# THE

# CORINNA OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.

# THE
# CORINNA OF ENGLAND,
# AND
# A HEROINE IN THE SHADE;

## A MODERN ROMANCE,
BY THE AUTHOR OF “THE WINTER IN BATH,” “THE BANKS OF THE WYE,” “THE WOMAN OF COLOUR,” “LIGHT AND SHADE,” &c. &c.

VOL. I

"What Caricatura is in painting," says Fielding, "Burlesque is in writing; and in the same manner the comic writer and painter correlate to each other. And here I shall observe, that as in the former the painter seems to have the advantage, so it is in the latter infinitely on the side of the writer: for the monstrous is much easier to paint than describe, and the ridiculous to describe than paint. And though, perhaps, this latter species doth not in either science so strongly affect and agitate the muscles as the other: yet it will be owned, I believe, that a more rational and useful pleasure arises to us from it.”

LIFE OF HOGARTH.

"When I see such games
"Play'd by the creatures of a pow'r, who swears
"That he will judge the earth, and call the fool
"To a sharp reck'ning that has liv'd in vain;
"And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well,
"And prove it in th' infallible result
"So hollow and so false; I feel my heart
"Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
"If this be learning, most of all deceived.
"Great crimes alarm the conscience, but she sleeps
"While thoughtful man is plausibly amus'd.
"Defend me, therefore, Common Sense, say I,
"From reveries so airy, from the toil
"Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
"And growing old in drawing nothing up!" COWPER.

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# THE

# CORINNA OF ENGLAND.

## CHAPTER I.

"Doom'd from each native joy to part;
"Each dear connection of the heart!"
LANGHORNE.

IT was a cold and wet morning, in the month of April, when Mary Cuthbert got into the stage-coach which was destined to convey her many miles from the place of her nativity, and the friends of her infantine days and her juvenile years. Deprived of both her parents at the early age of eighteen, this young and beautiful orphan had felt the heavy stroke of calamity; and though she had sustained herself under affliction, through a firm belief in a superintending Providence, with the resignation of a Christian, yet her whole deportment had evinced that she had greatly suffered—for that she had fondly loved, all who had beheld the dove-like eyes of Mary, when, turned with filial affection on her parents, they swam in "liquid lustre," would have given voluntary testimony!

Mr. Cuthbert had long been the pastor of a small parish in Somersetshire, where his worth had endeared him to his parishioners; and their respect and reverence had so conciliated his regard, that he wished not to emerge into a more conspicuous walk of life; but, with his gentle and amiable partner, was contented with the small emoluments of his living. Their mutual love, and mutual cares, devolved on their only child, and Mary Cuthbert's improvement had kept pace with their wishes. If perfect happiness resided upon earth, it had surely fixed its residence at Woodberry, till the fading form, the hectic colour of Mrs. Cuthbert told a "trembling tale" to her fond husband. A cold, taken by walking in the wet to visit a poor woman during the painful hour of labour, laid the foundation of a disorder which baffled all human skill. Mr. Cuthbert never recovered the loss of his wife; from that dreadful moment, he seemed to have lost the elasticity of his mind, with the activity of his body; and even the desolate and orphan state in which his poor girl would be left had not power to stimulate his exertions for life, though the acuteness of his parental reflections contributed to bend him in anguish still nearer to the grave. Too liberal and too generous to lay up from his scanty income, he had only a few hundreds to bequeath to his child: he had no other relations, except a niece, who had recently lost her parents, and, mistress of an affluent and independent fortune, resided in Staffordshire, in a house which her father had purchased a few years before.

Mr. Moreton had carried on an extensive manufactory at Birmingham with great success; he had married the only sister of Mr. Cuthbert, but the wide distance which separated them had deprived the brother and sister of all intercourse, except by letter, for many years preceding the death of the latter; and, on hearing that his niece had lost her other parent, Mr. Cuthbert had contented himself with writing her a letter of condolence, judging that a young heiress, in the full plenitude of wealth, could well spare the personal inquiries of a plain and serious uncle. But when he saw himself daily sinking to the grave;

when he looked on his beauteous and innocent Mary; when he recollected the friendless state in which she would be left to struggle with a world, to which she was yet a stranger; all the father rushed to his eyes, and he turned his thoughts towards Clarissa Moreton, as to the future guardian and protectress of her cousin. Of the character of his niece he knew nothing; her mother had been perfectly regular and uniform in her deportment and conduct, and he doubted not, but that her example and instructions had had their proper influence on her daughter. Besides, Miss Moreton was four years older than his Mary; and from eighteen to twenty-two how much experience is learned; how much judgment is acquired; how much consideration is added to the female character? Miss Moreton, too, had been used to the world; she had been born and bred amongst the populous walks of life, whilst the recluse Priory of Woodberry Parsonage had kept Mary Cuthbert as much in sequestration, as though she had been the blooming vestal of some time-worn cloister. To Clarissa Moreton then the anxious parent addressed himself with trembling hands and beating heart. Ah! the subject was very near that heart; for was he not pleading for his only child? Miss Moreton's answer was calculated to disperse all Mr. Cuthbert's fears. She accepted the office of guardianship, and agreed, nay, insisted on her cousin's residing with her till she became of age, unless she should marry previous to that period. In two days after the receipt of this letter, Mr. Cuthbert breathed his last in the arms of his beloved Mary.

Thus having, in a general way, placed before our readers the circumstances which led to the long and tedious journey which our youthful traveller was undertaking, alone and unprotected, we will pass over the two first days of it, during which no incident occurred worthy of remark. Her companions in the different coaches had been civil and well behaved; the modesty and simplicity of her demeanor had been her passport to general respect; but, fatigued and tired of such close confinement, she was congratulating herself at having changed her coach for the last time, as the next stage was the city of Coventry, where her cousin's carriage was to meet her, and to convey her to "the Attic Villa," (for so was Miss Moreton's residence called) about four miles from that place. On re-entering the coach, Mary perceived that her former companions were gone; a female of decent appearance and a smug round tradesman had made way for two young men of a genteel air; who, having paused for a few moments, to read her blushing countenance with eyes of speaking admiration; and having, through the same channel, mutually communicated their sentiments, now recurred to a conversation (as shall appear in the next Chapter) which seemed only to have been interrupted by the necessary confusion and bustle of entering a stage-coach.

## CHAP. II.

"Even such enraptur'd life, such energy was
ours." THOMSON.

"OF all things in the world, I shall enjoy the introduction and the visit; of that I am well assured; but, my dear Charles, in the ardour of your regard for me, may you not be stepping a little beyond the verge of propriety? Can you take the liberty of introducing an entire stranger to your fair friend? Surely the customs of the world, and the delicacy of the female character—"

"How often," said the other gentleman, hastily interrupting his companion, "how often must I tell you, my dear Montgomery, that your scrupulous conscience, your fears, and your doubts, will always stand in the way of your enjoyments. The goddess of the shrine to which I am guiding you despises the customs of the world, as much as she differs from the rest of her sex. She is a being who stands unique in the scale of creation; it is wholly impossible to define her character; she acts from the impulse of taste—of whim—of what you will please to call it; she delights in patronizing genius—in being known as the liberal rewarder of talent."

"Genius, talent," returned his companion; "but has she discrimination to discover either?" "Of what material consequence is that, my good friend? She has vanity enough to suppose that she has; and, flattered and courted by all around her, is it likely she should know her own deficiencies? She selects all her acquaintances from those whom she imagines to excel, and—" "Pray, Charles, may I ask you, for what particular excellence were you placed so conspicuously on the list?"

"Why faith, Montgomery, that question was not wholly unexpected; and you will allow, that to select my follies for the objects of praise was a rare piece of discernment in this fair damsel! You know my predilection for the stage: that, a buskin'd hero, I have frequently strutted my little hour on a theatre of village declamation, y'clept a barn. In one of my random moments, when whim took the place of judgment in my whirling brain, as our company were quartered in the city of Coventry, a company of comedians (I may call them fairly so, for the Tragic Muse must have flown at the first drawing up of the curtain) were entertaining the public; and, pitying the poor devils, willing to draw them a full barn—" "And willing, too, to show your own theatrical powers," said the friend. "Why that is fairly put in, I believe, Montgomery; I plead guilty—but to go on with my story, I volunteered my services, which were gratefully received, as you may imagine, and 'the part of Romeo by Capt. Walwyn,' was soon blazoned in the bills, and stuck up in every corner of the town. It chanced to meet the eye of the lady of whom we are talking; she honoured the representation with her presence; pronounced my Romeo a chef d'œuvre; though, Heaven knows, it required all my heroism to make love to a fat and brawny Juliet who cried out

"Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day;
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful *ollow* of thine *hears*.

Nightly she sits on yon pomegranate tree.
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale!"

I received a most charming billet from this fair, the next morning, and have ever since been as it were domesticated at the——" "Does the lady ever exhibit her own powers in the theatrical way?" interrupted Montgomery. "Oh, to enchantment. She does every thing, or *attempts* it! Indeed, Montgomery, you will not feel any thing like ennui whilst you are a resident under her roof; I defy you not to enjoy the motley groups, and the medley of entertainments and amusements, which will be there offered to you—the strangest, the most eccentric set, to be sure, which were ever huddled together; and I know, my friend, that you have a taste for the *perfectly ridiculous!*" "But it is a taste which I ought not to indulge," said Mr. Montgomery; "I always feel humbled in my own opinion, when I have been *amused* with the follies of my fellow men; but that I have been so too frequently, I will readily confess. There is something very tempting in ridicule; one is generally encouraged to pursue it by the applause, and for the entertainment, of others; and we insensibly forget that we are erring against the principles of benevolence and rectitude." "Out, out upon your too tender conscience; I will not stop to hum and to haw, and to consider first causes and secondary effects; I will laugh, I must laugh, where I can and while I can—'Mirth, admit me of thy Crew.' But you will go with me, Frederic?" "I confess that you have raised my curiosity so very high, that, maugre *my tender conscience*, I *must* go!" "That's my very dear Fred," said his friend, eagerly shaking him by the hand.

Mary Cuthbert had been a silent hearer of this conversation, and had been congratulating herself mentally at being placed in a more humble situation in life than the lady whose large and independent fortune, and more independent manners, had been so freely discussed in a stage-coach by two young men. She felt curious to know the lady's name; and, Miss Moreton being in the habit of visiting in the neighbourhood, and being likewise in the possession of a large fortune, she doubted not, but that she should have her curiosity gratified, when she reached the Attic Villa. A reflecting and attentive mind derives instruction from the most trivial occurrences. That levity and easiness of access which had been laughed at in the lady who had been the subject of discourse, made Mary Cuthbert more on the reserve towards her male companions, than she might otherwise have been; and, though she answered every question which they addressed to her, with the most undissembled sweetness, yet was it so chastened by modest reserve, as to draw from them the greatest respect and attention.

The coach soon stopped at an inn door in Coventry, from whence the passengers having alighted, Mary Cuthbert curtsied to her companions; in obliging terms, refused their offers of assistance, and retired to a private apartment to await the arrival of Miss Moreton's carriage, which was to meet her at this place. In a few minutes a waiter announced it, and Mary eagerly rose from her seat and followed him to the door. A handsome landau and four, with postillions in white and silver, saluted her eye. But she had time only for a cursory view; for surprise and astonishment had possession of every faculty, when she saw the two gentlemen who had so recently been her fellow travellers walk out from the inn door, followed by a footman in the same livery with the postillions, who said with the most respectful air, as he addressed the gentleman who had been the

chief speaker in the stage coach, "Miss Moreton, Sir, desired me to present her most particular compliments to you, and to say, that any civility you show this lady she shall consider as an obligation conferred on herself." "Such a message must be wholly unnecessary," returned the gentleman, bowing to Mary, and taking her hand to assist her into the vehicle. She suffered him to do so in silent wonder and confusion. Both the gentlemen jumped into the carriage after her, and it was bowling quickly along.—"Fortune favours the bold, I have often heard, Charles," said Mr. Montgomery; "*we*, I think, must just now rank high in the graces of that fickle Goddess; for who could have supposed, when we just now took leave of this young lady, that we should so soon again enjoy the pleasure of her company." "Are you acquainted with Miss Moreton, Sir?" asked Mary, in some confusion. "I am not at present," said Mr. Montgomery, "but my friend Walwyn is going to be my gentleman usher." "And is it possible then," (said Mary Cuthbert, lifting up her hands and eyes with the most artless expression of concern,) "that Miss Moreton is the lady of whom you, Sir, have been talking this morning," turning herself towards Captain Walwyn for an answer. The hero of the greenroom seemed embarrassed. "He pleads guilty, you find, Ma'am," said Mr. Montgomery; "but you must excuse a great deal in my friend, who is so used to *stage effect*, that he is apt to give himself poetical licence on all occasions." "I always speak in the highest terms of Miss Moreton; Frederic, you will give me credit for this at least.—You are a friend of that lady's, Ma'am?" looking at Mary Cuthbert with a painful air of inquiry. "I am her near relative," said Mary. Walwyn started; Montgomery was perfectly unconcerned, and laughingly said, "Trust me, this unwary pleasantry of thine will sooner or later bring thee into scrapes and difficulties, which no after wit can extricate thee out of." "I have never seen Miss Moreton," said Mary, pitying the evident confusion of Walwyn.—"I know nothing of her character, except that her benevolence has induced her to offer her arms and her heart to an orphan cousin." "May Heaven bless her for the deed," said Montgomery with enthusiasm. The colour crimsoned the cheeks of Mary at the fervor of his aspiration; but, recovering herself, she gracefully turned towards Walwyn, and said, "Be assured, Sir, that I shall make no unjust use of the conversation which passed in my hearing this morning, and I hope (oh, how earnestly do I hope,) to find that in the warmth of your description you greatly overcharged the picture." "And why should you hope so, fair lady," asked Walwyn; "surely, you heard me say nothing derogatory to the sterling merit of Miss Moreton?" "Ah! Sir," said Mary, sighing, "self will always be uppermost in the human breast. I have been cradled in solitude; brought up amidst the dear domestic duties of a country parsonage; is it likely then—is it?"—she stopped, she burst into tears. Walwyn appeared as if he did not know what to say, and Montgomery looked as if he could have wept with the lovely girl before him. Ashamed of her weakness, she hid her face with her handkerchief, and tried to rally herself into some appearance of composure, and to collect her thoughts for the introduction to Miss Moreton, but her truant thoughts were taking a review of all she had heard in the morning, and she shrunk from the idea of the miscellaneous group who kept open house at the Attic Villa.

