one too, who has kept such a *watch* upon my sayings, doings, and thinkings, as to preserve me at least from the *grosser* mistakes to which young men are liable who have no Mentor to guide their course. I am thoroughly convinced that religion is necessary in every community that aims at being well ordered, and that women ought to be considered as peculiarly its guardians; they are the nurses of young ideas, the first shoots of which are directed by female solicitude, and it would never do to have our *ladies* turn infidels."

"Very well," said Mr. Otway, "here are some strong admissions. You believe in the absolute necessity of religion in a well constituted state, and you are right; for if all the restraints which religion superadds to those arising out of mere moral fitness and utility, be quite inadequate to render men virtuous, *a fortiori*, they would not be better for increased latitude to do evil."

"You *next* admit that the most valuable of all things here, because that which best secures peace on earth and happiness in heaven, it is *peculiarly* the province of the female part of creation to protect with care, and distribute with zeal. Here is a high trust—here is a mighty office, and it would naturally follow from your acquiescence in reposing such confidence in a certain set of people, that you must admit the propriety of rendering them fit depositories for the sacred trust by some suitable preparation. Be assured, my young friend, that a fashionable education will not achieve this end. But you must not mistake me. I do not mean to assert that there is any necromancy in learning *this* language or the other. I would only be understood to say that during the early years of childhood there is time enough for much more than is usually taught to girls from five to fifteen; and while the memory is retentive, the curiosity fresh, and all the faculties ready for action, it is a pity that food for the mind should not be provided of a more substantial kind than is generally supplied. In learning the dead, we attain the principles of living languages; we become able to trace our own mother tongue to its source; we enlarge the field of knowledge and of comparison; we search the Scriptures with effect, because we are enabled to search them minutely; and why should these advantages be denied to one half of the creation? Woman's empire is peculiarly to be found in her *Home*. Whatever adds dignity to her dominion, and variety to her pleasures in the scene of them, I must ever maintain to be the best safeguard of national virtue. Barbarism and excessive refinement are extremes of a widely-extended series, and like all other extremes come to meet at last. The selfishness of the former, exercises the pre-eminence of animal strength in compelling the weaker sex to endure the fatigue of cultivating the ground, and performing every servile occupation, in order that the stronger may enjoy, without interruption, the coarse and sensual gratifications which constitute their happiness; while the equally selfish, but more elegant sons of modern luxury, exert a tyranny not less despotic, in reducing the female mind to that dull level best suited to their own inglorious apathy and sloth. The matter can never rest here. Providence has formed the sexes for each other; and the mutual attraction is too powerful to be resisted. To regulate the nature of this attraction is all that moral improvement can effect; and I see with grief a mighty change in progress. Our young men are (I speak not of all) cold, careless, rude, and covetous; our youthful females are bred up as if for the stage, and as, with all 'the means and appliances to boot,' the opera and the theatre will always supply more finished specimens of singing, dancing, and acting, than can be found elsewhere. We accordingly see that many of our present generation of men are not ashamed of seeking the companion of their lives, the wife of their bosoms, and the mother of their future offspring, on the boards of Drury Lane or Covent Garden: thus destroying whatever gives sweetness to domestic retirement. An actress *may* possess more worth than many of the audience who gaze upon her through their glasses from the surrounding boxes, but the charm of modesty can *hardly* belong to her who lives in perpetual exhibition; nor can the woman, whose sole profession is the study of fictitious and, generally speaking, unamiable characters, be expected to have much time for cultivating her own character to the profit of an immortal soul."

"But, Sir, you speak of the theatre. Our young women of fashion are not players; and supposing that they were, and that we must all select our partners in the school of Thespis, would the study of Homer and Simonides, of Virgil and Horace, be a remedy for the evils of which you complain?"

"No, my dear Howard. I attach no magic to these authors. On the contrary, there may be an overweening attachment to the ancients, and there are still a few scholars of the old school who value *every* thing that comes to them in Greek or Latin cloathing, and encumber their pages with

quotations which have nothing to recommend them beyond the mere learning which they exhibit. But, returning to our argument, I deny your premises. You assert that our young women of fashion are not actresses: I maintain that they are."

"Aye, 'all the world's a stage,' now-a-days. Nature—beautiful, refreshing Nature—is dismissed from what is technically called 'good society.' Too many of our youth of *one* sex are become horse-jockies, and pugilists—idle at school, dissipated at the University, and ignorant of most things, except what contributes to animal ease and luxury, they issue from the academic groves in full-fledged folly, knowing little indeed of learning, either ancient or modern, but well skilled in sauces and French wines. They are well read in the last edition of Dr. Kitchener, they are connoisseurs in eating and drinking, they can break their heads in the fancy ring, and their hearts in a rowing match. But, alas! how comparatively small the number of those who commence the business of life well furnished with useful knowledge, learning, taste, discretion! with all those qualities in short which ought to distinguish man from the inferior creation! How often are we disappointed when we cast our eyes around, in this polished age of the world, in quest of the materials which are to supply our future strength in every department of the State! A youth governed by religious principle, his head stored with science and literature, while his heart expands to *all* the social ties of generous affection, is the *only* character to whom the interests of his fellow-men may be fearlessly consigned; because he alone feels what they truly are: and he only who has learned himself to bow with respect to the wisdom of experience, and conform to the discipline of moral rule may be trusted to watch over the happiness of others. Yet such a being as this is a *rara avis in terris*, while the degenerate race, which I before described, crowd our streets and highways; and hope one day, through the influence of rank, to take their seats upon our parliamentary benches, where they will vote away our liberties, or relax them to license, just as interest guides, or party governs. Believe me, my young friend, 'there is something rotten in the state of Denmark;' and in turning our eyes towards the other sex, the eye finds nothing on which to rest with more complacency, except amongst the few who have sense enough to perceive and courage sufficient to resist the tide of fashionable folly. In what is called *the world*, it would seem that there is a *guillotine* established, to which every intellectual energy is fitted by lopping off every germ that buds beyond the narrow limits assigned as the modern standard. The heart is forced to undergo a like operation; and all the young affections, timid respect, and blushing reserve, which would seem to be the indigenous growth of the female mind, are destroyed with as much zeal as the gardener employs in restraining the luxuriance of his espaliers. Dressed to a common model, both in mind and body, you pass from one automaton to another, in a London drawing-room, without being conscious that you change your place unless by the variety of glare in the colours that surround you. These *effigies* neither see, feel, hear, nor understand, except as machines may appear to do. Likings, dislikings, looks, words, and actions, all are artificial; and natural disposition is only displayed when it is too late to regulate its movements. Marriage, like the fifth act of a play, brings matters to a conclusion, and our young ladies drive off from the theatre to exhibit at home the materials which *really* compose their characters. It may be that vanity, only changing its diet, is still fed to repletion; but should circumstances deny what habit and education have taught to be the only good, disappointment will have its revenge, a hecatomb of domestic victims must expiate the crime of all who withhold the accustomed tribute that had been paid to the attractions of youth."

I could not restrain a sigh. The portrait was sketched with animation, and the features of it were familiar to me. Our *Phil.* proceeded:

"I do not *insist* upon any of the acquirements which excite such general terror. I see no specific for the evils which I have prescribed in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chemistry, Botany, or Mathematics. My only object is to deprecate ridicule, and to ask for a little portion of that liberality which even descends to *cant* at the present day, in favour of all women of whatever country, who are seeking mental improvement. Let us only have an end of nick-names, which terrify the timorous; and, with the enlightened policy which is beginning to operate in our financial and commercial relations, let us renounce our narrow ideas of monopoly, and open the way to a free trade of mind, unincumbered by the taxes which retard its progress. Let us look a little higher than Mrs. Montagu's formal *soirées*, and the quaint cerulean hosen of Mr. Stillingfleet.

Fortunata la calza d'azzurra e d'oro
Così diletta' al Febo e l'Aonio coro."

"Apollo and the Aonian choir do not seem to have made any exclusions here. The blue and gold which are thus eulogized in Ariosto, may be permitted to decorate the softer sex; and we have no right to laugh them out of a costume which the gods themselves proclaimed as the livery in common of all their votaries. But you have been a patient listener to my inaugural lecture, and it is time to give you a writ of ease. You must breakfast with me to-morrow, and we shall find plenty of matter for more chat upon the world and its ways."

"Oh dear Phil.," exclaimed Fanny, "how delightful it will be, if Arthur, under your tuition, ceases to be woman-hater."

A burst of merriment at my expense, was the consequence. When I protested that nothing could possibly be farther from my character, and that I had rather the credit of being a *lady's* man; her reply was, "well it may be so, but if you wish to continue so vile a system as Phil. has been describing, you would sacrifice one half of the species to indulge the whims of the other."

Our little party now broke up; and after a very short interval we found ourselves re-assembled in the drawing-room. It was agreed upon that Mr. Otway's late illness rendered it imprudent for him

to risk the effects of evening air; and the whole family who seemed actuated by one principle in renouncing *self*, immediately declared their intention to amuse their guest and relinquish the afternoon's ramble. We passed the evening, I cannot tell you how pleasantly. My aunt is a charming person, and I cry *peccavi*. Though her appearance is singularly striking, and the expression of her face quite heavenly, dignity is the natural character of both. Gentle as a lamb, there is no weakness about her. The mother shines pre-eminently in all her conduct, and after one hour's observation of her manners towards Mr. Otway, I felt as ready to contradict my own suspicion which had wounded Emily's feelings as she could possibly be herself.

You and I have often argued the point of second marriages, of which I was always the advocate; more, I confess because we see them every day in the first circles, than from thinking much upon the subject one way or the other; but though I hardly as yet know why, it would grieve me, were my aunt to marry again.

We had music, chess, and conversation, which never flagged, but I cannot detail any more of this day's history. Phil. staid to prayers, in which he joined with the appearance of genuine piety; and I retired to my room, shall I own it, in a state of mind very new, and by no means disagreeable. I felt excited without delirium, such as succeeds the whirl of dissipation in town. My mind seemed full, my heart glowed, and a sort of *reality* appeared connected with every thing around me at Glenalta, quite unlike what I have ever experienced before. Do you know that I was inclined two or three times this evening to turn hermit, and live in Kerry. However, the fit will not last. The arrival of a stranger is always met with something like a flourish of trumpets, which quickly subsides, to say nothing of old Oliphant's return, which will tie a log about our necks in a day or two.

As you *will* have exact accounts of all that we say, as well as do, I find that I must resume my narrative in another letter. This has swelled to an unconscionable bulk. Good night. In my next you may expect a description of *Coelebs* and his breakfast at Lisfarne, whither I must go alone as the cousinhood seemed determined on giving a welcome to old Squaretoes, the tutor, *en masse*. How primitive! Vale.

Ever your affectionate friend,
ARTHUR HOWARD.

LETTER VI. THE SAME TO THE SAME.

My dear Falkland,

"Early to bed and early to rise,
Is the way to be healthy and wealthy and wise."

If this be true, as the old spelling books have it, and as I saw confirmed to day, by the authority of a village schoolmaster, who had a large class operating upon the above sapient apophthegm, which served as a copy in the school, and which I have adopted for the heading of my letter instead of an extract from some "old play," I may come out at last a goodly example of rosy cheeks, full pockets, and well-stored pericranium, for here I am living a life worthy of Hygeia herself. I was up at six o'clock this morning, and according to an arrangement with Emily, had an hour's walk with her before I set out for Lisfarne. When we were retiring last night, I heard her whisper to Frederick that she meant to visit "Susan" in the morning, and on inquiry, I found that the said Susan is a poor woman residing in the mountain, for whom some present had been prepared. Now, it occurred to me that before I saw Mr. Otway at his own house, and particularly as I was to encounter him *alone*, I should like to hear the sketch of his history, which Emily had promised me at a future day, so following her to the foot of the stairs, I told her how entirely I repented my error, and requested her perfect forgiveness, proposing that she should seal my pardon by allowing me to be her mountain beau; and moreover, that she should come to our morning's walk prepared to gratify my curiosity. My petition was granted; a brilliant sun-rise invited us to perform our mutual engagement, and we had not made much way in the rugged ascent towards Susan Lambert's wild abode, followed by Paddy, the running footman upon such occasions, who trotted after us with a large basket, well stuffed with I knew not what, when I reminded Emily of her task, and she gave me the narrative, which I shall try to convey as briefly as I can of Phil's Life and Character.

"Mr. Otway," said Emily, "was the dear friend of my father, and so devotedly were they attached to each other, that even at school they were always called Pylades and Orestes. At the University they lived together; and the same day saw them both embark in the same profession. For the character of that loved parent who was taken from us, before his children were of an age to appreciate his various excellences, his splendid talents, exquisite taste, and uncommon attainments, I must refer you to his friend, who, it is probable will one day describe your uncle, and tell you that he was indeed 'a man whose like we ne'er shall look upon again.' I could not hope to do justice to the portrait, and will therefore not attempt to draw his resemblance. My father and mother, who seemed to have been peculiarly formed for each other, met in early life, and became mutually attached, as one might naturally suppose that two such gifted beings would be. Pecuniary circumstances alone prevented their union; but while their happiness was retarded, their affection was tried in the furnace, and came out purified. Mr. Otway was the sole guardian of their secret, and the only support of their long deferred hopes. After years of devoted constancy, they were rewarded at last by such domestic felicity as I have heard from Mr. Otway falls to the lot of very few on earth, and was too perfect for continuance in a world designed by

its Great Creator to serve only as a vestibule to more abiding mansions. The friends were separated by the tide of events, but never ceased to correspond. Once, and I believe but once, imagining that he had found a resemblance of my mother, Mr. Otway's affections were engaged, and he resigned himself to the fascination of such an attachment as only minds of lofty pitch are capable of feeling at once noble, disinterested, and devoted. The lady whom he loved was rich, while, he at *that* time, was a younger brother, and but slenderly provided for. The dread of being suspected of mercenary motives, sealed his lips; and a man of fortune making his appearance, the object of his thoughts proved how little worthy she was of such a being, by marrying this more opulent suitor after a very short acquaintance. So dreadful was the shock which our dear friend's sensitive nature sustained upon this unexpected event, that his life nearly fell a sacrifice to the conflicts which he endured. My father and mother were now his staff and solace in the hour of trial; and their tender solicitude, aided by time, restored to comparative peace that generous spirit which had nearly sunk under the pressure of disappointment. He travelled, and ere the expiration of many years, was recalled to England, by the death of his elder brother, which event was followed at no great distance of time by that of Mr. Stanhope, the husband of her who had so cruelly trifled with his happiness. Mrs. Stanhope was the mother of an only child, and the noble character of our friend overcoming every selfish retrospect, cast off the memory of past wrongs, and he stepped forward to offer the aid of his best services to the widow and the orphan, without, however, I believe, even for a moment, entertaining the remotest idea of renewing his suit. His lot had been cast; he had retired from what is called the world, and though so far from becoming a misanthrope that all his fine qualities appeared to expand when he obtained the means of making others happy; yet he never seemed to calculate upon any change in his own situation. Though delicacy and feeling prevented him from ever uttering a harsh sentiment, his friends were of opinion that he had arrived at a full conviction of having misplaced his affections in early life; and that conviction once attained, he never sought to hazard a new experiment.

But the care of young Stanhope became a favourite object, and no assistance which the most efficient friendship could bestow was withheld from the boy's mother. Lisfarne was part of the property which devolved to this invaluable neighbour of ours by his brother's bequest; and the retired beauty of the scenery determined him to make this his asylum. His next object was to induce the beloved companions of youth, who had shared the gladness of his brightest, and dispelled the clouds of his darkest days, to come and live in his immediate vicinity. He purchased Glenalta for my father, and by his good taste and activity, transformed its rude wilds into the little paradise which you see. Here resided the happiest family which, I believe, ever existed; but I cannot talk of home, I must proceed with the story which I promised you:—Mr. Otway received a letter from a Solicitor in London, to say that the interests of his young ward (not that he was *legally* so) required his immediate attendance in town. It was to him a most disagreeable undertaking. A recluse through long habit, and devoted to the society of Glenalta; active in the discharge of such multiplied duties at Lisfarne, as could ill spare his vigilant eye and beneficent heart, it was great pain to set out upon a journey without understanding its object, and plunge anew into scenes which he had abjured in idea for ever. But dear Phil. only hesitates till he has satisfied himself concerning what is right to be done, and there is no farther pause—he proceeds to execution. To London he went, and never shall I forget how much we longed for his return; and what blazing fires of heath *telegraphed* his approach upon our neighbouring hills. On reaching town, he only waited to refresh himself before he set forward to the Solicitor's, from whom his summons had issued, and the mystery was soon unravelled. Mrs. Stanhope had married a young fortune-hunter, and was endeavouring to prevail upon her son, then a child of fourteen, to make a settlement on his penniless stepfather. Relying on the influence of her former attractions, she had prepared a *scene*, and desiring her Attorney carefully to abstain from giving Mr. Otway the least intimation of her new tie, she burst upon him in the moment of his entrance at Mr. Scriven's house, dressed in fashionable attire, which had succeeded in all the gay colouring of a London milliner's shop, to the garb of sorrow in which he had seen her arrayed in *one* personal interview after her husband's death. The only time of their meeting had been upon that occasion, when he begged permission to consider himself as guardian to her child, thus proving that, though he had ceased to *love*, he still felt the kindest and most sacred interest in her fate. Disgusted now beyond the power of controlling his feelings, he put a speedy termination to a conference, the manner, as well as the matter of which had excited his utmost indignation; and assuring her that if any undue advantage was taken by her influence over the minor, a suit should be immediately commenced against her and her husband, he took a hasty leave. Frightened by these menaces, the lady retired, and soon announced her departure to the Continent, where, about two years ago, she died of a broken heart. Mr. Otway's business completed, he quickly returned to his favourite retreat, and loved to wander alone along the beach which surrounds a part of his demesne. My dear father once caught him upon a rocky promontory with pencil and paper in his hand. The question of 'what is that? Has Otway secrets with *me*?' was answered by 'it is a worthless scrap; take it, but Henry touch not that chord again—it jars upon my ear, and spoils all harmony.' I will now read you the lines which my father obtained by this surprise. It is the only poetry which even mamma has ever seen of her friend's writing.—Here Emily read to me the following stanzas:—

On first seeing Stella in a coloured dress after her second marriage.

"Stella! thy beauty rested on the shade
Of sorrow's lonely night, like that fair flower,^[A]
Queen of the dark, whose tender glories fade
In the gay radiance of a noon-tide hour.

"That flower supreme in loveliness—and pure
As the pale Cynthian beam thro' which unveiled
It blooms—as if unwilling to endure
The gaze by which such beauties are assailed.

"And in the solitude of Nature's sleep,
Unfolds such treasures to the midnight gloom,
As gem the vault of Heaven in silence deep
When widowed wanderer seeks the mouldering
tomb.

"Yes! like the velvet-soft, and snowy star,
Wrapped in thy sable garb, it erst was thine,
With unassuming lustre, spreading far,
In mild and chastened majesty to shine.

"Each stranger footstep that approached the fane,
Eager to view, yet fearful to intrude;
Seemed to partake the dread of giving pain,
By glance unhallowed, or by finger rude.

"And has Aurora chased the sable cloud,
And, even jealous of a twilight grey,
Dispelled with sudden touch that mourning shroud,
And with her saffron robe unfurled the day?

"Alas! the graceful Cactus now no more,
Queen of the dark, asserts her silver reign,
Her empire nought on earth can e'er restore,
With other faded flowers she strews the plain."

[A] The Cactus Grandiflora, or Night-blowing Cereus.

"These lines," continued Emily, "first taught my parents the nature and extent of those feelings which had outlived the blights of early hope. They appear to prove that, however shipwrecked had been his own happiness, Mr. Otway had respected a perfect freedom of choice, and, though Mr. Stanhope differed widely from him, he had tutored his unselfish soul to consider this rival as the successful candidate in an election, the honourable fairness of which he had no right to question. It would seem that, in the depth of his heart, Mrs. Stanhope's pardon had been sealed, and when the death of her husband released her from her first vows, a romantic mixture of affection, which borrowed a reflected glow from the memory of brighter days, and that high and delicate respect of which the most refined and exalted minds alone are capable, spread round the consecrated image a mantle of fond protective kindness, akin perhaps to love, as pity is said to be, but so beautifully tempered, that it would never have passed the sacred boundary of friendship pure as angels might have breathed. The unseen bonds which had silently preserved connection between our friend and a woman whom I can never believe to have been at any time deserving such attachment as he bestowed, was rudely severed by Mrs. Stanhope's late conduct; and, for some time, the impression which such levity as was discovered in her second ill-assorted marriage made upon a mind almost morbidly sensitive, threatened to impair the benevolence of a character formed to shed on all around an atmosphere of happiness; but a strong sense of religion, which is the pole-star of his every action, gained its second victory; and time gave him back, once more unshorn of his beams, to be the life and animation of that little society who enjoy the blessing of his presence. I must hurry you through the remaining part of my *memoir*, not only because we are arriving at Susan's cabin, but also because it is so interwoven with the sorrows of Glenalta, that I fear to trust myself with a theme too fresh in recollection to bear the light; suffice it to say, that Heaven has given us such a friend in Mr. Otway, as no measure of gratitude can ever repay."

Emily paused, and I expressed my warm interest in her narrative, and thankfulness for the eloquent sketch which she had thrown off; but as my evil genius never even *dozes* in the county of Kerry, what should I unfortunately add, but "Phil. indeed is a treasure, and I rejoice for you all in such a tower of strength as his friendship affords to my aunt and her family. Frederick too is, I dare say, his object, and will inherit his possessions."

Emily blushed scarlet; her eyes were instantly suffused with tears, and she seemed ready to choke; but, recovering herself in an instant, with a little effort she said, "Arthur, I *will* not attribute any thing of this sort to motives unworthy of you; I am determined to set down to the mode of your own education whatever may appear like want of feeling. You are mistaken in your surmises; but, while it pleases God to continue to us the happiness which we now enjoy, let us not embitter life by dreadful anticipations."

We reached the hut to which we were bound, and I had no time for reply: I could only remark, in my own mind, on the difficulty of accommodating the ways of the world to the peculiarities of these simple folks; yet, at the same time, no doubt it is a pleasanter sensation to be "*Alcibiade ou le Moi*," rather than cherished for the sake of one's money.—On entering the cabin, alias cottage, we found a boy of about twelve years old nursing a weeping infant, and vainly endeavouring with one hand to scrape together a few expiring embers, while a poor woman, apparently in the extremity of weakness, lay in a corner, upon a miserable bed. "Susan, how do you do?" was

answered faintly by, "very ill, dear miss." "Where is Nancy?" "Gone to the fair to buy a bit of flannel for the child, and her father is gone with her to sell our *slip* of a pig."

