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**THE  
BLOSSOMS OF MORALITY;**

INTENDED FOR THE  
AMUSEMENT AND INSTRUCTION  
OF  
Young Ladies and Gentlemen.

BY THE EDITOR OF  
THE LOOKING-GLASS FOR THE MIND.

WITH FORTY-SEVEN CUTS, DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED

BY



*THE FOURTH EDITION.*

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1806.

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## PREFACE.

THE very flattering encouragement the Public have been pleased to give "The Looking-glass for the Mind, or Intellectual Mirror," has invited the Editor of that work to intrude once more on their indulgence. As a general preceptor, he wishes to be useful to the rising generation, and with that view recommends to their serious perusal "The Blossoms of Morality."

The Looking-glass is a *very free* translation of some of the most interesting tales of Mons. Berquin, and other foreign writers, whose works in the juvenile line undoubtedly merit the highest encomiums, and claim the most extensive patronage of their fellow-citizens. It certainly must be allowed, that great merit is due to those foreign celebrated writers, who, after studying the higher branches of literature, instead of attempting to acquire honour and fame by delivering lectures on the abstruse sciences, have condescended to humble themselves to the plain language of youth, in order to teach them wisdom, virtue, and morality.

With respect to the present work, though we have not so largely borrowed from foreign writers, yet we have endeavoured to supply that deficiency by the introduction of original matter. The juvenile mind very early begins to enlarge and expand, and is capable of reflection much sooner than we are generally apt to imagine.

From these considerations, we have carried our ideas in this volume one step higher than in the last: and, though we have given many tales that may contribute to amuse the youthful mind, yet we have occasionally introduced subjects which, we hope, will not fail to exercise their judgment, improve their morals, and give them some knowledge of the world.

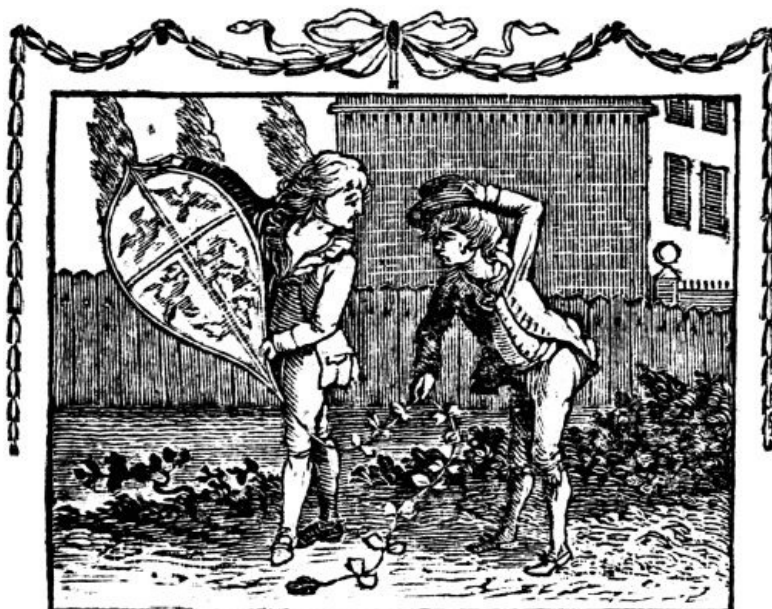
For instance: in the History of Ernestus and Fragilis, which is the first, and one of the original pieces inserted in this volume, the youthful reader is led to reflect on the instability of all human affairs; he is taught to be neither insolent in prosperity nor mean in adversity; but is shown how necessary it is to preserve an equality of temper through all the varying stages of fortune. He is also shown, how dangerous are the indulgences of parents, who suffer children to give themselves up to indolence and luxury, which generally, as in this history, terminate in a manner fatal to all the parties concerned.

May these Blossoms of Morality, in due time, ripen to maturity, and produce fruit that may be pleasing to the youthful taste, tend to correct the passions, invigorate the mental faculties, and confirm in their hearts true and solid sentiments of virtue, wisdom, and glory.

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## *Ernestus and Fragilis.*

THE faint glimmerings of the pale-faced moon on the troubled billows of the ocean are not so fleeting and inconstant as the fortune and condition of human life. We one day bask in the sunshine of prosperity, and the next, too often, roll in anguish on the thorny bed of adversity and affliction. To be neither too fond of prosperity, nor too much afraid of adversity, is one of the most useful lessons we have to learn and practise in the extensive commerce of this world. Happy is the youth whose parents are guided by these principles, who govern their children as good princes should their subjects, neither to load them with the chains of tyranny, nor suffer them to run into the excesses of dissipation and licentiousness. The following History of Ernestus and Fragilis is founded upon these general principles. 8

Ernestus and Fragilis were both the children of Fortune, but rocked in two different cradles. Philosophy and Prudence were the nurses of the first, and Vanity and Folly lulled the second to his repose. Ernestus was early used to experience the various changes of the air, and accustomed to a regular diet; while Fragilis was treated in a very different manner, being kept in a room where, it was supposed, no rude wind could intrude itself; and hurtful delicacies were given him, under the idle notion, that strength is to be acquired in proportion to the dainties and excesses of our meals.

Hence it is no wonder if, after a few years had strengthened their limbs and mental faculties, that there appeared an indisputable difference between the two youths.

Ernestus was all life and gaiety, and soon showed a propensity to be at the head of all kinds of mischief. Though this disposition often got him into disgrace with his parents, yet he always showed much contrition and sorrow when he really found he had injured any one, and seldom slept after the commission of a boyish crime till he had made ample amends to the party injured.

Fragilis had very different passions, and very contrary notions of things. Being accustomed to be indulged with whatever he cried for, his ideas soon wandered from real to imaginary wants, and as these could not possibly be gratified, he naturally became peevish, fretful, and ill-natured. Whenever the mind is affected, the body must partake of the shock it occasions. Fragilis was weak, rickety, and feeble; and the remedies they applied to relieve him only contributed to increase the evil. 9

As the two little heroes of my history lived in the same neighbourhood, and their parents were nearly equal in point of fortune, they consequently became intimate companions, and frequently visited each other. It was easily to be discovered which of these two children would one day figure most on the busy stage of the world. Ernestus and his lady with pleasure beheld in their little son an ample share of spirit and activity, kindness and affability, resolution and integrity. The parents of Fragilis, however, had not the same pleasing prospect in their favourite and darling; for he was of a dull and gloomy turn, seldom contented with any thing, perpetually wrangling with every one about him, and constantly pining after those things which he knew were not to be procured.

Ernestus made a rapid progress in his literary pursuits, under the tuition of his masters; for his application to his books was equal to the genius nature had bestowed on him. On the other hand, Fragilis advanced very slowly in the paths of science; for his genius had been spoiled by the pernicious indulgences of his parents in his infant years, and he had been suffered to acquire a habit of indolence, which made the least labour of body or of mind tiresome and disgusting. 10

These circumstances, however, did not seem to interrupt the rising friendship between these two youths, their connections growing stronger as they ripened in years. They were joint proprietors in their kites, their tops, their marbles, and their dumps; though Ernestus was generally the manufacturer of the first and last articles. Indeed, the kites made by Fragilis were always too heavy, and not equally balanced on both sides; consequently they were difficult to be raised into the air, and when there, they had a wavering and unsteady motion; whereas, those made by Ernestus were light and elegant, darted into the air like an eagle, and remained there as steady as a hawk resting on its wings; his dumps had the elegance of medals; and his tops and marbles were so judiciously chosen as to claim the admiration of all the neighbouring youths.

The time at length arrived, when it is usual for parents to begin to think of sending their children from home, to engage in the busy commerce of the world, and to learn how to provide for themselves. The feathered inhabitants of the woods and groves give up every pleasure to that of rearing their little brood; but, as soon as they have acquired a proper degree of maturity, they then drive them from their nests, to form new connections, and to shift for themselves. Man, more helpless than birds, requires the assistance of the parental hand, for some years, to rear and cherish him; nor do their cares and anxieties for him cease till life is no more. 11

Though Ernestus loved his parents with all the affections of a dutiful child, yet he could not help rejoicing at the idea of embarking in the bustle of the world, and making a figure as a man. On the other hand, Fragilis could not prevail on himself to quit the apron-string of his mother, and engage in the rude clamour of a commercial life, in which so much attention, thought, and industry, are required. Neither could his parents part with their darling, whose constitution they had spoiled, and rendered unfit for business. Ernestus, in a short time after, by his own desire, was placed as a clerk in a merchant's house in London; while Fragilis continued with his parents, to squander away his time in destructive scenes of indolence and luxury.

Five years had glided away as it were imperceptibly, when Ernestus found himself disengaged

from the ties of his clerkship. His person was by this time arrived at the state of manhood, his figure was graceful and genteel, and his mind was improved from the polite companies he had engaged in at his leisure hours. As business had ever been the first object of his attention, and as he had thereby made himself of no small consequence to his late master, the latter, to connect him more closely with his interests, offered Ernestus his daughter in marriage, and a considerable share in the trade of the house. Such a flattering offer could not admit of a moment's hesitation, especially as a secret passion had long mutually glowed in the bosom of each party. They were married, and they were happy.

12

Soon after this period, a most dreadful inundation happened on the sea-coast, on the very spot where the houses and lands of the parents of Ernestus and Fragilis were situated. Dreadful indeed it was, for it not only washed down their houses, but drowned some hundreds of cattle, and left that as a part of the briny ocean, which, but a few hours before, was beautiful meadows and gardens, adorned with every thing pleasing to regale the appetite, or please the eye.

Deplorable indeed was now the situation of those two families: their houses washed away, their cattle destroyed, and all their fruitful lands, on the produce of which their fortunes depended, were irrecoverably lost, and become of no value. Surely, to support such a situation with any tolerable degree of tranquility of mind, requires more courage and philosophy than generally fall to the lot of imperfect mortals!

After the first transports of terror and affright were a little abated, and calm reason and reflection succeeded the sad emotions of horror and despair, the old Ernestus thus addressed the fair partner of his misfortunes:—

13

"My dearest Emelia," for that was the name of his amiable lady, "in the midst of this terrible misfortune, we have the happiness to reflect, that what has befallen us is not derived from any fault of our own, but by the pleasure of Him who gave us every thing, and who has a just right to take what he pleases from us. Though he has taken from us our house and lands, he has still graciously left us our beloved son, who will not fail to console us in our misery, and who will perhaps help us in our distresses. Though we are deprived of our fortune, we have the pleasing consolation to reflect, that, by bringing him up in the school of Prudence and Industry, we have secured him from sinking under the wreck of our present calamity. Nothing can more contribute to soften the calamities of good parents, than to reflect that their children are not exposed to partake of their miseries."

The heart of this amiable spouse was, for some time, too full of grief for the misfortune she felt, to give any immediate reply: but, at last, recovering her usual spirits and sensibility, she withdrew her head from the bosom of her generous husband, on which it had been for some time tenderly reclined.

"Ah! my beloved partner of happiness and misery," said she, "why am I thus sorrowful and wretched? why do I thus fly in the face of Providence, for depriving us only of the baubles of life? Have I not still left an amiable and tender husband, and a dutiful and beloved son. These are treasures which I still possess—treasures infinitely beyond those I have lost—treasures that will support me in the stormy hour of adversity, and enable me to make a mockery and derision of every thing that the cruel hand of fabled Fortune can inflict."

14

She then caught her husband in her arms, and there fainted, rather through excess of joy than grief. Virtuous minds, however they may be distressed for a moment, by unforeseen accidents, soon find an inexpressible consolation in the integrity of their hearts.

Such was the character of Ernestus and his lady, that this dreadful calamity was no sooner known, than all the neighbouring gentry flocked round them, and seemed to contend with each other for the honour of assisting such distinguished characters. What is the empty parade of riches acquired by fraud, rapine, and plunder, when compared to the heartfelt satisfaction which virtue in distress must have here felt?

It may reasonably be supposed, that it was not long before this dreadful calamity of these amiable parents reached the ears of young Ernestus. A youth, brought up in the wilds of modern extravagance, would have exclaimed, perhaps in bitter terms, on being thus suddenly deprived of a fine patrimonial estate; he would, probably, have even arraigned the severe hand of Providence, and have dared to utter impieties against his omnipotent Maker!

15

Such was not the conduct of Ernestus. His parents had taken care to give him, not a flighty and frothy, but a rational and manly education, the foundation of which was honour, probity, and virtue; not folly, luxury, and vanity. It is a just proverb, that the first seasoning sticks longest by the vessel, and that those who have been accustomed, in their early days, to tread the paths of Prudence, will seldom, when they grow up, run into those of Folly.

Ernestus received the news of this terrible calamity, just as he and his lady returned from a party of pleasure. It is too often found, that after pleasure comes pain, and never was it more truly verified than in this instance; with this exception, that here the one was not the consequence of the other.

He tenderly embraced his lady, took leave of her for the present, and instantly set out for the fatal scene of ruin, to assist, console, and comfort, his unfortunate parents. What passed between them in the first moments of their meeting, afforded such a scene of tenderness and affection, as exceeds the possibility of description to reach: the feelings of the heart, in such a situation, exceed every thing the most lively imagination can fabricate.

16

Ernestus found his dear parents had taken shelter in the house of an old gentleman, who lived

in the neighbourhood, who was immensely rich, and had neither children nor relations living. Here they enjoyed all the consolation and comfort their generous hearts could wish for; nor was the young Ernestus suffered to contribute his mite to their aid. "It is enough," said the old gentleman of the house, "that you have lost your patrimony; but I have riches sufficient, and have no near relation to succeed me. How can I dispose of it better than in cherishing the distressed, and in taking virtue by the hand to raise it above the wrecks of fortune?"

In a little time after, this worthy old gentleman paid the debt of nature, and left the bulk of his fortune to the parents of Ernestus; who, by this act of generosity, were become as opulent as ever, and consequently resumed their former figure in the world. The fortune of young Ernestus was every day increasing, from his great success in commerce, till he at length found himself master of a sufficient independency, when he quitted trade; and he and his lady retired to the country, where they passed their days under the same roof with their parents, happy in themselves, and diffusing happiness to all who lived within the circle of their knowledge.

17

We could wish here to drop the curtain, and leave the mind filled with those pleasing ideas, which the good fortune of the family of Ernestus must raise in the bosoms of the generous and humane—but we must return to the unhappy family of Fragilis.

Young Fragilis, owing to the mistaken manner in which he was brought up, was feeble and enervated at that age, in which youths generally grow strong and robust. Hence it happened, from the sudden inundation of the waters, that it was with great difficulty he could save his life. However, though he escaped the fury of the unrelenting waves, he caught such a cold, that a fever ensued, which, heightened by the fright he had received, proved too much for his weakly constitution to support, and put a period to his existence in a few days.

Trying indeed was the situation of Mr. Fragilis and his lady: in one day, deprived of all their wealth and possessions, and in a few days afterwards of their only son, whom they loved to excess, whom they ruined by false indulgences, and by whom they were reproached for their mistaken conduct in his dying moments. To be reproached by the only object they loved in this world, as being in some distant degree instrumental to his death, was too cutting a consideration for them to bear. They felt the wound effectually, it festered in their hearts, and they soon followed their son to his untimely tomb.

18

Reflect, ye too tender and indulgent parents, how dangerous it is to rear your children in the lap of Luxury and Indolence, since you thereby make them unfit members of the community, frequently a heavy load to themselves, and always a source of anxiety and fear to their mistaken parents. Without health, strength, and vigour, life is but a burthen; why should then so many parents take such trouble to deprive their children of the three principal blessings of this life, which, when once lost, are never known to return?



19





## *Juvenile Tyranny conquered.*

MR. Wilson, his lady, and little family, left the noise and bustle of the city, to pass the more agreeable half of the year amidst the delights of rural scenes and prospects. Mr. Wilson, to a refined education, had added much knowledge and experience in the commerce of the polite world. His lady, though an amiable and sensible woman, had, in the education of her children, given rather too much into the fashionable errors of the metropolis.

As soon as they were properly settled in their rural retirement, Mr. Wilson thus addressed his lady: "I flatter myself, my dear, that you will now leave me at liberty to manage our two children, in the manner that shall appear to me most proper; for I wish to eradicate those seeds of pride, obstinacy, and perversity, which the little circle of their acquaintance in London has sown in their minds, and to which the corrupted manners of the city have given deep root."

20

Mrs. Wilson seemed a little angry at this introduction, and wished to know what were those defects he imagined to have discovered in the minds of her two little ones: she entreated him not to conceal them from her, as it was equally her duty to assist in every thing where the happiness of their children was concerned.

"I do not wish, my dear," replied Mr. Wilson, "to complain of your conduct as a wife; but I think you are too fond and indulgent as a mother, you encourage them too much in the pride of dress, and fill their minds with the love of those things, which, so far from being of any use to them, may in time be productive of the worst of evils. Children, who are taught to value themselves only on their dress, or in proportion as they expect a superiority of fortune to others, will with difficulty consent to be governed by the rigid rules of prudence, or submit with cheerfulness to those laborious studies, from which alone true greatness is derived."

Mrs. Wilson laughed at the oddities of her husband, as she called them, and represented him as one born in the beginning of the last century. She considered it as an indispensable duty to educate her children in conformity to the manners of the times, and the modes of education almost universally adopted in the fashionable world.

21

Mr. Wilson, however, was of a very different opinion, and considered nothing so dangerous to the morals of his children, as to suffer them to be brought up in the modern school of extravagance and pride. He owned it was a privilege which most wives claimed, of being permitted to spoil their daughters in their own way; and if, out of complaisance, he gave up that point, he hoped he should be permitted to educate his son as he thought proper.

The first thing he should endeavour to break him of, he said, should be his pride, which induced him to despise every one who was not dressed like himself, or whom he otherwise thought beneath him. Mr. Wilson considered it as very pernicious, to suffer children to value themselves merely on account of their dress or fortune.

Mrs. Wilson, however, could not be convinced of the truth of these arguments. "I suppose," said she, "you would have him brought up like a ploughman, or as if he were born to nothing greater than little Jackson, the son of the gardener, who lives at the bottom of your grounds."

The conversation now began to grow serious, and the gentleman could not help saying, he most heartily wished that his son, born as he was to an ample fortune, possessed all the good qualities which were conspicuous in that *poor* boy. He very judiciously observed, that what the world generally calls a *polite* education, often falls short of producing those happy effects, which Nature sometimes bestows on uncultivated minds. Children of humble birth are often despised, merely on account of their poverty, without considering, whether Nature may not have done more for them than for the children of Fortune. "Happy should I think myself," said he, "if my son and heir possessed half the civility and condescension which are so much taken notice of and admired in that little fellow you seem inconsiderately to despise."

22

Mrs. Wilson, though a little disconcerted by these observations, seemed by no means inclined to give up the argument. "Did I not know otherwise," said the lady, "I should suspect you of being prejudiced against every thing the world considers as polite, in favour of poverty and rusticity. With all your boasted qualifications of this little Jackson, what would you say, should I clearly prove to you, that he possesses secret faults, such as may be hurtful to your son; that he is guilty of robbing yours and every orchard in the neighbourhood? that he gluttonizes on the fruits of his robberies in private? and that, though he is so very complaisant with the children of Fortune in the presence of their parents, he is a tyrant over the little ones in private?"

23

Mr. Wilson observed, that if his lady could prove little Jackson to be guilty of one half of the crimes she had laid to his charge, he would instantly order, that he should never more be suffered to enter his house.

The lady then proposed to make a fair and candid experiment of this matter. "I will," said she, "order a little feast for our son and daughter, and young Jackson shall be one of the party. We will find an opportunity to conceal ourselves, when we shall hear every thing that passes. From thence we shall have an opportunity of judging whether you or I be right."

The proposal was so just and reasonable, that both parties instantly agreed to it. Some fruit and other things were immediately ordered to be brought into the parlour, and Miss and Master Wilson were sent for, as well as little Jackson. As soon as the latter entered, the little lady and her brother complained of the strong smell of dung he brought with him; and, though he was very clean and decent, they were afraid of his coming too near them, lest he should spoil their fine

clothes.

Though Mr. Wilson did not approve of this kind of behaviour in his children, he took no notice of it at present, but desired that they would be all happy together, while he and his lady took a walk into the garden. They then left the room, but softly entered it at another door, before which a screen was designedly placed, by which means they plainly overheard every thing that passed among the young folks. 24

The first thing they heard, was their little daughter calling to her brother to come and sit by her; at the same time telling young Jackson he must stand, and think himself happy that he was, at any rate, permitted to remain in their company. The little fellow seemed no ways displeased at this treatment, but told them he was not at all tired, and was very happy to be with them in any situation.

Master Wilson and his sister then divided the fruit into three parcels, as though they intended one of them for young Jackson; but, as soon as they had eat up their own shares, they began upon that intended for him, and eat it all up without giving him a taste, and even made ridicule of him all the time. They told him they would give him the parings of the apples, which were as much as such a poor creature as he could expect, and that he ought to think himself happy he could be indulged with them.

Young Jackson told them he was not hungry, and he hoped they would not deny themselves any thing on his account. They promised him they would not, and then set up a loud laugh; all which Jackson bore without uttering the least word of complaint. 25

At last, Miss Wilson and her brother having eaten up all the fruit, without permitting poor Jackson to taste a bit of it, they ordered him to go into the garden, and steal them some apples, promising, if he behaved well, to give him one for his obedience.

"I cannot think of doing any such thing," replied Jackson. "You indeed forced me twice to do so, and then went and told the gardener that I stole them for myself, though you very well know I did not eat a morsel of them."

"Poor thing!" said the young gentlefolks in derision, "and did they serve you so? Well, we insist on your going and doing the same now, or, look you, that cane in the corner shall be laid across your shoulders. We will teach you, that it is the duty of you beggars to obey us gentlefolks."

Jackson still persisting in his refusal to be again guilty of any thing of the kind, Master Wilson took up the cane, and gave poor Jackson two or three blows with it, as hard as he could, while Miss Wilson stood looking on, encouraging her brother, telling Jackson at the same time, that if he complained of being beaten to their papa, they would again accuse him of stealing fruit, and that their words would be sooner believed than his.

Poor Jackson replied, that he would rather be beaten all day than do so dishonest a thing as they desired him. He observed to them, that this was not the first by many times that he had been beaten by them unjustly and wantonly, and he did not suppose this would be the last. However, he said he should put up with it, without complaining to any one. 26

Mr. Wilson and his lady could not patiently hear any more, but instantly came from behind the screen.—"Sweet children, indeed!" said Mrs. Wilson. "We have, behind that screen, unseen by you, heard all you have been saying, and in what manner you have treated that poor little fellow!" Little Jackson was all in a tremble, and told her, that they were only at play, and meant no harm. But this would not satisfy the lady, who was now convinced of the bad conduct of her son and daughter.

"You wicked children," said she to them, with a resolute look and stern voice, "you have accused this innocent child of gluttony and theft, while you only are the authors of those abominable crimes. You have not scrupled to tell me the grossest falsehood, such as God will one day call you to account for, and severely punish you in the next world, where it will not be in my power to intercede for you. This moment ask pardon of that little boy, whom you have so unjustly treated, and sincerely ask pardon of God, for the wickedness you have been guilty of!" 27

Her children were so overcome with shame, confusion, and sorrow, that they both fell down at their mother's feet, and with tears of sincerity most humbly begged pardon of God and her, promising never to be again guilty of such crimes. Little Jackson ran to them, and endeavoured to lift them up, while the tears stole down his cheeks in abundance. "Do not be angry with them, madam," said he to the lady, "for we were only in play; and I am sorry I am come here to breed so much uneasiness. But, if you are angry with them, let me humbly beg of you to forgive them."

Mr. Wilson also interfered, and promised, if their mamma would forgive them this time, to be bound for their better conduct in future. The lady ordered them instantly to rise, to kiss little Jackson, and beg his pardon. This they did in so affecting a manner, as gave the most pleasing satisfaction to both their parents, who were now fully persuaded, that reason and tenderness will do more with children than the iron hand of correction.



## *The Book of Nature.*

MY dear papa, said young Theophilus to his father, I cannot help pitying those poor little boys, whose parents are not in a condition to purchase them such a nice gilded library, as that with which you have supplied me from my good friend's at the corner of St. Paul's Church-yard. Surely such unhappy boys must be very ignorant all their lives; for what can they learn without books?

I agree with you, replied his father, that you are happy in having so large a collection of books, and I am no less happy in seeing you make so good a use of them.—There is, however, my dear child, another book, called *The Book of Nature*, which is constantly open to the inspection of every one, and intelligible even to those of the tenderest years. To study that book, nothing more is required, than to be attentive to the surrounding objects which Nature presents to our view, to contemplate them carefully, and to explore and admire their beauties; but without attempting to search into their hidden causes, which youths must not think of, till age and experience shall enable them to dive into physical causes.

29

I say, my dear Theophilus, that even children are capable of studying this science; for you have eyes to see, and curiosity sufficient to induce you to ask questions, and it is natural for human nature to wish to acquire knowledge.

This study, if it may be so called, so far from being laborious or tiresome, affords nothing but pleasure and delight. It is a pleasing recreation, and a delightful amusement.

It is inconceivable how many things children would learn, were we but careful to improve all the opportunities with which they themselves supply us. A garden, the fields, a palace, are each a book open to their view, in which they must be accustomed to read, and to reflect thereon. Nothing is more common among us than the use of bread and linen; and yet how few children are taught to know the preparation of either! through how many shapes and hands wheat and hemp must pass before they are made into bread and linen!

30

A few examples will serve to show, how far we ought to study nature in every thing that presents itself to our view, and therein trace out the handy-works of the great Creator.

The first preacher that proclaimed the glory of the supreme God was the sky, where the sun, moon, and stars shine with such amazing splendour; and that book, written in characters of light, is sufficient to render all inexcusable who do not read and contemplate it. The Divine Wisdom is not less admirable in its more humble productions of what the earth brings forth, and these we can survey with more ease, since the eye is not dazzled by them.

Let us begin with plants. What appears to us mean and despicable, often affords wherewith to astonish the sublimest minds. Not a single leaf is neglected by Nature; order and symmetry are obvious in every part of it, and yet with so great a variety of pinking ornaments and beauties, that none of them are exactly like the others.

What is not discoverable by the help of microscopes in the smallest seeds! and with what unaccountable virtues and efficacies has it not pleased God to endow them! Nothing can more demand our admiration, than the choice which our great Creator has made of the general colour that beautifies all plants. Had he dyed the fields in white or scarlet, we should not have been able to bear either the brightness or the harshness of them. If he had darkened them with more dusky colours, we should have taken little delight in so sad and melancholy a prospect.