Mr. Walwyn's description must have been partly accurate, for did not Mary at this moment perceive a defalcation from established modes, in the very circumstance of Miss Moreton's having trusted her to the escort of two young men, both entire strangers to her, and one of them equally unknown to her cousin? What had been the first advice of

Mary's ever to be regretted mother on the subject of female conduct?—"My dear child, always avoid singularity; never wish to deviate from the beaten track; never imagine that you show understanding in despising common terms, and those rules of decorum which the world has prescribed to your sex. No situation ought to preclude a young woman from acting in conformity to those laws of custom, and of prudence, which may in some sense be called *her fence of protection*, and the *bulwark of her every virtue*."

Walwyn soon recovered his presence of mind, and, with much fluency of speech, began to relate many anecdotes to Mr. Montgomery, in praise of Miss Moreton's benevolence and generosity. Mary Cuthbert had discernment sufficient to perceive that these were meant wholly for her ear, hence they failed to make that impression on her mind which had been produced by his unguarded remarks in the morning. But the Attic Villa was now in sight. The heart of Mary bounded at her side; a thousand fearful and humiliating sensations oppressed her; her colour went and came; and she put her head out at the window to receive the freshness of the evening breeze, for she felt gasping for breath. "A most charming situation," said Montgomery, putting his head out of the same window, and pretending to be lost in admiration of the villa, at the moment that he watched his interesting female companion; for he could read the "human face divine," and he feared the consequences of that excessive emotion so plainly depicted in her countenance.

## CHAP. III.

"Here Freedom reign'd without the least alloy;
"Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
"Nor saintly spleen, durst murmur at our joy,
"And with envenom'd tongue our pleasures pall.
"For why? There was but one great rule for all;
"To wit, that each shall work his own desire,
"And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
"Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
"And carol what, unbid, the Muses might in-
spire."

THOMSON'S CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

AT length the carriage stopped, the step was let down, Walwyn hastily jumped out: Mary Cuthbert trembled from head to foot as she gave him her hand; but there was no time allowed her for reflection; she was led through the corridor, the door of an elegant apartment was thrown open, Miss Moreton sprang from a sopha, and throwing back a long veil, which half shaded her fine form, she pressed Mary Cuthbert to her bosom, saying "Welcome! thrice welcome, my dear Mary, to my house and to my heart!" There was something peculiarly grateful to the poor trembling girl in such a reception; she could not speak her thanks, but she smiled through her tears, and when placed at the side of Miss Moreton, she had time to observe her reception of the two gentlemen. Miss Moreton stretched out her hand, in token of amity to Mr. Montgomery, assured him that she had long wished for his acquaintance; and then, turning to Captain Walwyn, said in a style of theatrical declamation, "Walwyn, at sight of thee my gloomy heart cheers up, and gladness dawns within me!"—"And this long absence has been to me more tedious than a twice told tale;" said Walwyn, kissing her hand gallantly, and answering in the tragic strain. "But how comes it, that I see my fair alone?" "I purposely came hither to receive my cousin," answered Miss Moreton, "thinking that our first meeting required not a crowd of witnesses; but now that we are known to each other," said she, turning to Mary, and taking her hand, "let me, my dear girl, introduce you to the apartment where my friends are anxiously awaiting us.—Mr. Montgomery—Walwyn—you will follow!" The gentlemen bowed assent, and Mary was led out of the apartment by her cousin.

Mr. Moreton had been a man who had indulged himself in speculative inquiries, and who had professed what he called "liberal opinions;" he had been extremely fortunate in his mercantile career; and hence his eccentricity had never been tinctured with misanthropy; and he had been held in general estimation by the world, who, if they could not fall in with all his visionary theories and undigested plans, yet all agreed, "that he was a most generous fellow, that his dinners were excellent, that the company round his convivial board was sure to afford entertainment, and that nobody could envy a man his good fortune, who evinced so much spirit and liberality in the enjoyment of it."

The commercial concerns of Mr. Moreton had been widely extended, and he had been the peculiar favourite of Fortune, for through the whole of his bartering transactions

he had never had a bad debt; and his schemes had generally turned out as he wished; his good luck, as it appeared, usually supplying the place of judgment, for he had outstripped all his competitors; the wary and the prudent had failed where he had been successful; for to *attempt* and to *achieve* had been with Mr. Moreton the same thing.

Clarissa Moreton was his only child; she was her father's idol, for he saw in her enough of his own disposition, and of the traits which marked his character, to make her so. And it was in vain that Mrs. Moreton would have taught her child to walk in the path prescribed to her sex; when her father, proud of her "superior mind," and of her "bold and inquiring spirit," encouraged her in asserting her opinions, and in deviating in her behaviour and manners from all with whom she conversed. But the superiority of Miss Moreton's talents, like those of her father, were calculated only for display; there was nothing solid or substantial in her abilities or acquirements, no depth of argument in her declamatory harangues, in which she had practised, from the early age of fifteen, to the attentive auditors round her father's table. And while he, poor mistaken man, proud of her shining endowments, looked round for the admiration which, as a "levy en masse" he expected from all his guests, and which they in some sort were constrained to pay, as the price of their entertainment, Mrs. Moreton's confusion and concern was very apparent, and her motherly countenance would be covered with blushes at the improper confidence of her daughter, and the eccentric propositions, and chimerical absurdities, into which her father's foolish example and blind indulgence, had precipitated her. Miss Moreton's heart might have been rightly formed, but her good qualities were entirely obscured, by the extravagance of her opinions, the pertinacity with which she maintained them, and the most overweening vanity.— Superficial in every acquirement and every accomplishment, she attempted every thing; fond of the new school of manners, and of philosophy, "philanthropy" and "benevolence" were words which were constantly jingling in her ears; and, the inflated victim of vanity and self-conceit, was easily persuaded, that she was the succouring angel that was sent to patronise genius and virtue on earth. She had a great tincture of romantic fervour and enthusiasm in her manners, which was called "*energy*," a word well understood in the new vocabulary of the moderns, and which has been too frequently made use of to require any explanation here; not that Miss Moreton was a modern philosopher, there was not stability enough in her formation to call her any one distinct thing; she was every thing by starts, and nothing long; in fact, a young woman, who, with a showy person, a large fortune, and the most inordinate ideas of her own importance, dared to think and act without regarding the opinion of the world in any instance; and yet expecting not only to receive its general suffrage, but its applause and admiration. If our readers wish to see the contrast between the cousins, we hope they will have patience to follow us through the succeeding pages.

Miss Moreton led Mary Cuthbert into a room, where were seated, in different parts of it, several persons. The tremendous ceremony of introduction being over, Montgomery and Walwyn formed themselves into a group with the two ladies, whilst the rest of the company mixed in conversation, or indulged in their particular amusements, or meditations, as they liked best. Montgomery cast his acute eyes, in a hasty survey, round the spacious and elegant apartment; it was lighted by a number of Grecian lamps, supported by lofty Tripods, while Cupids and Sphinxes, Graces and Gorgons, Hebes and Hydras, covered the walls. Placed at the head of the room was a full length picture of

Miss Moreton; there was a fantastic style of drapery, perfectly in unison with her character, displayed in this portrait; a group of Cupids appeared sportively playing at her feet, while the Muses and the Graces were all crowning her with votive wreaths. The furniture of the room was correspondent to the various taste of the owner, books and exotics, globes and battledores, telescopes and skipping ropes, old china and dancing dolls, were strewed round it in elegant confusion; while a grand piano forte, a harp, a tamborine, a violin, a violoncello, flutes, and hautboys, were huddled promiscuously in one corner, and enveloped by music books. From inanimate, Mr. Montgomery recurred to animate objects: a highly rouged and most extravagantly dressed female was reclining on a sopha; she had made only a half inclination of her body, on being introduced to Miss Cuthbert; the greatest ease and most perfect assurance seemed to pervade her manners; and she was now employed, "sans ceremonie," in picking her teeth and arranging her eye-brows, at a little glass which she had taken from the "ridicule" attached to her side. This lady appeared nearly forty years of age; and, by the glances which she cast from her large dark orbs on the male part of the company, Montgomery judged that she had not "numbered these years in vestal purity." A gentleman sat near her, whose well-powdered whiskers reached his mouth on either side, and whose shrugs, whose grimaces, and whose perfumes, bespoke the insignificant coxcomb; he seemed very attentive to the lady. Indeed, the Signora Grosera and the Monsieur Myrtilla were excellent companions; her voice was the only attraction which she possessed; and the sweet tones which he drew from his Cremona were the only claims from which he could derive either favour or sufferance, as his manners were completely ridiculous, and his morals were most licentiously depraved. A plain dressed and very quizzical-looking man had drawn his chair in a direct line before Mary Cuthbert; and pursing up his thick lips, was pursuing a whistle, with his eyes intently fixed on her countenance, and very dexterously twirling his thumbs, as his hands met on his well-stuffed waistcoat. As Montgomery saw the heightening colour of Miss Cuthbert, as he watched her retreating eyes, and increasing confusion at being so obviously singled out from the company to be whistled at; he was on the point of asking him what he meant by such impertinent behaviour, when he felt himself tapped on the shoulder by Walwyn, who said in a whisper, "Come, I see I must be your Cicerone, for else you will be liable to some devilish mistakes; come with me under the viranda, and I will give you the professions, as well as the names of the company." "What! and leave that fellow to insult Miss Cuthbert by his lawless gaze?" asked Montgomery. "My dear fellow, if she were an automaton Mr. Copy would regard her just as intently: he does not examine Miss Cuthbert as a creature of flesh and blood." "She looks more like one of celestial mould, certainly!" said Montgomery. "Nor that either, my good friend," said Walwyn; "he is merely thinking how she will look on canvass; he has not an idea beyond his art, which is that of a mere copyist; he is one of the most stupid and tedious animals I ever saw; absent beyond description, all his senses are engrossed by his profession; and he can talk on no other subject." "Why do I see him here, then?" asked Montgomery. "Because he painted that portrait, which is thought a great likeness," said Walwyn. "And did he design the Muses and the Graces too?" "No, these were copies of copies, introduced at the desire of myself and some other of Miss Moreton's friends, who judged them symbolical and appropriate." Montgomery shook his head. "Those two you know," said Walwyn:—"The Signora sings, and the Monsieur plays the fiddle, when

Miss Moreton likes to have music; but, to say the truth, this is not the hall of song very often, for music disturbs Mr. Copy; the Signora Grosera is frequently subject to the head-ache, when she is asked to sing; and it interrupts Mr. Germ in his botanical researches; you observe him sitting there, in green spectacles, looking over his different specimens of thistles?" "But in such a spacious house as this, why are there not apartments appropriated for each particular pursuit?" "Because Miss Moreton has fixed on this for 'the Lyceum,' and that she is the undisputed mistress of her own mansion," Montgomery was answered; Captain Walwyn continued, "the gentleman whom you see there has been for some time an inmate of this house; I understand that he has been very unfortunate in his own country (France); but it must be confessed, that he has experienced the entire reverse here, where his pathetic story of emigration touched the heart of Miss Moreton, and from the moment that the Chevalier D'Aubert became known to her, he became a resident at the Villa." "How very imprudent!" said Montgomery: "has not Miss Moreton one friend who will speak the language of truth, and tell her of the impropriety of her behaviour?" "Do you recollect that independence of sentiment and action form the leading traits of her character? Frederic, believe me, that opposition only adds fuel to the fire, as Mrs. Deborah Moreton, an old maiden aunt, who resides in the village half a mile distant, finds to her cost every day that she takes a walk here, to rail at all which meets her eyes and ears!" Montgomery sighed; it was a sigh of the most pensive cast; he foresaw a thousand dangers, a thousand evils in store for the young and inexperienced Mary, under a roof where all the rules of propriety were invaded, and where a promiscuous and depraved throng found easy access. Even his friend Walwyn was by no means a man with whom a woman of strict virtue and modesty should be on intimate terms; his manners were lively and pleasant; his person was prepossessing; but, under this engaging exterior, Montgomery was well aware that he entertained a very indifferent opinion of the female world, and that his success with the weaker part of it had contributed to strengthen him in it, and that he sought their society only as they contributed to his gratification, or were likely to be instrumental to his advancement. That, under a semblance of frank gaiety, he entertained the idea of carrying off the rich heiress, Montgomery easily perceived; and there was a peculiar poignancy of expression and acerbity of manner when he mentioned D'Aubert, which evinced that the sentimental Frenchman was the rival whom he most dreaded. Captain Walwyn was the second son of a very respectable family; he was generally received as a pleasant companion; his fondness for the stage rendered him desirable in most of the gay circles, and his purse often failed in supplying his extravagancies; for his indulgences extended far beyond a younger brother's allowance, although that was not scantily allotted. The Walwyns inhabited the manor-house of the parish, where the father of Montgomery had been pastor for many years. Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Walwyn had been early acquainted, and had lived in terms of the strictest friendship; their difference of situation had been no barrier to their intimacy; Mr. Walwyn loved his friend for his superior sanctity and virtue, and Mr. Montgomery never thought the wealth of Mr. Walwyn entitled him to any portion of that respect, which he voluntarily yielded to his benevolence and goodness of heart. Two sons and a daughter were all the family of Mr. Walwyn, whilst a large tribe sprang up round the parsonage table. Early habits and early associations, rather than any similarity of character, had continued an intimacy between Captain Walwyn and young

Montgomery. Frederic Montgomery was the eldest of the family; his conduct had hitherto been exemplary; he was intended for the Church, to which profession his wishes had always bent; and he had kept his last term in Oxford previous to his ordination, when, meeting with Captain Walwyn, he was induced by his friend's earnest entreaties, and his own curiosity, to while away a few days at the Attic Villa.