"Arthur," said Emily, throwing off shawl and bonnet in an instant, "here is work to be done, and we must not be idle. You have taken Frederick's place this morning, and will kindly, I am sure, perform his duty: fly and bring me a good bundle of dry heath, or any thing else that you can find of which we can make a fire. Paddy, bring me a pitcher of water directly; and you, Tommy, give me your little sister, and settle the turf in a moment." So saying, she took the child, and soon set the poor thing at rest with some milk, which the basket contained, while I, glad to make the *amende honorable* by my alacrity, went off as if quicksilver were in my heels, to rummage up whatever combustible the mountain afforded. I was successful, and got credit for my speed. You never saw any thing like the magic of Emily's operations: as if she had been a peasant born, she broke up the sticks which I had gathered, and, blowing with her breath, for the cabin was unfurnished with bellows, she had a blazing fire in five minutes. Then, with a neatness and dexterity which would have done honor to a Welch inn, she washed an old sauce-pan, and put some meal into it to make gruel; hushed the baby to sleep, and, after laying it by the poor mother, and giving the latter a little weak wine and water, she desired Paddy to remain and stir the gruel till her return; then, taking my arm, hurried down the hill, and crossing a field which we had not come through before, tripped lightly up to a half-ruined gate, which was fastened by a twig to an old post, and disengaging this rustic band, lifted the frame, and we were in the adjoining space before I perceived that my fair cousin, to avoid interrupting our conversation, had performed the office of pioneer, which, according to all the laws of chivalry, should have fallen to my portion. I was going to apologize, when Emily pointed to a path, and turning into another herself, bid me fly, or I should be late at Lisfarne. We shook hands, and separated; and as I walked on alone, I could not help moralizing on the novelties which daily present themselves to my view. Lighting a fire, boiling gruel, sweeping up a cabin-hearth, and singing lullaby to a squalid infant in a dirty dress; and all this done and executed as if custom had rendered the whole business perfectly familiar, by a young lady of family and education; a scholar too, well read in Greek, Latin, Italian, French,—skilled in botany, chemistry, and I know not how much more; in short, a *Blue* to all intents and purposes. It is certainly neither more nor less than an anomaly which as yet I am unable to account for.

The Douglas girls are totally divested of affectation. Whatever they say or do, is said and done without the slightest reference to *effect* farther than this, that the best tact seems to regulate every word and action. The desire to impart pleasure makes them sure to please, and the dread of giving pain must, I think, render it impossible that they should wound one's feelings. Beyond this limit my cousins know no art. I fancy that I see a half-suppressed smile curling on your lip, as you exclaim, *mentally* at least, "What a revolution! Why here is Howard talking sense like a doctor of the *Sorbonne*!"

I confess to some very sober thoughts as I jogged on to Lisfarne; but as I was alone, I had nothing else to do except to muse and moralize; however, no triumph. I enter a caveat against any manner of rejoicing. I have not read my recantation, having a just dread of hasty judgments, and also of old Oliphant: he is the Mordecai sitting in my gate, and another week at Glenalta may bring out a very different story.

In four-and-twenty hours Kill-joy will have arrived, and then comes Sunday, as if at one blow to crush one's spirits to annihilation.

These were my lucubrations *en chemin faisant*, and just as I reached the hall-door at Lisfarne, the nine-o'clock bell ushered me in with *eclat*, though as little *hinging* upon my *entrée*, as the thunder and lightning which happened to synchronise with the poor Jew's carousal over a pork steak at Genoa. I was met at the threshold by Mr. Otway, who smiled a delightful welcome, and, taking me by both hands, accosted me with, "My dear Howard, I am heartily glad to see you at Lisfarne, and not the less so, because you are *punctual*. You should have had your breakfast at *any* hour; but I love to see young people recollective." I did not think it exactly *honest* to appropriate this compliment of the old school to myself, as I certainly never deserved it in all my life, and therefore expressed my happiness at not having kept him waiting; but *handed* over to Emily the whole merit of Cindarillaship in this my first visit at Lisfarne.

"Emily is a charming creature," answered mine host, "but that is nothing wonderful at Glenalta, where such a mother presides. Howard, you have the good fortune to reckon amongst your nearest relations, a little group whose virtues would save the universe from destruction, were the divine vengeance to over-take a guilty world, as in days of yore.—How do you like your aunt and cousin?" "Extremely, were I to judge by what I have seen; but we are new to each other, and they are very kind in excusing all the blunders which a man wholly unused to retirement is liable to make in a circle where a much higher standard of moral feeling prevails than that which governs what we call 'the world.'"

Mr. Otway looked benignly at me, saying, "Come, we must not get into a discussion now; you deserve your breakfast, and shall not be interrupted." And a capital breakfast we had.

A beautiful Newfoundland dog lay at his master's feet; a fine tortoise-shell cat purred upon the back of his arm-chair; and the windows were presently assailed by an army of supplicants in the shape of the finest pea-fowls that I ever saw.

"See what it is, Arthur, to be an old batchelor! I am obliged to keep my affections from becoming stagnant, you find, by practising them upon all these birds and beasts which you perceive are my companions as well as pensioners." After feeding the numerous host, we sallied from the breakfast-parlour, and Phil. escorted me to his study, a most comfortable apartment, and well

lined with books. He has a beautiful collection of the classics, all the best modern works of science, and a rich assortment of history and *Belles Lettres*. While I was glancing over this, he pointed to a compartment in the far end of the room, desiring me to examine its contents. "There I keep my novels, reviews, and magazines; for you know, that 'all work and no play would make Jack a dull boy;' and as I suppose that you do not intend to read yourself into a consumption while you stay at Glenalta, I give you a letter of credit on whatever amusement these shelves can supply." In this Poets' Corner I found Scott's works, both in prose and verse; several other modern novels of good name; and all the early poems of Lord Byron. "I perceive," said I, "Mr. Otway, that you have not yet completed your set of Byron's works; you have not got Don Juan, nor —" "Nor never shall, my young friend," answered the sage of Lisfarne. "I cannot prevent people who have money to buy and inclination to peruse, from reading these works; but they shall not find them in *my* library." "Then, sir, you are, I presume, of opinion that one cannot separate the poison from the poetry, and avoid imbibing the one, while we enjoy the exquisite beauty of the other."

"No, my dear boy; these are idle notions. Wherever vice is an ingredient in any compound so mingled as to seize upon the passions, or delight the imagination, the draught will always be injurious more or less. Even those minds of finer mould than we commonly meet with, will not escape, though they hate the contact, they cannot shun its defilement; and that which is impure, must sully whatever it touches." "Well, I should have supposed that good taste would protect a man of refined education. In fact, such a man rejects whatever is coarse, and simply vicious: he reads Lord Byron, not *because* of his occasional deviations from religion and morality; but in *spite* of them he admires the splendid genius who of all modern writers best understands, if I may so express myself, the metaphysics of the human heart, while every man of feeling must lament the shipwreck of such talents. The broad-cast pollution which is necessary to season a mess for vulgar palates, *must* be pernicious in the highest degree; but I confess I have never felt in the same way of those *polished* compositions which are only read by people of superior attainment, and who are fortified against evil by knowledge of the world."

"Alas, Howard, these are nice distinctions, and lead but to delusion. Our morals are much like a taper lit at each extremity, they are consuming at both ends. You talk of coarse messes, seasoned to the taste of vulgar appetite: believe me, it is a melancholy fact, that there are cooks who undertake to cater for nicer stomachs, and who know how to insinuate their poisons with such skill as to secure the custom of all who are not proof against their temptation. That number, I fear, is small; and as to the difference between vice well and ill dressed, you will find that it is about the same with that which distinguishes Tilburina stark mad in white satin, from her confidante stark mad in white linen. Amongst the mal-contents of the present day, you hear the complaint continually repeated, that there is one law for the rich, and another for the poor: the charge is unfounded, and, generally speaking, *known* to be so by the men who bring it forward. It will neither do to have two sets of laws, nor of *morals*, in any country. The tendency of all ranks in the community is to imitate those who are placed above them; and this aspiring inclination is to be traced from the lowest grade in society, till having reached the throne, you can rise no higher. The self-same rule applies to religion. I was glad to hear you say yesterday at Glenalta that you felt the absolute necessity of its influence in a state for the preservation of order and virtue; and that you considered women as the natural guardians of its altars. This is all right; but you are egregiously mistaken if you suppose that women will, generally speaking, take pains to nurture and cherish what is despised by the other sex. There are a few, and very few, such beings as your aunt, who appear to have dropped into our planet from some happier sphere, and who adjust their principles of action to a model of abstract perfection, with which common-place mortals are unacquainted. Such beings only think of how to please God; but the mass of men and women dress themselves daily in the mirror of each other's approbation, and act reciprocally on each others' characters. Let one sex degenerate, it matters not which, you will find the other follow in the downward course."

"But, my dear sir, these authors whom you decry, do not *create* vice, they only *exhibit* it; and though I do not advocate the practice, yet after all it would seem that men need not be much worse for *reading*, than for hearing and seeing what is exceptionable. If infidelity and immorality were only propagated by books, your argument against such writers as Lord Byron would be unanswerable. But allow me to say, that the Bible itself, in the strongest terms, insists on the depravity of the human species, and offers the most flagrant illustrations in proof of human delinquency. The hardness of heart, and unbelief of man, are frequently held up to view in Holy Writ; and what does a Rochefaucauld in prose, or a Byron in verse, do more than represent things as they *are*?"

"If you consider the matter for a moment," replied my opponent, "I fancy that you will be at no loss to discover some striking differences which will sufficiently answer your question. The evil tendency of such writers as Rochefaucauld, and all the class of satirists, who represent man as a debased and hypocritical animal, does not proceed from the truth of the picture, but from the manner of the painter. The scriptures indulge us in no 'lying vanities;' they speak of the human race as born in sin and the children of wrath; and Conscience, when we attend to her voice, confirms the humiliating charge, with uncompromising fidelity. But while the Bible, and those who preach its doctrines, point out the disease, they likewise present the antidote. If they proclaim the deformity of the natural man, it is to shew how the crooked may be made straight; if they expose his weakness, it is to impart strength; if they display his corruption, it is but to invite him to wash in those waters which cleanse from all impurity. But such moralists as you support, if moralists they can be called without absurdity, would seem intent on excusing vice. The effect of their books is, as it were to *legalize* iniquity, by representing it as invincible, and to destroy all

sense of shame by laying bare its concealments. Whatever produces this result by means of a pungent and sententious brevity, is doubly injurious; for the authority of a maxim is thus combined with the stimulus of evil: the form is thus rendered portable and adhesive; and truths conveyed in an epigrammatic shape at once flattering to our sagacity in an appeal to its acuteness, and soothing to our faults by pronouncing them to be universal, are not likely to be viewed as subjects for serious lamentation; and the danger is, that the generality of men will contemplate the moral sketches with feelings similar to those commonly inspired by a spirited caricature; namely, a desire that the object of ridicule may continue to exist, rather than not be so strikingly portrayed. As to Lord Byron, who stands pre-eminent, like Milton's Satan, at the head of all the mischief-workers of the present time, his poison is of another kind: slow and penetrating, it is inhaled in the breeze, and absorbed into the circulation; its effects are of the morbid class; it seduces, it insinuates, and, like opium too freely used, destroys every healthful function of the mind, and substitutes the distempered energy of an over-wrought imagination for the wholesome exercise of reason and the sweet charities of the heart. His beautiful poetry, and an inexhaustible source of talents, rare as they were brilliant, operate as cords which draw all mankind after him in bonds of submission. Descriptions of nature or character, external to ourselves, however happy in their delineation, interest but feebly in comparison with what you justly call the '*metaphysics*' of sentiment. This is the most fascinating of all possible studies; it requires no labour, it asks no preparation; and all people, whatever their pretensions in other respects, conceive themselves qualified for the school of mental analysis which Byron has instituted and endowed. A bad husband, a bad son, a bad father, has but to retire to some 'rose-leaf couch, where, nursing his dainty loves and slothful sympathies,' he may find, in a volume of this too-attractive bard, an apology for every sin of temper, every violation of duty; nay, so contagious is the influence of this Byron-mania, that our young men *cultivate* the failings of their chief, and seem to fancy that in becoming imitators of Childe Harold's eccentricities, they may slide into his unrivalled genius. Selfishness and egotism are to be found in the fallows of many a mind; but where are our youth to learn Lord Byron's recipe for compounding them?"

Though not convinced, I was excited, and ventured again into the field, by asking Mr. Otway whether good does not grow out of evil? "Surely," said I, "Truth, like a lazy corporation, would rely upon its charter, and have nothing to do but fatten on its revenues, were it not for opposition.

'Si Lyra non lyrasset,
Lutherus non Saltasset.'

"The publication of wrong principles stirs up our slumbering virtue; and besides, is it not useful to see exactly what we should avoid, that we may have no doubts regarding what we ought to follow? If I had not been the advocate of Lord Byron as a poet, I should not have had the pleasure of hearing your excellent remarks." "No, no, young man; a specious sophistry is not sound argument. I cannot allow you to misapply a scripture rule. Though Providence has decreed that all things should work together for good, it offers us no latitude to do evil that good may come of it. *Our* duty is defined; we must perform our part as well as we can, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world, leaving events in which we have no power given us of interference to the wisdom of Him whose ways are not as our ways. We learn much better from positive than from negative precepts: do you remember the pretty little French song—

'Jongeant à ce qu'il faut qu'on oublie,
On s'en souvient.'

"The mind of man is easily corrupted, and clings with tenacity to what it were better to forget. Believe me, that whatever we desire to keep a stranger from the heart should not be familiarized to the imagination. Vice is so alluring, that all the penalties appended to its indulgence by the laws of God and man, are found unequal to its suppression; but if the charms of wit and humour be employed to palliate its criminality, and trifle with its punishment, we may anticipate the conclusion, and expect to see the day when its progress will be unresisted. Do not fancy that there is any class of men exempt from the danger of infection. The stately quarto, like a whited sepulchre, may hide its contents under a splendid covering, but death and destruction are its inmates: rank and wealth confer no privilege, and afford no amulet to preserve from the contamination of immorality, alike fatal in its effects to high and low—rich and poor; but though I would guard you from giving yourself up to such a pilot through Parnassus as Lord Byron, I love poetry too well myself to withhold its enjoyment from my young friends. I am an old bachelor, but I hope that you will not find me a severe ascetic; all things in their season—buds in spring, blossoms in summer, and the fruit to crown our autumn board. Youth is the natural period in which Hope and Fancy delight to weave their golden tissues, and life is too changeful a scene to make it necessary that we should voluntarily abridge its harmless gratifications. We must not, however, sit here all day, while such a brilliant sun is inviting us to walk; I have a great deal to shew you, and we shall have many opportunities, I hope, for conversation."

We were soon in the fields. After seeing a great deal of well-kept and tastefully disposed pleasure-ground immediately contiguous to the house, excellent kitchen garden, and admirable farm-yard, stables, &c. we visited an inclosure, called here the *paddock*, where were at least a dozen old horses, which were turned to graze as superannuated pensioners. "When any of these my old and faithful servants," said Phil., "can enjoy life no longer, I have him despatched by a friendly bullet." "But, sir, you might get money for these; they do not seem by any means past their labour." "Not *quite*, perhaps, but they have worked diligently, and shall now have a holyday while they live." From the paddock we proceeded to a line of neat cottages, furnished each with a strip of garden at the back, and ornamented in front by a little rustic paling, thickened into a

fence impervious to pigs and dogs, by privet, sweet brier, and roses. "Here are some of your tenants' houses, Mr. Otway, I suppose." "Why not exactly tenants in the *usual* sense: these are poor people, who, like my old horses, have seen their best days in my service, and it is fair that *they* too should rest from their labours."

Showers of blessings were shed from these humble dwellings as we passed along, which were repaid by kind greetings from their benefactor. With one poor soul who sat in an arm-chair made of straw at her door, and who was blind, the good Phil. shook hands, and said aloud, "Mr. Howard, this is Kate Sullivan, the Queen of *Pastime Row*, which is the name given by your cousin Fanny to this line of houses." Old Kate appeared to feel as much delighted by this distinguishing compliment, as an autocrat of the proudest empire could be in seeing all the nations of the earth paying homage to his supremacy.

"God bless Miss Fanny, and all the misses of the Glynn," cried old *Cathleen*; "they are the Lord's own children; and glory, honour, and praise be to his holy name; he will make a wide gap for 'em whenever they are going into heaven; and *Maaster* Arthur, my heart (for 'tis I that very well has a right to know that you're he, and nobody else), if his honour would'nt be after telling you the *maining* of Miss Fanny's *concait*, why, sir, 'tis, that she's a pleasant, funny craiture in herself, and she have a *double aim* in *wording* the houses; for *pastime* they say is all as one as games, and sport-like; and it *mains* too, that (God be praised for all things) *we* are going down the hill, as I may say, and past our time for being any good-for."

I charmed this old soul as much by laughing heartily, and entering with spirit into Fanny's humour, as if I had presented her with fifty pounds. She called an aged man from the next door to hobble out and join in the merriment, which I dare say ran before it stopped, like an electric stream through every conductor of the whole series. As we walked on, "I perceive," said I, "that her majesty of *pastime*, is a Protestant, by her assurance that my cousins are all travelling the high road to heaven." "You are mistaken my dear fellow,—Kate has an *ave* for every bead in her *paddreen*, which is the Hibernian version of Corona, or Coronach; and blind as she is, is conveyed by one of my paddock horses annually on the eve of St. John, to a holy well, not far distant from Lisfarne. This little journey is all the work that the queen and her cattle are able to accomplish; and the same beast, that 'roan barbary' which came up to welcome us at the gate, has drawn Kate and her truckle for so many years, that were True-penny to die, I believe that blind as is his mistress, she would find out that she had lost him, and be uneasy till the priest was sent for, to *shrive* and anoint her, in the full persuasion that *her* hour was also come."

"Well, you really do surprise me, but to confess the truth, you deal in nothing but miracles in this county of Kerry. In less than a week I have seen some strange things, which had any one presumed, ere I beheld them, to say were existing realities, I should have laughed as the king of Pegu is said to have done when he heard of nations being governed without a monarch. I have seen *Blue-stockings* without pedantry, refinement that has never been learned in the world of fashion, religion free from cant, retirement unaccompanied by *ennui*; and now, as my list goes on increasing like the story of the house that Jack built, here is the Roman Catholic creed divested of bigotry; in the shape of an old woman too, who fully expects, though a Papist herself, to meet a Protestant family in the skies."

"Aye, my boy, and I hope that you will soon cease to wonder at any of these things. The poor people of this island are brim-full of intelligence and feeling; qualities which are of *adjective* character, and increase the measure of good or bad exactly as they happen to be associated. Were our peasantry fairly dealt with, the tables would speedily be turned, and instead of that cold-hearted sarcasm which would seem to be 'the badge and sufferance of all their kind,' you would see their accusers glad to steal away, and hide their diminished heads."

"But, sir, this is peculiarly the age of reason, and you will soon be able to bring your assertion to the proof. All the world is mad now upon the subject of education, and I suppose the light of modern liberality, which scorns the narrow principle of a churlish exclusion, has with the eagle eye of truth, borne down and pierced the shades of prejudice that may have hung upon your sea-girt Isle. Have you not schools at Lisfarne, and Glenalta? and if you will let me ask one question allied to the last, *may* I venture to enquire why you, whom I should imagine of all men, the last to countenance ignorance and superstition, should abet them both by sending old Kate upon her pilgrimage of folly, instead of endeavouring to open her mind to the sun of knowledge?" Otway smiled, and taking me by the hand, jocosely said, "why, Arthur, thou art fit for a senator; we must have you in the House of Commons; you are an orator:" then, resuming his usual expression of features, "you will despise me perhaps," added he, "if I tell you that I am not bitten with the fashionable school mania to the extent which you deem requisite to constitute a *liberal*. I have two schools,—one of them, and by far the most numerously attended, is for works of industry exclusively. To the other I only admit such children as by a previous discipline in moral conduct, and regularity of demeanor, earn the reward of being taught to read. To this promotion there are two conditions annexed, which form a *sine qua non* of admission. The first is, that the scriptures without note or comment, should be read daily, the master selecting, according to my instruction, such parts as are best adapted to the age and capacity of his pupils; the second, that each child should bring a penny per week, to create a fund for winter clothing, books, or whatever occasion may require. In this way I endeavour to prevent the abuse of letters, by preparing the soil for their introduction. Respect for learning is increased, when it costs something to obtain it; and I find a test of sincerity is established to a certain degree by this small pecuniary condition, as people never pay for what they do not really desire to possess. Though the money thus collected returns whence it came, it goes back in another form. Like the dew, it rises in imperceptible vapour, and falls in palpable, and refreshing showers. It requires a slight degree of self-denial,

even to allot a penny per week in this manner; and there is a feeling of independence connected with every benefit which exercises individual frugality in its acquisition, while gratitude is still kept alive towards the fostering hands which deal out the fund so husbanded for general good. Then again, by not offering gratuitous teaching, I prevent many from coming, who would not turn their learning to good account, while I may always provide for an exception to my rule in supplying a worthy object who is too poor to *qualify*, with means of contributing the appointed mite."

"Then, sir, I conclude that you think education may be spread too widely."

"Certainly; in *this* country we cannot interfere with the religion of the *Mass*. If I could plant a Bible in every cottage, I would teach all men, women, and children to read it; but the accomplishment of reading considered, without reference to religious instruction, is about as necessary and suitable to a poor labouring man, as a gold snuff box would be; and it is to me quite astonishing, that so many sober minds should give into the opposite absurdity which prevails at present, with a *rage* equal to that in the medical world for white mustard seed. We never think of silk gowns or fine cloth for the poor; we do not dream of serving up venison and turtle for them at a charity dinner; and, when sick, we do not order them the South of France, or prescribe hock, ice, and all the expensive delicacies become necessary to the luxury of our opulent higher classes. All things should *be in keeping*. A man who works for a shilling a day, eats his potatoes, and lies down to be refreshed by sleep for the morrow's labour, has no need of literature. It will neither make him happier nor better, unless you could secure the *use* of his acquirement in increased knowledge of the word of God. Our Irish Priests will not permit this. I do not mean to be hard upon them; they are a needy class, usually taken from the lowest conditions of life, and depending for subsistence on the measure of their influence with the people. To keep the minds of their flocks in absolute subjugation to their authority, is essential to their very existence; and they are fearfully aware, that free access to the Bible would quickly destroy their power, by undermining its foundation."

"At least," said I, "though the men cannot leave their spades, why not teach the women? *They* could instruct the children, and the next generation would reap the profit."

"Pooh, my dear Arthur, you are a young theorist, and float with the fashionable tide. Whatever be the situation of one sex must be shared by the other. A pair of diamond earrings would be about as appropriate an appendage to the head of poor Susan, whom you visited this morning, as the History of England, or a Treatise on Political Economy would be in her hands. The thing is not wanted—it is out of place. The sordid cares of life leave little time for bodily rest or mental repose; and unless, as I said before, you can be sure of planting the one thing needful, every moment which could be stolen from household toil, and devoted to books, would be employed on the trash which is placed through the licentious *liberality* of the press, within the grasp of all who desire to quaff at the feculent stream. Music is a pleasing resource, drawing is another, but you do not conceive these to be requisite for the well-being of our cottagers. How are reading, writing, arithmetic, and geometry, more allied to the happiness of an agricultural labourer than the former? Remember *always* that my argument only applies when the Bible is excluded or made subservient to the base purposes of secular advancement by hypocrites, who employ it as a stepping-stone to the favour of their superiors. Physicians do not read law, lawyers do not read physic, nor either of them military tactics—and why? Because they do not want a species of knowledge out of their department. The same rule may be generally applied. A poor cottager has nothing to do with letters, unless he be made better and happier by acquaintance with them; and should his attention be directed to the tirades of Messrs. Shiel and O'Connell, to the demoralizing details of practical vice with which our newspapers unfortunately abound; to the ethics of Mr. Cobbett or the religion of Mr. Carlile, instead of to the Sacred Volume, I think that you must agree with me in doubting the growth of virtue and contentment as the result of such studies."