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A pleasant verdure keeps a medium between these two extremes, and it has such an affinity with the frame of the eye, that it is diverted, not strained by it, and sustained and nourished, rather than wasted. What we considered at first but as one colour, is found to afford an astonishing diversity of shades: it is green every where, but it is in no two instances the same. Not one plant is coloured like another, and that surprising variety, which no art can imitate, is again diversified in each plant, which is, in its origin, its progress, and maturity, of a different sort of green.

Should my fancy waft me into some enamelled meadow, or into some garden in high cultivation, what an enamel, what variety of colours, what richness, are there conspicuous! What harmony, what sweetness in their mixture, and the shadowings that temper them! What a picture, and by what a master! But let us turn aside from this general view, to the contemplation of some particular flower, and pick up at random the first that offers to our hand, without troubling ourselves with the choice.

It is just blown, and has still all its freshness and brightness. Can the art of man produce any thing similar to this? No silk can be so soft, so thin, and of so fine a texture. Even Solomon's purple, when contrasted with the flowers of the fields, is coarse beyond comparison.

32

From the beauties of the meadows and gardens, which we have just been surveying, let us take a view of the fruitful orchard, filled with all sorts of fruits, which succeed each other, according to the varying seasons.

View one of those trees bowing its branches down to the ground, and bent under the weight of its excellent fruit, whose colour and smell declare the taste. The quantity, as well as the quality, is astonishing. Methinks that tree says to me, by the glory it displays to my eyes, "Learn of me what is the goodness and magnificence of that God, who has made me for you. It is neither for him, nor for myself that I am so rich: he has need of nothing, and I cannot use what he has given me. Bless him, and unload me. Give him thanks; and since he has made me the instrument of your delight, be you that of my gratitude."

The same invitations catch me on all sides, and, as I walk on, I discover new subjects of praise and adoration. Here the fruit is concealed within the shell; there the fruit is without, and the kernel within: the delicate pulp without shines in the most brilliant colours. This fruit sprung out of a blossom, as almost all do; but this other, so delicious, was not preceded by the blossom, and it shoots out of the very bark of the fig-tree. The one begins the summer, the other finishes it. If this be not soon gathered, it will fall down and wither; if you do not wait for that, it will not be properly ripened. This keeps long, that decays swiftly; the one refreshes, the other nourishes.

33

Among the fruit-trees, some bear fruit in two seasons of the year, and others unite together spring, summer, and autumn, bearing at the same time the blossom and green and ripe fruit; to convince us of the sovereign liberality of the Creator, who, in diversifying the laws of nature, shows that he is the master of it, and can at all times, and with all things, do equally what he pleases.

It is observable, that weak trees, or those of an indifferent pith, are those that bear the most exquisite fruits; and the higher they grow, the less rich is their productions. Other trees, which bear nothing but leaves, or bitter and very small fruit, are nevertheless useful for the important purposes of building and navigation.

If we had not seen trees of the height and bigness of those that are in forests, we could not believe that some drops of rain falling from heaven were capable to nourish them; for they stand in need of moisture not only in great plenty, but also such as is full of spirits and salts of all kinds, to give the root, the trunk, and branches, the strength and vigour we admire in them. It is even remarkable, that the more neglected these trees are, the handsomer they grow; and that if men applied themselves to cultivate them, as they do the small trees of their gardens, they would do them more harm than service. You, therefore, O Author of all things! thus establish this indisputable proof, that it is you alone who have made them; and you teach man to know, that his cares and industry are useless to you. If indeed you require his attention to some shrubs, it is but to employ him, and warn him of his own weakness, in trusting weak things only to his care.

34

Let us now turn to the scaly inhabitants of the water, and what a number and variety of fishes are there formed!

At the first sight of these creatures they appear only to have a head and tail, having neither feet nor arms. Even their head has no free motion; and were I to attend their figure only, I should think them deprived of every thing necessary for the preservation of their lives. But, few as their exterior organs are, they are more nimble, swift, artful, and cunning, than if they had many hands and feet; and the use they make of their tail and fins shoot them forward like arrows, and seem to make them fly.

How comes it to pass, that in the midst of waters, so much impregnated with salt that I cannot bear a drop of them in my mouth, fishes live and sport, and enjoy health and strength? How, in the midst of salt do they preserve a flesh that has not the least taste of it?

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It is wonderful when we reflect, how the best of the scaly tribe, and those most fit for the use of man, swarm upon our shores, and offer themselves, as it were, to our service; while many others, of less value to him, keep at a greater distance, and sport in the deep waters of the ocean.

Some there are that keep in their hiding places unknown to men, whilst they are propagating and growing to a certain size, such as salmon, mackerel, cod, and many others. They come in shoals, at an appointed time, to invite the fishermen, and throw themselves, as it were, of their own accord, into their nets and snares.

We see several sorts of these scaly animals, and those of the best kind get into the mouths of rivers, and come up to their fountain head, to communicate the benefits of the sea to those who are distant from it. The hand that directs them, with so much care and bounty for man, is at all times, and every where to be seen; but the ingratitude of man, and the capricious wanderings of his heart, often make him forgetful of the greatest bounties.

From the scaly inhabitants of the water, let us turn our attention to the feathered animals of the air. In several dumb creatures we see an imitation of reason which is truly astonishing; but it no where appears in a stronger degree, than in the industry and sagacity of birds in making their nests.

36

In the first place, what master has taught them that they had need of any? Who has taken care to forewarn them to get them ready in time, and not to be prevented by necessity? Who has told them how they must be contrived? What mathematician has given them such regular plans for that purpose? What architect has directed them to chuse a firm place, and to build upon a solid foundation? What tender mother has advised them to line the bottom of them with materials so soft and nice as down and cotton? and when these are wanting, who suggested to them that ingenious charity, which urges them to pluck from their breast with their bill, as much down as is requisite to prepare a convenient cradle for their young ones?

In the second place, what wisdom has traced out to each kind a particular way of making their nest, where the same precautions are kept, but in a thousand different ways? Who has commanded the swallow, the most industrious of all birds, to come near man, and chuse his house to build her habitation, immediately in his view, without fearing to have him for a witness, but on the contrary, seeming to invite him to survey her works? She does not imitate other birds, who build their nests with hay and small twigs: she uses cement and mortar, and makes her whole work so solid, as not to be destroyed without some labour. Her bill is her only instrument; and she has no other means of carrying her water, than by wetting her breast while she expands her wings. It is with this dew she sprinkles the mortar, and with this only she dilutes and

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moistens her masonry, which she afterwards arranges and sets in order with her bill.

In the third place, who has made these little feathered animals sensible, that they are to hatch their eggs by sitting over them? that both the father and mother must not be absent at the same time from the nest; and that if one went in quest of food, the other was to wait till its partner returned? Who has taught them that knowledge of calculating time, so as to make them able to know precisely the number of days of this rigorous attendance? Who has told them how to relieve the egg of the burthen of the young one, perfectly formed therein, by first breaking the shell at the critical moment, which they never fail to perform?

Lastly, what lecturer has read lessons to birds, to teach them to take care of their young, till they have proper strength and agility to shift for themselves? Who has taught them that wonderful sagacity and patience, to keep in their mouths either food or water, without permitting them to pass into their stomachs, and there preserve them for their young ones, to whom it supplies the place of milk? Who has made them capable of distinguishing between so many things, of which some are adapted to one kind, but are pernicious to another; and between those which are proper for the old ones, but would be hurtful to their young? We have daily opportunities of seeing the anxieties of mothers for their children, and the tenderness of nurses for the little ones committed to their charge; but it will admit of a doubt, whether we see any thing so perfect in the nursing of the human race as we see among the feathered inhabitants of the air.

It cannot be for birds alone that the Omnipotent Creator has united in their natures so many miracles, of which they are not sensible. It is obvious, that his design was to direct our attention to Him, and to make us sensible of his providence and infinite wisdom; to fill us with confidence in his goodness. Think of these things, my Theophilus, and do not fail to read the Book of Nature, from which you will learn to perceive your own insignificancy, and the omnipotency of him who made you.



## *The Unexpected Reformation.*

LITTLE Marcus was the only child of a wealthy tradesman, who had acquired an ample fortune by the sweat of his brow, and the reputable character he had invariably supported in the course of his business. He had always been an enemy to those little arts which some people put in practice to deceive those they have dealings with, being fully persuaded in his own mind, that no fortune could be so pleasing and grateful as that acquired by integrity and honour.

Being much hurried in his business, both he and his amiable spouse agreed, that it would be more prudent to send young Marcus into the country for his education, where he would not be likely to receive those pernicious examples he would every day see before him in the metropolis. 40

After a very nice enquiry, they were satisfied with the account they received of an academy at the distance of about a hundred miles from London, for the good management of which they were referred to several young gentlemen, who had there received their education, and were universally admired for their learning and prudence.

The master of the academy considered all his pupils as his children; he was equally attentive to instruct them in the different branches of science, and to admonish them against those errors which young people are naturally prone to run into. He endeavoured to excite their industry by proper encouragement, and, by example, to implant in their minds the seeds of honour and probity. He had also taken the most prudent precautions in the choice of those who were to assist him in so arduous an undertaking.

From so promising a situation, every parent would naturally expect the most happy consequences; but their son Marcus, whether from too tender a treatment at home, or not having been properly attended to, had an unhappy turn of mind, and an utter aversion to every kind of study. His thoughts were perpetually wandering after childish pastimes, so that his masters could make him comprehend nothing of the rudiments of science. The same marks of indolence appeared in the care of his person; for every part of his dress was generally in disorder; and though he was well made and handsome, yet his slovenly appearance made him disgusting to every one. 41

Let me advise my young readers to be particularly attentive, next to their studies, to the neatness of their persons; for no character is more prejudicial to a youth than that of a sloven. But do not let them mistake me, and suppose that I mean, by neatness in their dress, foppish and ridiculous apparel.

It may easily be supposed, that these defects in his conduct rendered him contemptible in the eyes of those children who were at first much behind him, but soon overtook him, to his inevitable disgrace. His master was so much ashamed of him, as well on account of his ignorance as slovenliness, that whenever any visitors came to the school, poor Marcus was sent out of the way, lest such a figure as he was might bring disgrace on the academy.

It might reasonably be expected, that so many humiliating circumstances would have made some impression on his mind; but he continued the same course of inconsistency, indolence, and dissipation; nor did there appear the least dawn of hope, that he would ever return into the paths of industry and prudence.

His master was very uneasy on his account, and knew not how to act: to keep him at his school, he considered as a robbery on his parents, and to send him home as a dunce and a blockhead would be a cutting consideration to his father and mother. He would sometimes say to his unworthy pupil, "Marcus, what will your father and mother think of me, when I shall send you home to them, so little improved in learning and knowledge?" It was, however, in vain to talk to him; for he seldom made any answer, but generally burst into tears. 42

Two years had glided away in this miserable manner, without his having made the least progress in learning, and without showing the least inclination for study. One evening, however, just as he was going to bed, he received a letter sealed with black wax, which he opened with some degree of indifference, and then read as follows:

"MY DEAR MARCUS,

"This morning has deprived me of the most affectionate husband, and you of the most tender parent. Alas, he is gone, to return no more! If there be any thing that can enable me to support this dreadful calamity, it is only in what I receive from the recollection, that I have left in my son the dear image of his father. It is from you only therefore I can look for comfort; and I am willing to flatter myself, that I shall receive as much pleasure from your conduct as I do from my tender affection for you. Should I find myself disappointed in my hopes, should you be only like your father in person, and not resemble him in his industry, integrity, and virtue, sorrow and despair will put a period to my miserable life. By the person who brings you this letter, I have sent you a miniature picture of your father. Wear it constantly at your bosom, and frequently look at it, that it may bring to your remembrance, and induce you to imitate, all the purest virtues and uncommon endowments of the dear original. I shall leave you in your present situation one year longer, by which time I hope you will be complete in your education. In the mean time, do not let this slip from your memory, that my happiness or misery depends on your conduct, industry, and attention to your studies. That God may bless you, and give you patience cheerfully to tread the rocky paths of science, is my sincere wish." 43



The errors of Marcus were the consequence of bad habits and customs he had imbibed in his infancy, and not from any natural depravity of the heart. He had no sooner read this letter than he found every sentiment of virtue awakening in his bosom. He burst into a flood of tears, and frequently interrupted by sighs, exclaimed, "O my dear father! my dear father! have I then lost you for ever?" He earnestly gazed on the miniature picture of his parent, pressed it to his bosom, while he, in faltering accents, uttered these words:—"Thou dear author of my existence, how unworthy am I to be called your son! How shamefully have I abused your tenderness, in idling that time away for which you have paid so dearly! But let me hope that reformation will not come too late."

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He passed that night in sorrow and contrition, he bedewed his pillow with tears, and sleep was a stranger to his troubled mind. If he happened but to slumber, he suddenly started, imagining he saw the image of his deceased father standing before him in the dreadful garb of death, and thus reproaching him: "Ungenerous youth! is this the manner in which you ought to return my past cares and attention to your interest?—Thou idle sloven, thou ungenerous son! awaken from your state of indolence, and properly improve the little time you have left for the pursuit of science, which you have hitherto so shamefully neglected; and do not, by an unpardonable inattention to yourself, shorten the few remaining days of your dear mother's life!"

I hope my youthful readers are well convinced that there are no such things as ghosts or apparitions, and that they are nothing more than the effects of a troubled imagination. Such was the ease with Marcus, who fancied he saw his father on the one hand, reproaching him for what was past, and his dear mother on the other, exhorting him to better conduct in future. "What a wretch I am," said he to himself, "to act in this manner! When my time for leaving this academy shall arrive, and I must appear before my mother to give proofs of my literary knowledge, what must be the pangs of her maternal heart, when she shall find that the child, on whom she had placed all the prospects of her future felicity, is an ungrateful, ignorant, and unworthy wretch? She will call on the friendly hand of Death to take her from such an insupportable scene!"

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Poor Marcus thus lay rolling on the thorny bed of trouble and anxiety, till, at last, totally overcome by grief and despair, he fell asleep. As soon as he awoke in the morning, on his bended knees he implored the assistance of the Almighty in the reformation he intended to make in his conduct. He instantly hastened to his master's chamber, and there threw himself on his knees before him: "Behold, sir," said he, "prostrate before you, an ungrateful wretch, who has hitherto treated, with the most shameful indifference, all the wise lessons you would have bestowed on him. Yet, unworthy as I may be of your future instructions, let me implore you, for the sake of my dear mother, whose life I fear I shall shorten by my unworthy conduct, to extend your bounty to me once more, and I will endeavour to convince you, by my future conduct, how much ashamed I am of what is past."

His master raised him up, took him in his arms, and tenderly embracing him, they shed tears together. "My dear Marcus," said his master to him, "to be sensible of your errors is half way to reformation. You have, it is true, squandered away, in the pursuit of trifles, two years that ought to have been employed in the acquisition of useful science. You have still one year left, and, as you appear to stand self-convicted of the imprudence of your past conduct, I would not wish to drive you to despair; but to encourage you by saying, that, by proper application, great things may be done, even in the remaining year. Begin this moment, lose no more time, and may God give you resolution to proceed suitably to my wishes, and your own interest."

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Marcus seized the hand of his master, tenderly kissed it, and then retired, being totally unable to utter a single word. He instantly ran to his chamber, there eased his heart in a flood of tears, and then set about the necessary business. He applied himself so closely to his books, and made therein so rapid a progress, as astonished his master and teachers. His companions, who had hitherto treated him with the utmost contempt, began to love and revere him. Marcus, thus encouraged by the different treatment he now received, pursued his studies with the utmost attention and alacrity. He was no longer despised for his wickedness and perversity, but admired and caressed for the affability and goodness of his temper. Formerly no severities or entreaties could make him attend to his studies; but they were now forced to use some degree of violence to make him partake of necessary recreations.

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In this manner his last twelvemonth passed on, and he viewed with regret the approach of that time when he was to leave school, and engage in pursuits of a different nature. He was hereafter to study men, and endeavour to acquire a knowledge of the latent motions of the human heart, perhaps the most difficult study in the commerce of this world.

The time allowed him being expired, his mother ordered him up to London. By the end of the year, the change he had made in his conduct so operated in his favour, that his departure was regretted by all his school companions; and, when he took his leave, sorrow visibly appeared in the countenance of every one. It was a pleasing reflection to his master, that a youth he had given up as lost, should on a sudden reform, and, in the circle of one year, make as great a progress in the sciences as the generality of youths do in three.

The journey afforded Marcus the most pleasing reflections; for he had now nothing to apprehend from the interrogatories of his mother, with respect to his education; and though he sincerely lamented the two years he had lost, yet he could not but feel the effects of the happy employment of the third.

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His schoolmaster had before acquainted his mother of the happy reformation in her son, and the great improvement he had made since the death of his father. These considerations, added to the natural feelings of a mother, made their meeting a scene of the most tender delights and

heartfelt transports.

Marcus lost only a week in paying visits to his relations and friends, and then applied himself to his father's business with unremitting assiduity and the most flattering success. In a few years he took an amiable partner for life, with whom he lived happy and contented. He was blessed with dutiful children, to whom he would frequently give this lesson: "My dear children, do not forget, that time once lost is not to be recalled; and that those hours you trifle away in your early years, you will severely lament the loss of when you shall have reached the age of maturity. An old age of ignorance is despicable indeed; for he who has neglected properly to cultivate his mind in his youth, will embitter the evening of his life with self-accusations and reproaches. Happy the youth who, having toiled hard during spring in the garden of science, sits down in the autumn at leisure to regale on the fruits of his labour!"



## *The Recompence of Virtue.*

THE northern confines of France boast of a small spot of ground, where virtue renders law unnecessary, and procures the inhabitants a state of peace as pure and unsullied as the air they breathe. In process of time, this territory fell into the hands of a widow, who merited a much more valuable patrimony.

Madam Clarisse, for that was the lady's name, joined benevolence of heart to a cultivated mind and an elevated genius. The place afforded neither physician nor apothecary; but Madam Clarisse supplied the want of them by her own knowledge of the medical qualities of different roots and plants. Her conduct evidently proved how much good a generous heart is capable of doing, even where Fortune has not been lavish of her smiles. 50

This lady had a servant maid, whose name was Maria, and who had seen twelve revolving suns in her service. Her attachment to her mistress, her disinterested behaviour, affability, and attention, procured her the just esteem of all who lived in the neighbourhood. It was a happiness for this girl, that she had all her life been brought up on this spot of innocence, and had not been exposed to the corrupting and pestiferous air of the metropolis.

Madam Clarisse had the highest opinion of the good qualities of Maria, and had entertained a strong affection for her. Maria, who in her turn tenderly loved her mistress, and was a little older than her, always wished that her good lady might be the longer survivor; but Providence had ordered it otherwise. Madam Clarisse was attacked with a disorder, which, on its first appearance, was supposed to be of no consequence; but, by the improper treatment of her physicians, who mistook her disorder, it at last proved fatal.

The visible approach of death did not disturb the peace and tranquility of the mind of this virtuous lady: her bosom was fortified with religious consolations; her heart had never been the receptacle of evil; and, while every one around her was bewailing her approaching dissolution, she alone seemed peaceful and tranquil. The salutary regimen she exactly followed, protracted her death for a little while, and her courage gave her strength. She was not confined to her bed, but walked about, and had the village girls around her, whom she instructed in the principles of religion and virtue. 51

One delightful morning, in the blooming month of May, she rose very early, and took a walk in the fields, accompanied by Maria, who never forsook her. She reached the summit of a verdant hill, from whence the eye wandered over the most delightful prospects. She sat down on the enamelled turf, and Maria by her side.

"What a delightful view!" said she. "See, Maria, that verdant meadow, over which we have so frequently walked! It is not long since, if you remember, that we there met the good old Genevive, who bent beneath the load on her back, while she carried in her hand a basket full of apples: you insisted on taking the load from her, and, in spite of all her resistance, I seized her basket of apples. Do you not remember what joy and pleasure every step afforded us, how grateful the good creature seemed, and what a hearty breakfast we ate in her cottage?"

"Look a little to the right, and there you see the willow-walk by the lake, in which, when we were young, we used so frequently to angle. How often have we there made ozier baskets, and then filled them with cowslips and violets! You recollect that cottage in front of us, the peaceful habitation of Myrtilla, for whom you in two days made up the wedding clothes I gave her. To the left, see the entrance of the wood, where I used every holiday to keep my evening school in the summer, for the instruction of the peasants' children. How happily those moments glided away, while surrounded by my youthful neighbours! How many sweet and delightful tales has the lovely Priscilla there told, and how many enchanting songs did the sweet Miranda there warble forth, while the feathered songsters seemed to stop their own notes to listen to her divine warblings! Methinks every thing around me brings back something pleasing to my reflection, and gives an inexpressible delight to my present sensations!" 52

"You are sensible, Maria, that there is a school in this village kept by a poor old woman. Many who attend her school can pay for instruction without any inconvenience, while there are others, who, for want of money, are obliged to keep their children at home in ignorance. Had I any hopes of living a few years longer, I should be much pleased with the idea, that I should by that time have saved a hundred crowns, which would have been sufficient to provide education for the children of those who cannot afford to pay for it; but, since it is the will of God that such shall not be the case, I submit without repining."

Here Maria turned her head aside, in order to conceal from her lady the tender tear that stole down her cheeks. Madam Clarisse perceiving the situation of her amiable servant, "My dear Maria," said she, "why do you weep? We shall again meet each other to part no more, and for the present let my serenity console you. I have not a doubt but you will always have a sure asylum in my house long after I shall have left it. Had it pleased God, I should have been happy to have it in my power to make some provision for you; but I cannot; and it is for me to submit." 53

Lifting up her hands, she exclaimed, "Accept, O gracious God! my most grateful acknowledgments for having placed me in a situation far from the temptations and vanities of this world. A stranger to headstrong passions and delusive pleasures, I have passed my tranquil life on this retired spot of innocence, secure from the tumultuous pursuits of pride and vanity, and a perfect stranger to the gnawing pangs of jealousy or envy. Innocence and peace, and all the tender feelings of friendship and humanity, have been my constant companions. In that

critical and awful moment, when the remembrance of past actions is not to be supported by the wicked, my mind enjoys inexpressible serenity and composure."

Madam Clarisse here stopped short, and her head sunk on the bosom of Maria; who, looking on the face of her amiable mistress, found it turned pale, and her eyes closed—never more to be opened!—Thus cracked the cordage of a virtuous heart;—good night, thou amiable woman; may choirs of angels sing you to your rest!

Maria was undoubtedly much afflicted at the death of her lady, and her sorrow on that account, added to the fatigues she had undergone, threw her into a fever, from which her recovery was for a long time doubtful. Nature, however, at last conquered her disorder, when she determined to quit that place, as soon as her strength would permit her. When she found herself capable of pursuing the journey, she packed up the little matter she had, and first repaired to the church-yard where her amiable lady lay buried. Having there paid the tribute of a tear upon her grave, she instantly set out for Charleville, her native place, sincerely regretted by the minister and people, who knew not what was become of her.

Two years had elapsed, and no news was heard of Maria, though every possible enquiry was made in the neighbourhood. About that time, however, the minister of the parish received a parcel containing some money, and the following letter with it:

"At last, my dear reverend sir, I am enabled to send you the hundred crowns which my worthy lady, in her expiring moments, so ardently wished to be possessed of, not for her own use, but for the emolument of others. Her wishes shall now be fulfilled, and the pious work she projected shall be completed. Had not this been the all I am possessed of in this world, I would have brought it myself. I am too poor to support myself among you; but I am happy in my poverty, and feel no anxieties but those occasioned by the loss of my dear lady. I beseech you to put this money out to interest, and inform the mistress of the school that it is for her use. This I hope will enable her to take under her care the children of such poor people, who cannot afford to pay for their education. If I have any favour to ask of Heaven, it is only this, that I may, before I am called hence, be enabled to save a little money, in order to be in a condition to pay you a visit. Should I live to see this school established on the plan my deceased lady wished for, I shall then be perfectly happy, and shall quit this world without envying those who roll in the gifts of fortune, but have not a heart properly to use them.  
—MARIA."

The curate, who was a man of generous feelings, read this letter with admiration, and the next day, in the church, communicated the contents of it to his congregation, who could not refrain from tears on the relation of so generous an action. According to Maria's request, he placed the hundred crowns out to interest; and thus, from the produce of two year's incessant labour of this amiable woman, was a foundation laid for the education of the poor children of the parish.

The generous Maria, having thus disposed of every thing she was possessed of, again sat down to work; but not with so much ardour as before, as she had now only to labour for her own maintenance. About this time, however, a relation died and left her ten pounds a year, which to her was a little fortune.

It soon came to the knowledge of Maria, that the curate had read her letter to his congregation, which gave her no small degree of uneasiness, as she wished it to remain unknown. However, it soon became the conversation of every one, and at last reached the place where she lived.

People of the first character and fortune in Charleville, at which place she then lived, were anxious to be acquainted with her; and some of them even went so far as to offer her apartments in their house. But she preferred her present situation to a life of ease and indolence.

The curate, having occasion soon after to visit Paris, mentioned Maria in all companies, and related the affecting story of her charity, which soon became the general subject of conversation in that metropolis, was publicly related in the Paris Gazette, and from thence copied into most of the public papers in Europe.

A young prince, who lived with his parents, at Paris, and who was hardly nine years of age, was so affected, young as he was, with this generous action of Maria, that he talked of nothing else from morning till night. "I wish I were a man," said the little prince one morning in his father's hearing. "And if you were a man," replied the peer, "what then would you do?"

The young prince threw his arms round his father's neck, and having obtained a promise that he would grant him what he asked, "I would," said he, "give Maria a pension." His father embraced him, applauded the generosity of his heart, and instantly settled fifty pounds a year on Maria for life.

We may learn from hence, that virtue often meets with its recompence in the possession of the good things of this life, besides that inexpressible delight it receives from the inward feelings of the heart. Maria received this donation with all becoming gratitude; but she used it as though she were only the steward of it: she fed the hungry, she clothed the naked, and diffused through the whole village a spirit of industry, prudence, and benevolence.



## *The Pleasures of Contentment.*

AMIDST all the objects of our pursuits in this world, in order to acquire happiness, Contentment is the first. Without this, all the parade of grandeur, the possession of the most beautiful villa, and all the studied delicacies of the table are dull and tasteless. When contentment has taken up its seat in the bosom, the straw-built hut is a palace, and the coarsest viands are preferable to the most sumptuous delicacies. The following history of an eastern vizier will contribute to support this opinion.