## CHAP. IV.

"Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
"Weigh sun-beams, carve a fly, or split a flea,
"The solemn trifler, with his boasted skill,
"Toils much, and is a solemn trifler still."
COWPER'S CHARITY.

WHEN Walwyn and Montgomery returned into the room, they perceived that the Chevalier D'Aubert had seated himself between Miss Moreton and Mary Cuthbert. Mary understood none of the half English, half French phrases, which were from time to time addressed to her cousin, accompanied with a sigh, or a look of languishment from the pensive orbs of the young Frenchman; but she saw that they were received by Miss Moreton with much satisfaction, who answered him so much in his own strain, and with an air so expressive of tender interest and feeling, that Mary felt embarrassed at being a disengaged spectator of the scene; especially as Mr. Copy still kept his eyes on her face, and had drawn his chair, the last time he resumed his whistle, rather nearer to her. She was ordered to sit in the seat she occupied, by Miss Moreton, and she had not courage to desert her post, though she felt very awkward in retaining it. In this dilemma, she recollected that she had her knitting in her pocket, and observing that the Signora had fallen asleep, and Monsieur was arranging a new crimson and silver cane string, she judged it to be no breach of politeness to take it out, which she accordingly did. "What a picture of Industry!" said Miss Moreton, with something rather sarcastic in her exclamation. "A picture! where?" said Copy, rubbing his eyes, and starting up from his seat in a moment. "There," said Miss Moreton, pointing towards Mary. "Why, Mr. Copy, you are more absent than ever. I thought you had been studying it this half hour!" "In the character of Penelope," said Copy, muttering to himself, "in the absence of Ulysses—Let me see, Penelope is generally drawn with blue eyes." Mary Cuthbert's eyes were fixed on the knitting. Leaning his elbows on his knees, Copy very coolly looked up in her face— "Yes, yes, I see, her's are blue too." "But Penelope wove, you know, Mr. Copy," said Walwyn; "this Lady's employment is of a different kind." "Very good attitude too," continued Copy; "head, a little too much recumbent—fingers displayed to advantage by the knitting—Penelope in character—the matron style of drapery, veil pendent from the left side." "But she did not knit—I tell you she wove, my friend," said Walwyn—Copy paid no attention. Mary Cuthbert took out her scissars to cut her thread.—"Or the fatal sister," said he. "Mista, black terrific maid!" said Walwyn, with a most hideous expression of countenance, looking towards Copy, and laughing: Copy whistled out the new idea and heard him not.

"Join the wayward work to aid.
"Tis the woof of victory."

said Montgomery quoting from the same Poem. "There are five sorts of spiders," said Mr. Germ, who had caught the words woof and weave, these had fallen within the compass of

his studies; and eagerly wetting his thumb and finger at his mouth, and turning over the leaves of an octavo volume which he drew from his pocket, he continued—"first, the house spider, who hangs her web in neglected apartments; secondly, the garden spider, who weaves in the open air a little round web, the centre of which is her situation in the day time; thirdly, the black spider, to be met with in cellars and the cavities of old walls; and, fourthly, the wandering spider, who has no settled nest like the others; fifthly, the field spider, which they call the long-legs."—Aha, aha, Monsieur Germ, aha, me think you be much like von gentilhomme, called Monsieur Long-legs," said the fidler. "And perhaps the wandering spider, who has no settled home, may apply to you, Mr. Myrtilla," said Germ, coolly resuming his former studies.

"The spider's most attenuated thread,
"Is cord, is cable, to man's hold on bliss!"

said Walwyn; but he was sorry that he had made the quotation, when he perceived the sentimental Chevalier strike his hand on his forehead with emphasis, and heave a deep drawn sigh, which was gently echoed by Miss Moreton. The Chevalier walked to the viranda; Miss Moreton followed him in great appearance of agitation, and took his hand, as if beseeching him to compose himself. Mary Cuthbert was heartily glad, when she could with any propriety, retire for the night; and, though laid on a bed of down, and surrounded by all the splendid elegancies of life, she gave way to her full heart in a burst of sorrow. She contrasted all that she had seen at the Villa, to all which she had been accustomed to see at Woodberry; there her duties had been her delights, and a series of useful and rational employment had enlivened every hour; there regularity and social order had presided, and no invasion on propriety or custom had taken place. It was by the express, the dying injunctions of her father, that she had sought her present asylum; destitute of friends, low in fortune as he had left his child, it was natural for him to wish that she should be sheltered by her only remaining relative, when she lived in a state of affluence, single and independent. By introducing the cousins to each other, he had hoped to render them mutually useful, and thus to have bestowed a mutual benefit: and he had frequently given Mary Cuthbert rules of behaviour, on her becoming the guest and companion of Miss Moreton, in which he had instructed her to comport herself with sweetness and gentleness of manner, and to make her company useful and agreeable to her protectress; "never flatter her foibles, or nurse her weaknesses, my dearest Mary; always consult your own dignity of character," continued the kind parent. "You must remember that you are to be accountable for your actions at the tribunal of your Heavenly Parent, and that while you continue to mould your conduct by that law of right which has been transmitted to you from above, you may rest secure in your own integrity, and the silent plaudits of a good conscience!"

Mary Cuthbert's talents and acquirements were not of the brilliant cast; her understanding was good, her perception lively and acute; but her natural modesty and reservedness of disposition, added to her secluded education, and the retirement in which she had lived at Woodberry, had given to her whole demeanour and behaviour, an air of timidity and *mauvaise haute*, which, though it did not diminish her natural and peculiar attractions in the eyes of those who had discernment and understanding to appreciate

them according to their value, made her appear to the followers of art and fashion as an awkward bashful girl, calculated neither for ornament or amusement. In the presence of Miss Moreton and Miss Moreton's circle, Mary had felt the most unaccountable embarrassment, and a restraint which was wholly foreign to her nature; for, open in her disposition, she was prompt in expressing her sentiments, although they were tempered by true modesty and diffidence. Yet at the Attic Villa she seemed to feel that every word she should have uttered would have been laughed or carped at by her hearers, as being in utter contradiction to their habits and sentiments; and for her own part, her's were in as direct opposition to their's. Miss Moreton was very much pleased with her cousin; her modest behaviour and diffident manners were the passport to her favour; for a rival under her roof, one whose conversational powers outshone her's, or whose flights of fancy had been as brilliant; one too possessed of youth and loveliness, could not have been suffered; for the *genius* of *philanthropy* and *benevolence* upon earth, the arbitress of *wit* and of elegance, had hitherto possessed her high situation in *absolute power*; she had scarcely known what envy was, as the women who approached her had been her fawning sycophants, the men her slaves. Mrs. Deborah Moreton, indeed, daily poured *plain truths* into the ear of her niece; but opposition and advice from a woman of rough manners, of coarse voice, and of an *unenlightened* mind, was received in the most disdainful manner by Clarissa; she generally on these occasions, adopted a cool and contemptuous silence; but, to show the notice she took of the advice in her future conduct, if Mrs. Moreton had endeavoured to dissuade her from any half formed project, from that moment she determined to put it in execution; and, on the contrary, if Mrs. Moreton recommended her to adopt any particular mode of behaviour, she contrived to be the exact reverse to the thing proposed. So proud was she of her fancied superiority; so vain of her own independence. Mrs. Deborah Moreton was a woman of common stamp; but she entertained very good and wholesome notions concerning the proper behaviour and the conduct of women, and they had been grafted in her mind, nearly fifty years before the *age* of *reason* and of *sentiment*; and had they been tempered with mildness and suavity of manners, they might have been of great use to her niece; but, unhappily, this good lady's temper was of a most irritable and hasty kind; ashamed of the repeated and daily increasing extravagancies of her niece, she no sooner heard of any thing she had done, or was about to do, than she sallied out in her long waisted sack, and with her ebony crooked cane, to give vent to her disapprobation; and as this was done in pretty harsh terms; as she so frequently had seen the consequences which had been produced, it would have been politic, if she could have put a check upon this effervescence of wrath; but she never attempted it. And if, over a sixpenny pool with her village friends, any anecdote had been related of the *Antic* Villa, (as not very unaptly it was called by the sober set at Marlow,) the next morning Mrs. Deborah Moreton was sure to be seen walking off; and as she passed some of the sisterhood, she would put in her sharp nose at their open windows, and say "You see I am as good as my word; I am going to give her a good round lecture!" We have informed our readers how these lectures usually turned out; but nothing discomfited the old lady; at her return she greeted her curious friends with, "Well! I have done *my* duty, I have told her a piece of my mind; now she may chuse whether she will hearken to it!" How seldom is the language of truth heard by young women in Miss Moreton's situation! her aunt might be said to be the only one who had ever spoken it to

her; and, coming under so homely and ungraceful a garb, no wonder that she turned from it with disgust and disdain to the more fascinating tones of falshood!

## CHAP. V.

"Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
"With patience many (an hour) she bore!"
GRAY.

AFTER a restless and uncomfortable night, Mary Cuthbert left her pillow; and having taken a survey of the park, and the surrounding country, from her windows, and made a little arrangement of her wardrobe, she stole down stairs, intending to taste the morning air by a short stroll. All was quiet in the house, and she found her way to the corridor, and the door of the Lyceum being open, she saw a house-maid busily engaged with her duster and brushes. "Are none of the family stirring?" asked Mary. "Oh dear, no, Miss," said the servant with a curtesy. "Does Miss Moreton breakfast in this room?" "Oh no, Miss, she do breakfast, most common, in the *Boy doer*, with the French *Caviller*; only sometimes she gets up *earlyish*, when the Captain be here, because they spouts a bit together, before breakfast, with the pebble stones in their mouths, out there in the park, because they do make plays in there, in the theatre, together." "Has Miss Moreton a private theatre in the Villa?" "Yes, that's what she have, Miss—t'was a chapel in old times, but now 'tis *convarted*, you see!" Mary Cuthbert shuddered at the perversion of her cousin; when a tall figure, in a blue worsted dressing-gown and scarlet night-cap, crossed the gravel-walk, outside the windows; she started. The maid, who was a simple uninformed creature, burst into a loud and hearty laugh; "I'fegs, Miss, I don't wonder at your being a little *gushed*; what a *quare* figure he do cut, to be sure! he is really terrifying to behold!" "Is the poor creature beside himself?" "Oh law's me, no, Miss, he be only one of the *Floss-all-overs*, as they call 'em; 'tis Mr. Germ; he as you seed last night; he gets up early to *snailing*!" "What is that?" asked Mary. "What, don'tee know, Miss? Why, he've been a gathering of snails, and slugs, and caterpillars. Oh law! he's a most *enauseous* old gentleman, to be sure; and you little know the work I've a got to clean after he; he brings it all into the house; as Joseph said, t'other night, he makes his room like Noah's ark, for he hath got creeping things *numerable* as the sand upon the sea shore, *sexing* and *dissexing* of it; look at 'en now, Miss, he is gallopping away, long-legs, spectacles and all, after a drumble drone! What an old fool 'tis!" Mary perceiving the servant to be very much inclined to volubility, now took up a book, and returned to her own apartment, not wishing to encounter Mr. Germ, by going out in the park, for she perceived that his race was not yet run. The book that she had taken was an English translation of a German play; it did not suit her taste; the language was bombastic; the sentiments were too lively drawn to do more than meet the ear; there was no depth of thought, no soundness of principle, and no invention in the fable; the catastrophe was unnatural and horrible. She had just concluded it, when the following note was put into her hand:—

"My dear Coz!—As I heard you say, last night, that you did not understand the French language, I will not inflict on you the misery of being present at my déjeune, which I shall have in my Boudoir this morning, as the dear Chevalier is good enough to read to me a most inimitable novel, the work of one of his own country-women. Such a novel! oh! my dear Mary, could you but read Delphine, or rather could you but hear it

read by the Chevalier, with *my* feelings, you would receive a gratification almost celestial. I shall not be able to see you till near dinner time, having appointed a little rehearsal with Walwyn, when D'Aubert shall have left me. I have ordered breakfast for you alone, as the Signora and the Monsieur have usually a morning's tête-a-tête, à la Françoise, in her room, and Mr. Germ's speculative and free inquiries into the wonders of Nature do not in general render him a very desirable companion for the repast of the morning; and I fear poor Copy might whistle you out of countenance. The two friends will probably lounge over their coffee together, while Walwyn gets himself perfect in his part, previous to meeting with me. This is Liberty-Hall, so pray amuse yourself as you like whilst under the roof of

"CLARISSA MORETON."