I felt shaken, I must own, but replied, "The tide of public opinion is so forcible, that we are often drawn along with it before we are aware how far it will lead us. I confess that I have joined a hue and cry in favour of universal education, without thinking much about the matter. Experience, undoubtedly, must confirm or contradict the utility of its unlimited extension, and I shall be happy to hear your farther sentiments upon the subject, if you are not tired of my questions."

"Indeed, my dear Howard, you shall ever find me ready and willing to discuss this and every other topic upon which I am capable of offering an opinion; but we must not pass the day of your first visit to Lisfarne, *at school*. We must have a little recreation this morning, or I should despair of your coming again to see old C[oe]lebs in his cell. I want to take you a walk along the sea shore, and, as the day is fine, I am going, with your permission, to send one of my young *footpads* over to Glenalta, to say that you will dine here; and should Oliphant arrive, as I think he probably will by this evening's coach, you will not regret being absent at the meeting, as you are a stranger to the good man."

The name of Oliphant caused a sudden revulsion, and produced a complete *bouleversement* in all my pleasurable sensations. A stripling mountaineer was despatched, who flew like an arrow across the fields with Mr. Otway's message, and behold us arm in arm skirting the wood, and, ere long, approaching a bold headland which stood beautifully out into the bay. As we jogged on together, I felt growing more and more at ease with mine host, and at last ventured to give a vent to my *Oliphantphobia*, by saying, "How I dread this tiresome piece of parchment divinity that we are expecting! Adieu now to the cheerfulness of Glenalta. This old bookworm is, I suppose, my aunt's domestic sense-carrier, and will disapprove of every thing but black letter lore in the mornings, and snuffing canticles for our evening diversion."

"I think," said Phil. "that having found yourself deceived in so many preconceptions respecting Glenalta, you ought not to condemn poor Domine without benefit of clergy. Suspend your judgment. If you do not like him, you will differ widely from your family, but let him have fair play; I will not bespeak your favour, nor stand sponsor to your taste."

We walked on, stopped now and then to look at the views, and, at length turning into a zig-zag path, arrived by a short circuit at a little spot of exquisite beauty. It was an arch-way rather than cavern in the rock, extending inwards no farther than to form a bower of stone, if you will admit such a description. Lined with ivy, which actually grows like a tissue fitted to the irregular surface, and almost buried in arbutus, it seemed as if the very Genius of Contemplation had selected this natural alcove for her favourite haunt. I stood wonder-struck by the scene, innumerable sea-birds wheeling round us, and uttering their plaintive wailings to the wind. Rocks, ocean, solitude wherever the eye could reach, while the sun-beams dancing on the calm surface of the "green one," seemed to say, "you shall not indulge melancholy here."

Mr. Otway appeared much pleased with my silent rapture, and, after a little pause, took me to a seat covered with the same luxuriant drapery which hung upon the rocky walls, and which, without any apparent assistance from art, formed a bench entirely round the cave.

When we were seated, Mr. Otway, with a sigh which seemed to break from his heart, told me that this rude temple, hewn by nature from the wild mass of stone under the shelter of which we were now conversing, was sacred to my uncle.

"Here have I sat for hours with Henry Douglas, the friend, the companion of my youth; and listened with unwearied delight to the flow of mind which poured its exhaustless treasure from his lips; sometimes expanding its stream to the amplitude of ocean, then narrowing its pellucid waves within confines of unrivalled fertility; and again, (if you will allow me to pursue the image,) still farther contracting its limits to disport occasionally amid the enchantments of rock and bower, scattering its spray in bright fantastic sparkles all around. You are to consider an introduction to this hallowed spot, which I have consecrated to his memory, as a distinguishing mark of the regard with which I wish to treat his nephew, and an earnest of that friendship, which if you desire to cultivate, I shall be happy to bestow on one so nearly allied to the man who, of all others, I most loved upon earth." There was a solemn tenderness in his manner which thrilled me; and I thanked him heartily, expressing as well as I could, how gratefully I felt inclined to profit by his kindness, adding, "I do not believe that I ever saw my uncle Henry: if I did, it must have been in early childhood, for I have no remembrance of him, but have often heard of him as a person rarely gifted."—"Yes,—had you ever seen him, he could never have been forgotten! there was an illumination in his very countenance which irresistibly seized upon the attention. The play of intelligence upon his features was like the summer lightning, 'as bright and harmless too;' and, in him were combined 'the wisdom of the serpent, with the innocence of the dove.' My dear departed Douglas possessed the most brilliant talents. Imagine these rising majestically from a solid plinth of boldest structure in religion and morals, while Fancy in her most tasteful mood had wreathed the light acanthus round his brow, and you may form some idea of the man who, in our youthful days, was always called the 'Corinthian pillar' of that little band in whose society he passed his hours of recreation. He was at once the most profound reasoner, the acutest critic, the soundest arbiter, and the kindest friend. The peculiar sensitiveness of his character never impaired its strength; and a remarkable accuracy of observation with which heaven had endowed him, acting in concert with an uncompromising integrity, imparted the influence of truth itself, to the decisions of his judgment. He saw whatever subject was presented to his understanding, in all its different bearings, with quickness bordering on intuition; and was enabled by the variety of his knowledge, to enter into the minutest details, without diminishing the force of outline in any question that offered itself for discussion. As might be easily supposed, this assemblage of qualities, at once the most solid and attractive that I ever knew, was little comprehended by the generality of mankind. That noble independence which disdains the tricking arts of popularity, and *dares* to walk alone, was miscalled pride. The elegant retirement of a mind replete with resources, and too refined to consider as society what was not congenial companionship, was, with equal departure from just discrimination, styled misanthropy, while sensibility, which with magic touch can raise aërial hosts of imagery; and straying over the sacred expanse of time gone by, and yet to come, sighs to the memory of the past, or o'er the uncertainty of the future: this was *selfishness*, according to vulgar interpretation. But vice and folly are compelled to pay the reluctant homage of an involuntary respect at the shrine of virtue, and collective excellence is always sure to receive its tribute, however incapable the mass of mankind may prove to appreciate the individual beauties of a character which they do not understand. *Such* tribute was paid in large proportion to my friend; and while kindred merit sought his acquaintance with enthusiasm, the *little world* were forced to gaze at him with reverence, and look up with veneration. He is gone! and I never visit this spot, associated peculiarly with his image, unaccompanied by the recollection of that epitaph at the Leasowes, the only beautiful testimony of surviving affection which I remember to have seen, and which seems as if written for Douglas, and for him alone.

Heu quanto minus est
Cum reliquis versari,
Quàm tui meminisse!"

Mr. Otway paused, and I felt deeply affected by the impressive manner in which these eloquent lines were repeated. After a short silence, I told him how greatly I felt indebted for the animated sketch which he had just given me of a relation whom I had never till then heard so particularly described. "At Glenalta," said I, "there is no allusion ever made to my uncle, and I think, that I

have already discovered, even at this distance of time from his death, that even the name of Henry cannot be pronounced without causing an inward convulsion of feeling in my aunt. At first I thought it impossible, but on reading a paragraph to her in the newspaper yesterday, I perceived a recurrence of such an expression in her countenance, as determined me to avoid producing it again, at least by a repetition of the same sound which gave rise to her present agitation."

"This, my young friend," answered the admirable Otway, "is true to nature. In those horrible and overwhelming moments of recent dismemberment, when the grave has just closed upon all that lived in our fondest affections,—when the affrighted spirit glances round upon the desert wilderness, and the tremendous solitude is only interrupted by images of despair,—then, *names* arrest not the attention. The throbbing heart is wrapped in present anguish, and the dull ear is dead to sounds; even the shade of the beloved might float upon the mourner's vision, and not surprise; but when the first agony of bereavement has settled into the waking consciousness of our loss, when the astonishment of death has subsided, when the phantoms of an amazed and distempered imagination no longer haunt the brain and people our dreams, then it is that the lonely heart sits in silent abandonment, and even 'the willow that waves in the wind,' terrifies like a ghost of other times; associations rise, names startle, and in proportion as distance from the event diminishes the natural *right* to sympathy which great misfortunes claim in the first moments of their visitation, the delicate mind shrinks within itself fearful of repulse, and would hide its feelings even from the eye of day, lest it might seem to solicit a participation in those thoughts, which are too sacred to be shared. Caroline Douglas is not to be judged of by commonplace criteria. When she and the partner of her affections took up their abode at Glenalta, they presented a picture of human felicity of which while 'memory holds her seat,' I shall never lose the most lively impression. Young, and united by the most perfect attachment, grounded upon an intimate and mutual acquaintance with disposition, character, sentiments, and opinions, the highest eulogium which it was possible to pass on either, might be comprised in one short sentence; they were formed for each other. Never did I behold two people knit together in bonds of love so tender, and friendship so rational. Every thought appeared to be held in common; and when they were conversing, it seemed as if the lips of one only gave utterance to that which in the same instant had started into life within the breast of the other. So perfect was the harmony of their souls, that every idea which arose in either mind, was caught by the other at a glance, improved and beautified ere it was reflected back again. In short, it was impossible that any one whose lot was not already cast, should enjoy the privilege of their intimacy, without becoming enamoured of a state capable of producing such celestial happiness as they were permitted to taste; while in proportion as the mind was disposed to offer a tribute of *abstract* homage at the altar of hymen, the dread of risking individual experiment would as naturally arise, lest mistaking an exception for the rule, disappointment should ensue as the fruit of imitation. But there are very few who marry upon the principles which governed their union; and to expect similar results from discordant motives, is to look for grapes on thorns, and figs on thistles. My friends were mutually attracted by esteem, as well as affection. They did not join their destinies upon the ground of external vanity, or the sordid views of worldly aggrandisement. Theirs was not a marriage of two estates; they knew what to desire: they were aware of what they wanted, and were contented with what they possessed. How often have I heard them talk of riches and poverty, in this place where you and I are now sitting! how often heard them agree that a larger share of fortune's favour might render them less dependent perhaps, upon each other for happiness, and consequently, diminish the sum of it; thus would they render privation a subject for gratitude, through the love that they bore to each other."

"What a picture of earthly bliss," said I, "have you drawn, and what a separation was that of two beings so united!"

"Aye, it was indeed a picture worth going any distance to gaze upon! It was a lesson never to be forgotten. Minds like those which I have been attempting to describe, possess the art of harmonizing every thing with which they come in contact in unison with themselves. True refinement inheres *within*, and no more derives its character from outward trappings, than heaven's gift of symmetry owes its fair proportions to the fringes with which fashion encumbers its beauty. In a cottage where luxury never visited, inborn elegance fixed her abode. A favorite author of mine says, that if death were considered stripped of the dreadful paraphernalia which generally attends its mournful presence, half its horrors would be annihilated. Of poverty, we may say the same. Vulgar people bring the machinery of life in all its ugliness and indelicacy before you. It is not whether your tables are of mahogany or deal; your dishes of china or delft which distinguishes *refinement* from its opposite. It is the soul that presides at the banquet. All this was so instinctively understood, by these pattern specimens of human nature, that dignity and ease, polish and simplicity, were the never-failing companions of their humble home. It is a theme which makes me forgetful of time. We will now bend our steps towards Lisfarne."

As we rose, he continued:—

"Over the misery which succeeded, I must, like Timanthes of old, draw a veil, for it was too painful to contemplate, even in painting. Douglas was snatched in the prime of life from the beloved of his bosom, from whom to part was the only anguish which religion had not yet taught him to endure with heavenly resignation. Even this bitter draught he learned at length to drink with Christian fortitude. No language could describe the scene of sorrow that I witnessed afterwards; but years have rolled away; the dear survivor lives to be a blessing still; and while with cheerfulness she can now mingle in the innocent gaieties of her children, her heart is set on heaven where she hopes for re-union with the only loved of earth."

Here ended a recital which I felt deeply interesting, partly perhaps because the actors in this sad tale were my nearest relations, and partly too on account of the noble characters which it portrayed. Falkland, I am growing serious in this place, and shall lose my spirits if I stay much longer here.

As we turned from the *sacred* promontory, Mr. Otway playfully shook my elbow, and, by a sudden change in the modulation of his voice, made me feel that we were not to dwell any longer on the topic which had occupied the preceeding hour. At his request I gave him a history of my *life and adventures*. We talked of you, and I so completely *fired* him by my subject, that he has taken your address, and means immediately to write to young Stanhope who, with his tutor, (a nephew, by the bye of Oliphant's) is to be at Pisa about the time of your arrival there, to make your acquaintance with all suitable activity. Mr. Otway gives a good character of his ward, so that probably you may find him worth knowing; but if not for his own sake, you will I am assured *fly to the meeting* for the sake of your romance; and consider the youth as a link in that mysterious *concatenation*, by which your fate *or* your fancy is bound to Glenalta.

Before we re-entered the house, Mr. Otway desired me to follow him down a winding-path, at the end of which I found myself within a nice little enclosure, sheltered by a hawthorn hedge which was bursting into a sheet of fragrant blossoms. "This is my botanic garden," said my companion, "and I must not forget to send Fanny some plants which I promised her. Here, Howard, help me to take these to the gardener, and he shall send them over to my little pupil."

"I will take them myself in the evening," said I, "and shall have the benefit of appearing very learned, if you will tell me their names. Emily has extracted a promise from me in our walk from the mountain this morning, to put myself under her tuition while I remain in these flowery regions, so the sooner I begin my task the better."

"You are very right," replied 'mine host;' "knowledge is never a burthen; and when the news of London is once told, and the stimulus of novelty wears off, we shall then feel the full value of such pursuits as at once sustain social communion, exercise common curiosity, and employ the powers of the understanding."

"You told me this morning, Mr. Otway, that you think the mania for education is outrunning its natural progress; and that it is the fashion at present to overleap the barrier of prudence in a premature and forced extension of learning. May I not urge your zeal in favour of female cultivation as somewhat inconsistent with this theory? Setting all jocularly aside, and banishing *nicknames*, as you call them, from our inquiry, will you tell me if utility be the measure by which you ascertain and determine the question of what possible use is education, beyond the polite limits of fashionable acquirement amongst the higher orders, and the necessary qualifications for a housewife in the lower classes? Can women keep schools for our youth? Can women occupy professors' chairs? Are women called upon to write works of science? In short, do women ever *want* all this lore? and if not, might not their time be more valuably employed in cultivating the delightful arts of pleasing? I confess to you," added I, "that I have a little scheme of trying to save Fanny, who is as yet a child, and a very engaging one too, from going through the ordeal which her sisters have passed. They are sweet girls, and certainly have contributed to soften my prejudices exceedingly against learned ladies. Still, however, it is a pity not to spare Fanny the trouble as well as the hazard of becoming one. *You* are so looked up to at Glenalta, that if you are on the opposition benches I may despair of a majority, so pray answer me seriously."

"I will, indeed," answered Phil, "though I cannot help laughing at your pity and intended kindness, for which, however the *motive* may secure your pardon, my little Fan would certainly not thank you as gratefully as you expect. To answer your question will in no wise perplex me. Utility is a test by which I am very well satisfied to abide; and, if we try the matter at present in debate by that rule, I think I shall be able to convince you, that unless in *our* sex education is to lower its tone, or be neglected, there can be no doubt of the advantage which would be gained by the solid instruction of the female world. You grant that it is to women we ought to look for all that is most valuable in first impressions. Boys rarely quit their homes before ten years of age, and girls, not generally speaking, till they marry. It seems then to require no argument to prove, that upon a mother's being fond of her home, and satisfied with the pleasures of her domestic fire-side, must depend an *inclination* to give up society abroad for the good of her family; at least you will grant, without difficulty that, though a sense of duty may do much with the truly conscientious, the union of duty and inclination will work double tides—so far we must be agreed. Now the question which remains is, *how* the love of home may be produced, and here I should have no hesitation in saying, by a marriage, in which the greatest portion of sympathy can be found, and, consequently, the greatest number of common pursuits. The amusements of young men at the present day—I mean the majority are such as no female can join in—hunting, shooting, horse-racing, pugilism, rowing matches, are diversions exclusively appertaining to the mass of our male population of the gentry class. Now we will, if you please, suppose two families:—the first shall be composed of a Gentleman, who has been bred at one of the great schools without making a figure in scholarship of any kind, and who, having passed through the University in a manner equally undistinguished, and vapoured at balls, concerts, and parties, lost his money at play, and gone the rounds of fashionable dissipation, marries at length to repair his fortune and improve his interest; and a young Lady who plays on the harp and piano forte, draws a little, dances and dresses according to the last French receipt. This happy pair set up an establishment. If rich, they live in a whirl of company, sometimes at home, but more frequently abroad. When children come, they are committed to the care of servants and the nursery governess, till a time arrives for sending the boys to school, and exchanging the humble services of the infant teacher for the *Ma'amoiselle*, who, more like a dancing dog than a human being,

takes charge of the girls, and becomes the guardian of their religion, morals, and manners! Perhaps you interrupt me, ere my conclusion be drawn, to observe that this representation only applies to what are called the higher circles. Very well—be it so; you shall have the advantage of a second statement upon *your* side before I contrast it with *my* view of the subject. Let us suppose a Gentleman of a thousand a year, or a Professional man, the former may, or may not, have profited more by his school and collegiate course than the man of fashion. The latter is obliged to plod his weary way through law or physic for his daily bread. These Gentlemen marry, and, according to the present modes of female education, are not likely to be much happier than our former Benedick; for a young Lady, now-a-days, whose fortune is no more than a thousand pounds, learns exactly the same things which are taught to the daughters of a Duke; and it depends upon original genius whether her accomplishments be more or less shining than those of her more splendid models. But music and drawing, however well performed, can enter but a little way into the happiness of a fire-side in the country, or that of a Barrister or Physician in town, when compared with the comforts which *might* result from a different order of things. Take a peep now into a *menage*, such as I wish were not too often to be found only in an air-built castle."

"Imagine a well-educated man, who, not stopping at the animal qualifications of eating, drinking, boxing, and fox-hunting, has cultivated his mind, and acquired a taste for literature, will not such a man be likely to enjoy more happiness at home, if he has a companion capable of participating in his most rational gratifications? Will a sensible man admire an amiable woman less, because in addition to whatever personal qualities may have endeared her to his affections, she is possessed of solidly useful knowledge which she is capable of imparting to her offspring? Surely not; to maintain the contrary, would be to pass the severest censure on our sex. A woman is neither less pretty, less elegant, less kind, nor less accomplished of *necessity*, because she has read and loves reading; and, considering her *own* happiness, can there be any question respecting the advantage of books as a source of amusement as well as usefulness, above all the lighter acquirements above enumerated? The former pass away with the careless gaiety of youth. The rising generation steps close upon the heels of that which has immediately preceded it; and as novelty is the very essence of fashion, the singing which has been heard, and the dancing which has been seen for a few successive winters cease to charm, and newer attractions occupy the stage. How much would the respect of children towards their mothers be increased, were women, generally speaking, capable of taking part in the instruction of a family, attending to their interests, exercising a sound judgment on their progress, and accompanying their pursuits! Reflect upon the numbers who are left widows to guide sons, as well as daughters, through the thorny paths of life? Is it of no importance that a woman, whom it has pleased God to make the solitary guardian of a youthful progeny, should place her affections on higher objects than dress, cards, theatres? Is it of no use that she should be able to direct the eternal interests of her children, and watch, as a careful nurse, over their temporal welfare? And will she be less the object of veneration and love, because every hour of the day presents some variety of cheerful companionship, where utility and pleasure go hand in hand, and knowledge is delightful, because associated with maternal tenderness? Believe not such untruths, my dear Howard, and if you ever marry, beware of those idle butterflies who, having skimmed through a summer's day, flutter their fading wings and are forgotten. Such women are, indeed, but children of a larger growth, and totally unfit for the responsibility which devolves upon them. But do not suppose that by a sweeping clause, as false as it would be uncharitable, I mean to include the *entire* world of fashion in the denunciation which I have pronounced against modern modes and manners. There are some beautiful exceptions, which not only have escaped contagion, but which illustrate my position by being themselves amongst its brightest examples. It is the *general* evil of which I complain, and unless women will stand their *own* friends, and resist the tyranny of opinion which, if it proceed much farther in its present course, bids fair to deprive them of those faculties which Heaven has bountifully bestowed, they may rest assured that their power will daily decline; both sexes will degenerate, and the rude supremacy of physical strength will be at last resorted to, to complete female subjugation, and bring the civilized world again to a state of barbarism from which it will slowly emerge."

Just as I was going to reply, a servant announced Mr. Bentley. A young man entered the room, and we were ere long summoned to dinner. Nothing could be more agreeable than the trio. You see that I include myself in the compliment to our good humour, ease, and festivity. Phil. is an extraordinary man, and I am much *taken* with him. He is a perfect Encyclopedia, as little Fanny called him, and literally seems to know every thing; but so absolutely is he divested of the pomps and ceremony of literature, that it is only by the fulness of your own mind, and the number of new ideas that you find in your brain, that you discover the superiority of him from whom you have derived such accession to your thoughts. We ate, drank, and were merry.

Bentley is a very sensible young man, and a near neighbour of Mr. Otway's.

I suppose that I must tell you what we talked of. Well, I am patiently going through my task of *minute* narrative in the beginning; but by the time that you are acquainted with the characters around me, through these my *masterly* sketches you must prepare to take your leave of such reports. I shall write regularly, and mention whatever incidents may occur; but to hold on in this method, of repeating every word that is uttered, would be more than flesh and blood are equal to. Besides, should money fall short, you may take advantage of me, and make a book out of these my voluminous materials. Thus forestalling, for all you can possibly tell, my intentions of giving so many sapient observations as I have committed to paper, one day myself to the world.

Well, but you want to know who Bentley is, and what we talked about. As to who a young man, living in the county of Kerry in Ireland, may be, I am not quite ready to answer though *faute*

d'autres sujets, I shall inquire more concerning him; perhaps somewhat more determined in my design so to do, from having remarked a scarlet blush pass over his cheek at dinner when Charlotte's name was mentioned.

In these back settlements there is nothing to do, but exercise the skill of a calm observer; and I expect to be quite *au fait* as a critic in every thing appertaining to countenance, by the time that I return to the world. As to conversation we had a great deal of one sort or other. Some politics, some anecdote, some I know not what, pleasant enough, but nothing striking. I remember only two remarks that I shall take the trouble of exporting to Pisa. We were speaking of Scott's Novels (for I take the liberty of calling them his, notwithstanding all the denials which are cited to prove the contrary^[A]) and I instanced these and some other works of fiction which are justly celebrated, and of recent publication, to support my opinion, that the present genius of literature stands upon a lofty pedestal in comparison with former times, adding "what can be a stronger argument in favour of modern wisdom than that *such* books are the recreation of our contemporaries?" A stranger just set down in England might naturally say, if this be *amusement*, what are the *serious* studies in this country? And if, as some writer has said, "tell me your diversions, and I'll tell you what you are," carry any weight, we may fairly claim to high pre-eminence."