Alibeg, in his youth, had been a very great favourite of the Sultan Mahmud: he had been the partner of his childish sports, and, as they grew up, the companion of his more manly amusements. He entrusted him with all his secrets, and generally followed his advice in most matters of importance. Mahmud, therefore, out of gratitude, advanced him to the first office of state in the empire. 59

Alibeg was a man of a noble and generous heart, and of a complexion of mind very different from those who generally flock about royalty, like drones about the hive, only to rob it of its sweets. The inferior ministers of Mahmud were avaricious, cruel, and oppressive, and sacrificed the ease and happiness of the people to gratify their own pleasure, avarice, and ambition. Alibeg was determined, whatever might be the consequences, to set about a reformation of many shameful abuses.

An attempt of this nature naturally brought upon him the united opposition of the imans and grandees. They first endeavoured to ruin Alibeg in the opinion of the sultan, by charging him with those very crimes, which he was in reality endeavouring to correct; but their endeavours were for a long time ineffectual. The sultan loved Alibeg, and well knew that all the accusations against him were false and groundless.

Men in power, who have no other object in view but the gratification of their unbounded passions, dread nothing so much as the influence which wise and virtuous minds sometimes have over good princes. The wicked courtiers finding they could not prevail on the sultan, by fair means, to give up his favourite Alibeg, called in to their aid diabolical rebellion. 60

The deluded multitude rose against their best friend, whose only wish was to make them happy, by freeing them from the shameful tyranny in which the ministers and great men held them. What a pity it is, that the lower class of people, on whom the prosperity of almost every nation undoubtedly depends, should be so often blind to their own interest, as to be persuaded, by artful and designing men, to forge fetters for themselves!

The sultan, finding he must either give up his empire or his favourite, consented to the disgrace of Alibeg; but not till the leaders of the rebellion had sworn, by the holy Prophet, that Alibeg should be permitted to retire where he pleased, without being insulted or molested.

Alibeg, thus divested of power and all his property, without a friend who dared to give him the least assistance, retired to spend the remainder of his days among the rocks and deserts of the Korasan. Here, on the borders of a limpid and meandering stream, he erected himself a little hut; and here, remote from the converse of ambitious and deceitful man, he passed his time unnoticed by any human being.

He had lived in this solitary retreat, amidst rocks and deserts for upwards of two years, when the virtuous Mentor discovered his gloomy abode. This good man, who was the intimate friend of Alibeg, and who had advised him to attempt the reformation of the state, was thereby instrumental in the ruin of his friend. However, as soon as Alibeg was banished by the people, Mentor banished himself, and retired to a little village at a great distance from the capital. 61

Mentor sighed for the absence of his friend, and, as he knew he was retired to the Korasan, he determined to set out in search of him. As he was walking on, and at about a furlong distant from the abode of Alibeg, they suddenly met in a winding path. They instantly knew each other, embraced, and wept. When they had wiped away their tears, and had got over the first emotions of joy which so sudden and unexpected a meeting had occasioned, Mentor was astonished to see how much serenity and composure were visible on the countenance of his friend Alibeg, whose bosom was the repository of peace and contentment.

"Blessed be the Eternal," said Mentor, "who gives strength to the weak, and contentment to the unfortunate! He, who had fertile plains at his command in the environs of the capital, is now contented and happy in a cottage, among barren rocks and deserts! But Alibeg has brought virtue with him to these rocks, and he despises the roses that for ever bloom in the garden of Hiera, the diamonds that harden in the rich mines of Nishapous, and the silks that rustle in the manufactories of Mezendran. But tell me, my dear friend, has it taught you to live alone? Is it possible, that any one can live without the converse of a friend? Such a life would be the solitude of a tomb!" 62

While Mentor was thus addressing his friend, they kept walking on; when they approached the cottage, which Alibeg left that morning before the sun had given light to the eastern parts of the horizon, their ears were first assailed with the neighing of a colt that came to meet them. When the animal approached its master, its motions seemed to express its satisfaction on seeing him again: it turned about either walking or prancing before him all the way home.

Presently two beautiful heifers came running towards them from an adjoining meadow. They moved in a circle round them, then stopped, as it were, to offer him their milk, and holding out

their necks to him to be yoked; for nature had taught these animals to be grateful to the hand that fed them.

When they had proceeded a little further, two goats, attended by their kids, as soon as they caught sight of Alibeg, descended from the rocks, and expressed their joy on seeing him again by skipping and sporting round him.

While Mentor was amusing himself with this pleasing scene, his attention was called aside to observe five or six sheep, which had just issued from a neighbouring thicket, and were bleating as they ran. They leaped with joy, and approached to lick their master's hand, who, in return, made much of them, and showed them, by the manner in which he received those marks of their gratitude, how much he was satisfied with their affection for him.

This tender scene engaged much the attention of Mentor, who was still more surprised when he saw a flock of doves surround Alibeg, some of which hovered over his head, and others perched on his shoulders.

By this time he had entered the inclosure of his cottage, when a cock perceiving him, instantly began crowing; and, to complete the concert, the hens flew from their pursuit of food, and endeavoured, in their way, to welcome his return.

But all these marks of attachment were not equal to those shown by two dogs who waited, at the door of the cot, the arrival of Alibeg, their generous master. Neither of them would stir out to meet him, but kept to the post he seemed to have assigned them, that of taking care of his house. However, as soon as he and his friend had entered the cot, they pawed and jumped round him, played a thousand antics, crouched before him, and expressed their joy by their agility; they licked their master's feet, and, when he stretched his hand to pat and stroke them, they would hardly stay to receive the fond mark of approbation, but, rushing through the door-way, sprung forward, and made long circuits over the rocks, and scoured backwards and forwards to express their joy. When they had tired themselves, they returned and lay down at the feet of their beloved master.

Mentor seemed lost in astonishment, and was convinced, in his own mind, that his friend must be happier in this cot, amidst these irrational beings, if they deserved to be so called, than he could possibly be among faithless men, in the palaces of Mahmud.

"You here see, my good friend," said Alibeg, "that I know how to make myself happy, even among the rocks and deserts of Korasan. I endeavoured to teach men the love of virtue, to inspire the subjects of Mahmud with the proper notions of liberty, and to shake off that tyranny they laboured under from the usurpation of the rich and powerful; but they despised my advice, and drove me from my native spot, to seek shelter here, where I have found animals of the brute creation more grateful than men. Thus, you see, my solitude is not a tomb, and that I here enjoy a kind of sovereignty over those animals, which is far more grateful, and less dangerous, than the condition of Mahmud, who reigns over a fickle and inconstant people, who is every hour deceived by them, and who may perhaps one day drive him from his throne."

While they were thus conversing together, they heard the sound of a number of horses' feet on the solid rock. Alibeg was alarmed, and could not conceive that any band of robbers could inhabit those regions; nor could he suppose that any civilized beings would come that way in the pursuit of pleasure.

A few minutes, however, cleared up all his doubts, when he saw about a hundred horsemen approaching his cot. At the head of these Alibeg perceived his old friend Sha-abba, who had been the principal cause of changing Alibeg's sentence, from that of losing his head to perpetual banishment.

Sha-abba leaped from his horse, and caught Alibeg in his arms. Mentor, who was a witness to this scene, could not conceive what all this could mean; but he soon learned, that the people were so wearied out with the oppressions of the great, which had been carried to a more enormous height than ever since the banishment of Alibeg, that they unanimously rose in their defence, and destroyed all the authors of their oppression; but remained firm in their duty and attachment to the Sultan Mahmud.

The sultan had sent these horsemen, a hundred in number, with Sha-abba at their head, in quest of the virtuous Alibeg, whom he was to bring back with him by force, if entreaty could not prevail, to assume his former post of vizier. When Alibeg was informed of this, he wept bitterly, and exclaimed, "After having learned to know in what happiness and contentment consist, why am I thus to be snatched in a moment from them, and again compelled to hazard my peace of mind among men more savage than the rocks and deserts of Korasan? How can I forsake these faithful companions of my retirement, my dogs, my doves, and my cattle? No, if I must go, they shall follow me, that I may have them ready to attend me when Fortune shall again drive me to these deserts."

Sha-abba and Mentor endeavoured to pacify his mind: the former assured him, that all his enemies had been killed by the hands of the oppressed multitude, and the general voice of both the sultan and people was for the return of Alibeg. By these and such like arguments they prevailed on Alibeg to return to the capital, and resume his former exalted employments.

Alibeg mounted his colt, and, after shedding a flood of tears, as a tributary farewell to the rocks and deserts of Korasan, he proceeded on his journey; his two faithful dogs by his side, while the doves fluttered around him, and his kids, sheep, and heifers, followed in the rear.

When they arrived within a few miles of the metropolis, they were met by some thousands of

the citizens, who seemed at a loss how properly to express their happiness on the return of their faithful Alibeg, while shame, for having treated him so unjustly, in some measure diminished their joy. Mahmud waited for him at the door of his palace; he received him with open arms; and Alibeg all his life afterwards was equally esteemed by the sultan and his people. Happy is he who, in every various station of life, in prosperity or adversity, can maintain the same equanimity, resolution, and fortitude.





## *The happy Effects of Sunday Schools on the Morals of the rising Generation.*

WHATEVER may be said of the increasing luxury and dissipation of Englishmen, their hearts have not yet lost any part of their ancient reputation for the feelings of humanity, and they are still ever ready to provide clothing for the naked, medical assistance for the sick and lame, and education for the untaught children of the poor.

The great number of hospitals, infirmaries, free-schools, and other charitable establishments, with which almost every part of this country abounds, afford an ample display of British benevolence. The institution of Sunday Schools owes its foundation to the humanity of the present times, and will be a credit to it in future ages. The following history of Dorcas and Amarillis may serve as one instance of the happy effects of Sunday Schools. 69

In a solitary village, far remote from the metropolis, and not near to any capital city, lived the parents of Dorcas and Amarillis. The husband was a shepherd and his wife a shepherdess; but their earnings were so little, that even with their joint labour they could hardly procure bread for themselves and their children, and a morsel of meat once a week was the highest pitch of their luxury, though even that was of the very coarsest kind.

As soon as Dorcas and Amarillis grew up, the former was sent into the fields to frighten birds from the grain, and the latter was kept at home to knit coarse yarn stockings for the use of the family.

Their whole library consisted only of a Testament and a Prayer-book; but these were so injured by the depredations of time, having passed from hand to hand for many years, that what was not torn away, was rendered nearly illegible. However, that was of little consequence, since neither of them could read, and consequently could have no idea of writing. The church was at some distance from them, which served as an excuse to be absent from thence.

Dorcas had neither hat, shirt, shoes, nor stockings; and all the apparel of poor Amarillis was only a straw hat and a coarse gown and petticoat.—These considerations alone were sufficient to keep them from church, admitting they had any inclination to go there. In course, as Sunday was the only day of rest they had from their labour, both boys and girls passed it in such tricks and gambols as were most suitable to their age and taste. 70

Thus they lived almost in a state of nature, without knowing any thing of the Supreme Being, or of any of the duties we owe to him. They had no idea of prayer, further than, "I thank God we have had a fine season this year, &c." and herein consisted all their devotion. However, amidst all this ignorance and poverty, Dorcas, his sister, and family, were all strictly honest, and never, like others in their village, employed their Sunday in stealing fowls, and other things from their rich neighbours, which they thought it no crime to do: the only dread they had of the commission of these robberies, was the fear of being discovered, and the punishment that would inevitably follow it.

These two children, Dorcas and Amarillis, lived in this state of ignorance till they were ten or eleven years of age. It had been some time a custom with Dorcas and his sister, with a black-lead pencil they had found by chance, to imitate, on the back of a clean white trencher, all the letters they found in the remains of their Common Prayer-book, though they knew not the sound, nor combination of the different letters of the alphabet, in order to form and connect words. 71

As they were one winter's evening hovering over the fire, Dorcas said to his sister, "How happy are those young people, who, having parents that can afford to pay for their education, are taught to read, write, and cast accounts! and yet how many of those children prefer the most idle pastimes to the more invaluable improvement of their minds? There must be something vastly pretty, in being able to read that Testament and Prayer-book."

"I agree with you, my dear Dorcas," said the blooming Amarillis, "that there must be something uncommonly delightful, to be able to unriddle the meaning of all those words we see in that book. What a hardship it is, that we should be born to spend our days in ignorance, and know none of the pleasures which learning must undoubtedly bring with it!"

The next morning, the principal person in the village, who owned a great part of it, came to their hovel, and acquainted the old folks that they might the next Sunday send their children to church, where they would be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, and be likewise taught to read, without any expence to themselves.

The next Sunday morning, accompanied by other children in the village, they accordingly repaired to church, where they were all dressed in new apparel, prepared for them by the voluntary subscriptions of the humane and generous. Though their clothes were but of coarse materials, yet Dorcas and Amarillis had never been so fine before; the one thought herself as elegant as Cleopatra, and the other considered himself as great as Cæsar. 72

Besides clothing, such as could read tolerably well had a Bible, Testament, and Common Prayer given them; while others who could not read, had only a spelling-book. A schoolmaster was appointed in each village to instruct the poor children in the evening; and every Sunday they went regularly to church, to be examined by the parson in public.

It was a pleasing change to behold: instead of noise, riot, and confusion, every Sunday, from one end of the village to the other, peace, order, and decorum were every where seen. Instead of

having recourse to mischievous inventions to pass away the time, each was now seen quietly seated on the enamelled turf, with a book in his hand, and either reading to himself or to some others.

Among all these youthful students, Dorcas and Amarillis made the most distinguished figures, and displayed such a genius and attention as attracted the wonder and amazement of every one. In a few months they learned to read with some degree of emphasis, and could write a hand sufficient for any of the common concerns of business.

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Such an uncommon display of genius created them many friends, and they frequently received invitations from the younger branches of the neighbouring gentry. From these visits they learned a polite and graceful behaviour, and consequently soon got rid of their awkward rusticity. As they increased in knowledge, so their minds opened and expanded; and, though their wishes were at first only to learn to read, they now sighed after the higher branches of literature.

"What a pleasing thing it must be," said Dorcas one day to his sister, "to read of what passed in the former ages of the world, and trace out the tempers and dispositions of the people in those days! What a narrow span of earth are we confined to, in comparison of what we are told the world is at large! I should like to read those books which give a description of the different parts of the earth and seas; what animals inhabit them, and what curiosities they contain superior to our own."

"I have the same wish," replied Amarillis; "but let us be thankful to that good God, and to the generosity of our opulent neighbours, by whose bounty and goodness we were rescued from a state of ignorance and gloomy despair, have been enabled to read the Sacred Writings, and imbibe the glorious doctrines of salvation."

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This conversation was overheard by a gentleman, who immediately bought them some small books of history and geography, of which they made so proper a use, that there were very few young people, within several miles of them, who were able to converse with them on geographical and historical subjects.

Within the course of two years, Dorcas and his sister had made great improvements in the sciences, when it was thought necessary to send them into the world to provide for themselves, as their parents were now engaged in a gentleman's family, in a much better situation than that of a shepherd and shepherdess. Amarillis was taken as a waiting maid, attendant and companion of a young lady of distinction and fortune; and Dorcas thought himself happy in being taken as clerk in the shop of a capital tradesman.

In this situation all parties at present remain, and afford an unanswerable proof of the utility of Sunday Schools. Had it not been for that noble institution, Dorcas and Amarillis must have lived and died in the grossest ignorance, overwhelmed with poverty and despair; their parents must have lingered out a half-starved life in their miserable cot, without being able to bequeath any thing to their children but rags and poverty. What may be the future situation of Dorcas and Amarillis we cannot say; but we need not search the roll of fate to know this, that they are bound to pray, as they undoubtedly do, for the first promoters of Sunday Schools.

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Let me advise my youthful readers, whatever their condition in life may be, to imitate the industry of Dorcas and Amarillis. Let them remember that, however painful a few years of hard study may be, how pleasing will be the consequences to them all the rest of their lives, when they will be possessed of that which nothing but their final dissolution can take from them!





## *The Happy Villager.*

MR. Jackson had been an eminent tradesman in the city of London, where he by trade acquired an independent fortune, and was now retired into the country to spend the remainder of his days amidst rural retreats, to enjoy the pleasures of rambling through woods and groves, by the side of purling and meandering streams, while the harmony of the feathered songsters would charm the ear, and lull the busy mind into the most tranquil repose.

The retreat Mr. Jackson had chosen was situated in the county of Worcester, and near to the place where he drew his first breath. His house was a well-designed mean between the vast piles raised for magnificence and those smaller ones in which convenience alone is considered. The walk from the back of the house led through a wood, by the side of a delightful stream, which meandered over grass from out of a deep hollow. A gush of water, which fell into it, gurgled through a rocky cavity; and in front you looked down on a fine lawn, terminated with a noble bank of hanging woods.

He would frequently ramble to a great distance from home, to survey the beauties of the surrounding country. He had already visited every neighbouring village, and therefore one day strayed farther than usual in pursuit of new objects. On a sudden he discovered a delightful valley, the appearance of which seemed to correspond with every thing descriptive of a rural scene.

It was surrounded on all sides by hills, at the feet of which were thickly scattered cottages, groves, and gardens, which seemed to be the abode of rural happiness. The silence of the scene was broken only by the dashings of a torrent, which, rushing from an eminence, precipitated, bellowing, into a cavern beneath. Having there vented its rage in foam, it then divided into a multitude of little rills, and forming serpentine sweeps, refreshed the meadows and surrounding gardens with its friendly streams.

However pleased Mr. Jackson was with the natural beauties of the place, he was no less struck with the neatness and simplicity of the many cottages that presented themselves to his view, every house having a garden, an orchard, and some well-cultivated ground about it. Their only fences were hedges of holly, which afforded a convincing proof of two things, the fertility of the soil, and the confidence each one had in his neighbour.

Mr. Jackson was so wholly employed in contemplating this pleasing scene, that he paid no attention to a storm that was gathering around him, till the lightning flashed in his face, the thunder rolled over his head, and the rain began to fall in torrents. He instantly ran to the nearest farm door, and having there knocked, gained immediate admittance.

It was an elderly woman that came to the door, and who, though old, was not decrepid, and appeared to have something venerable in her countenance. "Come in, sir," said she, "and I will make a fire to dry you. I am glad our cottage was so near to you; but you would have met with a kind reception in any of these cottages. There is hardly a house here which is not kept by some of our children or descendants."

Mr. Jackson had sufficient leisure, while the good woman was lighting the fire, to survey the apartment. Every thing appeared uncommonly neat, and it was easy to be seen, from the nature of the furniture, that necessity had no abode under that roof. The novelty of the whole scene, and the particular words the good old woman had dropped in conversation during the lighting of the fire, gave Mr. Jackson a strong desire to know further particulars.

While he was drying his clothes, he heard a voice in the other room, asking if the stranger was taken care of, to which the good woman replied in the affirmative. "I suppose," said Mr. Jackson, "that is your husband in the next room, whose voice I hear. May I go in and thank him for his hospitality and kindness!"

"With all my heart, sir," replied the woman, "you will please to step in, and I believe you will not be dissatisfied with your reception." Mr. Jackson did so; and there found an old man reclining on a bed, of which the clothes and furniture were very neat and clean. He had on a cap, and his snow-white locks hung over his venerable shoulders. His countenance indicated the goodness and serenity of his heart, and even Time had here been more sparing of his devastations than is generally the case.

The appearance of this happy villager had a very great effect upon Mr. Jackson, who could not look on him without being, in some measure, prejudiced in his favour. "What is the matter with you?" said he to the old cottager, "I suppose you are ill, and obliged to keep your bed?"

"God be praised," replied the old man, "that is not the case; though it cannot be expected, that a person turned of fourscore years of age should be free from all kinds of complaints. It is not a long time since I have given up daily labour, which my children obliged me to do; for they said I had worked long enough for them, and that it was now time they should work for me in their turns."

Mr. Jackson highly applauded the conduct of his children; and observed to the old man, that he must have purchased his present repose at the expence of a great deal of labour; but he wished to know, after having passed his life in such active scenes, how he could amuse himself at present.

"My whole life," replied the old man, "has been a constant succession of labour. There are few men who have carried in more hay, or tied more sheaves together than I have; but my labour

procured me health, contentment, and happiness. As to time, it never sits heavy on my hands; and, when my body is at rest, my mind is at work. How can any person be at a loss for thoughts who has ten children, and fifty children's children to think for? They every day give me an account of their affairs and labour, and it is I who put every thing in order. There is always one constantly upon my hands that must be married, and matches of that kind are not to be settled in a moment. If those I have provided for in this way are now in a thriving state, it is to me they owe their welfare. I have at this time three marriages in hand, and I hope they will soon be settled to the mutual satisfaction of all parties."

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Mr. Jackson observed, that he must be very happy in so numerous a family, and asked him how many he had at home with him. "I have at present only two," replied the old man, "who are my grand-daughters, for I cannot lodge an army here. It is my lands, and not my house, that I wish to enlarge. Thank God, I have been able to give each of my children a tolerable portion; not in gold, but acres, and that without impoverishing myself. For a mere trifle, I bought a large quantity of land, which none of my neighbours thought worth meddling with: but I set about improving it, and gave it to my daughters as so many marriage portions, which are now, in their improved state, of great value.

"Whenever any of my children were ill, I had skill enough to cure them by the use of those few plants I am acquainted with, and of their behaviour to me I never had any reason to complain. I always took care to set them a good example; for though in my youth I was as wild as any other, and there could not be a dance in this or any neighbouring parish but I was sure to be there, yet, as soon as I was married, I left off those pranks. My wife was fortunately handsome, good, and sprightly, and that kept me in awe.

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"I took my boys into the fields with me as soon as they could walk, and I presently made them useful in one way or other. I put my youngest son on the plough, and was pleased to see the others frolic round him; and, on my return home in the evening, my little girls would divert me with singing, while they were spinning at their wheel.

"I used to go among my children and grandchildren, to see if every thing went on properly; but now, since old age has prevented me, they come and see me. The sermon is no sooner over on a Sunday, than my daughters and grand-daughters bring their little ones; and it would please you, sir, to behold me in the midst of twenty women dressed as for a marriage, and as pretty as angels. There is a family resemblance in their children, and that charms me."

Mr. Jackson observed, that the other six days of the week must be very tiresome to him, since he could not have the company of his family to amuse him. To this the old man replied, "If I be denied this pleasure, yet I have others to supply its place. I know every inch of ground in this parish, and am as well acquainted with all who live in it. My neighbours, therefore, frequently come to ask my opinion on matters of husbandry, in which they are engaged. I give them my advice with pleasure; and if they be poor people, I provide them with the seed they want, and they repay it me the ensuing harvest. Thus am I serviceable to others, without injuring myself or my family.

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"In my endeavours to do good to my neighbours, I am assisted by our vicar, who is a very good man, and of whom I have, in some degree, made a bishop, by the weddings, christenings, and tithes with which I have enriched him. I have even given him some instructions concerning his business in the pulpit; for the country people, in general, like example better than precept. The general rule I taught him to lay down to his congregation was no more than this: *No rest, good neighbours, to your land; but peace among yourselves.*"

Mr. Jackson could not help applauding such principles, and told the good old villager, that he apprehended he was of more service to the vicar than he was to the lawyer, if any such professional man lived near them.

The good old man replied, "We have indeed one lawyer among us, but I have pretty well spoiled his trade. Had I taken only sixpence every time I have been consulted, in order to settle disputes, I should at this time have been a very rich man. In all places, there frequently will happen disputes of one kind or other, and principally when the ground of any deceased person is to be parceled out among his successors.

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"On these occasions, they generally come to me for my advice; and if there be children to be married, I soon settle the affair. If there be any ground in dispute, and the parties cannot agree about it, they take me in their little cart, and, being on the spot, I have the ground surveyed; I then weigh the good and bad qualities of it in my mind, and endeavour, if I can, to satisfy the different parties.

"When I find the parties are not inclined to agree, the next day I get them all together here, and I always keep a barrel of good ale on the run, such as will soften the most obdurate and flinty heart. I give them a glass or two of it, and in the mean time I tell them, that a lawsuit would cost ten times more than the ground is worth; that if they proceed in it, they will lose a great deal of time as well as money, and ever after be enemies to each other. These arguments and a few glasses of ale, never fail to make up the matter, and bring about a perfect reconciliation. It is true, I lose my ale by such a practice; but then I am amply repaid by the reflection of having done good."

Here the cottager called to his wife, and told her to bring a jug of their ale. Mr. Jackson drank some of it, and confessed that it was admirably calculated to make peace among his neighbours in the village, especially when administered by so able a hand, who knew how to extract friendship from the very means that often produce strife and disaffection.

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By this time the storm was entirely abated, Nature had put off her gloomy aspect, and the returning sun began to enliven every thing. Mr. Jackson took a friendly leave, and promised to see them again in a few days. On his return home, "Who would not," said he to himself, "prefer the healthful age of this good cottager, happy in his own esteem and the love of others, to the vanity of those great men, who make no other use of their abundance, than to set examples of luxury and dissipation, who make light of public scorn and hatred, and whom the very grave will not protect from infamy and execration!"



## *The Indolent Beauty.*

WE too often see beauty contaminated by vanity, and a fine genius by indolence. Bella was the only daughter of a tender and affectionate mother, whose virtue and discretion were a source of happiness to her family, and a credit to her sex. Bella, on her arrival at six years of age, afforded every symptom of a good heart, complaisance, affability, and a tolerable share of understanding. This was the glaring part of the picture; for the shade afforded a strange attachment to indolence, and a disgust to every species of refined education.

Though her mother possessed all the talents necessary for an excellent instructress, yet she had never before any opportunity of reducing them to practice, and an only child was not perhaps the most proper object for her experience in the science of juvenile education. It should ever be one important point with parents, never to give up a command they have once laid on their children, but punctually to insist on its performance. The observation of this rule would frequently save a great deal of uneasiness to both parents and children.

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Her mother could not think of applying even the most tender correction, and the use of threatenings only added to her own uneasiness. She hoped, as her daughter grew older, she would become more sensible of her indolence and inattention to business, and, as she ripened in years, would proportionably increase in sense and judgment; but the older the twig grew the less pliant it became, and what might have been accomplished in its younger state, was by time become almost impracticable.

Bella, however, when she arrived at eight years of age, showed very little inclination to make any alteration in her conduct; the little creature's idleness rather increased than diminished, and she began to be troublesome even to herself. Her mother now conceived the plan of putting down on paper, every evening, the value of such things as she had lost or spoiled in the course of the day, in consequence of her carelessness and invincible indolence.