Mary Cuthbert smiled at the various ways in which Miss Moreton's visitors were disposed and dispersed, though her heart sickened at the romantic and extraordinary stile of the billet, and the unblushing ease with which Clarissa admitted men to a tête-a-tête in her private apartment. Breakfast was prepared for Mary in a snug little parlour; which was more in unison with her habits and occupations, than Lyceums or Boudoirs. Supposing herself free from interruption for some hours, she employed herself in altering some white dresses, previous to throwing off her deep sables; and she had been reverting to the times when she had worn them last; when she had been the happiest of the happy; blessed with the fostering protection of both her parents, and sheltered in the parsonage of Woodberry; tears of irrepressible sorrow forced their way at the recollection. Her back was towards the door, when she heard it open, and a loud and discordant voice said, "For *once*, then, I see my niece employed as I could wish. So, you have at last learnt how to handle your needle; Miss Moreton, I sincerely congratulate you." Mary Cuthbert rose from her seat, and turned her tearful eyes on an old lady of stern and harsh physiognomy, who stood in an erect posture of surprise, as she earnestly surveyed her. That this old lady was Mrs. Deborah Moreton, the aunt of her protectress, Mary instantly perceived, and hastily wiping her eyes, and placing her a chair, with a graceful, yet modest curtsey, she desired her to be seated, and that she would ring, and order the servant to acquaint Miss Moreton of her arrival. "No, child! no!" cried the old lady, detaining her by stretching out her long cane, and laying the end of it on her arm. "No, pray sit down, and go on with your work. My niece, Miss Clarissa Moreton, minds me just as much as she does you. Your name is Cuthbert, I suppose?" "Yes, Ma'am." "You are very much like your aunt Moreton, child; if you wore your hair combed straight over a toupee, and had a fine taper waist, I should almost conceit that I saw her again, when my brother first brought her into Coventry. When did you come, child?" "Last evening, Madam." "And is it true that the ranting, raving Captain is here again, and some other young scape-grace?" "Captain Walwyn is here, Ma'am, with a Mr. Montgomery." "Oh fie, fie!" said the lady, holding up her stick, and lifting up her eyes; "here are doings with a witness! Book-worms, painters, fiddlers, and Frenchmen, an't enough, it seems, but the rake-hellish red coats must come forth. Oh, if your aunt was alive, she would mourn these days, these dissolute days, in sackcloth and ashes; but she, poor woman, was taken from the evil to come! Miss Cuthbert, you seem to be like your aunt in character, as well as in person. She was a regular, a modest, and a well-behaved woman!" "You are very good, Madam, to entertain so favourable an

opinion of me. I hope I shall conduct myself so as to deserve it." "Why, in truth, child, I am not apt to pay compliments; Honest Blunt is the name I go by, and if I would retain my character, I can speak no smooth words in times like these. The whole world is turned upside down, now-a-days. I am confident that it will very soon be at an end; for wickedness is come to its highest pitch! In *my* days, if a young woman was seen to be speaking to a man, unless he happened to be her father, her brother, or at least her cousin-german, he was set down as her betrothed admirer, and it generally turned out that he became her husband; but now 'tis hoity-toity, higgledy-piggledy, fiddling, racketting, acting, a parcel of fellows kept and maintained in the house of a young woman, for no earthly purpose, that I see, but to make her the talk and the scandal of the whole neighbourhood. Here is the mischief and folly of leaving young girls to their own guidance. Talk of fortune and independence, forsooth; in God's name, let her enjoy her fortune and her riches; who is to prevent her? who wishes to prevent her? I ask; but then, let her enjoy it like a reasonable being, and like a Christian, and use it with moderation; let her visit the poor; let her work for them; let her make baby-linen for the honest wives; let her have a good piece of roast beef, and a handsome pudding of a Sunday; let her give amply at the altar, and never turn away her face from a poor man in distress; and in God's name let her chuse some respectable man of character, and a steady age, and after a reasonable time, a year or two spent in the proper formalities of courtship, let her marry, and so secure to herself a protector. I have no objection to these things; I do not wish her, I do not want her, to live single, nor to hoard up her money: but to spend it on lazy rattle-trap vermin, who do not care one farthing for her, it makes me almost frantic!" "Miss Moreton seems very good humoured and amiable, Madam," said Mary, now interposing a word, as Mrs. Deborah Moreton literally stopped to draw breath. "I think that she would attend to any advice which came from so near a relative, and which was so well intentioned." "You would not think her so, if you knew her," said Mrs. Deborah; "she always acts in direct opposition to me, as if she studied the rule of *contrary*, for no other end, but to teaze and provoke me; but no matter, I do my duty, I always have spoke my mind, and I always will, let what will come of it. She is my own niece, and if I don't speak out, who else will? I don't mince matters—no, not I. The blacker she looks, the more I talk; and if I think my company is not wanted, I will come the oftener, to see how things are going on. It shall never be said that her own aunt deserted her, though I may have hurted my own character, for aught I know, by continuing to come here; for, except myself, I believe she cannot reckon a truly *chaste* and *virtuous* woman in the whole range of her acquaintance. And indeed, Miss Cuthbert, I am glad to see that she had the grace to accept the guardianship of your person, though I believe your father would as soon have thought of sending you to Jericho as here, had he known what a sort of a daughter his poor sister had left behind her!" Mary thought so too: her heart sickened at the description of Mrs. Deborah Moreton; for, however exaggerated, that she was placed in a most awkward and extraordinary situation was very apparent. "Who have you seen this morning, child?" "Nobody, but the servant who has attended me, Ma'am, or those who I have met in the apartments as I passed." "And that is as it should be, let me give *you* a word of advice, the less you are with the pack who are assembled here the better—much the better will it be for you." "Indeed, Madam," said Mary, "I am so wholly unacquainted with the world, that I feel very awkward in such a mixed party." "I know a good deal of

the world," said Mrs. Deborah, raising her head and her cane at the same time. "But, as you rightly say, this is a mixture, and that too of its very scum and dregs—of all countries too; and now in the time of war, when a true-bred Englishwoman should avoid a Frenchman, with as much care as she would a serpent! For is not one the *natural* enemy of her country, as the other was in old times of her sex? Now are these doors opened to as many of 'em as will come, and the more they jabber and chatter their monkey nonsense, and kick their maccaroni heels, the more are they applauded and caressed!" At that moment entered Monsieur Myrtilla, in a chintz robe de chambre, lined with pink sarsnet, red and sharp pointed slippers, with high green heels, and about fifty strings of light blue ribbon at the knees of his flesh-coloured muslin small clothes, while his hair was rolled up in as many papillots; his violin was slung round his shoulder, and tyed by a bunch of the same blue ribbon on the top of his shoulder. "Ah! me demand pardons, Ma'amselle, me thought you were all alone, so brought my fiddle, thinking to entertain a Ma'amselle, with one, two, pretty petit ariettes." "I believe, Sir, neither Miss Cuthbert or myself could derive entertainment from your *airs*," said Mrs. Deborah Moreton, "although it must be confessed that they are very extraordinary." "Madam, you do me much, ver great honneur, by de compliment," said Monsieur, making several bows, and skipping off with the most assured and unembarrassed countenance. "You may say what you will to this herd of parasites and sycophants," said Mrs. Deborah, "they will not be offended, they pretend to take it all in the way *coom-plee-maung*, as the French monkey calls it; and as a dog returns to the vomit, so do they resume their grimaces and contortions; my niece must see the contemptible insignificancy of this animal, but she countenances him merely because he can play the fiddle, as if the scraping a stick to and fro on a few strings to tickle the ear could make up for the want of every thing besides." How long Mrs. Deborah Moreton might have pursued her harangue, is uncertain; but the first dinner bell sounding, she said to Mary, "I suppose, child, you will want to make some little alteration in your dress, though you are mighty well, for aught I see, *clean* and *decent*, which is more than you will be able to say of all your companions; however, don't mind me, I shall look about me; but I mean to stay to dinner, I generally do so about once or twice a week; to put some little restraint on the company, by the presence of one of my respectability. I make it a point of conscience, for I assure you, I feel no pleasure from the visit." Mary Cuthbert folded up her work preparatory to leaving the room. "Aye, aye, your guardian may learn a little tidiness and order of you, I see, if she *would*. Ah, child, you have been well brought up! I see you have been well brought up; I dare say your mother was a clever notable woman!" Mary's heart was full; she longed to speak in praise of her mother, but her tongue refused its office. So, making a silent curtesy, she withdrew.

## CHAP. VI.

"Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits."
THOMSON.

MARY was soon arrayed; and, perceiving that the parlour had been vacated by Mrs. Deborah Moreton, she followed her into the Lyceum, which she understood to be the general sitting room. At the top of the apartment, on a large chair, sat Mrs. Deborah Moreton; her head was erect, her unbending brows exhibited a picture of stern severity; her hands were folded before her; and, neither turning to the right or to the left, there was a magisterial dignity and *hauteur* about her, which was calculated to intimidate, and to awe all those around her; but, perfectly easy and free in manners, as in morals, none of the company appeared to regard her, except Copy, who had placed himself as directly opposite to Mrs. Deborah, as he had been to Mary Cuthbert on the preceding evening, only that, instead of advancing gradually towards the old lady, as he had done towards the young one, he made a retrograde motion, as he perceived the curve on the forehead become stronger, and the lines more deeply marked over the rest of the features; and from time to time, he muttered to himself—"yes, stern, and unrelenting; these are the characteristic marks of her countenance; something of a Popish hat on her head, the cross, and the rosary.—The centre picture for the other two: Gardiner at the right hand—Bonner on the left—Queen Mary in the middle, the best I ever saw; not a smile, not the smallest relaxation of muscle—three quarters length—she will do, yes, yes, she will do!" and he began a long and uninterrupted whistle, as the rest of the company, engaged by their own amusements and pursuits, looked not at the ideal painter.

Miss Moreton was recumbent on an Ottoman; near her stood Walwyn, while the humble Chevalier, in all the flow of sentiment, had sunk on the carpet at her feet. Mr. Germ had a large folio of coloured plates before him, and was comparing his specimens with their descriptions; while his pockets were stuffed out like wallets; and he had books piled on each side of the carpet as he sat. Montgomery stood at a window; the Signora had not yet made her appearance; Mary Cuthbert felt a little awed at the unbending stiffness of Mrs. Deborah Moreton, and at being thus obliged to make her *entreé* before the company; but Miss Moreton immediately beckoned her towards her, and taking her hand, would have seated her at her side; while Captain Walwyn and Mr. Montgomery eagerly advanced, and, in the politest manner, made inquiries after her health.

"You received my billet this morning, my dear Mary," said Miss Moreton; "I was sorry to be obliged to leave you entirely to yourself, but should have been quite *au de despoir*, if the Chevalier had not read to me an hour or two, in the divinest work which ever issued from a Parisian press!"

"You had *much* better take a seat by me, child," said Mrs. Deborah Moreton, calling to Mary; "here is *much* the fittest place for you."

"Don't think of leaving *us* Mary," said Miss Moreton. "Mrs. Deborah Moreton is, you see, quite deserted," said Mary: "and as she has been so kind as to give me her company this morning, I must not neglect her now."

"Oh, by all means, go," said Miss Moreton, Mary obeyed; and though the disappointed look of Montgomery might have told her, had she taken notice of it, that he wished her to remain in her former station, yet she felt gratified in shewing some attention to the old lady, when she saw her entirely neglected by the rest of the company.

Dinner was at length announced. "The Signora is not ready," said Miss Moreton, "let the Signora know;" and she remained on the Ottoman, while Mrs. Deborah Moreton rose from her chair, and sailed with slow movement into the dining room; Germ seemed to understand her meaning, and hastily pocketing his specimens, he strided after her. "We *must* go, I perceive," said Miss Moreton, giving one hand to Walwyn, and helping the Chevalier to rise with the other; as if by an involuntary movement, Montgomery took the hand of Mary to lead her into the dining room; and Monsieur Myrtilla, skipping away, said, "Where can ma chere Signora be all this great long time? She vas finish de rouge and de patch, ven I saw her last!" and all the way up the stair-case, he danced, calling, "Ma Signora, Ma Signora—dinner be quite ready; dinner be waiting for you, Ma chere Signora!"