"And deserve it too," answered Phil., "if we do not push the argument too far. The present day furnishes us some admirable samples in the department of fiction; but I question much if you will not find, that novels, with a large portion of existing men, and women, make the *business*, as well as the relaxation of their reading hours. The novels of our time are like letters of marque. They are *armés en flûte* for war or merchandize, *alias* for instruction or entertainment; and if people will not read any thing more serious we must be happy that there *is* a method of riveting attention by cloathing good sense in the light drapery of fiction. Thousands are led on to better things than they are promised by a pleasant tale; and I rejoice to perceive a growing sense of accountableness in the writers who supply the present rage for new publications. I see a consciousness arising amongst novelists and the editors of reviews and magazines that the morbid diseases induced by *mental* opium eating (if you will allow me the image) threaten paralysis and, would inevitably lead to dissolution of all intellectual energy, if not arrested in their progress. Several are usefully employed in applying alterations, and endeavouring to bring about a more healthful action of the rational powers. Let us earnestly desire a blessing on every effort of this nature, and give our best individual support even to story, when, like the useful wedge, it is successful in sliding in, what would not find its way into the hands of half mankind unaided by such an instrument." The remark struck me as valid, and I had the grace to say so. Led on from one topic to another, in which this excellent man discovered so much knowledge of life as perfectly to amaze me, I turned to young Bentley, and said, "I have often heard people obtain credit for extraordinary acquaintance with the world, and wherever this has been the case, such skill has been attributed to travelling, and a widely spreading communion with various classes of men; but it sometimes strikes me as matter of surprise to find the acutest sense of all that is doing on the great theatre, in a retired corner of the earth, apparently shut out from all the bustle, vice, and folly, that pervade the world."

Bentley replied, "I know not to whom you may apply for information on *this* head, more appropriately than to my good friend of Lisfarne, who contrives to know mankind so well without going amongst them. Let us ask him how he manages to find them out?"

"Were it really the case," answered Phil. "that I am better informed than my neighbours in the science which you ascribe to me; a point which I utterly dissent from, I should be apt perhaps to take credit for my skill as resulting from the very reason that, according to your view, might excuse its deficiency, namely, to those retired habits which lead me to study a few, rather than glance my eye over a multitude. It is with men as with books. You may skim over too great a number to read any with profit. With some few exceptions, the characters of which mankind is made up, are easily classified; and if you master a score of distinct specimens from each tribe with care and accuracy, you will find the sum of your knowledge considerably to exceed that which has been gleaned from a larger surface, where less attention has been brought to the task of investigation. A certain impatience of decision leads people frequently to pronounce upon as anomalies, what a severer scrutiny would prove to be well understood, and belonging to accredited divisions of human character."

"I seldom meet with a *real* non-descript, though appearances may puzzle me for a time, and though I have not been in a crowd for many years, I meet in succession with individuals of all sorts, and perhaps am enabled to form a more discriminating judgment of each single figure as it passes before me than I could do were my mind distracted by many objects together. The whole being made up of parts, one may give a shrewd guess at the collective effect from acquaintance with the separate atoms."

"From what you say," said I, "a man ought to live *out* of the world, to judge rightly of those men who compose it."—"No, my young friend, not quite so *terse*. There is no more *necessary* connection between knowledge of the world and retirement, than between naval tactics and an old gentleman sitting by his fireside in Hampshire; yet it so happened, that the present system of breaking the line, which was of such astonishing importance to us in the last war, was the invention of a man unconnected with naval affairs, and who, marshalling a parcel of cherry-stones after dinner upon his table, proved to a practical understanding how the object could be achieved, and what a Clarke projected, was accomplished by a Rodney."

"*In* the world or *out* of the world sagacity may find materials upon which to work, and it will

depend on the acuteness of that sagacity to arrive at eminence in the knowledge of man.—Where this is furnished, I should believe retirement, I do not mean solitude, to be more favorable to sound discrimination than a busy scene, because more likely to secure against precipitancy of judgment. On the whole, we may see, and hear, a great deal too much with our *outward* senses. The principal defect of the present day is want of reflection. The provision, the apparatus for conveying instruction to the mind is superb, but exactly in proportion to these "tricking facilities" is the deficiency of original thinking. When books were few, and purchased with difficulty, they were intensely studied. The mind was forced to be in some sort its own library. The treasures of learning were committed to memory, and the intellect traded upon its internal resources; the capital was frequently turned, and mental riches crowned exertion; but the multiplication of *means* often retards the *end*, and the understanding is encumbered with help."

"But pray, sir, if we gain more in expansion than we lose in depth, is not the balance on our side? Now that the press is teeming with instruction brought down to the level of *all* capacities, are we not advancing by rapid strides to a full developement of the reasoning faculty, and approaching that happy termination of ignorance so devoutly to be wished for?"

"I do not agree with you, Howard. If you desire my opinion, it must be given in the negative. I am an old-fashioned fellow, and many of my notions are desperately heretical in these days of display. I cannot help preferring substance to shadows, and depth to surface. I love real improvements, not mere changes. In some instances we *are* improving. The exact sciences are making progress, and so are those arts which depend upon the application of their principles. Chemistry, mechanics, &c. advance, and there is a disposition to reward the talent that is exhibited in forwarding them to perfection; but I maintain that the system of school and collegiate education for our youth requires reform. The best part of life, as regards some of our mental powers, is frittered away in learning badly two dead languages, to the neglect of better things at school; and at the Universities much might be done to effect a better order of things than prevails in any of them. Then, with respect to the prevailing taste in literature, it is too much devoted to *stimulus*. We have too many new books, and too many young authors. Some expatiating in the labyrinths of moral paradox—others in the wild regions of uncontrolled imagination; and so on. Whatever is *new*, is devoured with avidity, and so great is the quantity, so pulp-like the quality, of this literary pabulum, that the digestive organs are destroyed, and the mind is seldom exercised for itself."

As Phil. finished the last sentence, his old servant opened the door, and in ran Frederick, followed by the redoubtable Domine. A general commotion ensued. Much shaking of hands, inquiries after health, friends, and all the etceteras which are hurried over in the first ten minutes after meeting succeeded, I was presented; and while Mr. Otway was engaged with Oliphant, and Fred. was interchanging civilities with Mr. Bentley, I sat examining the object of my fearful anticipations. Imprimis, he has no wig, but a fine expansive front with a clean bald pate. His hair "a sable silvered," scantily *set*, but curling naturally in a *fringe* round the back of his head, and a countenance full of benevolence, and sparkling with affection.

Yes, it is a true bill. Here are more fruits of Prophecy and Prejudice, quoth you!—I will give up *anticipating*.—It will save me a great deal of plague in future, not to think of people till they cross my path, and are actually before my eyes.

Before we set out on the return to Glenalta, I was as easy as an old shoe with Oliphant; but all his quaint practice and methodistical habits are hanging over *in terrorem*.

On the following day, which was Saturday, we met as usual at breakfast, and immediately afterwards, I was called by the girls and Frederick to come and see the treasures of which their tutor had been the escort. On entering the Library, I saw a valuable addition to the book-shelves; Clarke's Bible, handsomely, but unshewily bound, for my aunt; the Flora and Pomona Londinensis for Emily; a capital Biographical Dictionary for Charlotte; a fine Herodotus for Fred; and Withering's Botany for Fan. Besides these were writing-desks, drawing-books, pencils, port-folios, and a parcel containing the Pirates, Kenilworth, Quentin Durward, and the Inheritance, as food for the "Evening hour." In short, Domine must have been literally built up in the *stack* which brought him, as tightly as poor Rose de Beverley in the dungeon wall; and to have seen the good man *deterré* from such a mass of matter must have been diverting enough.

These various objects of acquisition were all gifts of Mr. Otway, who had made his own remarks upon the wants and wishes of his neighbours, and written to Oliphant accordingly, to come laden with whatever he thought most likely to gratify the family group. It is impossible to form an idea of the advantages in *one* respect which people living in these outposts of mankind possess over the civilized world. If my mother and sisters require a packet of books, or any thing else, from town, Gibson is ordered to write, the things come per next mail. Turner, my mother's maid, opens the store, and the contents are spread upon tables, where perhaps they lie for days before they are observed, and when looked at, are either to be returned, or if retained, it is ten to one if they produce the slightest degree of animation. Here the minds of the little party are so alive and fresh, that one catches the contagion; and I found myself bustling through wrapping papers and twine with an eagerness which I certainly never experienced upon the arrival of a similar importation at Selby.

"We have been so long *wishing* for these," said Emily, "that they are quite a mine of happiness."

"Yes," answered Charlotte, "and how magical are our dear Phil.'s guesses, for he always discovers what one *wants* most." "And I," added Fanny, "am just expiring to be off to Lisfarne, with a budget of thanks to our necromancer."

We all dispersed after this library scene; the young people to shew Mr. Oliphant puppies, kittens, young pheasants, and sundry other live stock, which had either grown or been acquired during his absence, and I, after promising to walk with my aunt in an hour or two, filed off to my room to fold up this enormous volume. On looking over my journal before doing so, I perceived an omission: you desired me to tell you more of the *tastes* of my fair friends in dress, furniture, *etcetera*, I thought that I had given you a *coup d'oeil* which might have sufficed; but if you must have more, learn now, and for ever after hold your peace, that you may walk from top to bottom of this house without hitching your skirts in any of the fopperies of a modern *boudoir*. There is no danger of being entangled amongst a nest of spider-tables covered with china, or of overturning a chiffoniere burthened with flower-pots. There are no scraps of japan, nor *odds* and *ends* of any sort to molest a visitor, and interrupt conversation. Glenalta is furnished with simplicity and convenience: the general *character*, is that of chaste uniformity, without any thing of the *drab* of quakerism. A few good pictures ornament the walls both of drawing-room and parlour. Some handsome busts in bronze give a finish to the bookcases of the library; and the hall, which is light and airy, has a very good appearance as you enter the house. The furniture is solid, and there is every real comfort of polished life to be found in its place without any exhibition of finery or *nick-knackery*, if I may coin a word for the occasion.—Altogether the best idea I can convey of my aunt's dwelling, is by telling you what it is *not*: it is *not* a *shew-house*—it is *not* a fashionable house, neither has it the cold, raw, uninhabited look of an English provincial residence; but it is strictly clean, bright, *easy* looking, and has an air of unpretending elegance.

Now, as to dress, hang me if I know the names of any manufacture; but I told you before, that the cousins have very pretty figures, beautiful hair, and are always perfectly *presentable*. They do not wear the gaudy colouring of the French school, nor are they squeezed as if in a vice, to look like wasps, without any visible connecting link to unite the upper and lower parts of the body. There is a natural grace and gentility in every movement; and the *effect* is pleasing to the eye from the *repose* which it meets with, equally remote from *excitement* on the one hand, and torpor on the other.

What can I tell you more particular? And had I not better say Adieu at once, than add to this mighty mass of paper by further general description?

Your affectionate friend,
ARTHUR HOWARD.

[A] The authorship of the Novels has been avowed by Sir Walter Scott since this letter was written.

LETTER VII. FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

My dear Falkland,

My last despatch, you will remember, was sealed just after it had been arranged that I should accompany my aunt in a walk. At the appointed hour I tapped at her door, to put her in mind of our assignation; and was not sorry to have a *tête à tête* in prospect, thinking that I might take advantage of this opportunity to edge in a little word of counsel, that might be of use, at *least* in Fanny's, though Emily and Charlotte might be beyond my reach in effecting a change in *their* destiny.

My sweet aunt (for she is really quite delightful) was speedily equipped, and we set out upon our rambles. As soon as we had cleared the house, and were not in danger of being overheard, I expressed my gratitude for her kindness in asking me to Glenalta; spoke of the pleasure which I already felt in its society, and my admiration, as well as surprise, at finding my cousins every thing that could be wished. My aunt smiled. "Then," said she, "you had heard, I suppose, but an unflattering account of us, and expected to see a very *outré* sort of a family." "I expected," answered I, "to find, as I *have* found, very superior attainments; but you know, dearest lady, the prejudice which universally subsists against *Blue-Stockings*; and though you have succeeded so admirably in the result of your system, and may therefore triumph, as 'those who win may laugh,' yet you must allow the experiment to have been a bold one." "And why so, my dear Arthur? I should not have felt at all inclined to make bold experiments, and am not conscious how I have done so. You must explain yourself." "Well then, I will; and hope that I may venture to do so without running any risk of offending you." "Certainly, I cannot be offended, having requested you to tell me what you mean; and I, on my part, shall not only thank you for your observations, but shall be ready, with the most perfect candour, to satisfy you as far as I can, respecting my conduct."

"Dear aunt, then," said I, "the great object to which a girl's prospects should tend from infancy to maturity is marriage; and every prudent mother, I need not say to you, is perpetually intent upon this termination of all her cares and anxiety. To marry a daughter *well* is no easy matter now-a-days, and often requires a vast deal of address to bring about the event. Beauty, though very captivating, will not do without money, and young men have learned to be philosophers; they can see and admire, but, like the Baron of Moubray, they must know how 'to love and to ride away,' unless they would entail ruin on their posterity. Almost every man's circumstances are dipped more or less, either by his own folly or that of his predecessors; and most men look to a fortunate marriage some time or other in their lives, for the purpose of paying off charges on their property, and clearing a load of debt. Now, girls of large fortune, may certainly take some liberties; for even were they old, ugly, or *Blue*, thousands *will* tell, and they may generally

command a choice amongst the other sex; but young women, even of such personal attraction as my cousins ought 'to be with caution bold.' I do assure you, that were you at this moment suddenly removed to London, I would not, for any consideration that I can name, that Emily and Charlotte were discovered to know a syllable of Greek, Latin, botany, chemistry, or any of the arts and sciences: it is unheard of in town, except to be laughed at, or avoided; and as your girls have pretensions that might secure their being courted in the best society, it would mortify any one who loves them to witness a complete failure in their *debut*, through a want of that circumspection which mothers, *so* inferior to you, know how to exercise. Dear little Fan is young and volatile; there is more danger of her betraying herself than of her sisters' being giddy. Much might be done still with your elder girls, who are so reasonable and so docile, that they would probably take a hint immediately; but it is quite a *sin* not to snatch Fanny from perdition, by allowing what *azure* she has already contracted, to fade away as quickly as possible. Elegant and accomplished, pretty and pleasing, my cousins are formed for the world, and would shine in it: but Greek, Latin, chemistry, *etcetera*, are like forgery, never to be forgiven."

Here I paused, and my aunt calmly replied, "I fear, my dear boy, that I shall make matters worse rather than better by my answer to your advice; but, notwithstanding, I must run the risk, and boldly hazard the loss of your esteem, by detailing some opinions of mine, which do not harmonize at all with your's. First, then, you will stare at me perhaps when I tell you, that I am very far from thinking marriage necessary to the happiness of my children, though should I live to see them find such partners as I think worthy of them, I should rejoice, inasmuch as, under *certain* circumstances, I look upon marriage as the happiest lot of life in this chequered scene; but, Arthur, rank and fortune are only *accidents*, and make no part of the *essence* in my creed of such requisites as constitute felicity in domestic union. My dear girls will not be rich, but they will have enough to make them independent. If they marry, I think I may venture to say, that it will not be through worldly motives of aggrandizement; and should they remain single, they will, I trust in the Almighty, be both useful and contented."

I certainly *did* stare. What! a mother, and disregard the establishment of daughters! My aunt continued: "According to your ideas, a woman is merely an appendage, and, I dare say, frequently considered a very troublesome one to her fortune, the acquisition of which seems to be, even under favourable circumstances of youth and beauty thrown into the scale, the *principal* object, and where these may be wanting, the *sole* incentive which leads a man of fashion to permit a young lady the honour of bearing his name. Now in a country where the blessing of freedom has never been known, where parents possess absolute power over their children, and masters over their slaves, I can perceive a reason for such an order of things; but I confess myself so ignorant as not to comprehend why liberty and affluence *here* should be sacrificed without any valuable consideration. It would be better to subscribe a part of one's property to the necessities of a needy gentleman than be obliged to give up the whole, and tie oneself to him for ever. May I ask you how women are compensated in your scheme for the relinquishment of independence?" "Bless me, dear aunt, the question is so extraordinary, that really I feel at a loss to believe that you can ask it: *compensated?*—Why, by being married; by being promoted to a state in society of more consideration than they previously occupied; by being provided for, established, and, finally, as the acme of all female hope and ambition, taken out of the never-ending defile of recruits through which a man has to make his way at every ball, concert, or theatre in town."

"Well," said Mrs. Douglas, "I am not a little amazed that these *recruits*, as you call them, should be ready to place themselves under the control of officers so little disposed to regard them with tenderness; but, as this is a serious subject in which the happiness of mankind at large is concerned, we will treat it gravely. Providence has so ordered the affairs of earth, that marriage will always be a primary object of concern with *both* sexes; for remember, that the idea of *wife*, involves that of *husband*; and to supply each *aspirant* of either sex, you must find a disengaged individual of the other. Now if it appear that the mass of human beings are intended by their Creator for the state of matrimony, and that their own wishes generally coincide with the original purpose of creation, would it not seem a reasonable consequence that a condition which almost all men and women anticipate, should be rendered as desirable, as suitable, as happy, and as wise as a reflecting choice can make it?" "Surely," said I, "and *there* lies the difference between an improvident silly mother, or one who is governed by a prudent knowledge of the world, and clear views of her childrens' advantage. Women are, you will confess, great fools when they allow their girls to flirt with younger sons who have nothing; military men, whose fortunes are on their backs, and all the idle host who furnish a drawing-room and excel in a quadrille. Maternal solicitude ought unquestionably to be directed to a good settlement, liberal pin-money—if *possible* a distinguished connection; and in short, all the circumstances which constitute what every one admits to be a *good match*. How painful must it be to read a paragraph in the public papers announcing that on such a day Mr. Such-an-one, whom nobody knows, was married by some clergyman whose name was never heard of, in a parish church not to be found in any map, to Miss Douglas of Glenalta! If I am doomed to suffer such disgrace, I shall set out directly for Greece, or some other distant quarter to which my countrymen do not flock in the crowds that one is certain to meet in France and Italy, *there* to remain till the event is forgotten, and the unfortunate actors in it, are consigned to well-merited oblivion. Forgive me if I am warm; I do not mean to be disrespectful, but my energies rise in proportion to the hourly increase of love and admiration which I feel towards relations so near and so deserving."

"Arthur, I am not angry," rejoined my aunt, "but I must oppose, though I may fail to convince you; I can never desire to see my dear girls, who have been loved, valued, and considered as rational creatures in their own home, become a part of the *retinue* of a man of fashion; and therefore I

neither intend to introduce them upon a theatre where success is failure according to my notion of things, nor attempt to infuse a new class of doctrines upon the nature of happiness into their guiltless hearts. Let us go on in our accustomed routine, and if there ever was a case to which we may apply the maxim 'If ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise,' you will admit its force upon that in question, for *so* happy are my dear children at Glenalta, that visionary dreams of joy seem not to pass beyond its well-known boundary. When the mind is full of resource, it is wonderfully independent, and suffers none of that *ennui* which is the disease of vacancy. From the birth of my children to the present time, they have never heard that there was an *effect* to be produced by any thing they learned except the natural consequences that grow out of virtue and occupation. Marriage may, or may not, be their portion; should it be so, the characters of their husbands may probably differ, as their own do, from each other; and thus far I meet your views, that I should be sorry to see any child of mine marry so imprudently as to plunge into the sordid cares of life without consideration. Should misfortune bring poverty, and the Almighty try his creatures by affliction, how beautiful is it *then* to behold the exertions which the finest minds are capable of making when sustained by religious submission, and encouraged by fond affection; but to *place* ourselves *willingly* in situations which our strength may not prove sufficient to admit of our filling conscientiously, is to presume upon our own powers, and is therefore dangerous. You see then, my dear boy, that as far as my opinion may have weight, you are not to expect any accession to your worldly pride from the Douglas family, who are very unambitious people; and, though I trust that they will never 'disgrace you,' I fear that you must be contented to love them for their *own* sakes, and not for any flattering unction to be derived through their future destiny. No, I hardly think it likely that Emily, Charlotte, or Fanny, will ever contribute their aid to a high-sounding paragraph in the newspapers; but I shall indeed be disappointed if they are satisfied with less than sense and affection, if they marry."

"My dear aunt, you mistake me: as much sense as you like; and you cannot imagine that I could be such a barbarian as to fancy that any man who married one of my cousins should be so deficient in good taste as not to love her as well as men generally love their wives. Remember, that the happiest home of infancy must, in the course of nature, dissolve; and then what becomes of a luckless sisterhood of old maids, who, having suffered the spring and summer to pass by unheeded, in vain deplore their idle improvidence, and fret away the gloomy remnant of their days on earth in sourness and solitude?" "A dismal picture, indeed," replied my aunt, "I must try if I cannot draw one less dispiriting. In the first place you acknowledge that, according to *your* scheme, sense and affection, though not *principals*, are useful *accessories*, and are to be taken as make-weights into the scale of happiness. Now my idea is, that this is to expect too much, and more than experience will realize, unless in some instance perhaps of extraordinary exception upon which we have no right to calculate. If you marry for rank, you *obtain* it, and should be satisfied with your bargain; if for fortune, you have gained your object, and must not complain: the contract is fair, though you receive only that for which you make your agreement; and it is quite unjust to suppose that perfections which you never sought, and qualities of which you never went in search, will be added to heap up your measure."

"The happiest home of early life must in nature's course dissolve, you say: agreed; but, the affrighting scene of unavailing misery which you have painted, is not the necessary consequence of such an event. I can imagine three sisters who may not have been tempted to quit the paternal roof by meeting such congeniality of character as they deemed essential to happiness, living together as kindly in the decline, as in the meridian of life. I can imagine them to look abroad without envy, and at home without disgust. If excluded from some enjoyments which belong to another mode of existence, they are spared also many of the evils which attach to it, and with this advantage, that while the former are precarious, the latter are inevitable. The brightest anticipations founded on the most apparently stable foundation, may *possibly* deceive, but the physical suffering, and the anxious care which are inseparable from the maternal relation, are penalties from which there is no exemption. No bill of indemnity can set aside a mother's pangs; and be assured, that were women endowed with the gift of oracular foresight, and like the ancient Sybils capable of peeping into the cup of futurity, very few would have courage to taste the bitter draught which marriage too frequently mingles to allure by promises, and poison by disappointment. The fondest affection, the kindest support, and all the inestimable charms of sympathetic companionship, may indeed render the conjugal union an antepast of heaven; but such contracts of folly and avarice, as are but too often sealed in what you call the world, represent as truly a state of severest punishment; and between these extremes, a single lot is far to be preferred to the compromise which matrimony in its average of calculation *usually* exhibits. The great purposes of life are, however, fulfilled at the expense of individual ease, and many a spirit learns in the school of adversity, those blessed lessons of humility and dependence upon a Heavenly Father, that pay with such peace 'as the world can neither give nor take away' for the infliction of an earthly husband."