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Her mother had flattered herself that Bella, when she came to know the value of money, would act in a more prudent manner; but she read over the account with the utmost indifference, and considered the sums there mentioned as too insignificant for her notice and attention. A pretended head-ache was almost her constant excuse to avoid her attendance on her masters; and thus, though naturally sincere, she began to accustom herself to deviate from the truth.

Bella had reached her thirteenth year, without the least appearance of alteration in her conduct, and the lost and broken account, kept by her mother, was increased to a large sum. One irregularity, if not timely checked, brings on others; and thus Bella to indolence soon added inconsistency. She presently grew tired of every thing; her harpsichord, which was one week her favourite instrument, was the next discarded with disgust, to make room for the guitar; and this, in a short time after, for something else. She had masters to teach her geography, French, and Italian; writing, accounts, dancing, drawing, and music. These added to her mother's long catalogue of expences, contributed but little to her improvement.

It is natural to suppose, that when the follies of youth are not early corrected, they will, like pernicious weeds, thrive so fast as to check the growth of every thing that is valuable in the same soil. Hence it happened, that after three years more had elapsed, the lovely Bella, instead of growing wiser by age, as her mother had vainly expected, became more indolent, whimsical, and capricious. All the money paid to her masters was thrown away, she learned nothing, and was in fact little more than an *ignorant beauty*: a character I most sincerely wish is not applicable to any of my fair readers, since nothing can be more dangerous, pernicious, and derogatory to female reputation.

89

At this period of her folly, a young gentleman of fortune and character, whom I shall call by the name of Honestus, among other company, visited the parents of Bella. He was struck with her charms, and immediately conceived some thought of paying his addresses to that capricious beauty; but, when he learned what was her character, he declined all thoughts of forming such a connection.

The tender mother did not fail to represent this disappointment to her daughter, who was then of an age capable to receive remonstrances of that nature. To her natural disposition for indolence she had now added pride, the forerunner of all evils to a female mind. Instead of properly feeling the reproaches of a tender mother, she haughtily replied, "It is true, I have lost a great deal of time, and have not improved myself much from the lessons of my masters; but what need have I of learning, when my parents are so rich, and you yourself acknowledge I am so pretty?"

90

As soon as Bella had attained her eighteenth year, she began to think herself happy in being no longer incommoded with the visits of her teachers; so, when a young lady arrives at that age, she is supposed to be accomplished in point of education, and has nothing else to do but to apply herself to the application of those rules she learned from her masters. Alas! this was not the case of the lovely Bella: she had learned nothing but those principles which never fail to be pernicious to the youthful mind.

That morning, which on its opening appeared to her so delightful and brilliant, was soon enveloped in dark and heavy clouds. Her mother entered her chamber with a countenance that convinced Bella something was amiss. After an awful pause, she thus addressed her daughter: "My dear child, you are this day eighteen years of age; but I fear your education is far short of what it now ought to be. I fear the indulgences I have granted you have made you too vain of

yourself, and have fatally induced you to believe, that you had less occasion for an education than others. Will beauty make you lovely? separated from the graces of the mind, it will not so much as please. Are you not always uneasy in yourself, and constantly dissatisfied with others? Besides, rich as you imagine your father to be, are you sure that, while we are now speaking, he is not a ruined and undone man?"

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The last words awakened in the bosom of Bella all the alarms which an unexpected disappointment to ambition is capable of feeling. Her mother got up, and left the room without saying any thing more.

The apprehensions of Bella on this occasion were but too well founded; for, in a few days after this conversation, her father stopped payment. This imprudent gentleman, not contented with a fortune of six thousand pounds a year, engaged in a very hazardous undertaking, which, happening to fail, brought on a bankruptcy. He had all his life been the child of fortune, and therefore made but a poor pupil in the school of adversity: he took this matter so to heart, that in spite of all the care and attention of his wife and daughter, he soon bid adieu to the cares of this world, and fled for repose to the next. He died perfectly sensible, exhorting those around him, never to give way to the emotions of avarice and rapacity, since these first brought him to ruin, and then to his grave.

His wife undoubtedly felt this shock severely, though she supported it with Christian fortitude. She had a small jointure, which the creditors could not, nor did they wish to touch. Having performed the duties of the last funeral rites to her husband, she and her daughter retired to a private situation in the west of England, where every necessary article of life was cheaper than in the metropolis.

92

Bella, however, behaved with all the propriety that could be expected from a repenting daughter, and made every effort she was capable of to console her unhappy mother. She would frequently reproach herself with her past negligence, and reckon up the vast sums of money that had been squandered away upon her to so little purpose.

Bella had valued herself much on the fortune she supposed herself born to; but it pleased Providence to deprive her of it. She had, however, her beauty still left to boast of; but even of this she was soon to be deprived. Be cautious, my youthful readers, how you place too great a confidence in the possession of wealth and beauty, since they are fleeting as the wind, and as unsteady as the vessel on the troubled billows of the ocean. Fortify your minds with religion and virtue, and a proper knowledge of the useful sciences; the storms and hurricanes of Fortune may then attack you, but you will always safely withstand their rage, and deride their fury.

One evening, while she was bewailing her past neglect, and vowing a reform for the future, she was seized with a head-ache, and being otherwise very ill, she went to bed. The next morning a violent fever seized her, and a physician being sent for, her disorder was declared to be that which is frequently so fatal to female beauty.

93

It was one of the most unpromising kind; the doctors could say but little, and the mother was driven to despair. Day after day, and night after night, her mother never left her bed-side, but was constantly with her, in a state of uncertainty, worse than that of death itself. The afflicted Bella became delirious, the disorder made a rapid progress, and her eyes were soon excluded from the light.

Though this circumstance is not uncommon in this fatal disorder, and therefore did not at first create any alarm in her mother, yet at last it increased to such a dangerous height, that the physicians were no longer able to dissemble matters, and candidly confessed their apprehensions, that her daughter would be blind all her life. Judge, if you can, what must be the feelings of a tender mother on so trying a calamity!

However, youth got the better of her disorder, very contrary to the expectation of her mother, the physicians, and every one around her; she also recovered her sight, but there were left terrible marks on her face of the devastation it had there made. As soon as she was able to walk about the room, she looked in the glass, and then exclaimed: "Ah! what is become of that lovely face, of which the proud Bella so lately boasted? Has cruel fortune robbed her of all she boasted, of all she valued herself for but a month ago, her fortune and her beauty? I am justly punished, and I will patiently submit."

94

Bella, thus instructed by misfortune, soon conquered her indolence, and all her former imperfections; a sudden revolution took place, and her very nature seemed to be reformed. Her mother's conversation now became delightful to her, and she began to sit down to study with unwearied attention. Reading, music, and drawing were her daily amusements; and so great were her improvements therein, that she soon made up for the time she had before thrown away in the most shameful indolence.

Her beauty was indeed vanished, but the improvements she made in her mind procured her more friends than she was ever before able to acquire by the charms of her person. Her shape was still truly elegant, and her eyes and countenance were still expressive of the vivacity of her heart. She was no longer expensive in her dress, though she was always neat and fashionable.— Though her visitors did not look upon her with that astonishment as formerly, yet they soon became captivated with the charms of her mind and the politeness of her conversation.

95

Two years had passed away in this retired situation, when Honestus, who had long before ceased to think of making a partner of Bella, on account of her capricious and indolent temper, being on some business in that quarter, called on the mother and daughter to see them. He was introduced into a parlour elegantly furnished, and adorned with pictures. "Is not this," said the



lady, "a neat apartment? Every thing you here see, and these drawings in particular, are the works of my daughter."

Honestus was much surprised at hearing what he considered as a tale, and his looks expressed his incredulity. He turned round, and stedfastly gazing on the face of Bella, was equally astonished at seeing her so changed. "Is this the lovely creature," said he to himself, "with whose beauty I was once so much enraptured, and whom I forsook on account of her pride, vanity, and indolence!"

Out of politeness he entered into conversation with her, and found in her a most pleasing alteration: before she was a beauty without sense; now she had lost the charms of her face, but had found those of the mind, which are infinitely the most to be valued.

Honestus passed day after day in the company of Bella, whose conversation was so pleasing and attracting, that he began to feel himself uneasy when she was out of his sight. In order, therefore, that he might enjoy the pleasure of her company without interruption, he offered her his hand for life. "You certainly deserve her," said her mother, "since you refused her in the bloom of her beauty, when her fortune too afforded the most splendid promises, and now admire her when they are both for ever vanished."

Though the fortune of Honestus was not very splendid, yet it was sufficient, with the assistance of his trade, to keep up a genteel appearance, and to provide decently for a family, should such be the consequence of their marriage. They soon quitted this rural retreat and returned to London, where they now live in the enjoyment of all those pleasures which conjugal love, friendship, and virtue are capable of producing.

Let my youthful readers reflect on what they have here read, and they will then become sensible how vain and momentary, how fickle and inconstant are the possession of riches and beauty. They are like habitations built on the sands of the ocean, which are perpetually liable to be swept away by the violence of winds and floods. I mean not, that fortune and beauty are to be spised, I mean only that they should be used properly, and that the possessor of them should not vainly imagine, that they will supply the place of education, industry, benevolence, charity, and virtue.





## *An Oriental Tale.*

TIME, the devourer of all things, has permitted me to be the spectator of a long series of events. The colour of my locks is now changed to that of the swans, which sport in the gardens of the mighty kings of the earth. Age and experience have taught me to believe, that the sovereign Disposer of our destinies has given to man a heart susceptible of virtue, and a soul capable of tasting the pleasures which arise from doing good. A noble and disinterested action must somewhere meet with its reward. Listen, O sons of Adam! listen to my faithful tale.

In one of those delightful valleys which cut the chain of the mountains in Arabia, for a long time lived a rich pastor. He was happy because he was contented, and his happiness consisted in doing good. One day, as he was walking on the enamelled borders of a purling stream, under the shade of a grove of palm-trees, which extended their verdant branches even to the heads of the lofty cedars with which the mountain was crowned, he heard a voice that frequently echoed into the valley the most piercing cries, and sometimes low murmuring plaints, which were lost in the noise of the torrent.

The venerable pastor hastened to the place from whence the voice proceeded, when he saw a young man prostrate on the sand, at the foot of a rock. His garment was torn, and his hair, in wild confusion, covered his face, on which were easily to be traced the flowers of beauty, faded by grief: tears trickled down his cheeks, and his head was sunk on his bosom: he appeared like the rose which the rude blast of a storm had leveled to the earth. The pastor was touched at the sight: he approached the youth, and said to him, "O child of Grief! hasten to my arms. Let me press to my bosom the offspring of Despair!"

The youth lifted up his head in mournful silence; in astonishment he fixed his eyes on the pastor; for he supposed no human being was capable of feeling for his sufferings. The sight of so venerable a figure inspired him with confidence, and he perceived in his eyes the tear of pity and the fire of generosity. If to a generous soul it is pleasure to complain, and unfold the latent secrets of the heart, that pleasure surely must be heightened when we complain to those who will not shut their ears to the voice of truth, but will weigh every thing in the scale of reason, even though those truths may be disagreeable, and such as they wish to have no existence.

The youth rose up, covered with dust, and, as he flew to the arms of the pastor, uttered cries which the neighbouring mountains trebly echoed. "O my father!" said he: "O my father!" when he had a little recovered himself, after the tender embraces and the wise counsels of the old man who asked him many questions.

"It is," continued the unfortunate youth, "behind those lofty cedars, which you behold on those high mountains, it is there dwells Shel-Adar, the father of Fatima. The abode of my father is not far distant from thence. Fatima is the most beautiful damsel of all those in the mountains. I offered my service to Shel-Adar, to conduct one particular part of his flock, and he granted me my request. The father of Fatima is rich; mine is poor. I fell in love with Fatima, and she fell in love with me. Her father perceived it, and I was ordered to retire from the quarter in which lived every thing that was dear to my heart.

"I besought Shel-Adar, in the most suppliant terms, to permit me to attend his far-distant flocks, where I could have no opportunity to speak to the object of my soul. My entreaties were in vain, and I was ordered instantly to retire. My mother is no more; but I have an aged father, and two brothers so young, that they can yet hardly reach the most humble of the palm-tree branches. They have long depended on me for support; but that support is now at an end. Let me die, hoary-headed sire, and put an end to my woes!"

The pastor went instantly in search of Shel-Adar, and having found him, thus addressed him. "A dove from Aleppo took refuge at Damos, and lived with a dove of that country. The master feared that the dove from Aleppo would one day entice away his companion, and therefore caused them to be separated. They would eat no grain but that which they received when together; they languished; they died. O Shel-Adar! separate not those who cannot live unless they live together!"

Shel-Adar listened with attention to the words of the pastor; and, when he found that the flock and the horses he had brought with him were now given to the bewailing youth, he took Fatima by the hand, and led her to the arms of her lover. They then retired to the neighbouring grove, where the nymphs and swains from the mountains assembled around them, crowned them with garlands, and in circles tripped over the enamelled grass to the sweet notes of the lute.

The day had passed too swiftly, when the twinkling stars appearing in the heavens, gave the signal for retiring each to their habitation. The reverend pastor then withdrew, but not till he had uttered these words:—

"Listen, ye tender branches, to your parent stock; bend to the lessons of instruction, and imbibe the maxims of age and experience. As the pismire creeps not to its labour till fed by its elder, as the young eagle soars not to the sun but under the shadow of its mother's wings, so neither doth the child of mortality spring forth to action, unless the parent hand point out its destined labour. Dangerous are the desires of pleasure, and mean the pursuits of the sons of the earth. They stretch out their sinews like the patient mule; they persevere, with the swiftness of the camel in the desert, in their pursuit of trifles. As the leopard springs on his prey, so does man rejoice over his riches, and, like the lion's cub, basks in the sunshine of slothfulness. On the stream of life float the bodies of the careless and intemperate, as the carcasses of the dead on the

waves of the Tigris. Wish not to enjoy life longer than you wish to do good."

The worthy pastor then retired, and the moon darted forth her glimmering lights to illumine the way to his habitation. The amiable young shepherd and shepherdess, being now left by themselves, "My adorable Fatima," said the youth, "let us not retire to repose till we have offered up our most grateful thanks to him, whose throne is as far above that of earthly princes, as all the waters of the mighty ocean exceed one single drop falling from the clouds. To him we owe all the gratification of our wishes, and to him alone we must hereafter look up as our friend, guardian, and protector. May it be recorded in after times, that among these mountains once lived the happy Fatima and Dorillis, whose affections for each other, whose universal benevolence to all within the narrow sphere of their knowledge, and whose virtues and piety have left an example worthy the imitation of all who wish and know how to be happy."



## *Generosity rewarded.*

OF all the graces that contribute to adorn the human mind, there are perhaps none, more estimable than generosity and gratitude. To define the exact boundary between generosity and profusion, is not perhaps easy, since every one will explain it by the ideas they have of their own motives for action; yet how far soever avarice may have deprived some men of every spark of generosity, yet those very men fail not to expect it from others, and are sure to complain bitterly of those who do not display it in all their actions.

Nothing can equal the pleasure arising from the glow of a generous heart, which is prompted to a noble action solely from the love of virtue, and who wishes not to make of it a worldly parade. Fame is often purchased by generous donations, which would never have been given, had not popular idolatry been the motive; while others, like the generous man in the following tale, consult only the approbation of their own honest feelings. 105

One of the califs of Egypt, being in the field of battle, was unexpectedly surrounded by a great number of rebels, who were preparing to give that fatal blow, which would at once have finished his life and put an end to his mortal career. Fortunately for him an Arab happened to be near the spot with other soldiers of his party, who, seeing the situation of the calif, rushed upon the rebels, and soon put them to flight.

The name of this Arab was Nadir, who had for some months lived a wandering life in the most retired and unfrequented places, in order to escape the vengeance of the calif, against whom he had joined the people in a late insurrection.

This generous conduct of Nadir was so much admired by all the Arabians, that the sires still tell it their children among their evening tales. This adventure had the happy effect of perfectly reconciling Nadir to the calif, who, charmed with the generosity of a man who had saved his life, at the very instant he might have destroyed it, promised to place in him an implicit confidence. "But," said the calif, "let me hear how you have passed your time, during your banishment." 106

"I have been a wandering fugitive," replied Nadir, "ever since your family were elevated to the throne of this empire; conscious that the sword of vengeance was at all times hanging over my head, it became natural for me to seek security in retirement. I found refuge for some time in the house of a friend at Basra; but fearing that my stay in that city might be dangerous, I one night quitted it under the favour of a disguise, and pursued my journey towards the desert.

"I had escaped the vigilance of the guards, and thought myself out of all danger, when a man of a suspicious countenance seized my camel's bridle, and expressed his suspicions that I was the man the calif was in search of, and for the apprehension of whom a very considerable reward had been promised.

"I answered, that I was not the man he was in quest of."—"Is not your name Nadir?" said he. "This disconcerted me, and I could no longer deny myself to be the object of his pursuit. I put my hand into my bosom, and pulling out a jewel of some value, 'Receive,' said I, 'this trifling token of my gratitude, for the important service I hope you will now do me, in keeping silence, and favouring my escape. Should fortune again smile on me, I will share my prosperity with you.'

"He took my diamond, and examined it very attentively, 'Before I put this diamond into my turban, as your gift,' said he, 'I would wish you to answer me one question honestly. I have heard you have been a liberal man, and always ready to assist the poor and necessitous; but did you ever give away one half of your wealth at one time?' I answered in the negative; and he renewed his questions till he came down to one-tenth; when I replied, that I believed I had, at one time, given away more than one-tenth of my whole fortune. 107

"If that be the case,' said the man, as soon as I had made him that reply, 'that you may know there is at least one person in the realm more bountiful than yourself, I, who am nothing better than a private soldier, and receive only two dollars per month, return you your jewel, which must certainly be worth three thousand times that money.' Having thus said, he threw me back my diamond, and pursued his journey.

"Astonished at so benevolent and generous an action, I rode after him, and begged him to return. 'Generous friend,' said I to him, 'I would rather be discovered, and forfeit my head, than be thus vanquished in point of generosity. Magnanimous stranger, either I must follow you all day or you must accept this tribute of my gratitude.'

"He then, turning about, said to me, 'Were I to take from you your diamond, I should consider myself as a robber on the highway, since you receive no value from it. Let me advise you to lose no time, but set off for your proposed retreat.' He continued inflexible, and we parted." 108

The calif knew not which to admire most, the generosity of Nadir or the soldier. A proclamation was published, ordering the generous soldier to appear at the calif's court, that he might receive the reward of his virtues; but all was to no effect, as no one came forward to claim the glorious reward. However, about a twelvemonth afterwards, when Nadir attended the calif at a general review, a private soldier received a blow from his officer, for holding down his head as the calif passed. This drew the attention of Nadir, who, after looking stedfastly in the face of the offending soldier, leaped from his horse, and caught him in his arms. To conclude, this proved to be the man who had so generously treated Nadir, and had endeavoured to shun the reward of his virtues. The calif paid him singular honours; and at last raised him to the highest rank in his army.



## An Evening Vision.

ONE beautiful, serene, summer evening, after rambling in a grove of laurels, till the lamp of night arose to illumine the objects around me, I seated myself on the bank of a meandering river; a weeping willow spread over me its branches, which bent so humbly as to sweep the stream. An antique tower, partly in ruins, mantled in ivy, and surrounded with yew and cypress, was the only building to be seen.

I had been reading a melancholy tale, which in strong colours impressed itself on my memory, and led me to reflect on the strange pleasure we sometimes feel in perusing the most tragical adventures. What, said I to myself, can occasion it? Can the human heart feel any delight in the misfortunes of others?—Forbid it Heaven!

110

My eyes were fixed on the surface of the water; the soft beams of Luna sported on the curling waves, and all nature seemed hushed to repose; when a gentle slumber stole upon my senses, and methought a being of angelic form seated herself before me.

A mantle of the palest sapphire hung over her shoulders to the ground, her flaxen hair fell in waving curls on her lovely neck, and a white veil, almost transparent, shaded her face. As she lifted it up, she sighed, and continued for some moments silent. Never did I behold a countenance so delicate; and, notwithstanding a smile sported on her coral lips, her lovely blue eyes were surcharged with tears, and resembled violets dropping with dew. Below her veil she wore a wreath of amarinths and jessamines. "Wonder not," said she, in accents soft as the breath of zephyrs, "that a state of woe can please. I am called *Sensibility*, and have been from my infancy your constant companion. My sire was *Humanity*, and my mother *Sympathy*, the daughter of *Tenderness*. I was born in a cavern, overshadowed with myrtles and orange-trees, at the foot of Parnassus, and consigned to the care of Melpomene, who fed me with honey from Hybla, and lulled me to rest with plaintive songs and melancholy music.

"Down on one side of the cavern ran a stream from Helicon, and in the trees around it the doves and nightingales built their nests. I make it my sole care to augment the felicity of some favoured mortals, who nevertheless repine at my influence, and would gladly be under the dominion of *Apathy*."

111

"Alas, how inconsiderate! If the rose has thorns, has it not also a balsamic tincture and ambrosial sweetness? If the woodbine droops, laden with the dew drops of the morning, when the sun has exhaled them, will it not be refreshed, and yield richer fragrance? So, if a heart be touched with a story of distress, it will at the same time experience a delightful sensation; and, if the tears sometimes flow, say, can you call it weakness? can you wish to be divested of this genuine test of *tenderness*, and desire the departure of *Sensibility*? Were I totally to forsake you, man would become a senseless being, and presently imbibe the ferocity of the savage inhabitants of the forest."

"Ah no, fair nymph!" said I, "still deign to be my attendant; teach me to sigh with the unhappy, and with the happy to rejoice. I am now sensible, that the pleasures which arise from legends of sorrow, owe their origin to this certain knowledge, that our hearts are not callous to the finer feelings, but that we have some generous joys, and some generous cares beyond ourselves."

112

Scarcely had I pronounced these words, when the loud tolling of the village bell broke the fetters in which Morpheus had bound me, and dispelled the airy illusion.







## *The Anxieties of Royalty.*

THE califs of the East having extended their dominions as far as the boundaries of Europe, found their iron sceptre too heavy to be supported with any degree of pleasure or satisfaction. They therefore appointed what are called emirs; but each of these governors soon assumed the power of sultans. Not contented with the appearance of being equal to their master, they frequently arraigned his conduct, and sometimes dethroned him.

Mahmoud was the most celebrated of all the califs who had kept their court at Ispahan. He was a patron of the arts and sciences, and naturally a friend to the blessings of peace. Some of his predecessors, however, had been of different sentiments, and thought their happiness and glory consisted only in warlike exploits, in the desolation of villages, towns, and cities, without regarding the horrible carnage of human beings, and the miseries to which thousands of families were thereby reduced. His subjects being thus accustomed to warlike achievements, being naturally savage, and thinking nothing but a victorious hero fit to govern them, they rebelled against their peaceful monarch.

Though Mahmoud wisely preferred peace to war, yet he was by no means destitute of true courage, and he now found himself under the disagreeable necessity of taking the field, as the only means of quelling his rebellious subjects. His arms were every where victorious, and he returned in triumph to Ispahan, where he hoped to enjoy the fruits of his victories in peace and tranquility.

In this, however, he was much disappointed; for his rebellious subjects attributed his successes more to good fortune than wisdom or courage, and they seemed only to be in want of a chief to lead them to open rebellion. Selim put himself at the head of these rebels; but, in the course of two years' contest, Selim lost his head, and Mahmoud returned in triumph to his capital.

The man, who has long been accustomed to scenes of blood and slaughter, will naturally become hardened and of savage feelings, totally the reverse of those of pity, tenderness, and humanity. Almost every day convinced Mahmoud, that he must part with either his tender feelings or his throne. He wished to pursue the middle path between clemency and tyranny; but the rebellious spirit of his subjects by degrees so hardened his heart, that he at last became the complete tyrant.

The people soon began to groan under the weight of his iron hand, and offered up their prayers to the great prophet for a peaceful king, such as Mahmoud had been. Alas! all their prayers were in vain, for Mahmoud was young and vigorous, and beloved by his army. He was once loved; he was now dreaded in every part of the Persian empire.

The calif, after having some time exercised his tyranny with a high hand, suddenly withdrew from public affairs, and shut himself up in the recesses of his palace, visible to no one but the emir he had always trusted. In this unprecedented solitude he passed his time during the whole course of a moon, and then suddenly appeared again on his throne. A visible alteration had taken place in his countenance, and, instead of the ferocity of a tyrant, clemency and mercy seemed seated on his brow. He was no longer the savage calif, but the father of his country.

Such an unexpected change undoubtedly became the universal topic of conversation, and various reasons were assigned for his sudden transformation, but none of their conjectures came near the truth. An accident, however, brought every thing to light.

Among the wise men of Ispahan was Alicaun, who was one day conversing with an iman, and several dervises, concerning the change of the calif's conduct. One of the dervises laid claim to the honour of this change, having obtained it of Mahomet by fasting and prayer. Another said, that this great work had been accomplished by a beauty in the seraglio; but an iman, or priest, was bold enough to contradict them both, and boasted, that it was by his remonstrances that the calif's heart was softened. Alicaun being then called upon to give his opinion, replied, "The lion, weary of the chase, lies down to repose a little: but let the traveller be upon his guard; perhaps he is only sleeping to recover his lost strength, that, when he wakes, he may rush forth with additional fury."

One of the treacherous dervises reported this conversation to the calif, and, in consequence thereof, Alicaun was ordered to appear before him.

Alicaun accordingly made his appearance, when the calif, having taken his seat at the tribunal, thus addressed him: "I have been informed of the particulars of your late conversation; your having compared me to the noble lion, can have nothing in it that ought reasonably to offend me; but tell me sincerely, in which of these lights you considered the lion; as the generous monarch of the forest, or as the savage tyrant?"

Alicaun bowed down his head to the earth, and replied, "My sovereign, you have ordered me to speak sincerely: I will obey your orders, regardless of the consequences that may follow. When I lately took the liberty to compare you to the lion, I must own I had in my view the ferocity of that animal. I am sensible I deserve to die:—your decree will determine, whether you are the monarch of the forest, or the savage tyrant. Should you be graciously pleased to spare me, it will turn to your own advantage; because if you condemn me to die, my accusers will think I spoke truth; but pardon me, and they will be confounded."

"I forgive you, Alicaun," said the calif; "and I will tell you, and all present, my motive for doing

so. You are not a stranger to the influence my favourite emir, Abdalla, has over me. Like many other monarchs, I became jealous of my favourite, on the unbounded acclamations he received on his return home from a war of no great consequence. I therefore resolved on putting him to death, but was at a loss in what manner I should accomplish that purpose.