At the right hand of the table *stood* Mrs. Deborah Moreton, waiting for her niece to head it, and to hear grace. "*I* go to the side *to-day*," said Miss Moreton; "Mr. Germ be so good as to help the fish." Mr. Germ obeyed. "Indeed, Walwyn," continued she, "my spouting has nearly incapacitated me for any more exertion to-day; there is a great deal of violent action in that last scene!"

"Who says grace, Miss Moreton?" asked Mrs. Deborah, still standing. "Who is the chaplain, niece?"

"My dear Madam, it is entirely out of fashion, quite exploded; it is never attended to when said." "It is a custom more honoured in the breach, than the observance," said Walwyn. "And the fish is spoiling," said Germ. "Can't *you* say grace, child?" asked Mrs. Deborah Moreton, turning towards Mary Cuthbert. "*I* can, Madam," said Montgomery, with the utmost promptitude. He said a short grace, in a distinct and serious tone.

"Thank you, Sir," said the old lady; "here is a chair at your service, between me and this young lady." Miss Moreton was seated between Walwyn and the Chevalier; Mr. Copy was at the bottom of the table; but, instead of carving, he was whistling, and taking the character of Germ's face *ideally* on canvass.

The Signora at length entered, led by Monsieur. "It vas all of von obstinate little lock, which so cruelly detained the Signora," said he; "she has been one, two, tree, whole hours in disposing to her wishes." The Signora scarcely noticed the party; but, seating herself, called for a glass of Madeira, while the attentive Monsieur kept tempting her palate, by praising the numerous dishes of which he ate. Montgomery was pleasant, and well bred; he paid Mrs. Deborah Moreton proper respect and attention, whilst he did not overlook his fair neighbour; and insensibly, the old lady's countenance relaxed a little of its accustomed sternness, at meeting with such unusual politeness at the Villa; and, on her re-entering the Lyceum after dinner with Mary Cuthbert, she declared that she had never dined so decently with her niece before. "That Mr. Montgomery is a civil, well-behaved young man," said she; "and I only can wonder what can have brought him here?"

"On Mrs. Deborah's rising to leave the gentlemen, the Chevalier D'Aubert had taken the hand of Miss Moreton, it never being his custom to sit after dinner; and the

Signora Grosera had re-filled her glass, it not being her's to leave the Monsieur Myrtilla to a solo over his wine.

After a sentimental tête-a-tête between the Chevalier and Miss Moreton in the viranda, the Chevalier quitted the room. "Pray, niece," said Mrs. Deborah, "is that Mr. *Dobbert* a married or a single man?" "Heavens, Madam! do you think I ever asked him the question?" "I should think it a very natural one, Miss Moreton, admitted as he is, upon such very familiar terms in your house; and to tell you the truth, which you know I am very fond of doing, I have heard that he *is* certainly married, and that his wife is now in England, and in the utmost distress." "Poor man! I pity him!" "Poor man?—Poor woman, you should say," said Mrs. Deborah, "to be deserted by her husband, and that, too, in a strange country!" "Dear Ma'am, what is *country*? a mere local distinction: to a truly benevolent and liberal mind, this or that tract of land makes no more difference than this or that potatoe."

"Poor D'Aubert! joined, but not matched! How, how is my sympathy excited in your melancholy fate!" "Miss Moreton—Miss *Clary* Moreton—" "How often, Madam, have I desired, nay conjured you not to *Clarify* me!" "Fie, fie, Miss Moreton, are you determined to act for ever in opposition to all the world? Will you still permit this wicked diabolical Frenchman to intimacies which I blush only to think of, and, *knowing* that he can never become your husband?"

"Husband! What an idea! Madam, I never *thought* of him as my husband!"

"*Not* as a husband? what then, child?—Miss Cuthbert, you had better quit the room, before she confesses what you ought not to hear!"

"Madam, the whole world, which *you* are so afraid of, may hear my sentiments. The friendship which exists between D'Aubert and myself is of a nature which common and vulgar minds may not comprehend, nor do we desire they should. To level it to every-day understandings, and to every-day practice, would destroy all the charming privacy of its nature. Friendship, like our's, Mrs. Deborah Moreton, is the sweet confidence of kindred souls. Benevolence and philanthropy first impelled me towards the suffering Chevalier; but these feelings have long ceased to actuate me. In the prosecution of our delicate and refined interchange of sentiments, I find all that can interest my heart, and touch its softest emotions; and I glory in saying that the Chevalier D'Aubert is the very sweetener of my existence."

"Oh, monstrous, monstrous!" cried Mrs. Deborah. "You glory in your shame, child; and if, as you say, you are really so wrapt up in this *Dobbert*; for what earthly purpose have you brought back that rattling Captain again?"

"For my amusement," said Miss Moreton, with the utmost *non chalance*; "While D'Aubert is the friend of my soul, Walwyn is the companion of my lighter hours!"

"Why, child, one would think, to hear you talk, that you had yielded yourself up, a shameless wanton!" "That *one* must have very *gross* ideas then, Madam, and a most depraved mind!" "And who is Mr. Montgomery, that sat by me; and who, to say the truth, appears to be the best of the whole bunch; what is HE, I pray you? Is HE the *friend* of your *soul*, or the *companion* of your lighter hours?"

The crimson mounted to the cheeks of Mary uncalled for, as she heard this question; Miss Moreton, she thought, seemed a little confused as she answered; "He is, at present, neither the one or the other—if I was inclined, indeed, to chuse a companion for

my *heavy hours*, he might perhaps suit me; for he seems vastly grave, and wonderfully solemn—however, *heavy hours* are best passed alone, I believe."

"Then you are likely, one day, to have a very *solitary* time of it, child," said Mrs. Deborah; "for when you shall reflect, how you have abused the talents, and slighted the bounties, which have been given you—how you have perverted the blessings of Heaven, and wasted your fortune on the profligate and the undeserving;—when your flatterers shall have left you, and old age shall approach—"

"Pray, Madam, do not talk of old age," said Miss Moreton; "it is time enough for *me* to think of that some years hence. I act up to the impulsive movements of my own heart; I glory in being the protectress of the unfortunate, the fosterer of the distressed, and the friend and patroness of genius—and, in the proud emotions of this moment, how strikingly true do I feel the truth of the axiom, that, 'virtue is its own reward!' "What vain, what proud self-boasting, do I hear?" said Mrs. Deborah. "Virtue! it is known to you only by name; you have got a little high-sounding jargon by rote, and you use it like a parrot on all occasions. The fosterer of the distressed, indeed! what humanity is there in separating a husband from a wife, and feeding him on the fat of the land, while she probably is starving for want of food?—Where is the merit of patronising men and women, who are below the attention, and even the notice of all respectable characters?—Oh, Miss Moreton, Miss Moreton, would you but learn a little Christian humility, it would better become you than all the benevolence, the philanthropy, and the genius, about which you rave so much. The only part of your conduct which I can commend, was your accepting the office of guardian to this poor child. God grant that your example may not operate to her destruction! *There*, now I have given you a piece of my mind, you may take it as you like."

"Just as usual, Madam," said Miss Moreton, 'the conscious mind is its own awful world!' Nothing shall ever induce me to give up *my* friends to the antiquated and strait-laced dogmas of the old school, which must be utterly exploded by all the proselytes of refinement and sentiment."

"I wish that word had never been uttered in England," said Mrs. Deborah Moreton; "but I have done—I have spoken my mind!" "You have indeed," said Miss Moreton, as rising from her seat, folding her arms, and lifting up her eyes, she began an invocation, which was meant to appear as involuntary, but she was well aware, that the company were all returning into the Lyceum, and that she had numerous hearers.

## CHAP. VII.

"Would you (blest) Sensibility resign?
And with those powers of Genius would
you part?" LANGHORNE.

"OH, ye immortal Spirits of Sentiment!"cried the empassioned Clarissa; "Hear, oh! hear, the profanation which has been offered to your Muses! Divine Petrarch! where, if Sentiment had not existed, where would have been found those heart-piercing notes, which, like the harmonious trillings of the nightingale, were wafted on the evening breeze, in soft murmurings, through the woods of Vauclusa? In the absence of Sentiment, where, oh! where had been the immortality of Rousseau? The genius of his inspiration flown, in vain should we have sought for those polished periods, which will melt the heart to tenderness and affection—Eloise—St. Preux—Unfortunate Lovers! your sorrows would not have been excited by him; hearts of sensibility would not have known the pause of exquisite rapture; they would not have shed the tear of exquisite, of refined sympathy. Goethe too, then beloved writer! I call on thee! Where would have been the ray of light, which illumined thy pen, if Sentiment had been unknown to thee? Was not the affection of Werter the offspring of Sentiment *alone*? Was it not the refinement of passion, acting on the soul of sensibility? Oh! immortal and beatified lover of Charlotte! how often have I melted over your virtues, your passion, and your melancholy fate!—How often have I contemplated on the soul-harrowing picture of thy death!—How often in imagination descended with thee to the tomb!

"Sterne, too, thou genius of Sentiment, thou friend of all created beings, was it not Sentiment which warmed thy heart, when the oath of Uncle Toby blotted thy immortal page? And is it not to Sentiment, to Sentiment alone, that we owe the life of our souls, the most precious of our existing moments.

"For me, for Clarissa, she avows it," (and she gracefully extended her right hand, and then pressed it emphatically on her breast.) "Clarissa glories in the avowal, that when she ceases to be actuated by Sentiment, she ceases to think herself a reasonable being!"

The different sentiments of the company, during this wild rhapsody of Miss Moreton, as expressed by their gestures and countenances, were worthy of observation. The brows of Mrs. Deborah Moreton were curved into a tremendous frown. She moved to and fro in her chair, as if she had lost all patience; and when Clarissa had finished, she said, "The Lord be good unto me! Miss Moreton, all the world must think you have lost your *reason* now!" The Chevalier had placed himself very near Miss Moreton, in an attitude expressive of "wrapt attention;" while, as if catching the very impulse by which she was directed, his whole countenance marked that he, too, was the devoted worshipper of Sentiment.

Walwyn stood in the door-way of the Lyceum, the living statue of stage-struck astonishment; and as the last fall of Clarissa's voice struck on his *charmed ear*, he clasped his hands together, saying, "Is she not more than painting can express, or youthful poets fancy when they love?" "Oh no, by no means, by no means," said Copy; "I have taken her, I have taken her several times myself, and I think I might succeed again. Miss

Moreton's eye and figure are just the thing!" "Miss Moreton's be very fine tones of voice, don't you think so, Signora?" asked Monsieur. "They be so fine, so silvery sweet!"

"Oh, yes," said the Signora, yawning; "and they take in such compass—and her action is so tragic!" Mary Cuthbert looked at her cousin with wonder, fear, and pity; and her features expressed all she felt.

Convulsed by laughter, Montgomery could not repress his risible feelings, till, turning his head towards that part of the room where she sat, he observed her sorrowful air, and, at one view, entered into her thoughts. Then, the most bitter look of severity was to be seen on his countenance, as he turned towards Germ; who, as usual, with spectacles on nose, was poring over a large heap of books, and had continued his studies during the whole effusion of sentiment, with perfect composure:

"Did you ever trouble yourself, Sir, to examine the history of the Queen Bee? It is a study well worthy your attention, I assure you," said Germ. "I have," said Montgomery, with some asperity of voice, "and have vainly endeavoured to find out the character of the *drones*, who attended her; for I find she is always followed by a *swarm* of them." "They are useless insects, Sir," said Germ—"Intirely so," said Montgomery, "and I admire the discernment which enables the Queen Bee to discover this, and expel them from her society!"

Mrs. Deborah Moreton soon walked off; little notice was taken of her departure; indeed she paid no parting compliments to any of the company, except a "well—God bless you!" to her niece, a nod to Mary Cuthbert; and a formal curtesy, and, "I wish you good night, Sir," to Montgomery, as he opened the door of the Lyceum to let her pass.

In all the wild wanderings of Clarissa Moreton, her *heart* had hitherto taken no part. Borne away by vanity and self-confidence, she fancied that every new eccentricity, into which she ran, was a new proof of discernment, of talent, and of pre-eminent merit; or rendered her more interesting, and more graceful, in the eyes of her beholders. She liked the attention of the men, and welcomed the fulsome adulation of every coxcomb (whom she chose y'clep a *genius*) as a natural homage; but she had hitherto felt no particular preference in favour of any individual; and, though her fortune was daily suffering from the crowd of worthless beings, whom she drew around her, yet she never appeared likely to become the *exclusive* prey of one, frequently declaring, that she would not resign her liberty for the best husband in Christendom.

While these strange and volatile opinions deterred the regular and the well-principled from pursuing her, it rather emboldened than intimidated those of a contrary stamp; those who were acquainted with the instability and the capriciousness, of the female character, and *those* who, having nothing to lose, would make a bold venture in pursuit of fortune. Amongst these were Walwyn and the Chevalier.

Walwyn had seen enough of the frailty of the ladies, to know that he had great advantages on his side. The musty studies of the antiquated Germ were not calculated to *warm* the imagination, any more than the frivolous Monsieur, or the absent Copy were to *interest* it.