"Well, my ears," said I, "are unaccustomed to such language. I confess it is no less new than surprising; yet that I may know the full extent of your deviation from modern creeds, perhaps you will describe the sort of helpmate to whose guardianship *you* would entrust a daughter?"

"Most willingly, Arthur. The peculiar temperament of each individual stamps an impress of its own upon the mind, and, according to the variety of taste, will be our selection of such qualities in a friend, as harmonize with its distinctive character. Marriage has been eloquently described as 'the queen of friendships,' and yet the monarch fares less well than any of her subjects; and while the choice of a companion who is only to travel in our society for a few short miles upon the continent, is governed by kindred feeling and pursuits, the journey which is to end but with life, is undertaken upon the most flimsy ground of temporary whim or expediency. Is this rational, is it

consistent conduct?"

"Then may I ask, my dear aunt, do you conceive it really necessary that two people must have learned the same arts, have studied the same sciences, and read the same books; spoken in the same languages, thought the same thoughts, and been in fact, like Helen and Hermia, 'a double cherry seeming parted, but yet a union in partition;' to make a reasonably happy, suitable jog-trot couple in the holy bands of wedlock?"

"Not entirely, though perhaps the more of such similarity the better; but Arthur, you asked for a description, and you shall have one. After the great leading bond of sympathy upon religion and moral conduct, the *grain* of character is most essential to happiness in married life. There is a fineness of texture in some minds which cannot endure contact with what is coarse, any more than cambric will bear being united to sail-cloth. The unequal tissue will give way, and the more delicate fabric will be torn to atoms. The mere matters of acquirement may differ without injury to affection, an interchange may take place, which shall borrow sweetness from its source; and even that which possessed no charms to invite its acquisition, may become delightful, if taught by, or studied for the sake of a being whom we love. I knew a lady whose husband was a barrister; they adored each other, but they were poor, and professional industry could not be dispensed with. Their mornings were necessarily passed in the performance of separate duties; but when the business of the day was over, and the evening hearth burned brightly as they sat together, a doubt would arise whether the most enchanting of all gratifications, each others' society, was not a luxury too great for *them*. The doubt ended in certainty, that law reading ought to supersede the charms of conversation, and what was the result? that affection was too powerful to be selfish, or rather *self* was extended to a second and a dearer object. The wife determined to convert a solitary and painful duty, into a social delight; she insisted on joining in her husband's study, and several of the driest and most difficult books were read aloud to each other in succession. The experiment answered to admiration. They were engaged *together*, and this was enough to make them happy. What was distasteful to one, and at first unintelligible to the other, became amusement; and in the morning's walk, were often discussed the cases which had occupied the previous afternoon. Memory was improved by this exercise: a little time enabled the lady still farther to share the fatigues of a beloved partner in noting his briefs, and assisting in other professional cares, rewarded by the delight of knowing that her presence was necessary to the happiness of him who formed her own. Arthur, such is what I call affection, and such is my idea of companionship in wedded love."

My heart glowed, and I could not speak; I gazed on my aunt: her cheek was slightly flushed, and her eyes had acquired the deep and clear expression which brought to my mind that exquisite description in the Prisoner of Chillon.

"The eye of most transparent light
That almost made the dungeon bright."

We both paused: when, recovering from a momentary lapse of thought, she continued: "I knew another wife whose husband was employed for several years in various diplomatic trusts of high importance. He was an invalid, and frequently incapacitated from taking part in public affairs; but the faithful friend of his bosom who was a most admirable linguist, wrote his letters in five different tongues, and was supposed to be a native in them all. Can you match these instances of connubial tenderness and confidence in the frigid annals of fashion? Turn, my Arthur, from the heartless trammels, and dare to be free."

"Such women," said I, "as you have represented, would soon revolutionize the world, and bring about a mighty change in the motives that influence marriage; but instances like these occur at intervals, just to shew us of what your sex is *capable*, and that is all."

"Alas, Arthur," replied my aunt, "women rarely discover objects amongst men worthy of exciting powerful affection, and none but slaves will bestow the semblance where the reality does not exist. Men and women act and re-act reciprocally on each other's characters, and though exceptions may appear, you will find it easy in general to decide upon one sex, by the merits or demerits of the other, allowing for those differences between them which distinguishes each from its opposite."

"How then," said I, "is a new order of things to be effected? *One* swallow does not make a summer.

"The change would be achieved with-out any difficulty, my child, would each individual only throw off the artificial shackles which are imposed by opinion upon the heart and understanding. Nature is so lovely, truth so captivating, that one would *imagine* it no hard matter to disengage the mind from the bondage of a factitious yoke, and I return to their gentle empire. Yet this is all that we are called upon to do, and that only with *ourselves*. If our early years were passed in laying up store for futurity in practising the affections within the circle of those whom God has given to be our nearest and dearest ties, in cultivating intellect, and acquiring useful knowledge, we should need no farther security against the mistakes of after life. Religion, virtue, wisdom, and good taste, would be our guides as well as our protectors."

"Aunt, 'almost thou persuadest me;' but you named religion, and before we conclude I must say a word upon that part of the subject."

At this instant who should appear at the entrance of a moss-house, in which my aunt and I had been seated for the last half hour, but Oliphant, Charlotte, and Fanny? They had taken a round of the wood, and were returning when this *contre tems* took place. I blushed immoderately. It was such a topic to be caught in the act of discussing; but my confusion did not last long.

What a blessing is *tact!* That monosyllable contains a volume. My aunt saw, I suppose, exactly all that was passing across my mind—

"*Caciata del core fuge nel volto,*"—and, instantly seizing on Charlotte's hand, she said, "My love, I want you and Fanny to run home and send the little car to me. I am a wee bit tired; I will keep Mr. Oliphant and Arthur here, till Paddy and poney arrive."

Like lightning, the nymph disappeared, and, quietly turning to me as if our dialogue had suffered no interruption, "I am so glad that just as we wanted Mr. Oliphant, he has come to our aid," said my aunt. "He will be quite at home in answering your last question."

She then in a moment playfully informed Domine of our single combat, "which," added she "was fairly fought, and rather favourably to my side at the close, till Arthur rallying his forces, to make a powerful stand, entrenched himself under an authority to which, were it against me, I should implicitly submit; but I will now place *you* in my stead; and, as I am sure that Arthur was *going* to say (no *young* ladies being present) that female inferiority is supported by that volume, from which there is no appeal at Glenalta, I am not without hope that you will drive my nephew from this last fastness."

"I accept the challenge," said Oliphant, "and thank you for the post which you allot to me, as the laurel of victory already circles round my brow; but I must hear my adversary state his case."

Thus forced into a tilting match with the tutor, I laughed, and assured him that I had never presumed upon encountering so formidable an enemy; but as it would be a tacit confession that my cause was weak, were I to remain silent, "I must own," said I, "that Mrs. Douglas precisely hit upon what I was going to urge, namely, that however modern manners, to which my aunt discovers so little gratitude, have *raised* women to the pedestal on which they stand, the Bible tells a different tale; and were it even true that female pride had got a fall through fashion's fiat, would not such depreciation be exact conformity with holy writ?"

"Were it so," answered the *giant* of learning, "Mrs. Douglas would neither lament nor contend against her fate, but the Bible is peculiarly her sanctuary of refuge, from which, when driven to its sacred shelter by the taunts of the world, she might proudly exclaim, 'it was not thus, when we came from the hands of God.'"

"No, my dear sir, man was created in God's own image; 'male and female created he them.' Eve (the meaning of which word is life) was formed after, and *out of* man. She was not given to him as property, but given 'to be with him,' as a companion, because he would have been a cheerless, as also a useless animal without her. The original Hebrew implies no superiority, nor inferiority. Adam and Eve were the counterparts of each other. Eve was bone of bone, flesh of flesh, to her husband, *both* endowed with immortality, *both* invested with rule over all creatures of the earth. The word woman is from the Hebrew *Ish*, signifying man, which, when simply altered by two letters to *Ishau*, literally means she-man. *Andris* is the female form of *Aner*, man, in the Greek; and in Arabic we have *Imrat*, she-man, from *Imree*, man. Every man should consider woman as a part of himself; and when, as a punishment for her disobedience, the heavy denunciation was issued that Eve should be subject to her *husband*, it was not required by their Maker that she should resign any part of that understanding, any prerogative of heart or intellect, which had originally been bestowed, when she was formed his equal in power. Both man and woman were deprived of immortality. Death came into the world with sin, and with *these*, woman's legal bondage to her *husband*; but beyond this limit you cannot proceed. On the contrary, though the brutal habits of eastern tyranny debased the sex, to which inferior bodily strength had been from the first communicated, yet was it exalted in the moment of depression by Him who called it into being, and inflicted the curse. The woman was to bruise the serpent's head. She was the first destroyer, and was permitted to be the first in the chain of restoration, by being the appointed medium, the *sole* earthly parent of the Saviour. When Abraham was entitled Father of the faithful, Sarah received like honour, and was named their Mother; and when our blessed Lord came upon earth, from one end to the other of his ministry, there is not a syllable to be found derogatory of the female sex. He loved Mary as a sister; and upon various occasions distinguished certain women by particular expressions of affectionate approbation. There is no authority in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation for the opinion that you hold; and with respect to punishment inflicted by Deity for transgression, a generous feeling would naturally suggest the desire of lightening rather than aggravating its infliction, especially when we reflect that the only difference between the culprits lay in the measure of delinquency. Adam and his sons have no cause of triumph; and I never read the story of the fall without considering with humiliation the first proof afforded of a lowered nature in our common progenitor, when to save himself from the principal condemnation, he selfishly consigned his partner to the wrath of offended divinity. When our Saviour arose from the dead, it was to his faithful female followers that he first revealed himself; and, as a concluding remark, permit me to observe, that if, as we are assured unequivocally, women are equal inheritors of the skies, it ill befits us to refuse them their rights on earth. No, sir, depend upon it, when men cannot support themselves, except by asserting that power which the laws have conferred upon them, they are *hard run*, and the edifice is tottering when it requires a buttress. The nobler animals are all *quiescent*. The lion reposes in his strength, and knowing how much he can command, is slow at making exhibition of his force; but "man, proud man!"

"Dressed in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep."

"I remember, sir," said I, "to have seen once, in the library of a gentleman, who, by the bye, was a

most complete domestic despot, an odd sort of a book, entitled "Rights of Women."

"Are you acquainted with, and an approver of that work?"—"No, young gentleman, that is a book which has long ago found its resting-place amid dust and cobwebs. When new, it was a wretched thing, and is now forgotten; but you found it, as the mineralogists express themselves, *in situ*, when you discovered a stray copy on the shelves of a tyrant. The brawlers about liberty are generally fond of keeping it all to themselves. The French revolution, which was before your time, set many heads distracted, and loosened the whole frame-work of our morals; but we are sobered, and have consigned to oblivion the grosser absurdities of that disjointed period.

"Women have real and substantial rights, natural as well as civil, which no one attempts to dispute; and they are fools when they part with them, unless to secure a greater good than they relinquish; but marriage is the rock upon which multitudes make shipwreck, because from the present constitution of things, that solemn act of life is performed with less consideration than people commonly employ in the purchase of a field. Men, after a career of folly, begin to look about them, and think it wise to *settle*, before time has thinned their locks and scattered silver over the flowing honours of youth. Women sigh for what are called establishments; and happiness slides out of a scheme in which no provision has been made for its entertainment. Take an old man's advice, Mr. Howard, be as deliberate in your selection as you please, and I hope that you will not marry till you know your own mind; but when you *do* become a Benedick, let your Beatrice be the friend of your bosom, the companion of your life, and a partner in all your pains, pleasures, and pursuits."

I was not prepared to contradict, for the truth is, that Domine told me more in half a dozen sentences than I ever heard before. However, not to appear as if I had suddenly lost *my speech*, I gently hinted, "that Solomon was usually thought a wise man, upon the authority of the Scriptures; and he declares that, in his search after wisdom, he had never found *one* woman to reward his pains."

"Truly, that is not very wonderful," said Oliphant. "When the men, who possessed all the advantages that superior power bestowed, made so little use of it towards the cultivation of knowledge and virtue, that Solomon complains of not finding a man of worth in *a thousand*, no wonder that amongst the weaker sex, who were kept in the lowest state of slavery and degradation, he should not discover any who, deprived of the benefit of education, and shut out from the light of truth, had broken her bonds, and soared above the horrible debasement to which females were condemned by their rulers. The Christian Religion, of which that Bible that you lately quoted as authority for the servitude of women, is the sacred repository, is in fact the charter of female liberty; and in proportion as the Sun of Righteousness shines with more or less refulgence in any land, in such proportion is woman respected."

"Pray then, Mr. Oliphant, how comes it that the sense of mankind has always been taking a contrary course? A boy is hardly out of his nurse's arms, before he hears of his superiority over his sisters. When he goes to school, the first grammar that his lisping tongue is turned to repeat, tells him that his sex is most worthy. In the *world*, one hears women only estimated by their beauty, or their wealth; and in families we see them nothing better than the wrecks of a former day, little loved by their husbands, or respected by their children."

"*Hinc illæ lachrymæ*," answered my opponent, "in *one* sense the male sex is decidedly superior—I mean in strength; and were this employed in supporting the weak, instead of oppressing them, the female world would not be disposed to grudge men a supremacy of which they would themselves enjoy the happy fruits. But as to your nursery nonsense, an elder son is always told that he is as much above his younger brothers, as his sisters; and so he is, by the laws of primogeniture, which give him the estate. Yet I suppose that there are few such blockheads as to believe, that because a man happens to come into the world before his brethren, he is therefore invested with a patent of superior intellectual endowment. On the contrary, it often happens, that elder sons, satisfied with the gifts of fortune, take little trouble with their minds, and are, in point of cultivation, at the *tail* instead of the *head* of their Houses. Grammar rules prove nothing. They were made by *men*, and according to vulgar estimates of physical force; and as *to the world*, the most convincing proof in my eyes of its degeneracy in our day, is to be found in the impertinent neglect of women, so frequently observable in the *soi-disant* men of fashion. To sum up the argument: the sexes differ from each other, but *difference* implies nothing of better or worse, taller or shorter, wiser or less wise. They are *different*, and each beautifully adapted by the eternal Creator to fulfil the purposes for which it was designed. The man stronger, more active—made to encounter danger, and endure fatigue. The woman more delicate, more refined, formed to sooth by her tenderness, to watch over the helpless, comfort the unfortunate, and be the balm of human kind. In mental capacity Nature has dealt with impartial bounty, and the most splendid talents are to be found in that sex, which I grieve to add, too rarely exercise their powers. Rely upon it, that men are not less manly for sharing their privileges, nor women less feminine for profiting by the boon. The age of Chivalry is gone, and it would be well to restore it.

"Look, my dear young gentleman, around you at Glenalta. Is Frederick less likely to attain the gold medal at his University, or is he less ardent in pursuit of game in the fields, because he loves his mother and sisters, and would be unwilling to enjoy any gratification in which they were not partakers? Turn your eyes upon the dear gentle trio of your fair cousins, and tell me are they less pleasing, less modest, less artless, and happy, because, with minds well stored, they can always find resources at home, for which others are vainly seeking abroad? Are they less elegant because they are independent, or less delicate because they neither shriek at a wasp, nor faint at the sight of a spider?"—

I was going to say something, I hardly know what, when a party appeared in sight, that at a little distance might have passed for a group of gipsies; Paddy and the poney car, led the van. Frederick, the three girls, Phil., and young Bentley brought up the rear. We were together in the next moment, and in the midst of salutations, I could not help remarking the anxiety of all the young people about my aunt, whose expression of fatigue had brought them back to offer aid, and satisfy themselves that she was not ill. Frederick settled the cushions, and dispatched Paddy, saying, that he must himself drive the little car, lest it should go too fast. Fanny had brought a small basket, in which was a phial of hartshorn, and a glass having been also produced, away ran Charlotte to the stream which tumbles through this rocky glen, to procure water,—all without *fuss*, or effort.

Yes, there is no question of it—what Oliphant says is true enough. These people are not at all the worse for any thing that they have said, done, learned, or acquired. My aunt was unusually gay, to convince her children that nothing ailed her; and we all returned home, laughing and talking as merrily as possible. Bentley was asked to stay and dine, which Phil. had promised also to do, and so sped Saturday away as smoothly as if it *rolled* on *casters*.

In the evening we walked. I took my first lesson in botany from Emily. We planned a trip to Killarney, for July, if my aunt makes no objection, and finished the *revels* with music.

What would you think, if I tell you, that Domine took the bass in several glees, and has a remarkably fine sonorous voice. Our guests departed. The bell rang. Servants were assembled, and the usual prayer was read, with no other circumstance of change, than the substitution of Mr. Oliphant, in quality of domestic chaplain, for my aunt.

Just as we were about to separate, Fanny called me, and whispered, "Don't go yet to your room. We are going to hold a conference for a few minutes in the study, and you must assist at our council." I accordingly lagged behind, and after Mr. Oliphant and my aunt had severally retired, we five mustered in the Library. Emily opened the proceedings, by saying, "Arthur, my brother, sisters and I, have set our hearts upon accomplishing a project which Frederick and I devised in our walk this evening. It is to prevail with our beloved mother to accompany us to Killarney. It is *many* years since she has been there, and I know that she will not revisit that heavenly spot without the deepest emotion. Yet we cannot help flattering ourselves with its being of such a nature as not to amount to pain; and it will be counteracted by the pleasure of beholding our rapture at seeing her make one in our excursion. Phil. is in our secret, and *now* so are you. We are going to write a petition. She shall not have it to-night, because it might agitate her; and it shall only be signed by her children, because if such happiness as her compliance would impart, should be in store for us, it is of that sacred character which we could not bear to owe even to the dearest friends; and if, on the other hand, as I am afraid may prove the case, we are asking too much, we will not involve any one else in the pain of a refusal. Now good night—wish us success, and meet us in the moss-house at eight in the morning to learn our fate."

I went to my room quite unable to speak—I was suffocating, and, *shall* I confess to Falkland (but proclaim it not in Gath) tears, such as I never shed before in all my life, coursed each other down my "innocent nose." It is too much. Unmanned at a short turn, and by what? a set of children laying schemes to have their mother's company in a party of pleasure! Well, I know not what is to come next, but this place will be the ruin of me, if this is the way in which I go on resigning my understanding. Positively I shall be absolutely unfit for society, and look when I go back to town precisely as if I had been spending a couple of months with Noah in the ark, and had just stepped out on Mount Ararat. I took myself to task; shook myself; scolded myself; chewed the cud of the last ball at Almack's; ditto at Lady Arabella Huntley's; placed myself in the midst of that group with whom I passed my last London evening at Lady Murray's after the Opera; but it would not do.

When the mind gets one of these *wrenches*, it is in vain to attempt setting matters to rights again in a hurry. I found, after toiling to give a new bent to my reflections, that they would still return with elastic force to the place whence they set out; and I therefore gave vent to them in the new course which they had channelled for themselves. While in this mood, I could not help thinking, that if we measure life by the exercise of our faculties, and the warmth of our feelings, instead of by such evidences of existence as might apply to stocks and stones as well as to sentient beings, I have only *lived* in your society, and since I came to Glenalta. A mournful chill stole over my heart as I involuntarily asked myself, "Is my mother like *this* mother, or are my sisters like my cousins?" These questions led me to one still more immediately painful—"Do I resemble Frederick?" The inquiry was accompanied by a feeling of such bitterness, that I fear it must have been answered in the negative, to each of my self-addressed queries. Alas! thought I, of what light materials are we formed! tossed about by every wind, and seizing on the contagion of every new situation! Well, one week has worked a strange *jumble* of my tastes and opinions, but all will be *stratified* in regular order, according to received notions, by a corresponding term, when I revisit Selby or Grosvenor Square. This consolation seemed a *quietus*, for I fell asleep, and undisturbed by farther moralizing, rose refreshed and full of spring, in due season to keep my engagement.

What a vein of lovely weather! and what an influence does it exert over our souls. The morning appeared as if determined to cheat me into good humour with all the wearisome business of Sunday in "a pious family" (oh that quaint expression) in the country. Nature looked as if she had just stepped, in the luxuriance of youth and beauty, that moment from her bath. A dew-drop glistened on every blade of grass, and fragrance breathed around from every flower. I set out with that invigorating sensation of hilarity which I have always found an early walk on a fine day to produce. I believe, that besides the animal gratification arising from sunshine, perfumes, and the bracing quality of fresh air, we are insensibly pleased with ourselves, when we have started

from the enervating effects of drowsy slumbers, and snatched a portion of time from Lethe's wave.

I was in the humour to analyze, and I think that I was more complacent in my feelings towards *myself* than usual. If so, it is not hard to account for the *balminess* of charity towards all things else—the key-note is ever to be found within our own breasts, and it regulates the whole strain.

Half-musing, half-poetizing, I reached the moss-house, and was ruminating on the sparkling stream that dashes over the rock, amongst its tangled brush-wood, when with light feet, my nymphs and their brother hastened round the wood, and appeared at the seat of Congress.

After a joyous "good morrow," they told me that "mamma" had not been awake when they left the house to attend the Sunday School, and therefore they had no good news to impart to me; and only came to the place of appointment, lest I should wait and accuse them of a failure in punctuality.

The words "Sunday School," acted as a "killing frost" to all the tender leaves and buds with which Fanny had wreathed my morning walk, and looking I dare say like an icicle, I said, "And are you *really* enlisted amongst those troops of godly women dressed in grey, and looking like flocks of Solon geese, who paddle from house to house on the Sabbath, and make that which was given us for an anniversary of repose, the most tiresome and laborious day of all the weekly seven?" My companions laughed, and Frederick bade me not be alarmed, assuring me that there were no Solon geese in the poultry-yard of Glenalta.

"We do not belong," said Emily, "to a *train-band* of any description; and a very short portion of Sunday is sufficient for our little task. But few children assemble at our school, as Protestants are thinly scattered in Kerry; and, as it is a rule here, never to teach to read where the Bible is not received, the number of our scholars is very limited. This would be subject of grief to mamma, were it not her fixed opinion, supported by the experience and strong sense of our friend Mr. Otway, and the worthy tutor, that in *this* country matters are not ripe for the quantity of education forced upon the people, and that a more gradual process is for the advantage of every part of the community; but were it otherwise, our individual labours would still be light. Charlotte, Fanny, and I, go before breakfast to hear the children read a chapter, repeat a collect, and answer a few questions, more as *pioneers* to Mr. Oliphant, than as teachers. This occupies only one hour, and we do no more. Domine, as you call him, and the Curate of our parish, who is a very good clergy-man, examine after church, and this finishes the school-work of the day."