"To attempt it by open violence would endanger my throne; I therefore resolved to do it by stratagem. At the bottom of my palace gardens, you all know, is a tremendous precipice, whose base is washed by the waters of the Tigris. Hither I resolved to take him, under the idea of consulting him on some important matters of state, and, when I found him off his guard, as he could not suspect my intentions, to shove him headlong over the precipice into the river.

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"Thought I in myself, this is the last sun Abdalla shall ever behold; for, by this time, we had reached the fatal spot; when, on a sudden, by chance, let me say rather, by the will of Heaven, the ground trembled beneath my feet, and I perceived part of the rock on which I stood was parting from the main body. At this critical moment, Abdalla seized me by the arm, and forcibly pulled me to him, otherwise I should certainly have fallen down the horrible precipice into the foaming billows beneath, and thus have met with that fate I designed for another.

"Shame and gratitude for some moments struck me dumb and motionless: with shame, that a sovereign prince should stoop to such mean treachery; and with gratitude, that I should owe my life to that man, who saved mine at the very moment I was plotting his destruction!

"I instantly retired to the most secret chamber in my palace, and opened my soul in prayer and thanksgiving to the Eternal. In this dejected situation, I suffered several days and nights to pass away, bitterly reflecting on my folly, and reproaching myself for sinking so much beneath the real dignity of royalty. What, said I, is the life of a sovereign more than that of his meanest subject, since the one is no more secure from the arrows of death than the other!

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"In a little time, by reasoning in this manner, I found all my tyranny and self-consequence humbled, and I wished in future to be considered only as a man. As the nights were long and tedious to me, in order to divert my mind from painful and disagreeable reflections, I resolved to take my rambles in disguise through the different parts of Ispahan.

"Among these rambles, chance carried me one night into a house of public entertainment. Here, while drinking the liquor I had ordered, I listened to the conversation of several parties round me.

"One of these parties consisted of a grave old man, surrounded by several youths, who seemed to pay the greatest veneration and attention to the words of the aged sire. I drew nearer to them, and was surprised to find them talking of the late transaction between me and Abdallah. The substance of their debates will never be erased from my memory.

"'There was a time,' said the old man, 'when all Persia would have extolled to the skies the generous action of Abdalla; but I fear, there is not at present a single voice that will thank him for saving the life of the calif.'

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"One of the youths, who I found was the old man's son, said he perfectly agreed in what he had mentioned, but advised him at the same time to be cautious in his observations; 'for,' said he, 'what is more quick than the ears of a tyrant, or more baneful than the tongue of a courtier!'

"'I fear not,' said the venerable old man, 'the ears of a tyrant, nor the tongue of a courtier. The most they can do is to shorten a life that has already almost finished its career. A man on the verge of fourscore has little to fear from the terrors of this life. My father, who has been dead half that time, left behind him in his cellar nine bottles of wine of a most delicious flavour. Believe me, this is the only liquor I ever dared to drink in opposition to the laws of Mahomet; and not even this, but on very particular occasions; nor have I yet consumed the whole.

"I drank the first two bottles, continued the old man, on the birth of your eldest brother: two other bottles were dispatched, when the father of the present calif delivered Persia from the invasion of a tyrant: and two others when the present tyrant mounted the throne. Believe me, I shall be happy to live to treat you with the other three bottles, when Mahmoud shall be called into the next world, to give an account of his conduct in this. Yet I would much rather wish to drink them with you, should he reform, cease to be a tyrant, and again become that good prince he one day was."

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"The company could not help smiling at such a declaration; but I was far from wishing to partake of their mirth. Had the old man, but a few days before, uttered such words as these, his head would undoubtedly have been the price of his temerity; but what would then have excited my revenge, now filled my mind with the deepest reflections. I stole away for fear of being discovered, and hastened home to my palace, there to ruminate by myself on this adventure. It is evident, said I to myself, that I must have been the worst of tyrants, since this good old man, who drank but two bottles at the birth of his eldest son, wishes to drink three on the news of my decease. He hopes for such an event to crown all his wishes, and to complete his victory.

"In this manner my thoughts were agitated, and it was not till some time afterwards I recollected he said, that he should finish his bottle with still greater pleasure, should he hear of my reformation. All my former notions of tyranny and power appeared to vanish before me, and my heart seemed to receive impressions of a different nature. To accomplish this work was my motive for being so long hidden from public view, and from thence has arisen that change in my conduct with which I see all my good subjects so much astonished and delighted. I will endeavour to change no more, but to live in the affections of my people. I leave you now to judge whether the good old man may not venture to drink his remaining three bottles."

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"Those three bottles are already drank," exclaimed a youth, while he was endeavouring to penetrate through the crowd of courtiers to the throne. As soon as he got to the calif, he threw himself at his feet, and again exclaimed, "Commander of the faithful under Mahomet, they are already drank!"

Mahmoud then ordered him to rise, and asked him who he was that had thus spoken. The youth replied, "Most gracious sovereign, I am one of five children, of whom the old man you have just mentioned is the father. I was one of the party in that conversation, which has made such a noble and generous impression on your royal heart. As we were yesterday surrounding him, he thus addressed us: 'I feel nature is nearly exhausted in me; but I shall now die with pleasure, since I have lived to see such an unexpected reformation in Mahmou. Let us drink the three remaining bottles and be merry.'"

The calif then ordered him to fetch his father, that he might have the sire and son always near him. The youth then retired, and Mahmou dismissed the assembly for the present.

Thus you see, my youthful readers, how easily you are to be led astray by your passions, when you suffer them to prevail over reason. Learn early to give law to your passions, or your passions will in time give law to you, and govern you with a tyrannical power.



## *The Generous Punishment.*

**K**ALAN was one of the principal favourites of Mahmoud, of whom we have said so much in the preceding article. He had chosen him from among the number of his courtiers, to bestow on him those favours of which royalty was possessed, and which he merited. He was more beholden to nature than to art for his education, which would have been sufficient to make him happy, had it been his lot to live remote from the snares and artifices of a court.

An open and disinterested heart, instead of procuring him love and esteem, often carried him to the brink of ruin; for those with whom he mingled, were artful and treacherous hypocrites, a set of vermin that infest every court. Though he wished to hate no man, yet he could not love those who were every day privately seeking his destruction.

These ungenerous attempts were so often repeated, that Kalan, fearing he should acquire a habit of despising human beings, resolved to retire from the noise and bustle of a court. He was strengthened in this resolution by a review of his affairs, which were so much deranged by his unbounded charity and benevolence, that he found it impossible any longer to support such expences.

Kalan, before he retired to enjoy a peaceful and tranquil life, left the following lines engraven on his door:

"The man who no ingratitude has found,  
Has never trod on courtiers' slipp'ry ground."

The calif, having one day heard these lines repeated, desired to know who was the author of them. At this time Kalan was supposed to be dead, and therefore the courtiers had nothing to fear, and no reason to conceal the name of the author. Those people who had formerly returned all his favours with ingratitude, now launched into high encomiums on his merit. In all this there is nothing astonishing. With respect to the arts and sciences, we see how different is the treatment the professors of them receive during their lives, and after they are no more. While living, he could perhaps hardly support his miserable existence; when dead, sumptuous and costly monuments are erected to his memory.

Kalan, having accidentally heard how much Mahmoud was pleased with the inscription on his door, quitted his retreat, and again appeared at Ispahan, to the astonishment of his friends, and the invidious regret of the courtiers. The calif received him kindly, and made him ample amends for all the neglect of his friends. Kalan was put into an office which enabled him to gratify all his beneficent wishes.

As the nettle and the rose thrive together on the same soil, so was the bosom of Kalan not without a weed. His too strong attachment to women sometimes led him astray, and made him unmindful of his duty. The calif was not ignorant of this fault in Kalan, for the courtiers that surrounded him took care that this error should not remain concealed. Mahmoud, though he pitied his weakness, did not esteem him the less on that account. "True it is," said the calif, "that an unbounded passion for women is much to be censured; but this folly will in time forsake him; while ambition, cruelty, and avarice, had any such vices got possession of him, would grow stronger as he advanced in age."

The calif's courtiers extolled the sublimity of this observation; but no sooner had he turned his back on them, than they ridiculed such a paltry idea. How much are courtiers to be pitied, who take so much pains to render themselves contemptible!

Some little time afterwards, the calif gave Kalan a commission to the furthest part of Persia, and fixed even the day and hour when he should expect him back. Kalan immediately set out on his journey, discharged his duty with the strictest punctuality, and returned a day before the time allowed. He received the applause due to his diligence, and was told, that every hour he gained on the stipulated time was of the utmost service to his country.

Kalan was the more pleased with these marks of the calif's approbation, as he received it in the presence of many courtiers, who all showed him the highest marks of applause, while in their hearts they hated and detested him, and envied the honours paid him by the calif.

The next day, however, one of these courtiers, deputed by the rest, approached Mahmoud, and, after bowing to the earth, thus addressed him:—"Most noble and glorious sovereign of the faithful, though I know not the nature of Kalan's late commission, yet I judge it was of the highest importance. Pardon then my zeal if, notwithstanding the transcendent light in which I behold him, I am under the disagreeable necessity of informing your highness, that he presumed to pass five days of that time so precious to the state, in the enjoyment of the pleasures of love."

The calif, astonished at this declaration, told the malevolent informer, that he hoped he could prove what he had asserted. "Dread sovereign," answered he, "his own slave will prove to you, that, at Gauri, nearly a hundred miles from this capital, he loitered in the lap of pleasure. The daughter of a caravanserist had influence over him sufficient to induce him to neglect, for five days, the confidence you had reposed in him, and the most important concerns of the state. If time should prove that I have accused him falsely, let me be the victim of your resentment."

Mahmoud thanked him for his vigilant information, which he presumed could arise from no other motive than his great attachment to his glory; and he assured him, that he would nicely search into the truth of what he had informed him. "Neither will I be forgetful," said the calif, "of the greatness of your soul, which has induced you to sacrifice to my interest the man, you say,

you so much admire and revere."

The courtier then bowed his head to the earth, and retired, not much pleased, however, with the last words of the calif, who, he had from thence reason to believe, was not greatly satisfied with the accusation, and who might let fall that vengeance on this head, which he was endeavouring to prepare for another. 129

Mahmoud presently afterwards sent for Kalan; which being known to the courtiers, they secretly triumphed in the idea, that the hour was hastily approaching, in which they hoped to find their revenge and hatred amply gratified.

As soon as Kalan appeared before the calif, "I will not," said the latter, "ask you any artful questions, such as may lead you inadvertently to criminate yourself; and, in the course of this business I will be your judge and counsellor, and will afford you every opportunity of clearing yourself of the charge laid against you. You cannot forget how precious I told you was the time I allowed you for the completion of your embassy; yet it has been reported to me, that you stopped five days on the road, to enjoy yourself in the lap of pleasure, without blushing at the praises you received for that one day, which I supposed your zeal and attachment to my interest had procured me. Say, are these things true?"

"My dread sovereign," replied Kalan, "had I a soul mean enough of having recourse to a falsehood to cover a crime, I should perhaps answer in the negative; but, sorry I am to say, that the charge is true. I really did saunter away in idleness five whole days at Gauri. I was intoxicated; yes, commander of the faithful, I was intoxicated with a passion that destroyed all my other faculties. I know I have merited death; but it is not the fear of death that terrifies me, but the hateful recollection of having displeased my friend and sovereign. Having completed the business of my embassy, and being arrived, on my return, at Gauri, wanting horses, and my slave too being harassed with the journey, I resolved to stop one night, which was the first I had indulged myself in from the time of my leaving the palace. 130

"Having taken a little refreshment, and being seated near a window, I suddenly heard a voice in the adjoining chamber strike forth in such melodious notes, that nothing could equal it. I listened with eager attention, and could plainly distinguish they were the lamentations of love. I was in great doubt to determine which were the more excellent, the music or the words. As soon as she had finished, I enquired who she was, and found it was the daughter of my host; that her voice was not her only merit, since the words were of her own composition, and besides, she was said to be as lovely as Venus, and as chaste as Diana.

"No wonder if this description excited my desire to see her; and I begged the caravanserist would gratify my wish. He for some time objected; but I persisted in my request, and at last, his great respect for the ambassador of Mahmoud made him yield to my entreaties. The moment she appeared I was enamoured with her beauty; but, when I heard her play upon her harp, O powerful love! my embassy, my duty as a subject, and the punishment to which my delay might expose me, every thing of this sort was totally forgotten. 131

"All my thoughts were absorbed at this time in one wish only, that of being beloved by Zada. I offered my hand in marriage, but during two days she made many trifling excuses. On the third day she confessed, that if ever she could love any man, it probably would be me. The fourth day she received my addresses, and on the fifth gave me every thing to hope for. On the arrival of the evening of this day, she happened to mention your name, when, recollecting myself, I became fully sensible of my guilt. She perceived my confusion, and begged to know the cause of it. As soon as I told her, she insisted on my setting out that night—that very night on which I promised myself so much felicity.

"Sensible I am that I merit death, for having thus shamefully neglected my duty; but one thing I have to beg, that my sufferings may not be long."

All was silent for a few moments. After which said the calif—"Your punishment shall be the slowest that human ingenuity can possibly invent. Imprisonment shall be your fate as long as life shall be able to support it. Take him hence, soldiers, and let his treatment henceforward be the severest man can endure." 132

The soldiers conducted Kalan to his place of confinement, and the courtiers followed him with their eyes, which seemed to be moistened with tears, while their hearts rejoiced in his disgrace.

In about an hour or two after this event, it was reported, that the calif had dispatched a messenger; but no one could tell whither, or on what account. In the course of the five following days, the name of Kalan was forgotten; but on the sixth, to the astonishment of every one, the calif ordered him again to be brought before him.

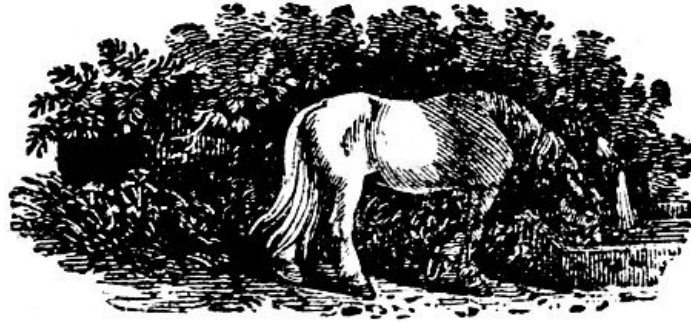
As soon as Kalan appeared, the calif, after asking him some taunting questions, "Yes," said he, "a song on some voluptuous subject, and a harp in that fair damsel's hand you saw upon your journey, made you negligent of what you knew your duty. I am, therefore, resolved both to punish and remind you of the fault you have committed, by decreeing, that in future you shall listen to such songs as are descriptive of complaining lovers. Let the Egyptian take her harp and play upon it."

Instantly was heard a voice so sweet, that Mahmoud's courtiers scarce dared to breathe, for fear of interrupting so much harmony. As soon as it began, the prisoner gave a cry, fell down, and beat the ground with his forehead.

"Rise, Kalan," said the calif, "and hear your sentence. You that at present surround my throne," speaking to his courtiers, "who so often stand in need of indulgence, tell me, which 133

among you, being in Kalan's place, on the point of having all his wishes accomplished, and after having passed five days in the pursuit of it, would not have presumed to hazard a sixth day?" (*Here a pause ensued.*) "No answer?—Kalan, since even envy thus keeps silence, you find favour with your king. Take your Zada, therefore, and be happy for the time to come; she is now yours."

Kalan, after having thrown himself at the feet of the calif, was no sooner risen up than he flew into the arms of his beloved Zada. They retired in mutual embraces; and the courtiers with hearts full of envy and fell malignity.



## *Female Courage properly considered.*

THE Rev. Mr. Sherlock being one day in company with a number of young ladies, the conversation happened to turn on the courage of their own sex. One observed, that Miss Lovelace had a resolution above being curbed by her guardians, and was determined to dress as she liked; while another gave it as her opinion, that it would be better for her to check her temper, and submit to the will of her guardians. "If ever I should be married," said one of the young ladies, "I think I shall have courage enough to make my husband do as I please."—"You may be right, miss," said another, "but I think, should I ever be married, I shall always consult my husband's opinion, and readily submit to it, whenever reason seems to require it."

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The young ladies kept up this kind of conversation for some time; when, at last, finding their opinions were so different, they requested the reverend divine to give them his sentiments, wherein true female courage consisted.

"I have," said Dr. Sherlock, "been listening to your conversation, and, as you have been pleased to appeal to me, I shall speak truth, without the least reserve. I hope you will attend to what I am going to say, and treasure it up in your minds.

"I consider *true* courage as one of the noblest ornaments of the fair sex, since it must be allowed, that without a becoming resolution, many female accomplishments would be lost, and sunk in obscurity, and that even virtue itself, unassisted by true courage, would soon dwindle to a shadow. I doubt not but that each of you amiable young ladies flatter yourselves with being possessed of this noble accomplishment; but permit me to tell you, that it is not every possessor of a pretty face who knows what it is. It is not Xantippe, but Lucretia, whom I call the woman of true courage.

"Xantippe is the daughter of two noble personages, and the wife of a sensible and prudent man; the mother of a blooming offspring, and the sole mistress of a plentiful fortune, the produce of which her husband cannot receive without her order. Elated with the thoughts of her high birth, and sensible of the dependence her husband has on her will, she subjects him to the most rigorous discipline, is cruelly severe to her children, and arbitrary and tyrannical over her servants.—Insolent and disdainful in her behaviour to her equals, and haughty and arrogant in her demeanour to her superiors, her jealousy is equalled only by her ill-nature; the most innocent freedom of her husband to a visitor is sufficient to give rise to the former; and the most trifling repartee is sure to occasion the latter. These are her qualities, which she is so far from endeavouring to amend, that she considers them as marks of true courage; or, to speak in a more polite phrase, they make her pass for a woman of spirit!

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"How reverse is the conduct of Lucretia!—Possessed of no other fortune than what good sense and a proper education give her, she passes through life with peace and serenity of mind.—The will of her husband, the care of her children, and the due preservation of order and economy in her house, are her principal studies. Easy, good-natured, and affable to her equals, and humble, submissive, and obliging to her superiors; as no height of prosperity makes her forgetful of adversity, so no storms of angry fortune are able to disturb the calm within her breast, or deprive her of that hope with which true courage will always support those who possess it.

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"True courage, rightly understood, and properly cultivated, will inspire the fair sex with the noblest sentiments of honour and generosity. It will elevate their minds above those mean and paltry methods, which too many of them put in practice, to captivate the hearts of the giddy and unthinking. It will raise in them a noble and emulative zeal for literary studies, which will rescue them from the odium that is too frequently, and too justly, cast on many of them, of being pretty, but silly, prattling creatures. It is true courage only that can raise in them such sentiments as shall preserve them the esteem and affection of all, when the bloom of youth shall be lost in the evening of life; when the lily and rose shall fade on their cheek, and the beautiful form of their persons can be no longer admired.

"I have now, young ladies, given you my opinion of what really ought to be considered as *true courage* in your sex, and I hope it will have some influence on your minds, as well as on your conduct in the commerce of this busy world. It is not at all surprising, that you young ladies should differ in your opinions on so delicate a question, since *true courage* is, in these times of refinement, considered in a very different light to what it was in the remote ages of antiquity. In order to amuse you, and perhaps instruct you, I shall beg your attention to a piece of ancient history; from which you will judge what was the barbarous ideas the ladies of antiquity had of true courage.

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"Mithridates, king of Pontus, proving unsuccessful in the war in which he was engaged against Lucullus, a Roman general, had shut up two of his wives (for the custom of that country allowed of a plurality) and two of his sisters, whom he most loved, in that part of his kingdom which was the most remote from danger. At last, not being able to brook the apprehensions of their falling into the hands of the Romans, he sent orders to Bacchalides, a eunuch, to put them to death. The manner in which they received this order, strongly marks the ideas the ladies of those times and regions had of true courage.

"Berenice and Monimes were these unfortunate princesses. The first was born in the island of Chio, and the other in Miletus, a city of Ionia, towards the borders of Cairo, on the coast of the Ægean Sea. Monimes was celebrated for the invincible resistance which she made to all the offers of Mithridates, who was most violently in love with her, and to which she never consented, till he had declared her queen, by calling her his wife, and sending her the royal diadem—a

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ceremony indispensable in the marriage of kings in that part of the world.

"However, even then she consented with reluctance, and only to gratify the inclinations of her family, who were dazzled with the lustre of the crown and power of Mithridates, who was at that time victorious and loaded with glory. Monimes abandoned herself to a perpetual melancholy, which the abject slavery in which Mithridates kept his wives, the distance she then was from Greece, where she had no hopes of returning, and perhaps too, a secret passion, which she always disguised, rendered insurmountable.

"When Bacchalides had declared to them the fatal message, and that they were at liberty to chuse what death appeared to them the most easy, Monimes tore off the royal bandage which she always wore on her head, and, fixing it round her neck, endeavoured to strangle herself; but the bandage broke, and left her in a condition truly to be pitied. 'Unfortunate diadem,' said she, trampling it under her feet, 'thou hast brought me to all my miseries! thou hast been witness of my slavery and wretchedness! Why wouldst thou not at last help me to put an end to them all?'— After having shown these marks of her resentment, she snatched a dagger from the hand of Bacchalides, and sheathed it in her bosom.

"Berenice swallowed the dreadful potion with astonishing resolution, and obeyed, without murmuring, the frenzy of a barbarous lover.

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"The king's two sisters, Statira and Roxana, followed the example of Berenice. Roxana, after having a long time kept a profound silence, swallowed the fatal draught, and died without uttering a single word. As for Statira, after having shown her grief for the king's defeat, she highly praised his conduct, and ordered Bacchalides to thank him for thinking of her amidst the wreck of his affairs, and thereby securing her, by a timely death, from the shameful slavery of the Romans."

Dr. Sherlock having now finished, the young ladies all rose and thanked him for the instruction he had been pleased to give them. They assured him, that they should in future endeavour to distinguish between the *true courage* of these modern times, and those in which lived the wives and sisters of Mithridates.



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## *The beautiful Statue.*

ONE of the kings of Balsora proved unfortunate in the choice of his queen, whose temper was as disgusting and displeasing as her person was lovely and beautiful. Discontented with every one around her, she made her own life miserable, and did all she could to interrupt the happiness of others.

They had an only son, and his father began very early to turn his thoughts, in what manner he should secure the young prince, when he came of age, from forming a connection in matrimony so disagreeable as his own. "If it should please Heaven," said he, "to spare my life till my son shall attain the years of discretion, I then shall be able properly to direct him in the search of a prudent wife; but, as there is no certainty in human life, and as I may be taken from him in his early days, before he can be capable of comprehending my admonitions, I will leave proper instructions with my executors, who, I hope, will fulfil my requests, when I shall be at rest in my peaceful grave."

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In consequence of this resolution, the king took every precaution he thought necessary in so important a business; and scarcely had he finished his regulations, when the unrelenting decree of death summoned him from this world to take up his eternal abode in the ever-blooming regions of felicity.

No sooner was the king dead than his will was examined. By this it was directed, that his son Achmet should be instructed in all the principles of rigid virtue, and in every scientific accomplishment necessary to form the mind of a wise and good prince. It was also directed, that at the age of eighteen years he should be put in possession of all his wealth, which was deposited in spacious vaults under the palace. The will, however, strongly directed that these vaults were not to be opened, under any pretence whatever, before the appointed time, on pain of Achmet losing the whole contents of them.

It may easily be supposed what were the anxieties of a youthful mind, while he waited with impatience for the arrival of that day, which was to make him master of so many hidden treasures. At length the day arrived, the vaults were opened, and the heart of Achmet leaped within his bosom at the sight of such unbounded riches.

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Amidst all this glare of profuse wealth, in one particular apartment of the vault, the eye of Achmet was caught by the dazzling view of nine pedestals of massy gold, on eight of which stood as many beautiful adamantine statues.

Achmet could not help expressing his astonishment, where his father could collect such uncommon and valuable curiosities. The ninth pedestal, however, increased his surprise, and he could not conceive why that alone should be without a statue on it. On going nearer to it, he found it covered with a piece of satin, upon which were written these words: "My dear Achmet, the acquisition of these statues has cost your father much; yet, beautiful as they are, you see there is one wanting, which is far more brilliant than either of those which now present themselves to your view. This, however, must be sought for in a remote quarter of the world, and, if you wish to be possessed of it, you must depart for Cairo, in the kingdom of Egypt. You will there find one Alibeg, formerly one of my slaves. Inform him who you are, and what is your business. He will properly direct your pursuits after this incomparable statue, the possession of which will make you one of the happiest and greatest monarchs of the East."

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As soon as Achmet had appointed proper persons to govern his kingdom in his absence, he set out in quest of this grand object. He pursued his journey without any thing particular happening; and, on his arrival at Cairo, he soon found out the house of Alibeg, who was supposed to be one of the richest persons in that city.

As Alibeg knew the time was nearly advanced, in which he was to expect a visit from Achmet, the arrival of the latter at Cairo did not at all surprise him. However, he appeared ignorant of the business; enquired of him what brought him to that city, his name, and his profession. To all these questions Achmet gave the most satisfactory answers; and informed him, that it was a statue he was engaged in the pursuit of.

This declaration of Achmet seemed at once to convince Alibeg, that he was talking with the son of the late king; and he blessed the great prophet for permitting him so honourable an interview. "My dear and honoured prince," said Alibeg, "your father bought me as a slave, and never made me free; consequently I am a slave still, and all my property is yours."—"From this moment," replied Achmet, "you are a free man, and I for ever renounce any future claim on your person or possessions."

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Alibeg then assured the young king, that he would do every thing in his power to procure him the ninth statue he was so ardent in the pursuit of; but advised him, after so fatiguing a journey, to take a few weeks rest. The next day, however, the king told Alibeg, that he was sufficiently rested; that he came not there for pleasure, and therefore wished immediately to enter on the pursuit of his grand object.

Alibeg told him, that he should certainly obtain his wish; but reminded him, that he must encounter much toil and fatigue before he could accomplish that desirable end. "I fear neither toils nor fatigues," replied the young king, "I am equal to the task, and by the blessing of the great prophet I will undertake any thing, however difficult it may appear. I entreat you only to let me know what part I am to act."