His own pursuits gave him a decided advantage over them. There was so much to be expected from the scenes and the situations of the drama, and he had there the greatest opportunities of prosecuting his suit with all the enthusiasm of passion:—that passion was there depicted in words the most forcible, tender, and yet warmly coloured. Miss

Moreton herself, by turns the soft Monimia; the interesting Belvidera, hanging with fond affection on her Jassier; the voluptuous Cleopatra; the frail Calista, mourning her fault!—Surely he had *every* thing to hope, if Clarissa's heart had but the smallest preference in his favour. And this he would have suspected, if he had not perceived, that the sighing, the sentimental Chevalier D'Aubert, was admitted to all these liberties in *propriâ personâ*, which he had never attempted, but as the hero of the tragic tale.

The Chevalier was artful and designing. Under the semblance of misfortune and distress, he hoped to bend Miss Moreton's principles to his own base purposes. A needy adventurer, he had already taken advantage of the distresses of his own country, to be received and commiserated in *this*; and he had left his wife to earn a precarious subsistence in London; by making flowers, and by other ingenious little devices, whilst he tried to work on the feelings of Miss Moreton, by representing himself as the most wretched of all created beings; as wedded to a woman without *a soul*, without an *existing sentiment*; and, by poisoning Clarissa's ear with the impure and sophistical tenets of the French school of philosophers, and by putting their productions into her hands, he endeavoured to weaken her small deference for established laws and for revealed religion.

But, while Clarissa was enraptured with the insinuating manners of the Chevalier, and her fancy was taken captive by the flowery style, and the specious arguments of his favourite authors; she did not conceive the idea of forming any connection with him, but that of the most unlimited friendship. Indeed, neither the form or the face of the Chevalier, were calculated to kindle another flame, in the breast of a young lady who made any use of her eyes in her choice of a partner for her heart; the one not being moulded in the harmony of proportion, and the other being deficient both in hue and comeliness.

But a Frenchman, it is universally known, has a good opinion of himself; and the little Chevalier would not have yielded the palm of manly beauty to the Apollo Belvedere, although he had an air of negligence and of melancholy abstraction, which appeared wholly unconscious of his attractions.

Yet while he feared Walwyn, and Walwyn feared and hated him, there was *now* a third, more to be dreaded by each, and on whom neither of them had yet cast a thought; and this was Montgomery!

Montgomery had come to the Villa at the entreaty of Walwyn; who, knowing that he could not fail of being amused, and being fully aware that the principles of Montgomery would secure him from being his rival (as they were in direct opposition to those of Miss Moreton) he thought he should be adding to the gaiety of the Villa by this addition to the party.

But here he was mistaken. Montgomery had never felt himself so reserved—so silent—so inclined to be petulant, as since his introduction to the Villa. He looked at Miss Moreton with something very little short of horror. He had the highest opinion of the female character; and any defalcation from the standard raised in his own mind, gave him a disagreeable sensation. But Miss Moreton's conduct was most unusually opposite to any thing he had ever seen or formed an idea of.

The imposing air of conscious superiority, which was apparent in her demeanour, at the moment when she was rising to the very acmé of folly and indiscretion, filled him with disgust; and his feelings were more strong, because his pity was excited, in no

common degree, for the interesting Mary Cuthbert. And though, as a cool spectator at the Attic Villa, Montgomery might have been entertained, and contributed in his turn to amuse; though his lively gallantry, and ready wit, might have delighted the mistress of the mansion, and his sarcastic humour would have given an edge to the gaiety of his friend Walwyn; yet these were all lost to him, in contemplating the peculiar situation of the young orphan; whose modest sweetness of manners, and the bewitching *naivetté* of whose countenance, could not be contemplated by him without the utmost melancholy and regret. Indeed, so forcible was the impression made on his mind, that to be again at ease, he would have flown from the Villa almost as soon as he had entered it, if he could have resolved to quit that lovely object for whom he felt so much.

To a serious mind, such as Montgomery possessed, one in whom education and situation had both encouraged habits of reasoning and reflection, there were a thousand dangers to be apprehended for Mary Cuthbert. She seemed, indeed, to fear them for herself; but with the helpless apprehension of an infant, who yields itself an affrighted victim to the devastating flames.

Yet how to warn—to caution—to save her! Alas! Montgomery could only pity, in silence pity her! He had no friends, no connections, who could put out their fostering arms to this poor girl. His parents were compassionate and humane; their tender hearts would ache to hear of the distress which they had not the means of alleviating; for, struggling with a narrow income, and a numerous family, they were but just removed from a state of poverty. How, then, could they extend their protection to her?

Such also was the strict import of Mr. Cuthbert's will in this respect; and so entire, so implicit a deference did his daughter pay to it, that he questioned if any inducement would prevail on Miss Cuthbert to quit her cousin till she became of age. Three years of trial! thought Montgomery; oh! if Mary Cuthbert passes through this frightful ordeal, her manners unsophisticated, her morals pure, she will be pre-eminent in merit as now in loveliness!—but the heavy sigh which concluded this mental soliloquy, seemed to proclaim, that the wish could never be realized.

## CHAP. VIII.

"Now while the drowsy is lost in sleep."
THOMSON.

MISS Moreton saw that she had a new guest in Mr. Montgomery. In Walwyn's friend she had expected to behold the prototype of himself; one who could rattle, rant, spout, rave, and sigh, and laugh in a breath, and be just what the humour of the moment should require. How, then, was she surprised at seeing that she must condescend to talk to him, if she would hear his voice; how was she astonished at seeing him retire to a distance, whenever an opportunity offered of approaching her; and sit in sombre silence during those bright effusions of humour, which set her "table in a roar!"

This peculiarity of behaviour, rendered him at first an object of no common curiosity, which was heightened, perhaps, at perceiving that his dark eyes beamed with intelligence; and that, whatever might be the cause of his taciturnity, she could not for a moment impute it to a "deficiency of soul."

"Perhaps," thought Clarissa, "dazzled with the emanations of my superior genius, he fears to approach me, lest the refulgent scintillations of my wit should be too much for his faculties. Perhaps he too painfully remembers the different situations in which we are placed by the world. He may be awed by the customs of society; he may not rightly estimate my notions of mental equality, which contemn all customs that would place barriers to sentiment and genius!"

So reflected Clarissa on her pillow; while the animated countenance, the fine form of Montgomery, as he had leaned over Germ, when she concluded her invocation to Sentiment, danced before her eyes; for, though she had not heard a syllable that he uttered, yet, from the warmth of his manner, and the bright sparkle of his eye, she was sure that an eulogium on herself must, at that moment, have involuntarily escaped him; and, surely, at such a moment, he must have been more than mortal to have restrained it!

"Such a character," thought Clarissa, pursuing her ruminations, "wants encouraging and emboldening. I must draw him out; Montgomery's is the *extreme* of sentimentality. Enthusiast as I am for Sentiment, I like to hear her votaries *talk* of her. Oh! if the *words* of the Chevalier were poured from the lips of Montgomery, I should then have an opportunity of regaling my *eyes* and ears with harmony! D'Aubert is refined and tender, but his person is against him. Walwyn has fire and vivacity, but he is too energetic—too fervent."

Miss Moreton sighed—It was seldom that she sighed, except whilst hearing the Chevalier read, Walwyn recite, or to fill a pause in one of her rhapsodical effusions. Perhaps this was the most deep drawn sigh, which had escaped her for some time; and she rocked her wild brain on the pillow, while forming numerous plans for drawing out this *kindred soul*!

On Mary Cuthbert she did not bestow a moment's consideration; for she had perceived, at the first view, that she was quite of the common stamp; a good sort of yea and nay girl, who seemed to suit aunt Deborah, but who had most unblushingly avowed her entire ignorance of the French language: "le pauvre Chevalier had quite laughed when she had told him of it; and D'Aubert seldom laughed!"

That a girl who said little, and that little in a diffident manner; who used no action, and was quite deficient in attitudes and energies; that such a girl could ever rival Miss Moreton in the favour of any individual, was quite out of her calculation. She allowed that Mary Cuthbert had a pretty childish face; but she was quite under size, and had not the least grace or *dignity*.

A variety of sensations accompanied Mary Cuthbert to her chamber; none of them of the most pleasing cast. The moon shone with mild lustre into the window; and, folding her arms, she stood before it. She surveyed the beautifully wooded park by this softened light; and a sigh issued from her bosom at the contrast, which the quiet and peaceful scene from without displayed to the interior of the Villa.

How happy, thought she, might my cousin be in this elegant retirement, if she would but resolve to perform the duties allotted to her station; and be contented to be esteemed and beloved! Of how much use would that fortune be, which is now wasted on the profligate and designing? Alas! she little imagines, that she is ridiculed and despised by those very beings, who now crowd around her, and pour their nauseous flattery in her ear!

Mary Cuthbert lifted up her heart to Heaven with meek resignation. She acquiesced in all its dispensations. She acknowledged, tearfully acknowledged, that she had enjoyed many years of undisturbed happiness; and that it was her part to meet her present difficulties with unrepining patience. She was walking in the path prescribed to her by her father. "Then why," sighed she, "do I fear any evil, for thou, O God, art with me: thy rod and thy staff comfort me?"

At the moment when this devout aspiration issued from the pious bosom of Mary, she was alarmed by a loud and instantaneous noise at her window; the glass gave way; something fell on the floor, with a violent noise. She started to the other end of the room; and, in making her retreat, threw down her candle, and extinguished it.

All was again quiet in the room; yet poor Mary had not courage to walk to the shattered window, or even to look towards it. She knew that the cause of her alarm still lay on the floor; and, with palpitating heart, and trembling limbs, she seated herself on the bed, behind the drawn curtains, till a voice at the door, which she knew to be the house-maid's, whom she had seen in the morning, aroused her attention with "Miss, Miss Cuthbert; be you asleep, Miss?" Mary immediately answered in the negative, and unbolted the door, though in doing so, she walked over the fragments of glass, which were plentifully scattered over the floor.

"Lah, Miss," said the maid, "I *warnest* you must have been mainly frightened; you looks as pale as a ghost, pretty nigh. To be sure the noise were enough to wake the dead, but you'll be used to us in time," giving a knowing wink.

"What is the meaning of this? Who threw it at my window?" said Mary, picking up a large battledore, and blushing to think that she had feared to approach it. "Surely, Miss Moreton could not countenance an insult like this?" "Lah's me, Miss, why Miss Moreton knows nothing at all about it. Mr. Germ was entirely by his own self."

"Mr. Germ!" repeated Mary, "A man of his advanced age to play so boyish a trick; you surprise me!"

"Yes, yes, Miss, he does; and 'tis an even chance that he doesn't go to his bed till day-break, for he told me to ask your pardon, and to fetch un his *battledoor* again."

"Lah's, Sir," says I, "now do'e please to call un battle-window for the future." He said I was a silly wench, and bid me go along, but I don't mind the *Floss-all-over* much."

"If he means to repeat his attacks, I had better wait for day-break too," said Mary, calmly assisting the servant in picking up the pieces of broken glass. "Oh! he mayn't come along this way again for the night, Miss; he's only *batting* and *owling* hood now; and so he went with his battledoor, to knock down one of the *leather-wings*, just as he went flap, flap, against your window; and then it all went crash, crash, and off flew the bat. And I declare for my *partickler* part, I thought the whole house was coming down about our ears.

"But, lah's me, Miss, I must run to old Germ, for he's had no sport this blessed night; not one bat or screech owl has he caught. I'll come up again directly, Miss, to make the window shutters fast, and then you'll be safe, and then I'll make you comfortable; and to-morrow we'll have the glazier; though if I was *somebody*, and mistress of the Antic Villar, I wou'd know who should pay for the mending."

Quite recovered from her affright, and reconciled to the occasion of it, now that she found that it had proceeded entirely from accident, Mary was inclined to smile at the vulgar simplicity of the girl; but she was careful not to encourage her in her loquacity, and she readily saw that Kitty did not want it, for on her return to the apartment, she resumed her discourse.

"Well, the old gentleman is as pleased as punch, and he's gone into the shubbery, *batting* and *owling* again; such a rare *curious* sight! 'Sir,' says I, 'I'm afeard you'll catch cold in pursuing them *enauseous* beasts.'

'Beasts,' says he, 'they are no beasts.'

'Lah's, Sir,' says I again, 'dont'ee say so, for you must remember what a beastly mess the last owl as your honour catch'd made about the little dressing-room where you kept it.' He turned upon his heel, for he couldn't well answer to this; and away he ran, with his *battledoor* in his hand, his green *specticles* on his nose, and a red *handkercher* tied under his chin; a body would think he was crazy as did'nt know his ways. Well, Miss, I must *wish'ee* good night, and hope as how you will have *nothink* to *disturb'ee* no more to-night." Mary hoped so too, and, glad to be rid of her talkative companion, she resigned herself to the influence of sleep.

## CHAP. IX

"Ah, little think the gay licentious proud,
————————"How many drink the cup
"Of baleful grief, and eat the bitter bread
"Of misery." THOMSON.

MARY Cuthbert awoke early; and, perceiving that it was a very fine morning, she determined to indulge herself with a walk, being assured that she should not be liable to meet any of the inmates of the Villa, unless it was Mr. Germ; and she guessed that even the philosopher would be more inclined to seek sleep than *snails*, after his nocturnal rambles. Mary strolled round the park, and was delighted with a lovely and richly variegated prospect. She seemed borne out of herself, and her own concerns, whilst wandering over these new and luxurious scenes; and whilst lifting up her heart, in gratitude and praise, to the Fountain and Giver of all Good, her spirits seemed strengthened and exhilarated.