"Bless me!" said I, "I am very glad to hear these things, but must own that your account is most unexpected. The ladies whom I have heard called 'pious,' at our post town in Buckinghamshire, sit up, I imagine, all Saturday night, and starve all Sunday. They defile along in troops, looking sour enough to curdle milk into whey by their presence, and are always to be seen loaded with tracts, and carrying bags which are filled with other implements of the trade. These saintly damsels are, I firmly believe, a set of whale-boned exclusionists, who deny salvation to all who are not within their pale, and able to answer their *qui va là?* by the signs and countersigns of their free masonry."

"Arthur," replied Emily, "though your anger diverts, I must scold you for being too severe. Why should you judge so hardly upon hearsay testimony of people whom it is your boast not to be acquainted with? Surely starving, without food or rest by day, and sleep at night, cannot be matter of *amusement*; and if your picture be not greatly exaggerated, we may at least hope that the motives are pure, which dictate so much self-denial."

"Not a bit of it, I assure you," answered I. "I promise you that these folks are self-sufficient, as they are generally weak; and have as much pride, vanity, and dogmatism, in their own *plain* way, as their neighbours. They set up to be teachers, when they would be much better employed in learning; and both men and women of the new light get into the cant, and are sworn in to the confederacies to serve very secular purposes. See how they nestle into the houses of the great, marry the best fortunes, and while they preach a religious republic, always take care if they can, to secure the dictatorship."

"We know nothing here of these abuses," said Emily; "I have heard of noble characters who devote all their time, money, and influence, to the high purposes of reclaiming the vicious, and teaching the Word of God to the ignorant. But if we lived in a less refined spot than this, we should not even then be likely to join any of the societies to which you allude, composed of such as are technically, and most improperly called, when with design to convey a *taunt*, 'good people.' Mamma dislikes *liveries*, whether of dress or manners. She disapproves of bazaars, working parties, and all religious exhibitions and excitements: in short, of all demonstrations of what she calls a *gregarious* spirit of piety; though she makes it a point never to express an opinion in the presence of any one who could wrest it to the unworthy purpose of throwing either ridicule or reproach on numbers of excellent persons of both sexes who differ from her in theory as well as practice."

"I perceive," said I, with delight, "that my aunt does not consider dancing a sin."—"No, so far from it," answered Frederick, "that when the Sandfords were with us, we were very gay, and I hope shall be so again when they return in the autumn. My mother loves that piety should rear her altar in the heart, and does not rest so much as some well meaning people are inclined to do, on petty observances of a merely external kind. She cannot endure *mannerism*, and her feelings are very strong upon the injury which true religion sustains through want of judgment in her votaries. The tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, occupies many, perhaps not to the entire *exclusion* of weightier matters; but *little* things can be understood, and grasped by minds totally

incapable of enlarged views; and unfortunately these are often mistaken for vital principles, when they are no more than sign-posts. For this reason, the peculiar language which has become so common, is never used here; and though Sunday at Glenalta is a very sacred day, I hope that you will not find it more dull than other days."

As Fred. ceased to speak, who should enter our council chamber but my aunt. "What! all my dears assembled in committee?" "Yes, dearest mother," said Frederick, springing forward to meet her, "and with Arthur in the chair, we have passed a resolution, that you will make us the happiest group in Christendom, if you will grant the boon implored in this petition." So saying, he slipped a paper into her hand, and taking two of his sisters, leaving Fanny to grace my arm, he added, "we must not take our sovereign by surprise. She must have time to *dwell* upon the prayer of her subjects. So we will make a tour of St. Colman's rock, and be back like true liegemen, to assist her in returning home." Off he hurried us, and this was done to spare his mother that emotion which is always felt when we know that what passes within the heart is seen and comprehended by others. It is astonishing! These young people study every look, and can follow the windings, however sinuous, of every thought, when affection is the lamp to guide their way.

We took the round of St. Colman, a great white rock, about which, there is a legend, that perhaps I may tell you at some other time, and found my aunt seated where we left her: probably pondering upon past happiness, and present gratitude, for blessings still continued. Her *own* sweet smile rested on her countenance, but a tear had recently fallen on her cheek. She did not wait to be addressed, but extending a hand to Fred. and his eldest sister, told them by a beaming, but silent look, that she complied with their entreaty. Fred. seized her in his arms in extacy, and having given one emphatic kiss, which bore a world of thanks upon its impress, he dashed out of the moss-house, unable to control the feeling of his manly heart. He is a fine creature. Emily and Charlotte glided away without uttering a word, and Fanny sobbed aloud. Her mother kissed her, and taking my arm, with a tremulous voice that seemed to struggle against display of those inward conflicts which caused it to falter, said to me, "dear Arthur, you are unused to scenes like this in fashionable life, yet they are very sweet. Like Cornelia, I have my jewels, and they are precious gems; but we shall be late, and Mr. Oliphant will wonder what has become of his congregation." I felt again the plaguy *choke*, which is an endemic, I suppose of these bogs, for I have scarcely ever experienced a fit of the disease till I came here. I could not help giving a gentle *squeeze* to the hand that leaned upon my arm. "You are the happiest set I ever saw," said I. A suppressed sigh met my ear, and Fanny, jumping into the middle of the walk, to arrest our progress, broke a chain which would have led to sorrow. "Oh! mamma, stop: Arthur, don't put down your right foot for your life. There, now he's safe poor thing," and in an instant, a frightful frog, which had been hurt by some unlucky foot that had come down too weightily on the reptile's leg, was gently deposited, first on her hand, and then laid quietly on the grass under the shade of a Lauristinus. "I will return after breakfast," muttered Fan. "and if I find that you are not likely to recover, poor little wretch, you shall be put out of your pain by old Lorry." How my sisters would stare in wild amaze, were I to tell them of such an act! "Pray," said I, "Fanny, do you cherish in this manner, all the vile vermin that chance brings into your path?" "To be sure; every creature can live its short hour in pleasure or in pain; and the less pretty and likely to excite sympathy, the more I feel to be its friend: it is so pleasant to be kind to any thing that is unfortunate. These little traits let you into whole regions of character, and therefore it is that I relate them. You are very near the end of my *sketches*, and must then be contented with letters that sum up events; but I will not relax the labours of my *pencil*, to commence upon those of my *pen*, till you have Sunday sent down the stream of time, with the years before the flood."

Oliphant, who had not any *starch* whatever in his features, met us at the verandah, without his hat, and looking as benign as the sky that he seemed to have stood admiring, before we reached the door. He helped my aunt to take off her shawl, and then presenting his arm, led the way towards the little room which serves as a chapel, where the only addition to the usual orisons, was a short and emphatic prayer for a blessing upon the employments and instruction, whether public or private, of this day. Breakfast ended, we soon set out to church, which is full a mile distant; but the fineness of the weather tempted most of the party to walk. My aunt and Emily accompanied Mr. Otway in his carriage; and young Bentley, who is on a visit at Lisfarne, joined *us*.

Arrived at the parish church, upon the side of a bleak and barren hill, I looked with amazement at the poverty of all around, not that there was an absence of decency, or even comfort; but the bare white-washed walls, the simple uncarved pulpit, unfringed cushions, with the absence of monumental decoration, music, and all the paraphernalia of church worship on our civilized side of the channel, struck me most unfavourably as I entered the family pew; but these things were soon forgotten, and the service was admirably performed. It so happened, that a gentleman who was on his way to some other part of the country, and whose talents as a preacher stand deservedly high, had halted the day before at our parson's house, and was prevailed upon to take the pulpit. Mr. Oliphant, whose voice is well modulated, and whose devotion communicates a kindred feeling to his auditors, read the lessons, and prepared the mind, by the simple energy of his manner, for the powerful impression which awaited it. The sermon was upon prayer, and described the efficacy of supplication for divine mercy and assistance. The preacher, who perhaps I may never see again, has left an indelible impression upon my mind. He was tall, thin, and pale, with a wonderful benevolence of aspect. A holy calm sat upon all his features, which the serene but clear light of his eye distinguished completely from the dulness of vanity. There was nothing monotonous in the repose of his appearance; and when he opened his lips, the effect was of music spoken. To the finest voice I ever heard, he added the perfection of its adaptation to every variety of meaning which his matter was designed to convey, and while every inflection

seemed to be suited to the words which it uttered with such correspondence of expression, that had *they* been removed echo would still have given back all they could have imparted; *study* was the last idea that suggested itself in listening to this eloquent being. All his tones, each look, each emphasis, appeared to be the spontaneous drapery in which a bright understanding clothed the feelings of his heart. I never was so transfixed in my life, and the apostolic sacredness of his figure harmonized so entirely with the simplicity of that lowly building divested of even the common-place decoration usual in English country churches, that for some time I was untrue to our beloved *Gothic*, and actually began to fancy that I had never till yesterday been amongst the faithful worshippers of God in His own Temple.

When the sermon was finished, the preacher remained in his pulpit, apparently desirous of allowing the congregation to disperse before his departure; and we saw no more of him.

The family of Glenalta had heard frequently of his extraordinary powers, but till now had never had an opportunity of judging for themselves. As we walked home, our talk by the wayside naturally enough took its hue from the scene which we had just quitted, and I asked Mr. Oliphant whether Mr. Leighton, whose performance had excited such general admiration, held the opinions distinctively denominated Calvinistic? "No, I should imagine not; but cannot speak positively, as I am not personally acquainted with him." Young Bentley, who was a little behind us, stepped up, and said, "I believe that I may answer with *certainty*; for an uncle of mine, who lives in the north, is very intimate with Mr. Leighton, and once asked him the question, from having heard some reports which were circulated touching the doctrines that he inculcated; and he entered upon that occasion into a full statement of his sentiments, which, to sum up briefly, may I fancy be comprised in two words, Gospel truth. He professed the most perfect charity for those who sincerely differ from him; and likewise the deepest admiration for holiness both of life and character, in some of those writers who held the peculiar tenets that mark Calvin's creed: but he unequivocally declared that he did not adopt the Genevan opinions, while he as unhesitatingly asserted his belief in evangelical piety as the only vital religion." "Pray," said I, "tell me what you mean; for with *us* evangelical preachers are synonymous with Calvinists." "Aye," said Mr. Oliphant, "and probably with Methodists too: there is nothing so easy as a *name* by which people are in the habit of representing things not understood or inquired into? I once knew a young man who, being met in the street by another who had known him at the university, was suddenly asked, 'Why, Dick, when did you turn Calvinist?' My young friend stared, and the other flippantly added, 'I heard that you never dance now, and therefore suppose you to be one of the new light.' In this way, idleness and folly make sad confusion; but to answer *your* question, as to differences between certain opinions, I will put a volume into your hands, whenever you please, which will give you in detail the points upon which Calvin dissented from the Lutheran doctrines, and formed a sect now known by his name. Very many individuals are called Calvinists in the unthinking manner which I have described, without being in reality such; and many who incontrovertibly held Calvin's opinions, and others who do hold them at the present day, have been, and are, men whose virtues ought to excite our deepest veneration, and inspire an earnest desire of imitation; however we may consider them mistaken in their explanation of those parts of the Bible which *appear* to sanction their doctrines. A pure evangelical faith embraces all that seems necessary to salvation, namely, the most perfect self-abasement before God, together with a lively sense of human unworthiness, full implicit confidence in the free gift of atoning mercy as the only way to everlasting glory, and an earnest desire, by increasing holiness and obedience, to prove ourselves the children of God. These principles, with the addition of a clear sense that we must *adopt* them, and become, through the divine spirit infused into our souls, awakened from the delusive securities of natural pride, and humbled by an abiding consciousness of our sins and infirmity, constitute a summary of the Christian system, and comprise all that is essentially evangelical."

"I observed nothing," said I, "of peculiar phraseology in Mr. Leighton's discourse, and certainly never heard any language more entirely free than is his from that *twang* which I have hitherto considered as a characteristic of the ultras in religion." "Now, my young friend," replied Domine, "are you not falling yourself into the error which you reprobate? Why use those words, which designate a sect of fashionable fault-finders, who rail against a religion which they do not take the trouble to investigate, just as plainly as the terms that you are desirous to abolish, mark what you call the new light fraternity?"

I told him that I stood corrected, and he shook my hand, saying, "I thank you for so kindly excusing me in thus abruptly calling you to order;" and then continued—"Mr. Leighton is a person of such character, that my conclusion respecting his not being a Calvinist was drawn entirely from the absence of those expressions generally belonging to the school." "But, sir," said Mr. Bentley, "I have heard several sermons preached by men whose principles I discovered at a *short turn* now and then to be really Calvinistic, though they were free from every peculiarity of phrase, and so guarded as to doctrine, that for a long time I have resisted the idea of their being any other than evangelical ministers of the gospel, such as you described it to be." "Aye," answered Oliphant, "that is the very point to which I would draw your attention. It is, in my opinion, not right to consider any tenet of a particular creed essential to salvation, and yet *suppress* it. Either the *decretum horribile* is, or is not, a vital article: If not, there is no Calvinism, and if it be, no man who believes in its importance as a pillar of faith is justified by motives of *expediency* in leaving out subjects so essential in *their* view of the Christian system. A practical evil which I have known to proceed from what is commonly called a *judicious* style of preaching is, that many are taken in to become members of a congregation before they are aware of the tenets of their instructor. Much confusion of mind sometimes results. Weak understandings are perplexed, and the effect is, that people who are not capable of drawing nice distinctions, at last

slide gradually, without any exercise of their own will or understanding, into the opinions very different from those of which they *imagine* themselves to be the advocates. But, my dear Mr. Howard, we should each in his own sphere, be it narrow or extended, rejoice in all the good that exists, though it may vary in its livery; and, so far from cultivating a spirit of ridicule, endeavour to draw the bonds of charity together, so as to include all the *sincere* and pains-taking of the Christian community, within its ample scope."

We were now arrived at the house, and separated into little parties. My aunt and her daughters disappeared, Mr. Oliphant and young Bentley went off to the school, and Fred. and I took a long and delightful walk *tête-à-tête* by the sea side. We had a great deal of conversation that informed me of many particulars respecting my family, with which I had never till then been made acquainted. On returning home, as we passed a cabin door, I saw Fanny busily distributing bread and money, the former from a large basket held by the same boy who attends the donkies, and the latter from a small leather bag which she carried slung upon her arm. "What are you doing here?" was answered by "nothing but our Sunday-work;" which, being interpreted, meant a weekly donation presented by these amiable girls to a few old people who cannot work, and who esteem the gift tenfold for being communicated by the hands of their young mistresses. This is a *striking* feature in the poor of this island. In England, a shilling is a shilling provided it come legitimately from the mint, no matter who is the donor; but here sentiment, which with us is confined to the higher classes, is to be found in the most miserable habitations.

Charlotte, who was within the hut, joined our party, and told us that a poor man had just been expressing to her feelings which certainly are not common in any rank of life. She had said, "*Tim.*, why are you not walking to-day; it is too fine weather to stay in the house?" and his answer was, "The finer the day, my dear miss, the more I'd covet not to be looking at it; ever since I buried *her*, I'd rather be to myself, and Sunday brings all the people out." What an artless expression of faithful affection! This man's wife, who is the "*her*" to be comprehended, he supposes, by every one, because there is no other to confound with the image in his own breast, has been dead for six years; and yet Memory is true to her trust. There is something very endearing in this tenderness, and we feel in good humour with our species, when an instance like what I have mentioned occurs, to prove that some of our best movements can spring from an uncultivated soil.

At dinner, after dinner, and all the evening, I am compelled in honesty to say, that not a moment passed heavily. We laughed and talked as usual. The interval between dinner and tea was spent in walking; that between tea and nine o'clock in listening to some of Handel's finest songs, very sweetly performed; and e'er "the close of the silent eve," the family group were once more assembled; and after prayers, and a short but impressive sermon, sent to their rest with an emphatic blessing.

You have now the panorama of Glenalta, and you are placed upon a platform in the midst, from which, turning yourself round the scene, you can form a just idea of every object which it includes within the circuit.

Thus have I brought (I believe with fidelity) the first part of my epistolary labours to a conclusion. From this time forth you will know all the *ground-plan*, and be enabled to allot its own place to each occurrence as it may chance to arise. As to the general impression made upon my mind, I own to you that I never was so happy anywhere as since I came to this lone and lovely spot; and I am powerfully struck with the truth of a remark which you once made to me, and which at that time though I had a vague idea of your being right, I had no actual experience that permitted me to confirm; namely, that *society* in its true sense consists not in the number of those *persons* with whom one converses, but in the number of ideas excited in one's own mind. Glenalta completely illustrates this observation. A family of five individuals, with the addition of two intimate friends, have furnished such variety and excitement in the flow of my thoughts, that I appear to have lived in a crowd; and through a long duration of time I was thinking of this circumstance before I got up this morning as a contradiction to the common notion, that when we are most happy time seems the fleetest; but I see how it is—both remarks are strictly true.

Stimulus of an agreeable diversified nature certainly prevents our taking note of time while *present*, and therefore it may be said to glide away rapidly; but when *remembered*, every circumstance which produced a change of pleasure, serves to distinguish one portion from another, and thus to afford a sense of progress, which the dullness of monotony is incapable of producing, just as a single acre of ground, animated by trees, houses, and living creatures, fills a much greater extent in imagination, when we *recollect* the landscape, than is occupied by a wide expanse of ocean, though the latter, when *looked* upon, appeared a boundless prospect; *still*, however, in the midst of this sunshine of the heart, I always bear in mind that its *locality* is the secret of its charm. *You* would not agree with me, but I am assured that the sort of thing that delights where one feels no *responsibility*, would cease to fascinate in the moment that the surrounding world came to call one to account for one's country cousins: and these dear souls, perhaps, might make one blush at the *west end*. I ought not to say so from any thing that I have seen here; but the whole course of our thoughts and feelings is *so* subject to join the tide of opinion, that I hardly dare to assert how far my present impressions, vivid as they are, would stand the test of a Bond-street jury.

As Mrs. Malaprop says, however, "let us not have any retrospections as to the future" *Viva, viva*. I am so much better, that I hardly remember how I came here in the high road to Charon's ferry.

I am longing to hear from you. Don't forget to let me know about Stanhope, as Mr. Otway will be anxious to learn whether you and he *cement*.

Adieu, dear Falkland. Am I not the very pine-apple, and quintessence of letter-writers? Huzza!

Yours, ever affectionately,
ARTHUR HOWARD.

LETTER VIII.
MISS DOUGLAS TO MISS SANDFORD.

My dearest Julia,

Glenalta.

Unfortunately for me, I promised to write again without entering into any covenant with you; and were I prevented from performing my vow for half a year to come, I suppose that you would be a little female Shylock and insist upon your bond, before you put pen to paper. I do not know whether I shall do more wisely in refraining from all apology for my silence, or in attempting to account for it. If you have been able to settle into a regular track of daily employment since your return to Checkley, you will be able to comprehend how the day should often find us defaulters at its close, in at least half the amount of what we had to do at its commencement; but if the *whirl* of travelling be still in operation, you may wonder how people, who are stationary, should not have too much time, rather than too little, on hand. I will therefore keep on the safe side, and make no excuse, lest it should not be considered a valid one, till I know how far you can understand our habits of life; but as I am very certain of your heart, I will proceed to tell you, as I promised in my last letter, of the surprise which Frederick and I have prepared lately for our dearest mother.

On Wednesday next Arthur is to take a long ride with Mr. George Bentley, and Frederick, and I mean to take advantage of our cousin's absence to introduce mamma to the *retreat*, for so we have named the spot which is consecrated by our rural labours to this idol of our daily worship. Surely such worship cannot be idolatry, for through the finest mortal, as the most beautiful natural, object, we may pay homage to the God that created it. But *do* we really offer this tribute, or does not too much love—does not too large a share of adoration rest in the channel without reaching the source, like the worship of our poor Roman Catholic, which is certainly given to the pictures and images, that adorn their altars rather than to the Divinity which they represent? This is a question which my conscience so often asks itself, that I believe the true answer would come against me; and yet with the half convicted sense of being a sinner, the sin of loving my mother beyond due bounds, borrows so much of her character from its object, that it *appears* like virtue, and so deludes.

Fred. and I talked the matter over yesterday evening, as we stole away to our hallowed bower.

When you were at Glenalta, I never told you of the discovery which my brother and I had made, because to have mentioned, without shewing you, a gem so worthy of your admiration, as I shall presently describe, would hardly have been kind. Your curiosity and feeling would have been awakened, and I should have feared to gratify them lest we might have disturbed the solitary genius of the place, who was at that time, a daily visitant at its rustic shrine. When first we came here, as I told you in my last letter, Nanny and Mr. Oliphant were alternately our walking companions. Mamma was weak both in body and spirits; and though she made exertion to be gay when we were with her, it is only long since that period that I have been fully sensible how much we owed her for efforts that were beyond her strength. As the mind requires to unbend after intense meditation, so her spirit asked repose after over excitement, and she used to glide along the shrubbery, meet her donkey at its wicket gate, and, following the winding pathway of our glen, ascend, as we imagined the mountain that lies beyond St. Colman's rock, to breathe the "unchartered air of heaven," in full security of not being interrupted; but, as she never went accompanied by any one, we still only conjectured whither she directed her daily ride: and her sorrow was too sensitive, even to our young eyes, to permit of our asking many questions. We had been at Glenalta for three years, before Frederick and I, who were then allowed to visit our poor people at a distance, and explore our glens alone, found ourselves one day about three miles from home, and along the course of the same rivulet which sports so gracefully near our moss-house, at the most enchanting spot that I ever beheld. It is a tiny dell, shut out, or rather shut in, from all the world besides. A Liliputian lawn of the softest green, and not more than a few yards in circumference, serves as a pedestal to one single tree, the only one of its kind in the whole scene. This tree is a beach of surpassing beauty, which casts its delicate branches in a sweeping curve round the little area which it occupies, forming an umbrella of shade, except in one part, where a natural opening invites underneath its lovely archway.

The stream, which near Glenalta is comparatively tame, though sweetly fanciful, assumes a bolder aspect at the retreat, and dashes over fragments of broken rock, which are richly clothed with fern and ivy, and start from masses of holly, and other brushwood, that grow luxuriantly down at each side, to the verge of our mountain brook, which makes a circuit round the beech, so as to render the *velvet cushion* on which it stands almost a little island. As the bleak heath-covered hill rises in every direction, you could fancy yourself to have reached a fertile oasis in the midst of a desert. Nothing of animated life appeared in view except two young goats that had ventured down the precipice, and the silence was only broken by the rush of waters. Frederick and I stood quite transfixed; but when our first exclamations of wonder and delight had subsided, we determined on exploring farther, and passing round the tree we scrambled to the other side, and found a rude seat of stone, over which a tuft of alders and mountain-ash had formed a roof impenetrable to the sun. A variety of the beautiful orchis, cowslip, and primrose tribes intermixed with wild violets of the most brilliant purple, enameled the ground, and the softest moss lined

every part of this sylvan niche with refreshing verdure. We sat down in a perfect ecstasy, then pulled bundles of flowers, drank at the stream, and were indulging in all the luxury of our good fortune, when something white struck my eye, clung into the root of an old hazle which stood a little below us. I pointed it out to Frederick, who immediately jumped down the rock, and found a bit of paper rolled round a pencil. It was torn, and had been injured by wet, having evidently lain for a long time in its concealment. The holly which grows so abundantly all over the rocks, had furnished its evergreen protection so as to save the paper from melting away, and the weight of the pencil, round which it was tightly wrapped, had contributed with the tangled roots, to prevent its being carried away by the wind. We eagerly unfolded our mysterious prize, and with some difficulty decyphered, at last completely, and in mamma's hand-writing, the following lines:

Inscribed upon thy polished rind,
That name was once engraved,
Which, traced upon my heart I find,
The wreck that grief has saved.