Alibeg, after a short pause, thus addressed his youthful sovereign: "You must swear to me by the holy prophet, that, when you set out from hence, you will immediately return to your own dominions. As soon as you arrive on the borders of it, you will immediately proceed on the search of what I am going to direct you to. Your search must be to find out a youthful female, whose age must not exceed sixteen years, nor be less than fifteen. She must be the offspring of virtuous parents, and who has never been the dupe to a previous passion of love. She must be as lovely as Venus, as chaste as Diana, and a native of your own kingdom. You must, therefore, traverse every part of your extensive dominions; and as soon as you shall be so fortunate to find one who corresponds with this description, you must bring her to me, and I will soon after put you in possession of the statue you sigh for. Remember, however, that should your pursuits be attended with success, you must have the most rigorous command over your passions while you are conducting the fair one hither, and not have even the least conversation with her. If this last condition be not punctually fulfilled, you will lose all claim to what you are now in pursuit of. Consider within yourself, whether the possession of the statue has so many charms in it, as to enable you to surmount all these obstacles, so difficult to one of your age."

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The young king, with an ardour natural to a youth of his years, was going to reply, when Alibeg, stopped him, by saying, that he had not yet done, but had still something further to say on the subject.

"You may idly imagine," continued Alibeg, "that should you be fortunate enough to find such a maiden as I have described to you, and your youthful ideas should lead you astray, you may imagine they will not be discovered; but herein you will be mistaken, for the great prophet will reveal your deceit, and you will thereby infallibly lose all pretensions to the statue. I must tell you still further, that, in order to give a sanction to your search for so virtuous a maiden, you must cause it to be reported, that you mean to make her the lawful partner of your throne."

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Achmet listened with attention to every word that dropt from the mouth of Alibeg, and in proportion as difficulties were mentioned to him, the more did his youthful bosom burn to show how much he was above them. He eagerly took the oath prescribed to him, grew more and more impatient to become possessed of the statue, and thought every hour an age that retarded his departure in pursuit of his favourite object.

The next morning, Alibeg, being unwilling to abate the ardour of the young prince, presented him with a looking-glass. "I here give you," said he to Achmet, "an invaluable present. In the course of your pursuit, you will meet with many beautiful damsels, fair to external appearance as Aurora herself; but outward forms may deceive you, and what your eye may applaud, your heart, on a more intimate acquaintance, may despise. Believe me, royal youth, the beauties of the person and those of the mind are very different. A degenerate and wicked heart may be concealed under the most lovely external appearances. Whenever, therefore, you meet with a beautiful female, whose charms may dazzle your eye, tell her to breathe upon this mirror. If she be chaste, her breath will not long remain upon the glass; but, if her pretensions are not founded in truth, her breath will long remain on the mirror, as a testimony of the falsehood she has advanced."

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These useful lessons, which Alibeg gave his royal pupil, were not the result of thoughts of his own, but were the consequence of the wise plan the late king of Balsora had prescribed for his son. He well knew that little artifices of this nature seldom failed of succeeding with youthful minds naturally fond of mystery.

The young prince took an affectionate leave of Alibeg, promised to be punctual to all his instructions, and then, taking up his miraculous glass, took the direct road from Egypt to Balsora. His intention was to commence his enquiries as soon as he reached the borders of his dominions; but a thought struck him, that it would be mean in him to seek the wished-for damsel among shepherds and peasants, when his own court furnished such a display of beauties.

As soon as he arrived in his own dominions, he proclaimed the resolution he had taken concerning marriage. He invited every maiden of fifteen years of age, who was born of virtuous parents, and had never experienced the passion of love, to repair to his court, out of which he proposed to chuse the fortunate partner of his crown and empire.

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This proclamation soon surrounded his palace with the first beauties of the kingdom; but as soon as the king presented to them the mirror, which was to be the touchstone of their prudence, they all shrunk back from the trying ordeal, conscious that they could not, with safety to their characters, run the hazard of such a trial.

Here it seems necessary to say a few words by way of explanation, lest the youthful part of my readers should be led into an error. The properties which Alibeg ascribed to this looking-glass were merely fabulous, and calculated only to strike a terror on the minds of youthful females, who, from the apprehensions of being discovered in their attempt to deceive an eastern monarch, refused to breathe on the glass. So that the young prince could not find, in any part of his capital, a maiden of fifteen perfectly answerable to the terms proposed by Alibeg.

Achmet, being thus disappointed in his capital, traversed every part of his dominions, and visited even the most sequestered villages; but he every where found the morals of the people so very corrupt, that no maiden could be found who would venture to look on the mirror, which they apprehended would reveal their most trifling defects. Achmet, therefore, began to be disheartened, and feared he should at last be disappointed in the grand object of his pursuit, and never be able to obtain the statue he so ardently sighed for.

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As he was one evening reposing himself in a mean habitation, situated in a lonely and recluse

village, an iman came to pay him a visit, having previously learned what was the cause of the king's journey. "I must confess," said he to the king, "that your majesty is engaged in a very difficult pursuit; and I should be led to believe, that all your researches would be in vain, did I not know of a beautiful damsel, who perfectly answers to the description of your wants. Her father was formerly a vizier of Balsora; but he has now left the court, and leads a private and recluse life, solely occupied in the education of his daughter. If it is your pleasure, royal sir, I will tomorrow attend you to the habitation of this lovely damsel. Her father will undoubtedly be exceedingly happy to have the king of Balsora for his son-in-law."

Achmet very prudently replied, "I cannot think of promising to marry the beauty you mention till I have seen her, and have put her to those trials which none have yet been able to withstand. I am satisfied with your account of her beauty, but I must have proof of her virtue and prudence." The king then told him of the glass he had in his possession, and which had hitherto so far terrified every damsel, that none had dared to look into it. 151

The iman, however, still persisted in every thing he had advanced concerning this beautiful female; and, in consequence, they went the next morning to see her and her father. As soon as the old gentleman was acquainted with the real character and business of his royal visitor, he ordered his daughter Elvira to attend unveiled. The king was struck with wonder and astonishment, when he beheld in this beautiful damsel such perfections as his court could not equal. After gazing on her some time with inexpressible astonishment, he pulled out his glass, and acquainted the lovely Elvira with the severe trial she would be put to on looking into that mirror of truth. Her conscious innocence derided all fear, she breathed on the glass without the least apprehension, when the high-polished surface rejected the breath thrown on it, and soon recovered its usual brightness.

As Achmet was now in possession of the person he had so long wished for, he asked her father to give him his permission to marry her; to which he readily consented, and the marriage ceremony was performed with all the decency a country village would admit of.

Achmet, however, could not help feeling the impressions which the charms of Elvira had made on his mind; and, though he hastened the preparations for his departure, yet it was with evident marks of reluctance. The vizier, who attended him in the pursuit of this fair one, plainly perceived it, and enquired the cause of it. 152

It seemed very singular to Achmet, that the vizier should ask him such a question. "Can there be any creature," said he, "more lovely than the angel I have married? Can you be any ways surprised, should I be tempted to dispute the instructions of Alibeg, and place her as the partner of my throne?"

"Be cautious what you do," said the vizier. "It will not be becoming of a prince like you, to lose the statue after you have done so much to obtain it." This rebuke roused him, and he determined not to lose it; but he desired the vizier to keep her from his sight, as he feared he had seen her too much already.

As soon as every thing was ready, Achmet set out for Cairo, and on his arrival there was introduced to Alibeg. The fair bride had performed the journey in a litter, and had not seen the prince since she was married. She enquired where she was, and whether that was her husband's palace.

"It is time, madam," said Alibeg, "to undeceive you. Prince Achmet only aimed at getting you from your father as a present to our sultan, who wishes to have in his possession such a beautiful living picture as you are." At these words Elvira shed a torrent of tears, which greatly affected both Achmet and Alibeg. As soon as her grief would permit her to speak, "How can you," said she, "be so treacherous to a stranger! Surely the great prophet will call you to an account for this act of perfidy!" 153

However, her tears and arguments were in vain. Achmet, indeed, seemed to feel for her situation, which Alibeg viewed with pleasure. "You have now performed your promise," said he to Achmet, "by bringing hither this beautiful virgin. The sultan will undoubtedly reward you, by putting you in possession of the statue you seek after. I will immediately send a person to Balsora to fetch the pedestal; and, within the compass of nine days, you may expect to see it and the statue in one of the apartments of my palace; for surely you only are worthy of such a precious possession."

Elvira was immediately separated from Achmet; she made the bitterest bewailings, and wished for death to hide her sorrows and disgrace. Notwithstanding the fond desire of Achmet to be in possession of the statue, he could not reconcile his mind to the hard fate of Elvira. He reproached himself with having taken her from an indulgent father, to throw her into the arms of a tyrant. He would sometimes say with a sigh, "O beautiful damsel, cruel indeed is your condition!"

At the expiration of the nine days, which had passed between hope and sorrow, Achmet was conducted into an apartment of the palace, in order to be put in possession of the inestimable statue. But it is impossible to express his astonishment and surprise, when, instead of such a figure as he expected, he beheld the beautiful maiden he had seduced from her father. 154

"Achmet," said the lovely virgin, "I doubt not but your expectations are sadly disappointed, in finding me here, instead of the inestimable statue you expected, and to obtain which you have taken so much pains." As soon as Achmet had recovered from his surprise, "The great prophet can bear me witness," said he, "that I was frequently tempted to break the oath I had solemnly taken to Alibeg, and to sacrifice the idea of every statue in the world to you. I love my dear,

beautiful Elvira more than all the world besides!"

"Prince Achmet," said Alibeg, "this is the ninth statue, which you have so long been in pursuit of, and which was the intentions of your father, who had contrived this method, in order to procure you a queen with whom you might be happy. Love her tenderly, be faithful to her, and in proportion as you endeavour to procure her happiness so will she yours."

Achmet, enraptured with the lovely countenance and virtuous dispositions of his dear Elvira, that day proclaimed her queen of Balsora, and thereby amply made her amends for the short disquietude he had occasioned her.

We may from hence draw this conclusion, that merit is not every where to be found; but, like diamonds of the first lustre, take up much toil and time in the pursuit. What we gain too easily, we are apt to think too little of; and we are accustomed to estimate the value of every thing in proportion to the care and pains it costs us. This the wise father of Achmet well knew, and therefore devised those means which were most likely to enable him to discover the woman of beauty, virtue, and prudence, without leaving him any hopes of finding it in the lap of pride, indolence, and luxury.



## *Dorcas and Amarillis.*

**D**ORCAS was born in a village far remote from the capital, amidst rocks and precipices, in the northern parts of the island. His parents laboured hard for their daily bread, and with difficulty procured a subsistence for themselves and their little son. A fever, which they both caught, put an untimely end to their existence, and Dorcas was taken care of by the parish, being then of too tender an age even to be sensible of his loss.

His education was adapted to his humble situation, and extended no farther than writing and reading. As soon as he had reached the fifteenth years, the directors of the workhouse thought it time to ease the parish of their burden, and accordingly placed him as a servant to a neighbouring farmer, to watch his cattle, and attend to the duties of husbandry. 157

Amarillis was of nearly the same age, the daughter of a farmer, and employed by her father in looking after his sheep. She would frequently bring her flock into the meadows to feed and wanton on the enamelled carpet of the sweetest herbage, where she frequently met with Dorcas. The youthful shepherd did her every little service in his power, and Amarillis was pleased to see him so solicitous to oblige her. Dorcas was never so happy as when in company with his shepherdess, and Amarillis always found pleasure in the presence of Dorcas.

Some years glided away in this pleasing intercourse between Dorcas and Amarillis, when what had hitherto appeared only under the name of friendship began gradually to assume a softer title, which at last ripened into love. Their hearts were formed for each other, and they began to be uneasy when separated. Dorcas talked of the happiness of marriage, and obtained permission from Amarillis to ask her father's consent to their union.

The maiden's delicacy would not suffer her to be present when Dorcas paid his visit to her father on that business; and, therefore, appointed a time when she was obliged to go to a neighbouring town, for him to take the opportunity of opening the matter to her parent, desiring he would meet her on her way home at night, and acquaint her with the success of his commission. 158

At the appointed time the shepherd waited on her father, and disclosed to him the secrets of his heart, adding, how happy he should be to have her for a wife. "I suppose so," replied the old man. "What, you are in love with my daughter! Do you know what you are talking of? Have you any clothes to give her? have you any house of your own? Learn how to get your own living, before you think of encumbering yourself with a wife. A poor shepherd as you are, you cannot have a penny beforehand. My daughter is not rich enough to keep herself, and I am sure you cannot keep her."

"If I am not rich," replied Dorcas, "I am vigorous and hearty, and those who are industrious never want for work. Out of the forty shillings I receive yearly for my wages, I have already saved five pounds, which will buy us goods in plenty. I will take a little farm, and I will work harder. The richest men in the village had no better beginning, and why may not I do as well as they have?"

The old man, however, told him he was young enough, and must wait for better circumstances. "Get rich," said the old farmer, "and Amarillis shall be yours; but speak no more to me concerning her, till your money shall induce me to listen to you." 159

It was in vain for Dorcas to argue any more; and as Amarillis was by this time on her return home, he went out to meet her. When they met, Dorcas was quite thoughtful, and the pretty shepherdess knew from thence he had not met with success. "I can see," said Amarillis, "that my father is averse to our marriage."—"What a misfortune it is," replied Dorcas, "to be born poor! Yet, I will not be cast down; for I may, by industry, perhaps change my situation. Had your father given his consent to our marriage, I would have laboured to procure you every thing comfortable. But I know we shall still be married, if we do but wait with patience, and trust till it shall please Providence to be more favourable to our wishes."

As the lovers were thus talking over the disappointment to their views, the night rapidly increased upon them; they therefore hastened their pace, that they might reach the cottage in good time. As they were pursuing their way home on the road, Dorcas stumbled over something, and fell down. As he felt about to discover what had occasioned his fall, he found a bag, which, on his lifting it, proved very heavy. Curiosity made them both anxious to know what it could be; but, on opening it, they were presently convinced, dark as it was, that it certainly was money. 160

"This is the gift of Heaven," said Dorcas, "who has made me rich to make you happy. What say you, my pretty Amarillis, will you now have me? How gracious has Heaven been to my wishes in sending me this wealth, such as is more than sufficient to satisfy your father, and make me happy!"

These ideas gave birth to inexpressible joy in their hearts; they anxiously surveyed the bag, they looked affectionately on each other, and then resumed the path that led to their village, eager to acquaint the old man with their unexpected good fortune.

They had nearly reached their habitation, when a thought struck Dorcas, and made him suddenly stop short. "We imagine," said he to Amarillis, "that this money will complete our happiness; but we should recollect that it is not ours. Some traveller has undoubtedly lost it. Our fair is but just over, and some dealer, coming from thence, may probably have dropped this bag; and while we are thus rejoicing over our good fortune on finding it, we may be assured that somebody is truly wretched on having lost it."

"My dear Dorcas," answered Amarillis, "your thoughts are very just. The poor man is undoubtedly much distressed by his loss. We have no right to this money, and were we to keep it, we should act a very dishonest part."

"We are going with it to your father's," said Dorcas, "and he would undoubtedly be glad to see us so rich; but what joy or happiness can we expect in possessing the property of another, whose family is perhaps ruined by the loss of it? As our minister is a worthy man, and has always been good to me, let us leave it with him. He is the properest person to consult on this occasion, as I am sure he will advise me for the best."

They accordingly went to the minister's, and found him at home. The honest Dorcas delivered the bag into his possession, and told him the whole tale; how happy they were at first on finding it, and what motives, from second thoughts, had induced them to bring it to him. He confessed his love for Amarillis, and acquainted him with the obstacles that poverty threw in the way of his felicity. "Yet," added Dorcas, "nothing shall tempt me to wander from the paths of honesty."

The minister was much pleased with their mutual affection for each other, and assured them, that Heaven would not fail to bless them, so long as they persevered in that line of conduct. "I will endeavour," said the minister, "to find out to whom this bag belongs, who will, no doubt, amply reward your honesty. Even out of the small matters I can save, I will add something to the present he shall make you, and I will then undertake to procure for you the consent of the father of Amarillis. Should the money not be claimed, it will be your property; and I shall then think myself bound to return it to you."

Dorcas and his lovely shepherdess returned to their homes much better satisfied than they would have been, had they otherwise made use of the treasure they had found, and they were happy in the promises the good minister had made them. The money was cried all round the country, and printed bills were distributed in towns and villages even at some distance. Many were base enough to put in their pretensions to it; but as they could neither describe the bag, nor what was in it, all they got by it was to establish their names as scandalous impostors.

In the mean time, the minister was not unmindful of the promise he had made the young lovers. A short time afterwards he put Dorcas into a little farm, provided him with money to purchase stock and farming implements, and at last procured him his beloved Amarillis.

The young couple having acquired every object of their humble wishes, sent up to Heaven their unfeigned thanks, and called down for blessings on the head of their good minister. Dorcas was industrious about the farm, and Amarillis kept every thing right in the house; they were punctual in the payment of their rent, and lived within the bounds of their income.

Two years had now passed, and no one had yet appeared to lay claim to the lost treasure. The minister, therefore, apprehended there was no necessity to wait any longer for a claimant, but took it to the virtuous couple, and gave it to them, saying, "My dear children, take what it has pleased Providence to throw in your way. This bag, which contains five hundred guineas, has not yet been claimed by its right owner, and therefore must at present be your property; but, should you ever discover the real person who lost it, you must then return it to him. At present, make such use of it as may turn it to advantage, and always be equal in value to the money, should it be justly demanded."

Dorcas entirely agreed with the minister, in laying out the money in such a manner that it might be ready on the shortest notice, or at least in something full the value in kind. As the landlord was proposing to sell the farm which Dorcas occupied, and as he valued it at little more than five hundred guineas, he thought he could not lay out the money to greater advantage than in the purchase of this farm; for, should a claimant ever appear, he would have no reason to complain of the disposal of his money, since it would be easy to find a purchaser for it, after it had received improvements from his labour.

The good pastor entirely agreed in opinion with Dorcas: the purchase was made, and, as the ground was now in his own hands, he turned it to much greater advantage. He was happy with his Amarillis, and two sweet children blessed their union. As he returned from his labour in the evening, his wife constantly welcomed his return, and met him on the way with her children, who fondled round him with inexpressible cheerfulness and delight.

The worthy minister, some years after this happy union, paid the debt of nature, and was sincerely wept for by both Dorcas and Amarillis.—The death of this worthy pastor brought them to reflect on the uncertainty of human life. "My dear partner," said Dorcas, "the time will come when we must be separated, and when the farm will fall to our children. You know it is not ours, nor perhaps ever properly will be. Should the owner appear, he will have nothing to show for it, and we shall go to the grave without having secured his property."

Dorcas, therefore, drew up a short history of the whole affair in writing, got the principal inhabitants to sign it, and then put it into the hands of the succeeding minister. Having thus taken all the precautions they could to secure the property to the right owner, should he ever appear, they were much more easy and contented than before.

Upwards of ten years had elapsed since they had been in possession of the farm; when Dorcas coming home from the fields one day to dinner, saw a phaeton in the road, which he had hardly cast his eyes on, till he saw it overset. He hastened to the spot to give them his assistance, and offered them the use of his team to convey their baggage. In the mean time, he begged them to step to his house, and take such refreshment as it afforded, though they had fortunately received no hurt.

"This place," said one of the gentlemen, "is always mischievous to me, and I suppose I must never expect to pass it without some accident.—About twelve years since, I somewhere hereabouts lost my bag, as I was returning from the fair, with five hundred guineas in it."

"Five hundred guineas, sir!" said Dorcas, who was all attention. "Did you make no enquiry after so great a loss?"—"I had it not in my power," replied the stranger, "as I was then going to the Indies, and was on my road to Portsmouth, which place I reached before I missed my bag. The ship was getting under way when I arrived there, and would have gone without me had I been an hour later. Considering it was money I had lost, it appeared to me a doubtful matter whether I should hear any thing of it after making the strictest enquiry; and had I been fortunate enough to succeed, even in that case, by losing my passage, I should have sustained a much greater loss than that of my bag and its contents."

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After the part Dorcas has acted, this conversation was undoubtedly pleasing to him, and he consequently became more earnest in wishing the travellers to partake of the fare of his table. As there was no house nearer, they accepted the offer; he walked before to show them the way, and his wife came out to meet them, to see what accident had happened; but he desired her to return, and prepare dinner.

While the good woman was dressing the dinner, Dorcas presented his guests with some refreshments, and endeavoured to turn the conversation on the traveller's loss. Being convinced of the truth of his assertions, he ran to the minister, told him who he had with him, and begged he would come and dine with him. They all sat down to dinner, and the strangers could not help admiring the order, decency, and neatness that were every where conspicuous. They could not but notice the generosity and frankness of Dorcas, and were highly delighted with his helpmate, and the manner in which she treated her children.

As soon as dinner was over, Dorcas showed them his house, his garden, sheepfold, flocks, and granaries. "This house and premises," said he, addressing himself to the traveller who had formerly lost his money, "is your property. I was fortunate enough to find your bag and money, with which I purchased this farm, intending to restore it to the owner, should he ever come forward, and show himself. For fear I should die before an owner was found, I left a full detail in writing with the minister, not wishing my children to enjoy what was not their own."

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It is impossible to express the surprise and astonishment of the stranger, who read the paper, and then returned it. He first gazed on Dorcas, then on Amarillis, and then on their young ones. At last, "Where am I?" cried he; "and what is it I have heard? Is this world capable of producing so much probity and virtue! and in what an humble station do I find it! Is this the whole of your property, my friend?"

"This house, my herd, and my cattle," replied Dorcas, "are all I possess. Even though you should keep the premises in your hand, still you will want a tenant, and I shall wish to be indulged with the preference."

The stranger replied, after a moment's pause, "Integrity like yours merits a more ample reward. It is upwards of twelve years since I first lost the money, and Providence threw it in your way. Providence has been no less kind to me, in blessing my undertakings. I had long since forgotten my loss, and even were I to add it to my fortune this day, it would not increase my happiness. Since it has pleased God that you should be the fortunate finder of it, far be it from me to wish to deprive you of it. Keep then what you have so well merited, and may heaven bless and prosper you with it."

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He then tore the paper, on which Dorcas had made his acknowledgment of finding the purse, saying, "I will have a different writing drawn up, which shall contain my free gift of these premises, and shall serve to hand down to posterity the virtue and probity of this amiable pair." He fulfilled his word, by immediately sending for a lawyer, when he made over the premises to Dorcas and his heirs for ever.

Dorcas and Amarillis were then going to fall at the feet of their generous benefactor, but he would by no means permit it. "I am infinitely happy," said the generous stranger, "in having it in my power this day to confirm your felicity. May your children long after you inherit your farm, and imitate all your virtues!"

Remember, my youthful readers, that the pleasures and the comforts of human life are not in proportion to the extent of our possessions, but to the manner in which we enjoy them. The cottage of liberty, peace, and tranquility, is preferable to the gilded palaces of slavery, anxiety, and guilt.

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## ***The Conversation.***

IT happened on one of those delightful summer afternoons, when the heat of the day was tempered with the gently-wafting zephyrs, that Madam Heathcote was entertaining a large company at tea in her arbour in the garden. No situation could be more delightful. The arbour looked full in front of a fine river, on which some were busily employed in fishing, or pursuing their different occupations, while others were skimming on its surface for amusement. All round the arbour the luxuriant grapes hung in clusters, and the woodbine and jessamine stole up between them. A situation like this will naturally incline the mind to be thoughtful, and the whole company, by imperceptible degrees, began to draw moral reflections. They remarked, how different were the objects of our pursuits, how unsteady and fickle are all human affairs, and what empty baubles frequently attract our most serious attention. After some time being spent in a kind of desultory conversation, the principal speakers began to arrange their ideas under distinct heads, and of this class the first who spoke was

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### ***Dr. Chamberlaine.***

I am very well acquainted with two brothers, whom I shall conceal under the borrowed names of Mercurius and Honestus.

Mercurius was the elder son of a gentleman, who, with a moderate fortune, and by a nice management, so regulated his affairs, that he was generally thought to be exceedingly rich.—He gave a genteel education to his two sons, who finished their studies at Cambridge.

Mercurius attached himself more to the gaiety and politeness of the college, than to the drudgery of books. He was a gay and lively companion, and a perfect master of those little arts which always recommend a young gentleman to the acquaintance of the giddy fools of fortune, who are sent to both our universities more out of complaisance to fashion, than to improve their morals, or enlarge their understandings.

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Mercurius had drawn this conclusion, (and it must be confessed, that experience tells us it is too true a conclusion), that powerful connections are more likely to raise a man's fortune in life than all the natural and acquired abilities which human nature is capable of possessing. He, therefore, took every opportunity to ingratiate himself with the noble young students, whose follies he flattered, and the fire of whose vanities he fanned.

Amidst this pursuit after fortune and grandeur, his father died, and left but a small pittance for the support of him and his brother Honestus.—This was soon known in the college, where fortune is considered as the first of all things.—Mercurius was now forced, in order to keep up his noble connections, to stoop to many meannesses, such as the thirst of ambition only can persuade the true dignity of a man to submit to; but, when we once quit the path of virtue in pursuit of imaginary pleasure, we must give up every hope of a retreat.

Among the patrons of Mercurius was a young nobleman of great fortune and connections, such as were more than sufficient to make a coxcomb of the happiest genius. The time arrived in which he was to quit college, and Mercurius accompanied him to London as his companion and friend. He was the constant partner of his nocturnal revels, and little more, in fact, than his footman out of livery. He was the dupe to his prejudices, the constant butt of his wit, and the contempt of every independent mind. But let us leave this mistaken man to the feelings of his own mind, and his fears for his future existence, that we may return to his brother.

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Honestus, less ambitious than his brother, had a mind above stooping too low in order to rise the higher. He applied himself closely to his studies, and employed the little his father had left him in the most frugal manner. He turned his whole attention to the study of the law, in which he became a very able proficient, and at last quitted the university with the reputation of a profound scholar, a cheerful companion, and a sincere friend.

These, however, are seldom characters sufficient to raise a man in the world. He long remained unnoticed in his profession as a counsellor; but, however long the beams of the sun may be obscured, they at last pierce through the densest bodies, and shine in their native lustre. He now reaps the fruits of his honest labours, and often looks back with pity on the tottering state of his brother, and the parade of empty ambition.

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### ***Madam Lenox.***

When we consider the short duration of human life, when extended even to its longest period, and the many perplexities, cares, and anxieties, which contribute to disturb the repose of even those whom we should be led to consider as happy mortals, what is there in our sublunary pursuits that ought to make any long and lasting impression on our minds?

We have seen many of the wisest people, on the loss of a darling child, or on a sudden and unexpected wreck in their affairs, retire from the world, and endeavour to seek consolation, by indulging their melancholy in some gloomy retreat. Surely, however, nothing can be more inconsistent with the dignity of human nature than such a conduct.