Following as fancy led, she got beyond the precincts of the park, and found herself on the verge of a common, skirted by a wood. A neat little cottage was in sight; she walked towards it; and when she had reached it, her curiosity was greatly attracted, at seeing a very lovely young woman standing at the door, and holding an infant in her arms, apparently in great distress, as her tears, and the agitation with which she continually folded the innocent to her bosom, plainly bespoke.

Ever ready to sympathise with the unfortunate, Mary gently inquired what was the matter? The young woman started at hearing the voice of a stranger; having been too much occupied in her own reflections to perceive her approach. "Is it possible for me to be of any assistance to you?" asked Mary. Her soft voice spoke to the heart; the tears of the young woman could no longer be restrained; they forced their way in torrents down her pallid cheeks. But this was a momentary affection; for, turning half aside, as if ashamed at discovering her feelings, a bitter and harsh expression overspread her countenance, as she said, "No, I thank you, Ma'am, the *rich* and the powerful have no *right* to be troubled with griefs that they know nothing about." "I am neither rich or powerful," said Mary, "and after acknowledging this, you may perhaps think my curiosity wholly impertinent, as I cannot be essentially useful, but the *will* to alleviate distress is mine."

"You come from the Villa, I suppose, Madam?" said the young woman, with an incredulous look. "I do," said Mary; "I have been there two days; I am quite a stranger in this country, but Miss Moreton will, I make no doubt, exert herself to relieve your distress, if you will make it known to her!" "You *are* a stranger, I perceive, Madam. Ah! Miss Moreton wouldn't hear of *my* distress; 'tis of a *common* kind: My husband's long illness, his consequent loss of work, four helpless little ones—" she stopped and wiped her eyes. "What is your husband's business?" asked Mary. "A carpenter, Madam; and in Mr. Moreton's time he had constant employ at the Villa." "And has he never worked for his daughter?" asked Mary. "Oh, yes, Ma'am, and it was there that he got his hurt."

"He had an accident, then?" "Oh, yes, Ma'am; and, acting against his conscience, as I may say, he has sometimes thought that it was a judgment upon him; but William was only working in the way of his occupation, and, as I have often told him, if he had not done it, another would; but he cannot make himself easy, though he told his mind, broad plain to Miss Moreton, in the beginning, and that is more than many of them do that are about her. 'Tis a thousand pities; for if she had not been spoiled, she might have made a nice young lady, and been the glory of the country."

"But your husband," said Mary; "speak of his accident," willing to hear the story rather than any remarks on Miss Moreton. "Will you condescend to sit down, Madam?" and Mary walked into the cottage, and sat down in a room where neatness appeared struggling with poverty, and where one child was spreading the breakfast on the lowly board, whilst two smaller ones were looking on.

"These are my four babes," said the mother, still holding the infant in her arms; "my poor William is not able to get up to breakfast this morning."

"I fear, I shall interrupt you," said Mary; "I would not retard your meal." "Oh dear, no, Ma'am, we shall not breakfast till William has had his nap; he had but a troublesome night of it, and so fell into a little doze this morning; but grief is wakeful, I could not rest, so, as soon as he was fast, I stole from his side to stand at my door, and to think of all that is likely to befal me. For, I thank God!" wiping her eyes, "I still contrive to carry a cheerful face before poor William, although my heart is pretty nigh breaking!"

Mary sighed at the sight of the genuine distress, depicted in the countenance of the young woman, as she uttered the last words. "Ah! Madam, forgive me; but you seem to feel for the unhappy; to be good and kind; and there is so little of this to be met with, that one is apt to be too bold; but I will go on with my story.

"William's father, Madam, was a carpenter, and bred his son to his own business; they were born and bred in this very cottage, and father and son always worked at the Villa. But in the days of my husband's father it was not called a Villa, no, Madam, it was Rutton Court; the family of the Ruttons were known centuries back in this country; they always lived in the great house, and were beloved and respected; they never raised their old tenants, or discharged their old servants; they had a chapel in their own house, and any body who liked might attend service there twice every Sunday. And the chaplain would visit all that wished it, and give comfort to the souls of their poor neighbours; while the Squire would take care that their bodies were in no want. The last Squire Rutton died without a will, and childless; the property went amongst a plenty of distant relations very far off, so there was a sale of Rutton Manor, and every thing belonging to it, and Mr. Moreton, you see, Ma'am, being a very lucky man in the trading way, came into the country and bought it, and retired from business, and came to live here.

"Mr. Moreton was a different man from the Ruttons; not that he was hard-hearted or tyrannical; but he was fond of every thing new, and old customs were laid by and forgotten, and new-fangled ones were taken up, and the duty in the chapel was gave over, and it was shut up, though I have heard that his Lady, Mrs. Moreton, was very sorry at this. My William, however, had constant work, in turning the old court to the new Villa, and had very good pay, and very well content he was; and then, when Miss Moreton came to be mistress of it, he was had again, to beautify and alter, and all very well; for who have a right to follow their own inventions if the rich have not, Ma'am? and how would

the workman get employ, if there was not a time for pulling down, as well as building up. But then such alterations as Miss Moreton made, Ma'am! 'twas too bad certainly to convert the house of God into a ——William did call it a den of thieves; but no, Madam—but no, Madam—no, it was to be a theatre; William spoke his mind, for it went to his heart, who was always brought up in the fear of the Lord, to see the old paintings, and the angels, and the ten commandments, torn down, from what used to be the Altar Piece, to make room for the naked gods and goddesses; for William had heard many and many a good sermon in that place, and it sorely went to his heart, and he did speak, and that too in Miss Moreton's hearing.

"She said it was her wish to get over all superstitious notions; and that the chapel had been quite useless to her, as her servants had refused to sleep there; and that she was delighted at having such a good theatre raised to her hands, with such a fine caned roof to speak in; and William said, Ma'am, he saw her get up in the pulpit, and speak a long speech from a play-book, to try how her voice would sound. Well, to work they all went, to beautify the theatre; and William, in taking down a piece of carved wood from the ceiling, to put up Fame blowing her trumpet, fell from the high scaffolding, and broke his thigh near the hip bone."

Sarah Jarvis stopped in her narration to wipe her eyes; and walking to her dresser, she opened a drawer, and taking from it a small tablet of wood, with the letters I.H.S. emblazoned in gold on it, and surrounded by a Cross and Glory, she said "this was the piece of carving which poor William displaced, Madam. He brought it home with him, and he has often said, that, if he were a Roman Catholic, he should have said his prayers before it, over and over, and asked its pardon." "And surely, Miss Moreton, who is all benevolence," said Mary, "surely, she stretched out her arm to succour and to help you!" "Ah! Madam, that benevolence is a fine word for talk; but one grain of old-fashioned active charity is worth a mint of it."

"Miss Moreton was not very well pleased with William for speaking about the chapel at first; and then some of the servants and the work-people talked about his accident, and said it was a judgment for daring to pull down God's house. So then, Miss Moreton was fretted and vexed, and a new carpenter was sent for from London; one as they called a right proper play-house carpenter; and so poor William took to his bed, and I lay-in soon after of this poor baby, and with one thing and t'other, we were brought low enough, as you see us now!"

"And has Miss Moreton done nothing for you?" asked Mary, in a tone almost amounting to incredulity. "Oh! yes, Ma'am, she walked to our cottage herself one morning, with one of the Frenchmen; and she asked for my husband; and indeed I was very near laughing outright, in the midst of all my troubles, when I saw that she had brought him a present of a fine worked cushion to put his maimed limb upon; and she gave him likewise a white dimity gown to fold about him. It was all very well meant, I suppose, but, to be sure, they were not the sort of things which William wanted; however, nothing would serve but Miss Moreton must place the cushion herself, and help on the gown with her own hands! The *Civilear*, as they call that French gentleman, was lifting up his eyes, and clasping his hands together all the while, as though he had been saying his prayers; and he called her a ministering angel, and the tears were to be seen standing in his eyes. But somehow, I did not please either of them; for very unfortunately for the

nice nose of the *Civilear*, I had been frying a little cabbage and potatoes for my children's dinner, and so the house smelled of it of course. The gentleman eyed me, and sniffed, and sniffed again; and he shrugged up his shoulders till they fairly reached his ears; and going out, I heard him tell Miss Moreton, that he plainly saw I had neither *sentiment* or feeling, and was a woman of most gross ideas, to entertain myself with *fryed meat*, whilst my husband was so ill! Miss Moreton seemed to be of his opinion, and from that moment to this I have seen no more of *the lady*." An emphasis was laid on the two last words. "Nor of the gentleman, I should suppose!" said Mary, rather quickly. "Ah! Madam! I soon saw the cloven foot; but though I am poor I am honest; and no man in *England* should tempt me to wrong the poor man above stairs. But the *Frenchman*! only to think of his impudence. Ah! my very blood boils at the bare mention of it; however," said she, after a few moments pause, "I never breathed a word of this before, even to my own dear William, but somehow, Madam, you looked so good and so kind, that I was fain to tell you all.

"You need not repent your confidence," said Mary; "indeed, you have conferred an obligation on me, by letting me into the character of this foreigner. I hope he has ceased to annoy you!"

"I hope so, Ma'am; I shewed him that I had some share of spirit, and that I could feel an insult, although I was only the wife of a poor carpenter. And I declared that, if he persisted in molesting me, I would go to the Villa, and complain of him to Miss Moreton.—This had a good effect; it is only virtue that is bold, Ma'am. If you could but have seen how he shrunk down, and fawned, and, spaniel-like, was for licking my hand, by offering hush-money!—I thank my God, with only a few shillings in the house, and not knowing where to look for more, I had the grace to refuse it; he has never been here since, and I hope he never will again."

"I hope not," said Mary, rising; "your story has deeply interested me, and I sincerely wish it was in my power to be of real service to you, but I am an orphan relative of Miss Moreton, placed under her care till I become of age. I hope I shall be able to call on you frequently, and that I shall soon hear of your husband's entire recovery; you have my best wishes;" and, modestly putting half a guinea into the little hand of the infant, Mary waited not to see Sarah Jervis's looks, or to hear her thanks, but ran out of the cottage, and across the common, and glided, like a sylph, into the park, where, slackening her pace to take breath, she mentally reviewed the simple story which had just been recited to her.

## CHAP. X.

"And as he view'd her ardent o'er and o'er,
"Love, Gratitude, and Pity, wept at once."
THOMSON.

ALL that Mary Cuthbert had just heard had but confirmed the fears which she had previously entertained of Miss Moreton's character; though she could not have suspected that her eccentricities were carried so far, or that she had utterly discarded all that was regular and respectable, and had so widely outstepped the modesty of nature.

The licentious and unprincipled Chevalier was at once the object of her fear and her abhorrence; and she shrunk within herself at the idea of associating and being on terms of apparent intimacy with a being of his stamp.

"Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
"To keep the even tenor of my way

is no longer allowed me," sighed Mary. "I am drawn from my humble retirement; and, though I am still in a subordinate station, yet am I exposed to all the dangers and the unpleasantries of a promiscuous society; but let me trust in thee my God.—

"Then, though thou should'st wrap me in clouds,
"And threaten the hill with a storm;
"Yet the sunshine of peace shall break forth,
"And the summit reflect its last ray."*

This pious quotation seemed to infuse new cheerfulness over her mind; and she was again regaling her eyes with the beauties of nature, when she was startled at hearing a small gate fall of a shrubbery, which led towards the house; and the next moment Montgomery appeared before her.

"Miss Cuthbert," said he, "how I rejoice at this accidental encounter! I will not say, I am surprised at it; but I am flattered at thinking that a similarity of sentiment has led us both to admire the beauties of such a morning as this."

"This park is very delightfully situated," said Mary, returning Montgomery's compliment by a modest curtesy; "if I was Miss Moreton, I should spend a great part of my time in it."

"Suppose then," said Montgomery, "that you were to lengthen your walk a little, and return by the shrubbery, which is a more circuitous route than the one you were taking—You will then be soon enough for breakfast; for Miss Moreton herself is to favour us with her company at that repast, and had given an hour's grace to all the slothful, at the moment when I quitted the house."

"I think some of the party require a little indulgence after their late vigils," said Mary, laughing.

* Miss Bowdler's edition of poems, by a young lady deceased.

"What do you mean?" asked Montgomery, with quickness. "Only, that Mr. Germ, in the pursuit of owls and bats, invaded my territories a little last night, and broke my window with a large battledore." "And he frightened you, of course?" said Montgomery. "I am almost ashamed to confess how much," answered Mary; "my spirits were in an agitable state, I believe. However, laughter succeeded apprehension, when a light was brought me, and I recognised the imbecile instrument of my fear lying on the floor, and heard the simple and ludicrous account which the house maid gave of Mr. Germ's nocturnal pursuits."—"It is almost incredible," said Montgomery, "that man, who is formed with faculties which capacitate him for a wide field of study and investigation, should thus confine himself to the contemplation of a moth and a spider. He neglects the admiration of the great universe, for the dissection of a butterfly; and stifles all the social and companionable qualities, in dry dissertations on the dry shell of a cockle. Such is the mischief of a ruling passion! for except with regard to his insects and his reptiles, Germ appears to me the mere drone of his own hive, and one of the most stupid and absent creatures that I have ever seen!"