Nor ruthless time, nor cankering care,
Hath swept that sacred line;
The perfect record lingers there,
Carved on the faithful shrine.

Yes, and within thy beechen breast,
Sweet sympathy conceals
The characters that once confessed,
Thy bark no more reveals.

Thy glossy fane now furrowed o'er,
Protects from wandering gaze
That name adored, which never more
Thy jealous love betrays.

Thy roughened form,—my time-worn cheek,
Alike refuse to tell
The signs that idlers vainly seek
Within this leafy dell.

But when the axe hath laid thee low,
And bowed thy graceful head;
And *me*, life's latest mortal foe,
Shall number with the dead;

Then in our bosoms' inmost seat,
The self same image found,
Reveals to view its deep retreat,
Fast in the heart-strings bound.

We gazed on each other, and the truth flashed upon our hearts in the same instant. Frederick and I, by a movement imparted from within, darted towards the tree together, and on examination found a part of the once varnished surface, raised into irregular carbuncles, where the bark had closed with time over some letters no longer legible. With much pains, we satisfied ourselves that the initials H. A. C. D. had been interwoven, and cut in the bark from the external face of which, these letters had been carried inward by the process of annual growth. It immediately occurred to us, that our beloved parents had made this a favourite haunt in happier days; and that the undying memory of some faithful mourner had sought again these now almost obliterated characters. Such mourner could have been no other than the dear surviving guardian of our youth; and our tears flowed without restraint, as we read again and again, the stanzas of which we had become accidentally possessed. The first movement of our minds was, as you may suppose, to restore them directly to their author; and it was not without considerable reasoning between ourselves, that either could convince the other of its being better to suppress the verses, and say nothing of the *retreat*. From mamma's never having communicated any hint relative to this little hermit-cell, it was obvious that she did not wish us to discover its situation; then, the pencilled lines had been lost for some time. She had made no inquiry about them; her memory was able in all probability, to supply them again; and in giving up what manifestly appeared to be mamma's own composition, such explanation might have ensued as would have opened all her wounds afresh, and destroyed ever afterwards the pleasure which she appeared to feel in visiting the sequestered spot which we had discovered. Upon mature deliberation then we agreed to hush up our little adventure, and keep the tender effusion that we had found, till some natural opportunity might occur of giving it back again to its owner.

Time has rolled on, and the gradual influence of its healing power is happily illustrated in the improved condition of our precious *charge*, (for I consider her as a blessing conferred upon her children, henceforward placed peculiarly in their care); and a moment having arrived in which Frederick agreed with me that we might venture to commence our little scheme, we set to work in the beginning of November, just at the time when the change of weather, and the death of faithful Dapple, that sole companion of our *pilgrim's progress*, conspired to prevent the discovery of our plan. Poor Tom Collins and his son, who live not far from the scene of our operations, were

necessarily let into the secret, for they were manual contributors to the execution of our project; and had this *not* been the case, I should have still rewarded the former by a confidence, the *distinguishing* nature of which he knows how to appreciate, in return for a trait of feeling so unlike one's abstract notion of a *peasant*, and so delicate, that I must tell the anecdote of him, before I proceed with our works at the retreat. One day preparatory to our design, Frederick and I watched an opportunity when mamma was obliged to drive on business to a little town in our neighbourhood, and paid a visit to our favourite spot. We were sitting talking over past, present, and future, when a slight rustling amongst the leaves, announced the approach of some one; and presently poor Tom Collins, on tip-toe, and his finger, in sign of caution, placed upon his lip, stood before us. "Och, then," said he, "its I that am after running to stop your honours from coming down at all, at all, into my misthess's nook. I does be keeping the childer always from this place till the sun does be setting, and then I knows there 'ont be any danger in life of seeing her honour, for becaase she only comes of a morning."

"And Tom," answered I, "why are you so uneasy from the fear of seeing mamma?"

"Och, then, miss, my heart, I'll tell ye, and I never tould it afore, nor wouldn't now, only becaase I never seed any one of quality like, here, only her honour's self; and now if I don't tell, why may be she'd be fretted to think that you and Masther Fred. would find her out in her nook; and I knows very well, that she wouldn't like it, for when it plased God to take my poor boy Darby away from me, I'd covet to be all day moping if I could, down in that very bottom. Why, then, sure enough, it was there I was one Midsummer day, lying down flat on the ground beyont the big holly stump, and thinking heavy enough of Darby, becaase of all days in the year, 'twas his own birth day, when I heard a whispering like, under the baach-tree, so I gets up fair and softly, without making as much stir as a baatle among the laaves; why then *mavourneen*, what would I see but my misthess on her two knees, upon the could ground, looking up and praying like. Well, there I stood, and I seed her crying like droppings from the ivy beyant; and I heerd the words axing the Lord to make yees good childer, and mark yees to Glory. And then she'd ax Him to make her a good mother, and to keep and to help her all the days of her life; and sure, be the same token, God listened to her prayer, for she's the best of ladies. After that she'd get up, and talk to the tree all as one as if it was a Christian, about my maasther, for I heerd her say, *Hinnery*, and so I knew well enough who she'd be spaiking of, being that I'd be often that way talking myself to the air, as I may say, about Darby. Well, my heart grew so big, that I thought it would fairly jump out o'me; so with that, I slinged away; and seeing poor Dapple another day fastened behind the rock above, I says to myself, to be sure says I, she's moping there like myself, and so I never would come again till night fall; but when I have time, I does be above, not far off, only she can't see me, be raison I'd like, if any thing would be for going down the clift, to stop 'em till she'd be clear and clane out o' the place for the day. So that's all about it; and she don't be coming so often now, tho' in the main-time 'tis constant at her prayers or writing on a bit of a paper, or reading out of a little book that she does be, whenever she'll come to the lag below."

The eloquence of Demosthenes could not have worked upon our hearts like this simple story. I seized instinctively upon the rough hand of honest Tom, and Frederick did so likewise. We were too full to utter a word, but we each of us resolved that this trait should have its recording angel, and that, however tears might bedew the remembrance of it, they should never blot out the registry. Of this we *said* nothing, for it would have been a species of sacrilege to sully the purity of such genuine feeling, by making it an apparent cause of any temporal benefit. Oh what a withering breath is praise, and how sickly do the motives of action become, when flattery, that *simoon* of the heart, has passed over them! We now communicated our embryo purpose to Tom, and told him that we intended proceeding to work on the following day, as it was not likely, that during the winter season, my mother would visit her seat again. Pride and joy took possession of his countenance, as we developed our plan; and had we presented him with a purse of gold, I do not think that the expression of his face could have indicated such happiness as the feeling of being thus distinguished by our confidence, inspired.

I must now describe what we have done: Mr. Oliphant has been let into our councils, and his excellent taste has assisted us not a little; but dear Phil., Charlotte, Fanny, and Arthur are as ignorant as mamma, of our necromancy. A beautiful rustic temple has taken place of the stone seat. It is lined with reeds, interleaved in a sort of basket-matting, which fits close to the inside; and the front is supported by pillars of twisted elm, which are surmounted by capitals of remarkably fine cones from the stone-pine. These supporters are covered with clematis, honeysuckle, and roses. A circular seat, equal in softness to any Ottoman divan, is raised to a convenient height, and covered with the same reed-matting which I have mentioned. The paving is of snow-white pebbles, which Collins' little girls have collected for me on the strand, and the whole Glen has been decorated by every thing either fragrant or beautiful, which was not out of character with its wildness. I have trained a number of Alpine plants over the rocks, and taught the lovely water-lily to unfold its flowers upon a tiny basin, which Frederick has scooped out, lower down the stream. We have secured this bower from trespassers, and made a serpentine path through the tangled brush-wood, to permit the dear sovereign of these sylvan dominions to descend the hill without fatigue, and admit of her being brought by Dapple the *second*, up to the door of her rural palace. When this was completed, we set to work at Tom Collins' abode, which is now raised and enlarged into a thoroughly comfortable habitation. A nice cabbage-garden is inclosed at the back, and the front is thickly planted with a double hedge of quicks and privet, separating a little space from the moor, which is filled with sweet, but common flowers. The family have been set to spin, and are already clothed in their own manufacture. Frederick has given poor Tom a cow, to which I have added half a dozen sheep; and such a scene of contentment above, and of beauty below, it would be difficult to equal: at least so *we* think; and

when we contemplate the entire as a creation of our own, Frederick and I certainly do confess to some degree of self-complacency. But as far as I have hitherto narrated, only relates to the *body* of our exertions. I must now describe the *soul* of them. In the back part of our rustic temple, is a door so completely concealed by the matting of reeds, as not to be discernible to ordinary observers. This door, upon being opened, discovers a little cell of just sufficient size to admit of one person's sitting in it without inconvenience. Its furniture consists of a small pedestal of delicate workmanship in white marble, upon which Frederick has placed the exquisite urn that you may remember, of alabaster, found at Pompeia. It belonged to my father, and has been kept in a closet, hidden from every eye since the time of his death. Upon the front of the pedestal which supports it, we have had engraved the following lines:—

Bless'd refuge of a sad and broken heart,
Soft soothing solitude, thy balm impart;
Come with thy gentle train, thy peaceful rest,
Thy tender stillness to this grief-worn breast.
With thee, how sweet to climb the craggy way,
And o'er these rocky cliffs in silence stray,
In Nature's temple to expand the soul,
While tears distil refreshing as they roll,
What fond deceit the present to beguile,
And bid the shades of past delight to smile.
Call back the dreams of youth, and hope, and love,
And 'mid the dear ærial phantoms rove.
But hush! too sharp that pang, my heart gives o'er,
Invoke the memory of thy bliss no more!
Raise up to heaven thy soul, quit earth, and fly,
Go seek thy refuge in yon azure sky;
Ask mercy's aid to shed celestial light
Upon the dismal gloom of sorrow's night,
And God's own spirits of the mountain air,
Shall waft on high the deep unuttered prayer,
While filial love shall consecrate the scene,
That gave a mother's tears for hope serene.

Immediately behind the urn, which with its pedestal is let into a niche, is a pretty little arched window of stained glass; and at the opposite extremity of our Anchorite's cell stands a slab of Kerry marble, which rests upon a simple cabinet of the beautiful black oak of the bog which our island furnishes from its *ebony* stores. When opened, a flat box of polished beech-wood presents itself, and this serves as a solid portfolio, preserving from damp an exquisite drawing in pencil, by Frederick, of the large tree to which you have been already introduced. Underneath the tree, mamma's lines which we found, are neatly transcribed; and the old pencil, with its original paper wrapped round it, as when first discovered in its hiding place, and a pocket Bible, in the first page of which, after the name of Caroline Douglas, are written these words; "The prayer of the righteous availeth much," complete the furniture of this rustic sanctuary.

When Frederick and I went this morning at early dawn, to see that all was finished according to our design, we found Tom Collins already there, leaning against one of the pillars, in an attitude of contemplation. He started from his reverie as we approached, and twirling his old hat in his hands, resting first upon one foot, then upon the other, he said, after the usual salutation, "Miss, dear, I was thinking that you would'nt refuse me, if you please, just to let me be standing overnight there beyond the big baach, when my mistress will be coming—I'll engage I'll not let her see a bit o'me, any more than if I was a sperret, nor I'ont brathe a word good, or bad, only to set my two looking eyes upon her, when she'll see the place you done for her." Could such a request fail of being granted?

This romantic mountaineer is full of the finest sensibilities, and not perverted, as so much of acute feeling often is, to the purposes of discontent and ingratitude. Tom is a good husband, a good son, and a good father. Yet he knows not a letter in the alphabet.

"What shameful ignorance," I hear you exclaim! Ignorance of letters it surely is, but not shameful. You, in England, can be sure of giving your poor a religious education. We cannot! but some of our peasants *act* the Bible, which their priests will not allow them to read; and what benefit would these derive from the pennyworth of sedition or impurity which they might be permitted to purchase, and instructed to peruse? With what fresh delight have I sometimes returned to this dear desert, after having visited some of the districts *said* to be civilized when compared with our neighbourhood!—Oh it is a great mistake to imagine that *reading* is a cure for every evil, unless the Bible be allowed to offer its blessed promises, and hold forth its bright meed of reward for patience in adversity, and resignation under privations, which all other learning is calculated to reveal in the strongest light, without affording any means to remedy. The will of God has made inequality the very essence of every social scheme. No spread of knowledge can improve the lot of him who must till the ground in the sweat of his brow, if that knowledge be not of a nature to make him *better*, and therefore happier; and I never pass by our smith's forge, which is the parish coffee-house, without hearing expressions, and seeing looks that mark a murmuring spirit.

The other day I asked an aged peasant, who lives on the lands of Lisfarne, about fairies; "Did you ever see the *Luracawn*," said I, "of which people say, that it is a sort of fairy that lives always by the sea-side, and carries a purse such as we often find on the strand with strings to it?"

"No, miss, I never did *myself*; but in ould times they used to be seen plenty enough."

"Then," answered I, "perhaps the truth may be, that the people now are grown too wise to believe the stories which were swallowed in old times."

The old man replied, "Miss, there's a great dael o' larning that is'nt knowledge, and there's more of it than is good, I can assure you. The people now gets hould o'books, and cares very little about their parents, who were better folk than many o'*them* that are going now a' days."

"Then you don't approve of learning Andrew."—"Why, miss, you might as well say I don't approve o'my fellow craitures. There's two kinds o'one as of the other.—Good men and good books, bad men and bad books. I likes the two first, and I don't like the two last, and when people gets hould o'larning, the're vastly fonder o'the bad than the good."

Really these people astonish me by the clearness of their views and the acuteness of their observations. But before I close this long letter, I must say a word of Arthur Howard, who is a great favourite already at Glenalta. Had he been born under a happier star than that which presided at his birth, he would be a charming young man, and great improvements may yet be effected, for he is young and full of generous feeling as of quick tact. The contrarieties which nature and art sometimes display in their contest for pre-eminence in his actions, would divert us excessively, if there were not so much to love and regard in the compound, that vexation must ever be a predominating sentiment when he obeys an unworthy impulse. Selfishness is, I believe, the leading vice of fashionable people; and it must be very difficult to throw off the habits in which education has taught us that comfort (that *aldermanic* little word, as many use it) consists.

The first thought in what is called the world, appears to be, "is such or such a thing for *my* pleasure, *my* interest, *my* convenience;" and the *last* is, "whether the matter in question be useful, or agreeable to other people?" I am now speaking of the school, not the scholar, for though Arthur has necessarily adopted *some* of the folly in the midst of which he has lived, moved, and had his being, it is astonishing how little the natural tendencies of his heart are obscured. He came here, as I told you, with very strong prejudices, but I perceive with delight that they are fading away; and, I believe, that he thinks less hardly than he did when he first came amongst us, of female improvement. How could he bask in the sunshine of mamma's sweet smile, and enjoy the constant variety of her unrivalled powers in conversation, without feeling how compatible are the charms of high cultivation with all that is excellent in private life—all that is fascinating in female softness?

As I listened eagerly to a dialogue the other day, in which she was engaged, shedding light and animation upon every subject which came before her, I could not help thinking, that were amusement the only object and end of existence, cultivation of mind would appear, in my opinion, to be an indispensable requisite in the art of attaining it. The gay world, I suppose has its charms, and may attract for a season. Change of place, and change of faces, may please perhaps for a time, but this cannot last for ever, and when the period arrives in which people *must* rely upon the resources of *home*, what an immeasurable distance must there be between the full mind and the empty one! The very playfulness of a superior person is so exhilarating that I never grow weary of it; but of all the tiresome companionships on earth, it is that of animal spirits in perennial flow, that bear no treasure on the tide. How well Pope has expressed what I mean! "For lively Dulness ever loves a joke."

I must reserve space for a concluding word after our visit at the Retreat. Till then adieu.

Well, dear Julia, I feel the repose of my own room most welcome after the excitement of this day. The sun shone in full splendor on our project. Last night Frederick and I spoke to mamma of some trifling alterations that we had been making for the comfort of Tom Collins and his family, whose little dwelling had suffered much from the winter storms.

"Yes, my loves," said she, "I am rejoiced that your activity has anticipated me. Since the death of my poor Dapple, I have not gone so far as Tom's house, and have been *intending* a visit to the mountain, till you have made me ashamed by this lesson on procrastination. The truth is, that my present *steed* is so unlike his predecessor in gait and humour, that he and I are not such friends as to make me quite at home in his company; and I hate to have Paddy running after me. My morning rambles were always solitary, and I should not be at ease now in going alone, till I am more accustomed to my *new Neddy*, or his temper becomes more amiable; but all this is no excuse for not having employed other eyes to see that the Collins' were not unroofed. I wonder why Tom did not come."

"We happened to see him," said Frederick, "which probably prevented his applying to you, as Emily and I did the needful; but if to-morrow should be a fine day, suppose that I drive you and Em. in the pony car, before breakfast, and we will shew you how we have patched up these poor people for the present."

Mamma consented, and this morning early we sat out; but my tears suffocate me at the bare remembrance of my mother's emotion. She was amazed and delighted with our improvements. The garden, the hedge, the clean house, and clean people, all appeared the effect of enchantment. Tom, his wife, and children, grinned with broad uncontrolled rapture, and overwhelmed the little party with blessings. When we had praised, and been praised (*such* praise warms the heart without enervating its powers), Frederick took mamma's arm, and said, "You must come, dearest mother, to look at a dell which Emily and I discovered some time ago, the sweetest spot that you ever beheld." A faint blush overspread her cheek, and I perceived a thrill run through her frame. She hesitated, then hinted that the banks were steep, and that we should be late for breakfast; but *we* coaxed, and she evidently not desiring to say how well she was acquainted with the scene which she was about to visit, suffered herself to be led forward, I

walking behind with a palpitating heart, down the narrow descent, and poor Tom following at a discreet distance. As we proceeded, I observed mamma gaze to the right and the left with amazement; but when our rustic temple burst upon her eye, the expression of her countenance became painfully inquisitive. The mysterious door was opened, Frederick pushed her gently in, closed the wicker-work, and waited with me in the outer inclosure. We heard her sob aloud, and in a few moments she was in our arms.

Here I pause. The sweetness of the feeling reciprocally called forth, would baffle my little powers of language to describe. Is it not Cora, in the play of Pizarro, who talks of three bright moments in her life? No moment in any one's life ever surpassed this expansion of hearts linked by a tie so pure and so affectionate as binds our's to each other. We sat till breakfast was forgotten. We looked, and looked again, and when the first swell of painful pleasure had given way to more tranquil sensations, *we* architects became garrulous, and in the vanity of success, hurrying our beloved mother from flower to flower, shrub to shrub, rock to rivulet, that we might not lose one *atom*, or one *item* of applause; and at length so completely communicated the contagion of *gladness* to her who had inspired the emotion in ourselves, that she entered zealously into the idea of surprising the rest of our party, adding, "I will first come here alone with our dear friend of Lisfarne, after which we will revisit this beloved retreat in a body, and enjoy in common the pleasures which you have created." We were now turning our steps towards Glenalta, when the sight of poor Tom wiping his eyes in the sleeve of his coat, as he leaned against the beech-tree, arrested mamma's attention. She went up, shook him warmly by the hand, and without a word uttered on either side, we separated.

I am promised a conveyance of this *pamphlet* rather than letter by that excellent creature George Bentley, and I am particularly pleased with the power of sending you so voluminous a packet by private hand at present, because I may not be able to write for some time again. We are all going to Killarney. Arthur is an enthusiast about our Glen scenery, and I enjoy exceedingly the delight of shewing him that gem of purest water. Some anxiety, however, is always wisely mingled in our cup, which mamma's promise to accompany us, would have rendered too intoxicating, and this anxiety is relating to dearest Fred. whose College examinations must precede our excursion. He and Mr. Oliphant leave us on Thursday next, and will only be absent during five or six days. I cannot sleep from feverish solicitude, though I believe that my Fred. is very well prepared; but we have so managed this charming trip to Killarney, that it will either crown our victory, should such happiness be in store, or divert our melancholy, should the dear fellow be doomed to suffer a disappointment. Phil. and Mr. Bentley are to be of our party. Do you know that Arthur is quite a surprising botanist already; and as I am his *Linnæa*, I am as proud as a peacock of my pupil. He can now walk without *leading strings*, and is grown so expert that our rambles are become trials of rival skill. Well, I must bid my dear friends adieu. With many loves from Charlotte and Fanny to Bertha and Agnes; and *all* our loves to your *dearly* loved aunt, believe me, Julia's most affectionate,

EMILY DOUGLAS.

LETTER IX. CHARLES FALKLAND TO ARTHUR HOWARD.

My dear Howard,

Rome.