If to fly from the face of an enemy in the hour of battle, and seek a retreat in some sequestered forest, may be considered as cowardice in the soldier, is it no less so in the moral militant, who has not courage to face the storms of fortune, but precipitately flies from the field of adversity, the ground of which he ought to dispute inch by inch?

It has been an old and long-received maxim, that Fortune favours the daring, and shuns the coward. Whatever may be the whims and caprice of Dame Fortune, who sometimes makes a peer of a beggar, and as often reduces the peer to a state of penury, yet experience tells us, that she is seldom able, for any considerable length of time, to withstand resolute and unremitted importunities; and, when she has hurled us to the bottom of her wheel, whatever motion that wheel afterwards makes, it must throw us upwards. As those, who have enjoyed a good state of health during the prime of their lives, feel the infirmities of age, or a sudden sickness, more keenly than those who have laboured under a weakly and sickly constitution; so those, who have basked in the perpetual sunshine of fortune, are more susceptible of the horrors of unexpected calamities, than those who have been rocked in the cradle of misfortune.

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To bear prosperity and adversity with equal prudence and fortitude is, perhaps, one of the greatest difficulties we have to conquer; and it is from hence we may venture to form our opinions of the generality of people. Those who are insolent in prosperity will be mean in adversity; but he who meets adversity with manly courage and fortitude, will, in the hour of prosperity, be humane, gentle, and generous.

To fly from misfortunes, and endeavour to console ourselves by retiring from the world, is undoubtedly increasing the evil we wish to lessen. This has often been the case of disappointed lovers, when the object of their hearts has proved inconstant or ungrateful. They have vainly imagined that there must be something very soothing to the afflicted mind, in listening to the plaintive sound of some purling and meandering stream, or in uttering their complaints to the gentle breezes and the nodding groves. But, alas! these delusive consolations only contribute to feed the disorders of the mind, and increase the evil, till melancholy takes deep root in their souls, and renders their complaints incurable.

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The society of the polite and refined of both sexes is the only relief, at least the principal one, for any uneasiness of the mind. Here a variety of objects will insensibly draw our attention from that one which tyrannises in our bosom, and endeavours to exclude all others.

In the commerce of this life there is hardly an evil which has not some good attending it; nor a blessing which does not, in some degree or other, carry with it some bitter ingredient. To be, therefore, too confident in prosperity, is a folly; and to despair in adversity, is madness.

Those who enjoy the good while they have it in their power, and support the evil without sinking under its weight, are surely best fitted for this uncertain and transitory state. To have too nice and delicate feelings is, perhaps, a misfortune; and the wise man has very justly said, "as we increase in knowledge, so we increase in sorrow."

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We are apt to form too great an opinion of ourselves, and to examine so closely into the conduct of others, that we at last begin to shun and despise all the world, in whom we can find no belief; but were we to examine our own conduct as critically, we should find, that we have as much to ask from the candour of others, as we have cause to give. Self-love and pride are the sources from whence flow most of our real, as well as imaginary woes; and if we seek the retired and sequestered hut, it is not so much with a view to avoid misery itself, as to endeavour to conceal it in ourselves from the eyes of the world.

### ***Sir John Chesterfield.***

Certain philosophers tell us, that "there is no such thing as happiness or misery in this life, and that they are terms merely confined to the ideas of different people, who differently define them." It must indeed be confessed, from constant and invariable experience, that what a man, at one time in his life, considered as a misery, he will at another consider as a happiness.

Cleorus was, from his childhood, bred to business, and the pursuit of riches appeared to him as the principal blessing he had in view, since, from his worldly possessions, he hoped to derive every comfort of life. He viewed, with an eye of pity and contempt, the follies and extravagancies of young fellows of his own age, and considered their nocturnal revels and excursions as so many sad scenes of misery.

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He continued in this opinion till he was turned of the age of forty; at which period, losing his wife, and finding his circumstances easy, he joined in the company of those we call *free* and *easy*. New company, by degrees, made him imbibe new sentiments, and what he had formerly considered as miseries, began insensibly to assume the name of pleasure, and his former happiness was soon construed to be misery. He began to reflect on the dull path he had trodden all the prime of his life, and therefore determined to atone for it in the evening of his days, by entering on such scenes as were disgraceful even to the youthful partners of his follies. Suffice it to say, that after having exchanged prudence for pleasure, he soon fell a martyr to his vices.

It is a melancholy but a just observation, that the man who turns vicious in the evening of his life, is generally worse than the youthful libertine, and his conversation often more lewd and obscene. Hence we may conclude with Ovid, that no man can be truly said to be blessed, till death has put a seal on his virtuous actions, and rendered him incapable of committing bad ones.

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The destruction of happiness and misery is, perhaps, more on a level than we are in general apt to imagine. If the labouring man toils all the day, and hardly earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, yet every meal is to him a sumptuous feast, and he sleeps as soundly between coarse blankets as on a bed of down; nor does any part of his life betray a sense of that state of misery, such as it would be considered by the courtier.

If the courtier basks in the sunshine of fortune; if he be loaded with honours, riches, and titles, keeps a brilliant equipage, and has numerous dependants at his command, the world in general will consider him as placed in a state of happiness; but, if we contemplate him at leisure, see the anxieties of his mind to be still more great and powerful, which interrupt his broken slumbers, and see how insipid to him are all the luxuries of his table, his perpetual succession of false pleasure, and the mean adoration he is compelled to pay to the idol of power, we shall hardly allow him the idea of happiness, but justly consider him as more miserable than the labouring peasant.

The mind is undoubtedly the seat of happiness and misery, and it is within our power to determine which shall hold the empire there. To maintain a uniform conduct through all the varying stations of life—to content ourselves with what comes within our reach, without pining after what we cannot obtain, or envying others what they possess—to maintain a clear unsullied conscience—and to allow for the infirmities of others from a retrospect of our own, are perhaps some of the best rules we can lay down, in order to banish misery from this mortal frame, and to acquire such a degree of happiness, as may enable us to perform our terrestrial journey with some degree of satisfaction to ourselves and others.

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### *Lady Heathcote.*

Though the depravity, luxury, and corruption of the times, form just subjects of complaint for the grave, the thoughtful, and the aged, yet I cannot help believing, that many of these complainants are themselves lending a helping hand to render the rising generation as effeminate and corrupt as the present.

I am now appealing to parents on the education of their children, which appears to me a subject that ought to attract the serious attention of those who wish longevity, peace, and happiness to their children, and prosperity, repose, and a reformation of manners to the rising generation.

"The first seasoning," says Plato, "sticks longest by the vessel. Thus those, who are permitted from their earliest periods to do wrong, will hardly ever be persuaded, when they arrive at maturity, to do right." It is a maxim with some people, a maxim surely founded only on pride, that their children shall not be checked in their early years, but be indulged in whatever their little hearts shall pant after; and for this reason, because they will grow wiser as they grow older. But, since the love of ease, finery, and pleasure, is natural to almost every youthful mind, how careful ought each parent to be to check those juvenile sallies, which, if encouraged, will in time be productive of the very evils they complain of in the present generation.

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It is not only in childhood, but also in their progress through school, and during their apprenticeship, that these indulgences are continued; and an excuse is always ready, that their children must not be more hardly treated than others. Hence it follows, that you often meet the apprentice of eighteen strutting through the streets in his boots on an errand of business, or screening himself from the dew of heaven under the shade of a large silken umbrella!—It would be worse than sacrilege, in their opinions, to appear abroad with an apron before them, or in their working dress.

Their evenings are too often spent abroad at chair clubs, in alehouses, at the theatres, or in some gardens. "To know the world," as they call it, is more their study than the attainment of their profession, by which they are hereafter to live. But of what does this knowledge of the world consist?—To despise virtue, to laugh at morality, and to give way to the most shocking scenes of folly and dissipation. Their Sundays, part of which, at least, ought to be spent in acts of piety, are passed in revelling and drunkenness; and the exploits and excesses of that day furnish plenty of boastful conversation for the rest of the week.

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What can be expected from a youth, when he shall arrive at manhood, who has thus passed the morning of his life? and with what reason can either parents or masters complain of the depravity of the times, since they themselves take so little care of the morals of the rising generation?

The youth who has been long accustomed to revel through the dangerous wilds of gaiety and pleasure, and has once given a loose to the excesses of the town, will hardly ever be prevailed on to quit them, for what he considers as the dull enjoyments of a calm, peaceable, and virtuous life. Deaf to all remonstrances, he pursues his pleasures, and perishes in the midst of his delusive enjoyments.

To check these evils, and thereby prevent the fatal consequences, the infant mind must be carefully watched, and the unruly passions made to give way to the reason and authority of the parent. Nothing can be so pleasing and delightful, and, at the same time, more the duty of the parent, than to watch over the tender thought, and teach the young ideas to flow in a proper channel. To leave these cares to the vain hope, that reason and maturity will gradually fix the wandering mind, and bring it to a proper sense of its duty, is as absurd and ridiculous as to

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expect that the fiery steed, who has never felt the spur nor the curb, the saddle nor the bridle, will with age become the peaceful, the quiet, and the obedient animal.

Nature seems, in some instances, to have given to the inferior class of beings that degree of instinct, which sometimes puts human reason to the blush. Shall inferior beings, merely by the power of instinct qualities, show more care and prudence in rearing their tender offspring, than proud man, with all his lordly and boasted superiority of human reason?

### *Dr. Sterne.*

When I was last summer on my travels through Yorkshire, I one day met with a person who gave me a very singular history of himself, of the veracity of which I was assured by some gentlemen I might rely upon. I shall repeat his history to you, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words.

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Though I was born of poor parents, said he, I was fortunate enough to pick up a tolerable education in one of those public schools in the country, which are supported by voluntary and charitable contributions.

Nature formed me of an active and lively disposition; and, as I grew up, my vanity began to flatter me, that I was not destitute of genius. I happened one day, accidentally, to take up the tragedy of the Orphan, when I was particularly struck with the following lines, which I seemed inclined never to forget:

"I would be busy in the world, and learn;  
Not like a coarse and worthless dunghill weed,  
Fix'd to one spot, to rot just where I grow."

As soon as I had reached the age of fourteen, I was discharged from the school, when my parents put me to the farming business; but my ideas soared above that menial profession.

I had frequently heard it mentioned in our village, that the only place for preferment was the great and rich city of London; where a young fellow had only to get himself hired as a porter in some respectable shop, and he would soon rise to be shopman, then clerk, then master, and at last a common-councilman, or an alderman, if not a lord mayor.

I, therefore, soon determined to leave my native village, and hasten up to this centre of preferment and happiness. On my arrival in London, I was advised to apply to a register office, from whence I was sent to a capital grocer in the city, who was then in want of a porter, and where I was accordingly engaged. "How happy am I," said I to myself, "at once to jump into so capital a place? I shall here learn a fine business, and in time, like my master, keep a splendid coach, horses, and livery servants."

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However, I was here very sadly mistaken; for I was constantly every day so driven about, from one end of the town to the other, with loads, that I had no opportunity of getting the least insight into the business; and every Sunday morning I almost sunk under a load of various kinds of provisions I was forced to carry to our villa in Kentish-town, from whence I returned in the evening with a still more enormous burden of the produce of the garden, consisting of cabbages, turnips, and potatoes, or whatever happened to be in season, for the use of the townhouse, during the ensuing week. I, therefore, was not much displeas'd at being oblig'd to quit this service on my master's becoming a bankrupt.

I next engag'd myself with a wholesale linen-draper, to open and shut up shop, and go occasionally on errands; but here again I was disappointed, being oblig'd to employ all my leisure hours in blacking shoes, cleaning knives, or whatever the cook-maid was pleas'd to set me about. My stay here consequently was but short, any more than in my next place, where my master starv'd his servants in order to feed his horses.

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I shall not trouble you with an account of all the places I was in, during the space of seven years, without the least hopes of success, till, by accident, I got to be a kind of shopman at a tobacconist's. Here hope seem'd to afford me some glimmerings of success, as I was well treated in the house, and taken particular notice of by my master, who was very rich, and had an only daughter, who was young and beautiful.

I soon fell in love equally with her person and her fortune, and had great reason to believe, from her looks, that I was not indifferent to her. One evening, when all the family were out on a visit, and miss had thought proper to stay at home, being a little indispos'd, I determin'd to improve the favourable opportunity, and, by one resolute action, complete the summit of my wishes. I accordingly enter'd the parlour, threw myself at her feet, and declar'd my passion for her, assuring her that I could not live without her.

She seem'd at first surpris'd; but, recollecting herself, with a most gracious smile, bid me rise and hope. I instantly retir'd, thinking I had done enough for the first attempt. But, alas! I was call'd up the next day after dinner, and was desir'd by miss, in the presence of a large company, who all join'd in the laugh against me, not to trouble myself with paying her any further addresses. My master then kick'd me down stairs, and out of the house. I am now return'd to my native village, having given over all hopes of ever being either a lord mayor, an alderman, or even a common-councilman!

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Here Dr. Sterne finished; and, as the sun was sunk beneath the horizon, and night was speedily advancing, the conversation ended for the present. Madam Heathcote thanked the company for the favour of their visit, and did not doubt but that the young ladies and gentlemen who were present, would go away pleased and edified by the polite conversation they had heard.



## *Edwin and Matilda.*

EDWIN and his sister were natives of a town in Glamorganshire, whose father had but little more to leave them at his death than the virtues he possessed in his lifetime. His character and assiduity procured him an employment of consequence, which, in a few years, enabled him to save a very decent fortune. Honour, virtue, and integrity, however amiable in themselves, will not always protect us against the calamities of human life, though they may contribute to soften them.

In the midst of his career of business, he was attacked by a long and tedious disorder, which considerably impaired his constitution, and obliged him to relinquish all thoughts of business at a very early age. Not long after he had given up all mercantile pursuits, the failure of his banker deprived him of two-thirds of his fortune. The remainder of his possessions, which consisted only of the house he then lived in, and a few cottages in the village, afforded him but a scanty pittance for the support of his wife and two children, Edwin, then about ten years of age, and Matilda, about nine.

Their mother was tenderly fond of them, and consequently was less able to endure the afflicting prospect of seeing them reduced so low, and her philosophy failed her in this instance. The narrow scale of living to which she was now forced to submit, and the parting with many little comforts and conveniences in which she had taken pleasure to indulge her children, and which they were no more to expect;—the affliction of seeing her dear Edwin and Matilda become her servants, and that dumb sorrow she fancied she beheld in their countenances whenever she looked on them;—all these, and many other thoughts, crowding on her mind, so weakened and impaired her constitution, that she was no longer the same woman. Every time she looked at her children, the tears stole down her cheeks; and her husband, who most tenderly loved her, would sometimes mingle his tears with hers, and at other times retire to conceal them.

As Edwin was one day gathering apples in the orchard, he perceived his parents in close conversation with each other. A hedge of rosebushes only parted them, so that he heard every thing they said. His mother gave a sigh, and his father thus endeavoured to console her.

"I was far from blaming," said he, "the excess of your affliction in the infancy of our misfortunes, and I did not attempt to interrupt you; but now you ought to be wiser from experience, and patiently bear those evils which cannot be removed, but may be increased by our impatience under them. I have concealed my sorrows, fearing they might add to yours; but you, in return, put no restraint on yourself; and you are shortening my days, without being sensible of what you are doing. I love my children no less than you, and feel for their misfortune in losing what I hoped they would live to enjoy after we were no more. Consider my infirmities, which will probably carry me to my long home before you. You must then act the part of father and mother; but how will you be able to do this, if you give way to such immoderate grief? You are sensible these misfortunes are not my own seeking; they are the works of the Almighty, and it is impiety not to submit to them. It has pleased him to deprive me of my property and health, while you deprive me of the satisfaction of seeing you submissive to his decrees. I see sorrow must pursue me to the grave, and you will not help to protract that awful hour of my dissolution."

Edwin treasured up in his youthful bosom every word that dropped from the lips of his father, but his mother answered only in sighs and half-finished words. "Do not distress your mind," continued her husband, "on the hapless situation of our children, since they may still be happy though deprived of their fortune. Edwin has noble and generous sentiments; and Matilda has been brought up in the strictest principles of virtue. Let us, therefore, set our children an example, by teaching them to submit to the will of Providence, instead of teaching them to repine at his decrees."

As soon as the conversation was ended, Edwin got away as softly as he could, and, going into the house, met his sister Matilda, who, as she saw him look very serious, asked him what was the matter with him. They went together into the parlour, when Edwin thus addressed his sister.

"Ah! my dear sister, had you, like me, heard what has just passed between my father and mother, on our account, I am sure you would have been equally afflicted. I was very near the arbour in which they were conversing; but though I could hear every thing they said, they could not see me. My mother talks of nothing but about our being ruined; and my father says every thing he can to pacify and comfort her. You well know, that my father has never had a good state of health, and my mother's is going very fast; so that I fear we shall soon lose them both. What, my dear sister, will become of us, and what shall we do without them? I could wish to die with them."

"Let us hope," replied Matilda, "that things will not go so hard with us. Do not let such melancholy thoughts enter your head, and be particularly careful not to cry in their presence, as that would affect them more than any thing else. Let us endeavour to be cheerful, and when they see us so, it will possibly lessen their affliction. They love us tenderly, and we ought, in return, to do every thing in our power to make them cheerful and contented, if we cannot make them happy."

Their father, coming to the door just as they began their conversation, stopped short, and heard every word that passed between the two young folks. His heart could not fail of being tenderly affected by their conversation, he rushed into the room, and caught them in his arms. "My dear children," said he, "how amiable is your conduct, and how worthy are you of a better fortune!"

He then took them by the hand, and led them to their mother, who was reading in another room. "Lay down your book," said he, "and kiss your children; for neither of us need be any more afflicted on their account. They stand not in need of our pity, for they have resources of happiness within their own youthful bosoms. We have been deceiving each other, in thus afflicting ourselves on their account, when nothing has disturbed them. Nothing can be wanting to the possessors of so much virtue."

He then related to their mother the conversation he had just overheard, and appealed to her tenderest feelings, whether she ought not to exert herself to the utmost to make herself happy, and endeavour to promote the felicity of two such children.

Their mother again shed tears, but they were tears of joy. "I will from henceforth," said she, "endeavour to quiet the storm within my breast, that I may be the better able to take care of my dear children. It would be disgraceful in me, to let the world see that I have children from whom I have to learn lessons of philosophy."

Edwin and Matilda were so lost in the delightful sensations they received from the words and caresses of their parents, that they thought themselves the happiest of all little mortals. From this moment all their griefs and anxieties seemed to subside, and the six following months glided away without even a desponding look from either of the parties.

Edwin frequently walked abroad with his father, who constantly taught him to draw some moral reflection, or some useful knowledge in the commerce of life, from every thing they saw. It is too often the case with parents, when they take their children abroad, to amuse themselves with their gossiping tales, instead of teaching them to reflect upon the different interesting subjects that fall within their view. Children are much sooner capable of reflecting than the generality of parents are aware of; and they would soon be convinced of the truth of this assertion, would they but make the trial, wait patiently for their answers, and endeavour to correct their youthful ideas when wrong.

Six months had now slid away in peace and serenity; but the apparent tranquility of their mother was only in outward appearance. Despair had taken deep root in her heart, and was secretly making great havoc with her constitution. A fever at last seized her, which soon put a period to her life.

The death of their mother was the source of inexpressible sorrow to her husband, who never recovered the shock it gave him. She expired in his arms, while poor Edwin and Matilda were drowned in tears by her side.

The house, for some time, afforded one continued scene of lamentation. Her character was truly amiable; her children obeyed her through love, for fear had no share in their duty. She possessed the happy skill of penetrating into the infant heart, and making it sensible, by its own feelings, of the propriety of what she commanded to be done. Thus she at once improved the heart and understanding, without ruffling the infant mind.

Edwin and Matilda severely felt the loss of their mother; but it was a still greater shock to their father, whose health, which was bad enough before, evidently grew worse from this fatal stroke. Grief brought on a complication of disorders, which soon confined him to his bed; and in this sad situation he lived near a twelvemonth, when, his strength being totally exhausted, he expired in the arms of his son.

The situation of Edwin and Matilda was much to be pitied. They had no relation left to fly to, and friends are rarely to be found when distress seeks them. Edwin was almost driven to despair; but Matilda had more fortitude, and recalled her brother back to reason. It is certain, that the female mind, in scenes of distress, often shows more fortitude than we meet with in men.

The young orphans agreed to live together, and cultivate the little spot that was left them. The remembrance of the virtues of their parents animated their labour, and their moderation regulated their wants. They enjoyed the sweets of friendship, and lived happily, because they had learned how to be contented with little.

Remember, my youthful readers, how fleeting and uncertain is the possession of riches. Of these Fortune may deprive you, but it cannot rob you of your virtue. Virtue is an invaluable treasure, which even the revolutions of states and empires cannot take from you. Like Edwin and Matilda, love and reverence your parents, cherish them in the evening of their days, and be a comfort to them in the time of trial, in the hour of sickness, and in the expiring moments of their lives. Let every wise mother imitate the mother of Edwin and Matilda, who never suffered passion to get the upper hand of her reason, when she argued with her children on those little imperfections, which young people are apt to run into, and which are necessary to be corrected. It is better to be beloved than feared; but to indulge children in excesses, will neither create fear nor esteem. Happy are those parents who have such children as Edwin and Matilda; and happy those children who know how properly to love, honour, and obey their parents.







## *The pious Hermit.*

AT the bottom of the Cordillieres, whose towering summits overlook Peru and Chili in the New World, as it is called, is situated an uninhabited spot of land, on which nature has exhausted all her art, being decorated with innumerable beauties. Woods of stately poplars rear their heads to the clouds, and odoriferous groves shed their fragrance over every part of it; while the roaring river Oroonoko rolls its majestic floods through an immense bed which, at length exhausting itself, contracts into peaceful rills and meandering streams. These beauties are terminated by a thick, gloomy forest, which serves as a foil to these enchanting beauties.

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In this charming solitude lived Nestor, an old and venerable hermit, who, for a long time, had withdrawn himself from the tumultuous bustle of the world, and had seen forty revolving suns pass over his head in this peaceful retreat. A stranger to the passions, without wishes or desires, he passed his life in tranquility, without the fear of experiencing either cares or disappointments. He was grown old in the practice of virtue, for this spot afforded not even the shadow of temptations. He felt not the infirmities which are natural to old age; nor had he any of those complaints, to which the luxurious inhabitants of cities and large towns are subject before they reach the meridian of their lives.

He had made himself a hut at the foot of a verdant hill, that screened it from the cold blasts of winter. Thick leaves and sod composed its walls, which time had covered and cemented with a mossy crust. A plantation of various trees, peculiar to the soil, reared their lofty heads around his mansion, and a narrow path led through them to his rustic habitation. A clear and transparent spring arose near his hut; which, after forming a little bason for domestic services, overflowed and fled away in meandering streams through the wood.

His time was employed in cultivating a little garden he had made contiguous to his house. Here he studied the works of Nature, and explored her wonderful operations in the production of fruits and vegetables. Here Nature furnished him with a volume that was never to be read through, but discovered something new every time it was opened.

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The sun was one evening sinking beneath the horizon, when Nestor was seated on the stump of a tree, near the door of his hut, shaded with woodbines and jessamines. His venerable front, which was now whitened by time, was lifted up towards heaven; calmness and serenity were seated on his countenance, and every thing about him accorded with wisdom and philosophy.

"How I delight," said he, "to view the beautiful azure of that glorious firmament! What a variety of beautiful colours show themselves in those clouds! O rich and magnificent dome! when shall I leave this sublunary world, and ascend to those regions of bliss, where my mind will be lost in raptures that will know no end! However, let me not be impatient, since the measure of my life is nearly exhausted. I ought not to repine at the length of my continuance here, since I enjoy, in this solitary retreat, what is denied to almost every one who is engaged in the busy pursuits of life. Every thing I possess is my own, and I live in the enjoyment of what is purely natural, without the troublesome alloy of ambition and parade. In whatever direction I turn my view, I see nothing but smiling landscapes. The sun affords to me the same cheering warmth, and its light in as great a degree, as to the first monarch of the earth! Should I not live to see his rising beams, yet he will rise to cheer the hearts of others, when I shall no longer want them.

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"Yonder lie the ruins of that ancient habitation in which once lived the venerable shepherd and his daughter, who taught me how to live, when I retired from the empty bustle of the world, and first took up my abode in these mansions of peace. If their hut be fallen into ruins, it is but an emblem of what will, in a few years, be the fate of the most stately palaces. Both he and his daughter now lie at rest under the shade of those neighbouring and lofty poplars.

"The scythe of Time mows down every thing that comes within the reach of its keen edge; it has destroyed not only towns and cities, but even whole empires, which were once mistresses of the world, and reduced them to a state of pity. The most lofty and luxuriant trees, by Time, are reduced to dry trunks, without being able to give nourishment to a single leaf. I have seen huge and tremendous rocks, to all appearance invulnerable, crumbled into powder by the roaring thunders and the vivid lightnings. Once the rose was blushing in my blooming cheeks; but grey hairs have now covered my head, and wrinkles hide my forehead. But the time is now coming, in which my mortal race will be finished."

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A young man had, for some years, taken a part in his solitude, and as the virtuous Nestor found himself weak and exhausted, he exerted himself in calling upon the youth. Misfortunes more severe than those that generally happen to mortal beings, first brought him into this charming solitude. The pleasing gloom of that retreat, which was not without its beauties to change the scenes, soon calmed the storm within his bosom, and made him happy in retirement; to which the conversation of the venerable old man contributed not a little.

"Come hither, my son," said the virtuous Nestor in faltering accents, "and embrace your friend for the last time in this world. My eyes will soon be closed for ever, and I must return to the earth from whence I came. Complain not that I go before you to the regions of bliss, for I have enjoyed a long succession of happy years. My career is finished, and I die without a murmur. It is our ignorance only of what may be our state hereafter, that makes men afraid of death; but everlasting happiness is promised to us, and death puts us in possession of it. Though you will in me lose a mortal friend, yet I leave you One in heaven who is eternal, and who never will forsake you, so long as you pursue the paths of virtue. As soon as I shall be no more, dig my grave close by the poplar which grows on the borders of the river, where it waters my last

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plantation. That spot afforded me infinite delight while I was living, and there I wish my body to repose. This is the last favour I have to ask of you. Farewell for ever, my virtuous companion.—The earth seems to fly from me—my time is come—once more, farewell.—Grieve not for the loss of me, but respect my memory.—Keep constantly in your view the example which it has pleased heaven to permit me to set you, and you will be happy, because you will be virtuous."

Having finished these words, the good Nestor closed his eyes, and expired without a struggle; he passed away like a cloud floating in the ambient air, which insensibly disperses and dissipates itself in a sky of azure. How peaceful and tranquil are the last moments of the virtuous man! The youth looked stedfastly on that venerable front, which appeared graceful even in death. He embraced him, and could not help sighing. "O my dear father," said he, "you are no more! You leave me in this solitude, without any one to partake of it with me. Who will, in future, be the comfort of my existence? and to whom am I to tell my tales of past woe?"

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His heart was sensibly affected, and the tears flowed down his cheeks; but he recollected the last words of his friend Nestor, and endeavoured to moderate his grief. He took the body on his shoulders, and carried it to the place where Nestor had desired it might be buried. Being come to the borders of the river, he gently laid down the body of his deceased friend, and then dug the grave.

While he was thus sadly employed in his last work for Nestor, he thought all nature, and whatever breathed throughout the region round him, united their tears for his virtuous benefactor. After he had deposited the body in the grave, it was some time before he could prevail on himself to cover it with the earth. He felt his heart very powerfully affected; he stood almost motionless, and the tears stole insensibly down his cheeks.

"Happy Nestor," said he, "you can neither see nor condemn my weakness. If you could, you would forgive me, and pity me. You were my father, philosopher, and friend; you taught me to love you, and now I have lost you. Let me indulge my tears in this melancholy moment, as the only tribute I can pay to your virtues."

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He then proceeded to fill up the grave; but every shovelful of earth was accompanied with a sigh. When he had covered part of his face, he stopped suddenly. "Farewell, my dear friend," said the generous and pious youth, "a little more earth, and then you will be lost from my sight for ever! It is the decree of Heaven, it must be so, and it is my duty to submit. But though you will soon be for ever lost from my sight, your memory will never be erased from my mind, till my mortal clay, like yours, shall be incapable of knowing what passes in this world. May my end be like yours, peaceful, composed, and tranquil."

After a few minutes pause, he proceeded in his business, filled up the grave, and covered it with the most verdant turf he could find. He then planted round it the woodbine and jessamine, and inclosed the whole with a fence of blushing roses.

His business being now completed, he turned to the transparent stream, and thus uttered his devotions, to which no mortal could be witness, and his plaintive accents were heard only by the wafting gentle zephyrs.

"Thou great and omnipotent Being, who, in your gracious bounty to me, unworthy wretch as I am, have been pleased to take me from the regions of Folly, and place me here in those of Innocence and Virtue, where I have learned to forget the former dreadful misfortunes of my life, grant me, O gracious Heaven! thy protection, and endow me with the same virtues that reverend sage possessed, to whose memory I have just paid the last duties. Left as I am without either guide or companion, his sacred ashes shall supply the place of them. Sooner shall this stream cease to flow, and the sun withdraw its benign influence from these happy regions, than I to wander from the paths into which my departed friend has conducted me."

205

Though Nestor's death left the virtuous youth without friend or companion, yet he in some measure consoled himself for that loss by daily visiting his grave, and cautiously watching the growth of that funeral plantation. He suffered not a weed to grow near it, and kept every thing about it in the highest state of perfection. Every morning and evening the birds assembled in the surrounding bushes, and warbled forth their notes over the departed sage.

Though it is neither to be expected nor wished, that my youthful readers should turn hermits, yet it would be proper for them to remember, that happiness is not always to be found among the bustling crowd, where every thing appears under borrowed shapes. In whatever condition Fortune may place them, let them remember this one certain truth, that there can be no real happiness where virtue is wanting.

206



## *The Caprice of Fortune.*

**P**AINTERS represent Fortune with a bandage over her eyes, by which they mean to tell us, that she distributes her gifts indiscriminately, and as chance happens to throw a happy object in her way, without paying regard to either virtue or merit. The following short history will evince the truth of the old adage, that there is a something necessary, besides merit and industry, to make a person's fortune in this capricious world.

A brave old soldier, whom I shall conceal under the borrowed name of Ulysses, had acquired immortal honours in the service of his country on the field of battle. Having passed the prime of his life in actual service, he retired to pass the evening of his days in the circle of his family, and the care of his children. 208

He tenderly loved his offspring, and he had the inexpressible pleasure and delight to find himself beloved by them.

As his eldest son had entered into a marriage contract by the consent of all parties, a house was taken for the young couple, and the necessary repairs and embellishments were not forgotten. One of the apartments being designed for pictures, the generous youth, without acquainting his father with his design, employed a painter to describe all the heroic actions of his sire.

This business was completed with great expedition and secrecy, and as soon as the house was properly ornamented and furnished, the young gentleman invited all his relations and particular acquaintances to partake of an elegant dinner, on his commencing housekeeping. When the veteran entered the room, where all his glorious actions were represented in the most lively colours, he could not avoid being singularly struck with the generous piety of his son. The company were at a loss which they should most admire, the heroic exploits of the father, or the exemplary conduct of the son.

The old general surveyed every picture with an air of carelessness, at which the company were not a little surprised, and could not help wondering at his composed indifference. "You acted very properly, son," said the old gentleman, "to conceal your intentions of this matter from me till you had completed it, as I otherwise should most certainly have stifled it in its birth. What you have thus done is a convincing proof of your love and affection for me; but, however sensible it may make me of your attachments to me, yet it does not much flatter my vanity. 209

"Few pieces of biography are correct on their first appearance in the world, where the parties meant to be handed down to posterity have not been previously consulted. The most particular event, from the want of proper information, is frequently omitted. Such is the case, my son, in the present instance. There is one circumstance in my life which ought to have been recorded, since to that action alone I owe all my fortune, and my promotion in the army." However, as dinner was then serving up, the conversation was dropped, and the company very soon began to have something else to think of.

The next day, however, being at dinner with his children and a small party of friends, his son requested him to inform him what was that heroic act he had forgotten in his penciled history. The general replied, he had no objections to do so, but observed, that it would be necessary to go into the room where the pictures were hanging. 210

As soon as they had entered the room, the general began his observations on the paintings. "I suppose son," said he, "you have terminated the first line with that in which his majesty is supposed to have made me a lieutenant-general. In this, indeed, you have made a very capital error, as you have here brought together events that happened at different periods. But I would wish to know, whether the military honours I have received, were in consequence of the actions represented in this picture, or on account of what is represented in the whole."

The young gentleman replied, without the least hesitation, that the honours he had received were in consequence of all his services, and not of any single one.

"You are very much mistaken," said the general, "for it was in consequence only of one action in my life, that I enjoy my present honours; and this action you have not recorded."

The young gentleman was very much surprised to think that he should forget the principal occurrence of his father's life, and that too from which alone he was raised in the army. He censured his own want of memory, and was the more angry with himself, as he could not even then recollect it.

"Do not make yourself uneasy," said the general to his son, "for it is not possible that you could paint an action you never knew any thing of. It is a transaction which I have never yet related to any one; but I shall now give you the particulars. 211

"During the very early part of my life as a soldier, I lost my left leg, and received so dangerous a wound in my head, that my life was for some time despaired of, nor did I perfectly recover of it till after sixteen months had elapsed. I lost my three youngest sons on the field of battle, where they bled in the service of their king and country.

"Notwithstanding all these services, I enjoyed no higher rank than that of a major for nearly thirty years, while in that battle, in which I lost my limb, my general fled, in order to preserve his precious life from danger, and was rewarded with a title and a pension. But he was the nephew of a favourite at court, who took care to represent him to his sovereign and the nation, as having on

the day of battle exposed himself to the most imminent dangers. It may easily be supposed, that my affections for my family, and my wishes to do well for them, induced me to hope for preferment. Numbers were, like me, seeking for promotion; but I could not, like the generality of them, stoop to their means to obtain it; and if they had not more merit than myself, at least they had better fortune. Tired out with expectations that met with nothing but disappointments, I took the resolution to hang about the court no longer in expectancy, but to retire into the country, and there spend the remainder of my days in private. However, Fortune at length smiled on me, and, when I least expected it, led me into the path of fame and preferment. Of this circumstance not the least notice is taken in your paintings!"

212

The young gentleman appeared very much astonished, and could not guess what this circumstance could be, which he had omitted in his pictures, since he apprehended that he was well acquainted with all the material occurrences in the life of his father. "I know not, sir," said his son, "what this circumstance can be that I have omitted. Perhaps it may be something which the pencil of the artist cannot express. I must confess, that I long much to know what this occurrence can be."

"Nothing can be more easy," replied the general, "than to represent this scene on canvass: A beautiful river, ladies weeping on the borders of it, and I on horseback in the liquid stream, holding a little lap-dog in a half-drowned condition. Surely this could not be a very difficult scene for an able pencil to represent, and could give but little trouble to the painter!"

The young gentleman could hardly think his father serious, and could not comprehend how such a scene as this could be considered as one of the general's most glorious military exploits, by which he had gained his promotion as a soldier. He, therefore, begged he would be pleased to explain himself more fully.

213

"Trifling as you may think this exploit," replied the veteran, "I owe to it my present promotion, which the loss of a limb in the field of battle could not procure me. I will give you the history of this strange affair in as few words as possible.

"As I was one morning riding on horseback, for the benefit of the air, as well as for the advantage of exercise, on the beautiful banks of the Thames, near Richmond, a coach passed me.—Curiosity induced me to look into it, when I discovered the mistress of the minister; who appeared to me as a pretty doll, agreeable to behold, but from whom you must expect neither sense nor reason, and but a very small share of modesty, that first accomplishment of the fair sex. Though she knew me perfectly well, she condescended only to give me a nod, and having driven to some distance before me, she got out of her carriage to walk with her companions on the banks of the river.

"In order to avoid giving her the trouble of taking notice of me again, I turned into a lane; but hardly had I entered it, when I heard a cry of distress from the same women. I doubted not but some misfortune had happened to them, and I, therefore, galloped towards them. As soon as I got to them, the pretty doll cried out, 'Help, help, dear major! my dear sweet Chloe has fallen into the water, and is unable to get out!—The poor dear will be drowned, and I shall die with grief. Save him, major, save him, I beg of you.'

214

"Though I cared as little for the mistress as for the animal, yet compassion urged me to put spurs to my horse, and get into the river. I happened to get hold of the ugly cur, and brought him in safety to his mistress. I know not whether the scene which followed excited most pity or contempt, since the most affectionate mother could not have shown more joy on the recovery of her child. The idle and ridiculous congratulations from the company, and their eager endeavours who should be first to caress the ugly animal, exceeds all description. Every mouth was open, and every tongue was in motion, each endeavouring to be most noticed by the doll of fashion.

"As I apprehended my company was no longer wanted, I was about taking my leave, when the little dog's mistress pressed me so warmly to stay, that I alighted from my horse, and she took me by the arm. As we sauntered along, at a little distance behind the company, and out of their reach of hearing, she told me, she had been informed, some time before, what rank I had been soliciting for. 'If I forget this service,' said she, 'and if the minister is not from this day your warmest advocate,—then major—O my poor dear Chloe!—you shall see—yes, that you shall.'

215

"I made her a bow without saying any thing; for I was too proud to wish to owe my preferment to such a woman, and to such paltry services.—However, the very next day, I was sent for to the minister's levee, when he drew me aside, and told me, that the king had recollected both my name and my services, and that he himself had represented the justice there would be in my promotion. In short, in less than a month from that day, I was promoted to the rank of a lieutenant-general. Thus, by saving the life of a little ugly animal, did I obtain more than all my services in the field could procure me."



## *The melancholy Effects of Pride.*

A FEW miles distant from the metropolis lived an industrious farmer, who had a son named Bounce. He had so strong a propensity to the military life, that he was observed to be continually shouldering his hoe, and treating it in other respects as a gun. He was fond of the company of soldiers, and took great delight in hearing them repeat their accounts of sieges and battles.

When he had reached the eighteenth year of his age, he enlisted in one of the marching regiments; and as he had previously learned at school to read, write, and cast up common accounts, he became so useful in his present station, that he was first made a corporal, and soon after was advanced to the higher state of a serjeant. 217

Much about this time, war was declared between England and France, and, by a succession of the most fortunate circumstances, at the commencement of the campaign, he had a lieutenancy given him. He behaved with great conduct on all occasions, and whenever any bold and daring enterprise was to be undertaken, he was always appointed to command it, and constantly came off with honour. The examples he set others of his bravery, made every soldier under him as brave as himself.

So strongly had his conduct recommended him to the favour of his general, that he soon after presented him with a company, in order that his fortune might raise in the common soldiers an emulation to imitate his conduct. He had not long enjoyed this new promotion, when a most desperate battle was fought, which proved fatal to several superior officers. On this occasion, Bounce, who had performed wonders during the battle, was instantly appointed a major.

His exploits had often been recorded in the public papers, which being read in his native village, all the inhabitants ran to congratulate his parents on the occasion. His parents and brothers, undoubtedly, were not a little flattered with the bravery and good fortune of Bounce. The tear of joy would frequently steal down their cheeks when these matters were mentioned. They longed for the happy day in which he was to return, that they might have the inexpressible pleasure of embracing a son and brother in their arms, whose bravery had done so much honour to his family, and raised himself to such an elevated situation. 218

We have hitherto only surveyed the brilliant colourings of the picture; but we must now proceed to examine its shades. All his good qualities were tarnished by one predominant and odious vice, which was pride. In relating the history of his own achievements, he would consider himself as little less than an Alexander or a Cæsar. He paid himself all the compliments for his heroic actions, which the most fulsome flatterer would give a victorious prince in his presence.—He assumed to himself all the honours of every battle he had been engaged in, without allowing the least merit to any other officer.

All parties being at last tired of the war, many thousands of their subjects having perished in the contest, many widows left to bemoan their husbands, and a great number of children to lament the loss of their fathers, a general peace put an end to this horrid carnage of human beings. It so happened, that the regiment to which Bounce belonged was directed to pass along the road on which his father's house was situated, in order to proceed to Windsor, where it was to be disbanded. 219

By this time, his father and mother had paid their last debt to nature; but his brothers, who were still living, hearing of his approach, ran to meet him, accompanied by many others in the village. They soon found him at the head of his battalion, exercising his men, in quality of captain and major.

They ran to him with open arms, saying, "O dear Bounce! were but our parents now living, what joy would this give to their aged hearts! My brother and I have been long sighing for this moment of seeing and embracing you. Thanks to that God who has preserved you through so many dangers, and at last has afforded us this inexpressible pleasure!" Having thus said, the two brothers attempted to embrace him.

The major, however, was very much displeased, that men, who had no cockades in their hats, should presume to take these freedoms with him, and call him brother. He pushed them from him, and treated their marks of affection with insolence and contempt. "What do you mean," said he, "by taking these freedoms with me?"—"Is it possible," replied the younger brother, "that you have forgotten us? Look at me, I am George, whom you formerly loved, whom you taught to dig and sow this ground, when I was but a little one, and not higher than the length of the sword which now dangles by your side." 220

This put the major into a violent rage, and he threatened he would have them apprehended as impostors, if they did not immediately depart.

This scene of pride and vanity passed at the head of his battalion, to which every soldier was witness. They dared not to speak their minds openly, but in their hearts execrated his conduct. They vented their indignation in whispers to each other. "Is it possible," said they, "that our major can be ashamed of having once been what we are at present? on the contrary, he ought to think himself happy, and be thankful, that Fortune has raised him from nothing to what he now is. It is more to the honour and reputation of a man, to acquire a fortune by merit, than it is to be born to one."

These were sentiments, however, of which Bounce had no idea; the fortune he met with seemed to increase the depravity of his heart rather than correct it. He even wished his fellow-

soldiers to forget that he had originally been, like them, one of the rank and file, and consequently treated them with the most haughty and insolent contempt; while they, on the other hand, viewed him in the just light in which men ought to be considered, who, having soared above their original obscurity, suffer themselves to be led away by the empty parade of pride and ambition.

221

As he was one day reviewing the regiment in the presence of the colonel, the latter having found some fault in his method of giving the word of command, he gave him a very insolent and haughty answer, such as the military laws will not admit an inferior to give to a superior officer. He had frequently before given shameful instances of his pride and arrogance to those of higher rank; his colonel, therefore, determined to try him by a court-martial, and at once punish him for all his audacious infractions of the military law. He was accordingly tried, found guilty, and solemnly declared incapable of serving any longer in the army. He was disgraced and ruined.

It can hardly be expected, that such a man as we have here described, could have any great share of prudence or economy in the management of his private affairs. He was not worth any thing at the time of his disgrace, and, therefore, found himself obliged either to labour for his living, or starve. What a situation for a man to be reduced to, who, but a little while since, ingloriously despised that condition, which he was now forced to apply to for his subsistence!

222

Necessity, at last, obliged him to pay a visit to the place of his nativity, and beg the assistance of those whom he had so lately despised. The villagers, when they saw him thus reduced, in their turn, treated him with contempt, and made him experience how dangerous it is, whatever may be our present fortune, to despise any one merely because he may not be so great as ourselves.— During the whole course of his prosperity he had formed no friendly connections, and therefore now, in the hour of adversity, he had no creature to apply to, either to advise or assist him. Thus had his pride and folly deprived him of one of the greatest blessings of this life. The mind receives some little consolation in being *pitied*; but deplorable indeed is his situation, who cannot command that most trifling relief.

Finding himself neglected and despised by every one he had hitherto applied to, he was at last forced to seek relief from his brothers, whom he had lately insulted so cruelly. It was now, indeed, their turn to retaliate on him; but they had souls far greater than his. They despised every idea of mean revenge, and did him all the service they could under his present difficulties.

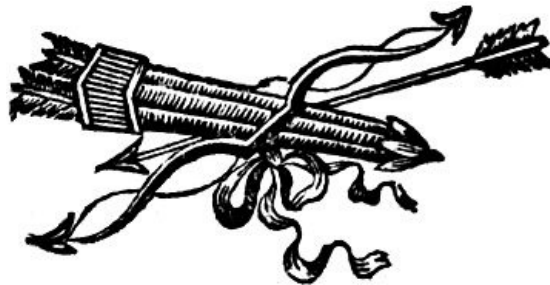
The little matters their father had left them had long been divided among them, and Bounce had made away with his share, as well as with all his pay. In this situation, the brothers gave him a little spot of ground to cultivate, on which he was obliged to employ all his time, in order to procure a scanty subsistence. He had now time enough to reflect on the elevated station from which his pride and folly had thrown him.

223

He would frequently exclaim to himself, "O diabolical pride, to what a melancholy situation hast thou brought me! Why, O Fortune! did you raise me so far above my original character, as to make me forget my former situation, and thereby make my fall more inglorious and irreparable? had you not raised me above the state of a subaltern, I might have still been happy; but, by making me great, you have ruined and undone me!"

Ideas and reflections such as these perpetually haunted him, and interrupted his repose; until Death, more kind to him than Fortune, put an end to his feelings and sufferings by an untimely end, leaving an example of the fatal consequences which pride brings in its train.

Be cautious, my youthful readers, how you suffer this vice to get possession of your hearts, since it renders deformed the most perfect beauty, and eclipses the most brilliant accomplishments.



224





## *The Nettle and the Rose.*

WE may consider human life as a garden, in which roses and nettles are promiscuously scattered, and in which we often feel the sting of the wounding nettle, while we enjoy the fragrance of the blooming rose. Those bowers of delight, entwined with the woodbine and jessamine, under whose friendly umbrage we seek shelter from the noon-day sun, frequently are the abode of snakes, adders, and venomous creatures, which wound us in those unguarded scenes of delight.

As the year has its seasons, and winter and summer are constantly in pursuit of each other; so changeable likewise is the condition of mortals; and, as the elements are frequently disturbed by storms, hurricanes, and tempests, so is the human mind frequently ruffled and indisposed, till the sun-shine of reason and philosophy bursts forth and dispels the gloom. Murmuring brooks, purling streams, and sequestered groves, whatever the fictions of a poetical imagination may have advanced, are not always the seat of unmingled pleasure, nor the abode of uninterrupted happiness.

225

The hapless Florio pined away some months on the delightful banks of the Severn: he complained of the cruelty of the lovely Anabella, and told his fond tale to the waters of that impetuous stream, which hurried along regardless of his plaints. He gathered the lilies of the field; but the lilies were not so fair as his Anabella, nor the fragrance of the blushing rose so sweet as her breath; the lambs were not so innocent, nor the sound of the tabor on the green half so melodious as her voice. Time, however, has joined Florio and Anabella in the fetters of wedlock, and the plaints of the swain are changed. The delusion of the enchantment is vanished, and what he but lately considered as the only object worthy of his sublunary pursuit, he now contemplates with coolness, indifference, and disgust: enjoyment has metamorphosed the rose into a nettle.

Ernestus, contrary to his inclinations, was compelled by his parents to marry the amiable Clara, whose sense, tenderness, and virtues, soon fixed the heart of the roving Ernestus; and what at first gave him pain and disgust, by degrees became familiar, pleasing, and delightful. Here the nettle was changed to the rose.

226

The wandering libertine, who pursues the rose through the unlawful paths of love, who tramples on every tender plant that comes within his reach, and who roves from flower to flower, like the bee, only to rob it of its sweets, will at last lose his way; and, when benighted, be compelled to repose on the restless bed of wounding nettles.

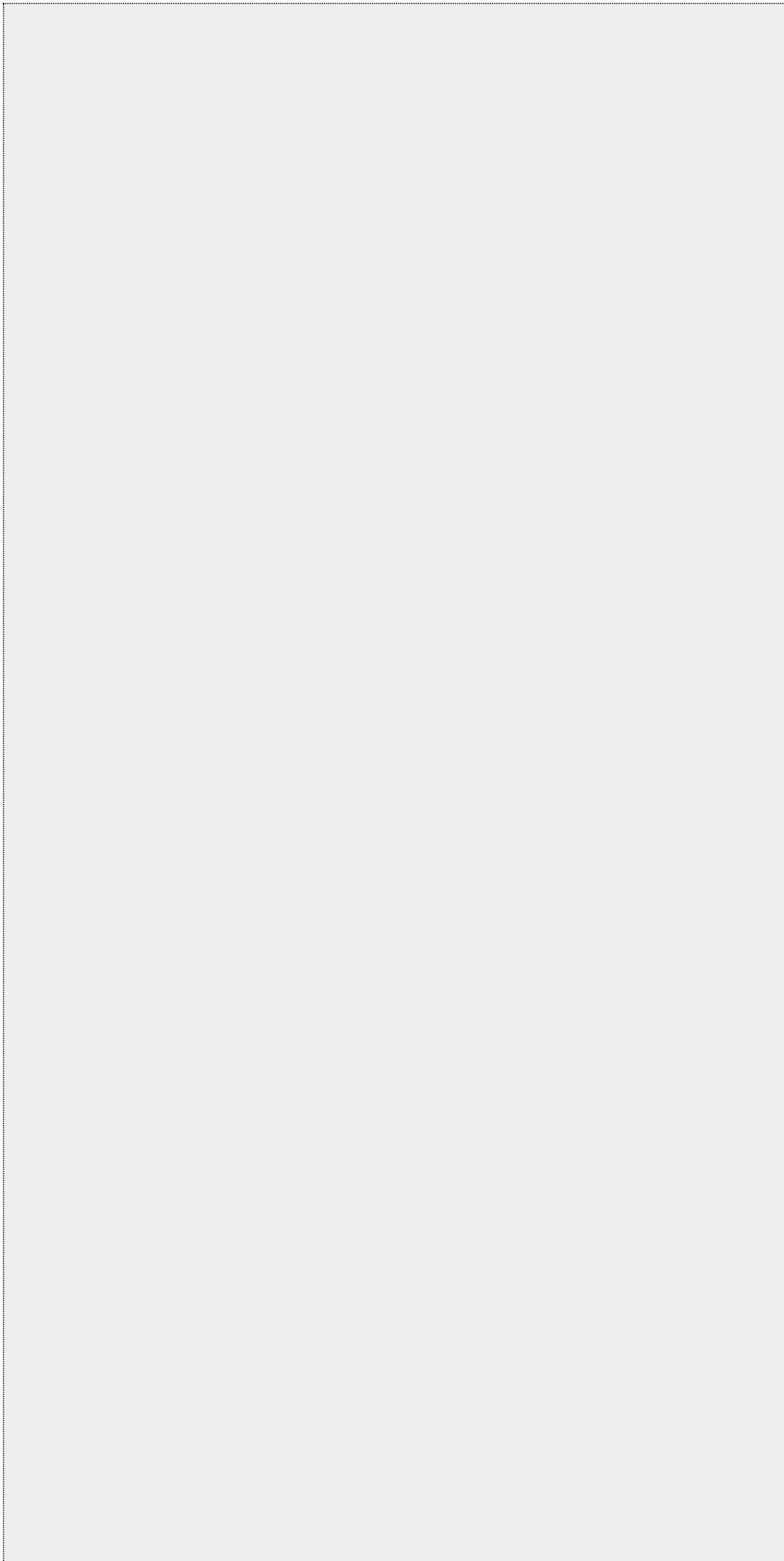
The blooming rose is an utter stranger to the regions of Ambition, where gloomy clouds perpetually obscure the beams of the joyful sun; where the gentle zephyrs never waft through the groves, but discordant blasts are perpetually howling, and where the climate produces only thorns and nettles.

The rose reaches its highest perfection in the garden of Industry, where the soil is neither too luxuriant, nor too much impoverished. Temperance fans it with the gentlest breezes, and Health and Contentment sport around it. Here the nettle no sooner makes its appearance, than the watchful eye of Prudence espies it; and, though it may not be possible totally to eradicate it, it is never suffered to reach to any height of perfection.

227

Since then human life is but a garden, in which weeds and flowers promiscuously shoot up and thrive, let us do what we can to encourage the culture of the rose, and guard against the spreading nettle. However barren may be the soil that falls to our lot, a careful and assiduous culture will contribute not a little to make the garden, at least, pleasing and cheerful.





## Transcriber's Notes

Punctuation and spelling were made consistent when a predominant preference was found in this book; otherwise they were not changed.

Simple typographical errors were corrected; occasional unbalanced quotation marks retained.

Ambiguous hyphens at the ends of lines were retained.

Occasional occurrences of the archaic long "s" (printed as "f") have been replaced with the modern "s".

Occasional missing periods and opening or closing quotation marks remedied.

Page [95](#): "Though her visitors did not look" was printed as "visitors", but was changed here for consistency with other occurrences of "visitor" or "visitors" in this text.

Page [97](#): "spised" probably should be "despised".

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BLOSSOMS OF MORALITY \*\*\*

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