You are, indeed, a *prince* of letter writers, and the delight which you have afforded me is inexpressible. Two of your admirable journals reached me at Pisa, and the last treasure I have received since I came here in company with—whom do you think? Why, actually, Mr. Richard Oliphant, young Stanhope, and I are dwelling under the same roof, and enthusiastically employed in exploring the wonders both within and without this enchanting city. Stanhope has given Mr. Otway a detailed account of our meeting, in consequence of a letter from Lisfarne, after your arrival at Glenalta; and I will therefore not take up your time, nor my own, in repetition, but proceed to say how greatly pleased I am with my new acquaintances. Their grand object was Rome, and I determined to quit Pisa much sooner than was my original design, that I might enjoy such excellent society. Here then we are together, and, should no unforeseen circumstances prevent the completion of our arrangements, I think it likely that we shall not separate hastily, but visit Florence, and Naples, see Pæstum, go to Venice, and pass the winter at Paris in company with each other. If *you* join us there what a coterie shall we form. I feel now as if I were in the midst of the Douglas group. I can see the very countenances, and already make my selections, *even* in that society where all are so much to my taste, that it seems at first view difficult to *prefer*, without doing injustice. From Stanhope I receive the most satisfactory answers to every question which your *volume* suggests; and, oh! what happiness it is to know that in any favoured spot of earth such purity and peace are to be found as bless that little valley of Glenalta with their presence. In any situation the contemplation of such a family would possess charms for me beyond the power of any other pleasure to excite; but if it required to be heightened through contrast, surely that contrast is to be met with on the Continent! Yes, to a sober mind, there is something horrible in the metamorphosis produced in the minds of some with whom you and I are acquainted. Letters are so frequently opened at the foreign post-offices, and so often lost, that I shall be prudent, and not send names out to the winds; however, you will have no difficulty in recognizing F— and L— by their initials; and, though you are *still* a wild sort of being yourself, you will be sorry to hear that they are immersed in every thing at Paris which they used to withstand so vigorously at Cambridge. We ranked them there amongst the *élite*, for genius,

good taste, and polished habits. Alas! how are the mighty fallen? The facilities afforded in Paris to the commission of every vice, are, perhaps hardly greater than those which London offers to tempt unwary youth; but there is all the difference in the world between the *manner* of doing the thing in the two capitals. Notwithstanding the daily intercourse between England and France, there is *still* such a body of national virtue and good feeling unshaken in the former country, that the most profligate can hardly sin with absolute impunity, and vice is scarcely bold enough to throw off the veil which, however flimsy, still protects some purer eyes from beholding corruption in all its deformity. Have you ever felt, when you lingered at a ball till day-light, and the bright beams of a newly risen sun shone with open freshness on the expiring lamps, the pale faces, and the tinsel finery of the last night's pageant; a sort of undefined sensation of shame at being thus caught by the truth-telling hour of waking seriousness, in the midst of a scene so unsuited to the time? If you have, I may avail myself of the similitude to describe the difference which I feel between England and the Continent. I say Continent at large, for the great towns are alike in this; ours is a daylight dance, while here is the nightly revel. With us the clear sunshine of opinion, if it cannot prevent excess, at least exhibits its faded form and haggard countenance, pronouncing on their ugliness, and inducing their concealment. Cross the channel, and a new order of things presents itself. *Decorum* is busy indeed, but it is to deceive, and while the fascination of gaiety and ease presents an opiate to circumspection, the good taste which borrows an external clothing of propriety in which to dress the votaries of pleasure, finishes the delusion, and many young men are not aware of the counterfeit till they are fast bound in the spell like Telemachus in the island of Calypso. The French language too, now so universal, is a potent ingredient in the intoxicating cup. It acts as a *mask*, and since I left England, I have met with numbers of my countrymen, aye, and countrywomen also, who say things at Paris in the idiom of another tongue, which could never find utterance in their own, though no infringement of decency in *conduct* would be tolerated publicly in good society abroad. All this renders foreign travelling a very insidious poison, and happy are those who can enjoy the benefits derivable from extensive acquaintance with men and manners, without risk of confounding the boundaries which separate vice from virtue. In short, no man is *safe*, upon whom the grand tour produces other effect than to send him back with increased thankfulness to the British Isles, as (waving adieu to the shores he has quitted) he borrows the words of the poet to say, "these are my visits;" and, turning to the white cliffs of Albion, finishes the line with "but thou art my home." It would be stupid, however, as well as ungrateful to deny the witchery, by way of securing either one's self, or one's friends against its allurements. This device, which my worthy guardian, I believe, in the honesty of his heart employed as a bastion of strength to fortify my weakness, will never, in any case, survive the first shot that experience levels against it. It is in vain to call the Syren's song discord, to say that nectar is but extract of wormwood, and Ambrosia but a mess of Spartan pottage. The first sound, and the first taste, disabuse the ignorant, adding the stimulus of surprise to what was but too attractive without it. No, let us fairly acknowledge the magic, and then try our best to repel its influence. You know that I shall keep all my *scenery*, whether moral or physical, for fireside talk, *perhaps* at Glenalta, and not so much as a moon-beam on the Coliseum will you have in the way of description, already exhausted by abler limners than I am; but I cannot avoid adding my testimony to the charms of foreign society. It is not that it is wiser or better; it is not that you have better cheer, or one half so good accommodation as at home. No, the whole necromancy exits in one monosyllable—ease. In England ease is *practised*; in France it springs naturally from every one with whom you converse. In England people are *remembering* to forget themselves; in France they do *really* forget themselves, and in this simple circumstance resides the whole secret of being *at ease*. In England people *run* to shew you how freely they can *walk*, never considering that *ease*, that grand desideratum, is as much banished by over exertion to be gay, as by the torpor of *mauvaise honte*. In France there is neither a *jerking* activity, nor a leaden stupor, but people convey the idea, while you are in their company, of being pleased, interested, and animated, by the subject of conversation. There is no *acted* egotism, no effort at making display; and the effect of an evening passed in a Parisian society is that of gaiety without fatigue. You have, perhaps, not heard a single sentence that you desire to treasure; but there has been no *strain* upon your animal spirits. You have spoken naturally what really presented itself to be said, instead of *fishing* for a theme, and having to recollect at every turn whether you were going to speak to a man or a woman. In fine, conversation, however trifling, flows on the Continent, while with us it resembles *pints* of water, *chucked* one after another into a pump. You work the handle, and up comes your pint, but there is no more till you make a new deposit, and a fresh exertion. It is unnecessary to add that I speak of *mixed* society, and of its *average* state in the two countries. Come to the sincere intercourse of mind and heart, when the affectations of fashion are in *abeyance*, or I should more justly say where they have never existed, and who would go to any climate of the earth from that in which our happy stars have placed us, to enjoy "the feast of reason and the flow of soul!" Ireland and Scotland, remember, are always included in this preference. But we do not understand *society*, even imitating the French, as we prove, alas, that we can do continually, in their *faults*, while we cannot throw off our whalebone and buckram. In France there is much less of *gossip* than in England; the King, the Court, the national prosperity, or distress, the political relations of Europe, philosophy, sentiment, all find their way broken down to a convenient circulable medium into company. You hear many false positions in each several department, but you have likewise a great deal of good sense and discrimination; and at all events you have *common property* in the subjects which are treated in a French circle, as if they really *interested* the assembly. Perhaps at the moment of reading this passage of my letter, you recollect what *pops* into my memory in the moment of writing it; I mean a paragraph upon which you and I commented together, in one of the letters of Madame du Deffand, where she describes to Horace Walpole the "*grand succes*" of a *soirée* at her house, from the introduction of some paltry New-year or Easter gifts. There is no inconsistency here.

Whether it be the army, the navy, the funds, Cuvier's last work, La Place's talents, the Jardin des Plantes, the fashionable actor or musician; the last song, epigram, bon-mot cap, bonnet or pin-cushion; the thing is talked of with animation, and apparent *interest*; and it is the want of this that renders common place society in England so insufferably dull, as often to suggest the idea that the several members who compose it prepare for meeting, by committing to memory a set of rapidly disjointed questions, and answers; a very catechism of inanity upon the least amusing topics which it is possible to select, and invariably such as no stranger can participate in from the strict *confinement* of their locality. Here, men, women, old, young, handsome or ugly; all who can speak the language, take a part according to their several measures of ability in the general conversation. All look happy, and, from being at perfect ease themselves, possess the power of imparting this indispensable charm, this *essential essence* of society, to every one with whom they hold companionship. Why cannot we seize upon this talent, and convert it to our own use, grateful as we must ever feel for its enlivening influence? Our deficiencies in colloquial power have long been matter of observation; and it is a trite remark, that the English cannot converse; but as it is admitted that every ingredient requisite for conversation of the most brilliant kind is to be found in our island, it would seem that we only want the method of *combining*, in which our neighbours excel. Your charming circle in Ireland have caught the happy art, and vainly should we look around for many such specimens as Glenalta exhibits of its perfection; but why cannot we all go into company determined to trade freely upon our capitals, be they large or small, avoiding on the one hand that *broad-cast* sincerity which I am afraid I must call selfishness, that refuses to take interest in any concern which does not come home to the narrow enclosure of individual loss and gain, pain, or pleasure; and on the other, that conventional adoption of trifles incapable of amusing in any community, except a paradise of fools, with which we are in the habit of performing the *mechanism* of society, fatiguing our friends, and doing penance ourselves?

Stanhope is a very fine young man, full of fire and enterprize, yet gentle and rational. He has a great deal of taste, and is very fond of the classics. We are going presently, armed with a pocket Horace, to visit Soracte, accompanied by Oliphant, who is exactly the sort of man to whose care Mr. Otway may fearlessly confide his charge. He has very good manners, plain, and unassuming, and possesses that fortunate mixture of sobriety and cheerfulness, which peculiarity befits the character of a tutor, securing at once the double tribute of respect and affection.

How I long for your next letter, which will tell me of your expedition to Killarney, and, oh that I could transport myself into the midst of you!

Before I close my letter, I must express the joy of a *true* friend, at finding that you are so happy with your relations. Dear Arthur, I *knew* that your mind would undergo a revolution. It is only in *progress* at present, but I anticipate more decision in all your views of people and things. You have too much sense, and your feelings are too fine, to admit of your being hood-winked. You must not drop into the crowd and suffer yourself to be borne upon its tide, without the slightest sympathy in the folly, and, shall I add, the *vulgarity* that surround you. Yes, do not start, and suppose that I have lost my senses. I repeat the word; there is infinite *vulgarity* in mere fashion. Something very poor and mean, in never daring to think for oneself, and in sacrificing every inclination and faculty to the tyranny of arbitrary control; but you will speedily rise into the consequence of a rational creature. You will take your station amongst intellectual beings, and, giving reins to the *real* bent of your character, find that fulness of mind, which absolutely excludes *ennui*. I cannot express how much I am interested by the conversations which you have given me. A volume of description would not have conveyed a *tithe* of what you have imparted in the way of information, by bringing me thus into the midst of the circle. I see the whole mental *map* before me, and though it would be unreasonable to think that you can have time for such details in future, I cannot set you entirely free; but would fain hope that, coupled with the "incidents" which are all that you *promise*, henceforward I may still find a few of those graphic touches which make me present in that unrivalled group with whom your good fortune has *bound you up*.

To Mr. Otway I feel that I may desire to be presented with gratitude for the pleasure of which he has thought me worthy, in an introduction to my agreeable *colleagues*; but how shall I contrive to make my bow at Glenalta? If you *can* find a happy moment in which to say with a good grace, "*Charles Falkland, Mrs. Douglas,*" you will be more than ever the cherished friend of,

Your affectionate,

C. F—.

P. S. Whenever you visit the city of the Seven Hills, be sure and come hither provided with "Rome in the nineteenth Century." It is a tribute which I for one, most willingly pay, to declare this work of a female pen to be by a thousand degrees the best *vade mecum* with which you can furnish yourself.

LETTER X.

MISS HOWARD TO ARTHUR HOWARD, ESQ.

Dear Arthur,

London.

I am so completely *obsedée* with all that I have to accomplish, that really you must be very thankful for a letter on any terms at present. The fact is that *la Madre* is put into a *flutterment* by news which we have just had from that old quiz, Mr. Ingoldsby, of the India House, who says poz, that our ancient uncle is coming home as rich as Croesus. What is bringing him, we know not. No

matter for the cause, the effect is that *Ingot* (as I always call him) came here last week *express* with the intelligence, since when I could not command five minutes, or you should have had the *on dit* on the wings of the wind. At first I felt transformed into a *begum*, and transported with joy. Shawls, gems, and jewels, dazzled my senses. I dreamt of lacs of rupees, snuffed otto in every breeze, and read envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, in every female face throughout the metropolitan world.

Such was the bright vision of half an hour, when, on the *per contra* side of the question a grisly band rose upon my disordered imagination, and I terrified myself with the bare idea, that *vielle-cour* is becoming religious, to such a degree that I had hardly spirits left for Lady Anne Legrave's "At Home," to which I was obliged to go in the evening. I told my fears to mamma and Adelaide. The former said that she would hope the best; but, if the worst comes to the worst, we must, she says, of course indulge the whim as long as it lasts. *Ingot* does not expect him for several months, so that we may take time by the forelock. Then it may be only a rumour, and he may be snug at Calcutta; but to make *sure*, we shall take a few *good books* down to Selby, and, *per* favour of the Morleys and Arundels, and a few more of the "Praise God Barebones" community, we shall get up a nice vocabulary, and with the help of a fawn-coloured bonnet, which I shall certainly borrow from Deborah Prim the grocer, that "demurest of the tabby kind," who is of the society called *Friends*, I do not despair of acting my part *à merveille*.

Mamma is rather *cross* upon the matter, I think, and *foresees* trouble; but she is always a bit of a Cassandra; and besides, she lost horribly the other night at *ecarté*; but for heavens sake don't say that I told you so.

Adelaide, some how or other too, does not enter into the thing *con amore*, and is not as much alive as one might expect upon a point of such magnitude, for though we have at present nothing to go upon but *Ingot's* testimony, and our own surmises, the return of the old lad is a serious sort of concern. If he is in good humour, and neither sick, nor pious, we are *Nabobs* and *Nabobesses* at once. *C'est tout dit*. If, on the other hand, he has *got the liver* (as the Indians say so vulgarly), or has any crotchet in his head, connected with new-light fantasies, I do assure you that we may have much vexation in prospect; and unless you just put yourself in training, and help me out, I do not promise myself any effective assistance. Our poor mother is, as I said before, in an acid vein, and will require Cheltenham certainly, when we leave town; and as to Adelaide, she has other fish to fry, and till the cookery is performed or the finny race, sent swimming *again from the net* (*vous comprenez*); I shall not be able to enlist her in my pantomime. *Apropos*, Lord George was with us last night, and protests that his mother shall give a masquerade at which he will perform the part of our old Rajah, and I shall *rehearse* my new character, dressed as a quaker, carrying a basket of *tracts* on my arm, and, followed by half a dozen of his sister, Lady Somerville's children, who are perfect cherubs, and are to enact *my school*. You can't fancy any thing more *spirituel*. It was quite a *scene*, and we were decidedly the attraction of the evening. I was evidently *prima donna*, and felt so *couleur de rose* with every thing, and every body, that, forgetful of a quarrel which I had with *Ady*. in the morning, I caught Lord Crayton by the arm, and, under pretence of asking his advice how to prepare for uncle's arrival, gave him such a *teeth-watering* account of the old boy's investments in the 3 *per cent*. *Consols*, that milord stuck, for the rest of the evening, like bird-lime to my pensive sister, and almost overturned poor Sir Leonard Twig to *beau* mamma down stairs; since when, he has never missed a day in visiting, riding with our coterie in the park; and in short I shall not be surprized if, before your return from the *land of darkness*, you see a paragraph in the Morning Post: but what should bring the Morning Post into the wilderness? I give myself immense credit for remembering ever since I performed the Druidical priestess at Lady Penguin's, and learned my evening's task for the occasion, that Annan is the Druid's name for your island of saints, and that it was held to be the dominions of night. It is *so à propos*!

Well, but I was talking of Crayton and Adelaide. If indeed a London newspaper should meet your eyes while you are suffering *ostracism*, (I got *such* credit for that stroke last night) I verily think it not improbable, that you will stumble ere long, upon, "It is rumoured in the higher circles, that Viscount Crayton is shortly to lead to the Hymeneal altar the lovely Miss A. Howard." What more you may see here-after, I cannot give you a hint of till you come.

Poor Lionel Strangeways bores me to death with his *petits soins*. Sir Stephen (that odious name always sets me sneezing) haunts Grosvenor-square; and Annesley with whom you used to be so *lié*, and who, begging your pardon, is neither more nor less than *bête*, worries me to dance wherever I meet him.

Adelaide, Crayton, Lord George, and I, made a *parti quarré*, in the park yesterday, when we met him quite *en polisson*. He had no servant, looked *bourgeois*; and though I am not ill-natured as you *know*, I was obliged to sham blindness, and to pass by without even a nod. This may cure *him*, and release *me* from a *blister*. If he were not nephew to the Duke of Elsbury, there would be no bearing him; but every one knows the relationship, and therefore one is *safe* in acknowledging him, though he is so horribly disagreeable. Directly after I gave him *the go by*, I recollected that perhaps he had heard from you since your letter to us of the 5th, and I might have asked how your cough is, but I did not think of it in time.

The match between Lady J. Marston and Mr. Harrop, ditto between Miss Percy and Lord Anfield are off, positively off *faute d'argent*. The old Countess held out for £2,000 a-year settlement, and Harrop was tied up by his former marriage. It is whispered that a Scotch coronet *hove in sight* just before poor H. got his *congé*; but I don't pledge myself for the truth of this *codicil* to the story.—I was interrupted here by Lord George and Mr. Cambray, and have been laughing till I am weary at the best thing in the world. I told you in a former part of this letter, that I was in

particularly good spirits last night, and made a sally, in speaking of your banishment. Lord George's "*bravissimo*" was the signal of applause, but poor Sir Hargrove Miles did not know the meaning of *ostracism*, and asked some one (I believe young Felton), who, in a funny mood, told him that I was talking of oysters. There was a laugh, and some ridiculous things were said which I did not hear, but Sir Hargrove looked *cloudy*, and your Marplot friend, Annesley, dreading a meeting in the morning, *explained* like a goose, and put him into good humour by allowing him to turn the joke against me. Poor Sir H. has accordingly been representing me to-day up and down the whole length of Bond-street as a *Blue*, and were it not that Lord George is my *chevalier*, and that *nuncle* is coming home with a heavy purse, it would not be so pleasant. As things *are*, I can *afford* a blue banner, or, as Lord George says, "We may hoist the *blue Peter* now if we like." He is very witty, and I assure you that *our* society is considered quite *haut ton*—quite *French*.

I did not intend to have written six lines, and you see how I have run on. Do, my dear, return to us as quickly as possible: you ought to be at your *post* when the old fellow lands on English ground. *You* will of course be his principal *look out*, and ought certainly to *toad* him a little, especially as he will probably be very bilious after the voyage. Mamma thinks it likely that the new light and the bile will be extinguished together, and proposes being ready at an hour's notice to *whisk* him off to Leamington; but should we find that there is any thing so fixed in his religious derangement as not to give way immediately to the waters, she says that the worst which can happen is our leaving him for a time, and going to the continent. He will probably come home after so long an absence with his heart in his hand, and be as generous as a prince. If so, we shall get plenty of money to take us abroad, and thus fare the better for any little *twist* that he may have got from received opinions, I do not say from *fashionable* ways of thinking; for I observe, that East Indians are never people of *ton*: they are expensive and luxurious, but want the *je ne sais quoi*, that inexplicable *odeur de la bonne société* which marks the select few in a London circle.

My uncle, in all likelihood, will purchase a magnificent seat, have a splendid establishment; and as a little time will remove any quaint prejudices which he may have contracted, he may keep a first-rate table, and see the best company if he is properly managed. The *great* bore will be to watch him so vigilantly as to prevent his marrying. I am *sure* that I know at least six regular sieges that will be commenced against the citadel of his purse, besides whatever masked batteries may be prepared to take him by surprise. It must be our care to be his *videttes*, and keep a strict guard upon the motions of the enemy, giving him notice upon every approach of danger.

Well, I must go and dress: I hate the Opera, but we are forced to join a party of Lady Mildmay's, and Lord Clayton will not let us be off. *Adio mio Caro*. Say something civil to the goodies of the Glen. What sickly stuff is pastoral life! I yawn as I write the word. Heaven defend me from your Arcadias! I absolutely shudder at the notion of a golden age, cool grots, and mountain nymphs. That milk diet, too, is a sleepy, corpulent sort of thing. You will loose your *air de noblesse*, and we shall have to put you in training, and fine you down like a jockey before you are fit to be seen.

Come quickly. *Bon repos*. *You* are retiring to your slumbers, no doubt.

Your mother and Ady said something, I suppose—loves, and so forth, but I'm not sure.

Yours, ever,
L. HOWARD.

LETTER XI. GENERAL DOUGLAS TO MR. OTWAY.

My dear old Friend,

Calcutta.

Were I less acquainted than I am with what was once Edward Otway, I could not dare to address a line with any hope of being remembered after the lapse which has occurred since last I wrote to you. I almost dread to look back and mark the time; I fear too that I should not advance a very satisfactory apology in declaring that I have been equally silent to all the European world. I am in this dilemma. I will therefore make no effort at defence or explanation, but proceed to tell you my present object in applying to you. A short time ago I wrote to my old friend Ingoldsby, one of the East India Directors to the like effect; but it may be prudent to provide against casualties, and therefore be it known to you, that with a constitution much shattered through vicissitudes of climate, and a mind *somewhat* jaundiced by disappointment, I am turning my face towards England, which I hope to reach in about six months after you receive this announcement of my design. Though I speak of disappointment I am not *poor*; on the contrary I have amassed more money than enough to secure all the luxuries, as well as comforts of life, for my remaining term; but I have lived in banishment from all that ought to have been dear to me; I have lost my health, seen little but wickedness in my early intercourse with mankind, and, now arrived at a premature old age, I look on the past without pleasure, and to the future divested of hope. I have for some time been determined to return, but found my pecuniary circumstances in much need of winding up; and having learned, through sad experience, to distrust the people in whose rectitude I had principally confided, I resolved on an arduous undertaking, which was no other than to go myself first to Delhi, and thence across the country to Bombay, hoping not only to settle my affairs in the best manner, but to retrieve my health by change of air and scene. The first object I have in a great measure achieved, but my liver is deranged, my digestive powers are so impaired that I almost despair of cure, and my spirits are *gone*. Here is a sorry picture; but to business. If this

should find you in England, I wish your own taste to be employed, and if you are in Ireland, that of any friend on whose judgment you can rely, in the purchase of a snug demesne, well wooded, well watered, and having a handsome, commodious house, in an airy situation, into which I may step as soon as possible after landing. As well as I recollect my own impressions, I liked Hampshire, Staffordshire, and Warwickshire, better than any other parts of the country, and I have no objection to go as far as forty or fifty thousand pounds; it must be fee simple property, and in a rich, cultivated district. Order whatever furniture you think suitable, and let me find a travelling carriage, five or six good horses, and a few servants to begin with.—Dear Otway forgive me if I am giving you a great deal of trouble; but Ingoldsby is a fixture in town, and I know so little of my relations, that I am hardly aware to whom I could give these commissions. The Howards, I conclude, are flourishing, for I believe that when my poor brother took the name he got a pretty estate. Of the Douglas family I have lost sight, and as I have long enjoyed the privilege (no small one I promise you) of being considered an oddity, I mean to preserve the character, and choose for myself amongst the people I may meet with. I *hate* consanguinity. It is a cursed plague to have a set of needy folks continually pressing about one, whose claims are supported by relationship, and whose cares are generally directed by self-interest. I have lived too long, and seen too much to be bamboozled, though I do not mean to be uncivil. Poor Henry might have made a fortune had he taken my advice, and come out to India according to my suggestion; he was my favourite brother, and I should have found both pride and pleasure in providing handsomely for him; but so absurd a marriage as his naturally alienates a prudent man. Poor fellow! I never answered his letters, and looked on him as my son; for he was several years my junior, and *felt* his resistance to my advice. I never saw his wife, nor any of his children, who have all been born since I came from Europe, and though I *do* feel sorry that he died without any act of reconciliation on my part; though I intend also to settle something on his family if they are in want; yet I certainly cannot blame myself for having shewn a well merited resentment at conduct so highly injurious to himself, and *obstinate* towards me. It is all over now, and I may perhaps follow him ere long; yet, while we *are* here, it is human nature to deplore *that* folly which blights the happiest anticipations in the bud. No man knows the value of money so well as he who has made it for himself. If you know where poor Mrs. H. Douglas and her family are, I shall thank you to let me hear of their retreat, and believe me, my dear Otway, with best wishes for a happy meeting,

Your very sincere old friend,
FRED. AUBREY DOUGLAS.

END OF VOL. I

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*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK BLUE-STOCKING HALL, (VOL. 1 OF 3) ***

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