"Except Mr. Copy," said Mary, with some archness.

"I will not except even Copy," said Montgomery, with equal archness; and, looking at her, "in as much as I consider the contemplation of the "*human face divine*" to be a sublimer study than that of the gnat or the flea. Painting is a noble employment—it speaks to the soul—it moves the passions—it warms the heart! When we behold generous actions pourtrayed on canvas; when we see the benign countenance of an hero; he seems to live again; he is brought to our mental as well as to our corporeal vision, and we feel as if we were participating in his emotion, whilst we are only looking at his mimic resemblance!"

"But Mr. Copy," said Mary, "appears to have none of that warmth of imagination, which you are describing." "Your observation is very just," said Montgomery, laughing; "and I have wondered how it was possible for him to be a painter, till I recollected that he was only a *Copyist*. He has no mind, no fire; he merely paints from what he sees, the only sense, by which ideas of his art can be brought to his comprehension; and I have seen an automaton painter in a piece of mechanism which would exactly give you my idea of Copy.

"How much preferable is a little general knowledge to such an unlimited predilection for one pursuit, unless that pursuit forms the means of existence? But I am now speaking of it merely as forming agreeable companions; and I think I could have picked out persons, who, though not so clever, as it is called, would have been much more amusing and instructive to Miss Moreton, than the group at present assembled at the Villa." "I dare answer for it you could," said Mary, "and I greatly fear, that neither the taste or the benevolence of Miss Moreton are quite correct. I have no right to speak of her conduct; and, most probably, I might be equally unthinking and credulous, if placed in a similar situation; but with respect to *amusement*, I think I should never select the gentlemen we have been talking of to contribute towards it, any more than I should the Chevalier D'Aubert for an object of charity."

Mary spoke the last words with more emphasis than was common to her, for the story she had been hearing at the cottage was yet fresh on her mind.

"Nor to me, either, does the Chevalier D'Aubert appear an object of compassion," said Montgomery. "That noble patriotism which led the nobility of France to prefer emigration to becoming the subjects of an usurper; that constant attachment to a dethroned and murdered sovereign, which led them to relinquish their fortunes and to confiscate their estates, to prove their fealty and allegiance; which taught them to brave the horrors of want and penury in a foreign land; was worthy of the highest applause, and the benevolent exertions of all good men. But, when we see these misfortunes made the pretext for introducing into this country all the frivolity, the false philosophy, and the licentiousness of France; when we see the promulgation of such sentiments received and cherished here, merely because they call themselves emigrants; we must naturally feel the most irrepressible disgust; and I think, in my whole life, I never met with a being towards whom I felt it in so great a degree, as the Chevalier D'Aubert!"

"He strikes me as a most artful and dangerous character," said Mary. "He certainly is so:" returned Montgomery. "The frivolous coxcombry of the fiddling Monsieur is seen and laughed at; but the sighing sophistry of D'Aubert has more serious effects; for, under the mask of pensive sentimentality, he would sap every principle which can make us happy here, and take from us every bright prospect of an hereafter!"—Montgomery paused; he seemed startled at his own seriousness; for, turning towards Mary, he said, "I might apologise to you for talking in this sententious strain; but indeed, Miss Cuthbert, I feel greatly interested for you—I seem to have acquired a right to converse with you in the language of friendship and sincerity, from having been privy to the amiable emotion, excited in your bosom, when my friend Walwyn, so unintentionally, let you a little into the character of your protectress. Believe me, when I tell you, that it is with no little anxiety, on the account of her protegé, that I have, since I came to the Villa, employed myself in scrutinizing the character of Miss Moreton!"

"And what has been the result of your investigation?" asked Mary, looking up with undissembled earnestness into the face of Montgomery. "Ah!" said he, shaking his head, with a desponding expression, "where there is so much confidence, so little judgment, and such a boundless thirst of praise, what can be expected but selfish and capricious conduct? Miss Moreton just now believes, that she may do any thing; that she is the object of universal attention and admiration; and that notoriety and applause will incessantly follow her steps. Poor young lady! she is to be pitied for entertaining such fallacious and extravagant notions; but she has too much self-conceit to be undeceived. I have been studying your character a little, likewise," said he, his voice lowering, and seeming almost afraid to trust himself to look at Mary. Neither did Mary examine his countenance with the lively earnestness that she had before displayed; the crimson suffused her cheek, as she said, "Indeed! *my* character! pray give it to me, Mr. Montgomery?"

"I have been examining it, as it relates to Miss Moreton," said he; "and I confess that the timidity, which prevents Miss Cuthbert from unfolding the graces of her mind and the charms of her conversation, in indiscriminate society, and which has been a severe mortification to me, since I have resided under the same roof with her, is yet the best promise that I perceive of her continuing on tolerable terms with her guardian; and will, at the same time, shield her from the bold and unlicensed attacks of *her* associates!" "Oh! may I ever feel constrained and awed in their society, if it will be a prevention from

danger," cried Mary, clasping her hands together—"Yet may I always fearlessly speak at the command of Virtue!"

"That, I am confident, you ever will," said Montgomery, taking her clasped hands tenderly, yet respectfully, in his—"charming Miss Cuthbert, you are most peculiarly situated; Providence has thought fit to place you, where your patience and your forbearance must be exerted; but, while you follow the pious rectitude of your own heart, you will have nothing to fear! you will go through the path of duty with cheerful magnanimity!"

"You are very good to embolden me," said Mary, releasing her hand to wipe off the starting tear. At that moment Walwyn appeared coming towards them, and, gaily kissing his hand to Mary, he said, "Miss Moreton in the Lyceum waits,

"The banquet spread, and all her guests
assembl'd,
"For thee, sweet maid, and for thy *charm'd*
companion,
"She now the tardy moments chide,
"That keep thee from the light repast.
"Haste then, fair Mary, haste,
"And *tea* and *butter'd muffins* taste.
"With *sugar* sweet as thy own lip,
"The balmy sweets of India sip!"

Sorry to be late at the breakfast-table, Mary hastened into the Lyceum, followed by the two gentlemen; she flung off her hat, as she passed through the Corridor; her fine brown tresses parted on her white forehead, and her cheeks glowed with the freshness of the morning, and she afforded a pretty striking contrast to some of the assembled group.

## CHAP. XI.

"They represent vices as frailties, and frailties as virtues." FORDYCE.

THE veil of Miss Moreton half shaded her face, as she reclined on a sopha, at the head of the long table, on which the breakfast was spread; bouquets of flowers were placed at every plate. Germ and Copy were already seated; the latter was holding a moss rose at a short distance from him, and whistling at it, as if in the act of pourtraying it on paper; while Germ, with green spectacles, was examining a leaf on which he had found the aurelia of a butterfly. Miss Moreton was studying, and did not, (or pretended not to) hear the entrance of Mary Cuthbert, or her morning compliments. Walwyn took his seat at her right hand, and, understanding its motion, immediately began to pour out the tea; when the Chevalier glided into the room, pressed the disengaged hand of Miss Moreton to his forehead, and to his heart, and, partly enveloping himself beneath her veil, leant over her shoulder to become a participator in her studies. Montgomery and Mary seated themselves; and Monsieur Myrtilla, skipping in, in the dress in which Mary had seen him the preceding morning, said, "One, too, tree million pardons vor de chere Belle Signora; she has not leave her toilette yet, so I just promise to make'a coffee vor two in her *apartment*. *Bon jour*, Mademoiselle Moreton;" and away he ran.

"Do you know this flower," asked Germ, addressing Walwyn. "Can you tell me what an egg is?" said Walwyn, smiling, as he took one. "Certainly, certainly," answered Germ; "let me see this little book—No, hang it, this is my Essay on Crocodiles. I have, though, somewhere certainly"—searching his left hand pocket. "No—wrong again, that is the History of the Horned Owl. Ah! here, here it comes at last; let me see—Eggs! page one hundred and sixty-three. Now, Sir, we have it." "I have *had* it, Sir," said Walwyn, crashing the empty shell in the ear of the philosopher.

"Pish, pish!" cried Germ, starting and settling his spectacles. "The egg you have had, but not its history; Willoughby, in his Ornithology, says, page one hundred and sixty-three—Willoughby says 'we may easily distinguish the yolk in the heart of an egg, as likewise the first white substance that surrounds it, and a second white in which the mass in the middle swims.'"

"For Heaven's sake, Mr. Germ," cried Miss Moreton, "let us not dissect as we are breakfasting!" "Be dumb for ever! Silent as the grave!" said Walwyn, giving Germ a cup of tea. "Take this beverage, Sir, it will wash off the *mass* of crudities which are collected in your brain!" "Tea is nothing more than the leaf of a tree, which grows in China," said Germ, not vastly well pleased to have been stopped in his dissertation on eggs. "The leaves, when steeped in warm water, and corrected in their bitterness by a *small* quantity of sugar—"

"Twenty lumps," said Walwyn, "is *your* usual number, I think, Sir," putting sugar into Germ's cup. Germ nodded his head and proceeded: "The leaves diffuse the scent of a violet, and a volatility which, in some measure, refreshes the brain; and, besides these qualities, it has the reputation of being an aperient."

"I will trouble you for another cup of coffee," said Montgomery, who thought Germ had proceeded quite far enough with the medicinal properties of tea. "Coffee—I have that in page two hundred and ninety-three," said Germ; "it is a little berry, gathered from a tree in Arabia-Felix, towards Aden and Mocha, and they now begin to cultivate it with success in the parts adjacent to Batavia."

"What precise time do you mean by *now*?" asked Walwyn, who knew that Germ was speaking in the words of an obsolete author; "Coffee has been cultivated in Batavia long ago."

"Let me reflect, Sir," said Germ. "Why, yes, 'twas then; it might then, be as far back as Anno Domini one thousand seven hundred and thirty."

"That is a great way back, indeed," said Walwyn, "to prove that in those days coffee was a *little* berry!"

Germ saw that the laugh was against him, and began to butter his roll with great eagerness and attention.

"I am enchanted with your book, my dear friend," said Miss Moreton, laying it down and sipping her tea; "and I declare to you, if there be a woman in the world whom I envy, it is the divine Madam Stael—what pathos—what feeling does she not display!"

"As a writer, and a composer, she is certainly very great," said Montgomery; "Delphine is an interesting production; but there are sentiments of a most pernicious and blameable tendency interspersed throughout the work, particularly *pernicious*, as, with many readers, imagination would usurp the place of judgment, and, captivated by flowing language, and impassioned descriptions, their interest would be too much excited to stay to examine its intrinsic merit."

"Do tell me where you can discover errors in this sublime composition," said Miss Moreton; who, spite of her admiration of the book in question, felt a secret pleasure in having at length called forth the interest of Montgomery.

The Chevalier probably wished to evade the discussion. "You read it in English, Sir, of course," said he. "Ah! many of the finest sentiments, many of the most melting touches, are lost, are annihilated in your language; they are harsh and incomprehensible in an English translation, and to an English ear. Miss Moreton reads it with the taste of a Parisian, and in the original diction and *purity*!"

"In a grammatical sense, that word may perhaps be properly applied," said Montgomery, "but in no other: *our* language would indeed, Sir, convey *harsh* meanings to many of the specious sentiments contained in that production!"

"I wish you would point out your objections," said Miss Moreton, reclining towards Montgomery, and stretching out her white arm to give him the book.

"I read it just as it appeared, and before its translation," said Montgomery, "and my treacherous memory will scarcely serve me as to the names of the characters, or the incidents of the story; but I well recollect many, *very* many, exceptionable parts, though I do not know where to look for them, neither should I like to be at the trouble of again turning over six volumes in such an unprofitable search, as the time spent in it must be lost, to say no worse of it."

"Mr. Montgomery does not seem able to point out the faults," said the Chevalier, "although they are so very glaring;" and he turned an expressive look towards Miss Moreton, which Montgomery understood.

"I can yet remember general principles which are pernicious and immoral," returned Montgomery; "for instance, the very little deference paid to the marriage vow, and conjugal fidelity. All the *particular* friends of the heroine; all the married ladies, for whom we are to be the most interested, have tender attachments, independent of their husbands! On the subject of divorce, too, Madam Stael delivers her sentiments very freely for a female writer; and Delphine, the heroine of the work, suffers a passion for Leonee de Mandeville to take possession of her heart, knowing him to be the plighted husband of her cousin; and, after his marriage with her *cousin* and *her* friend, maintains a correspondence with him, that cousin, too, an exemplary character!"

"Is it possible," cried Miss Moreton, "that you, Mr. Montgomery, can really call Matilda de Vernon an exemplary character? a cold-hearted prude, and a rigid devotee as ever professed catholicism; and as chilling, and as forbidding in her manners as—as Mrs. Deborah Moreton!"

"I think the character a regular and a good one," said Montgomery, "bred up in the strict regard of a religion which maintains a good deal of formality in devotion, and following its strict letter, from principle and a pious disposition; as a *catholic*, I think her character is an amiable one, and I pity her constant mortification and humiliating trials, seeing her rival shining before her eyes in those attractions, which she does not possess, and stealing from her the affections of her husband.

"Delphine, too, so impetuous in her feeling, so hasty in her resolves, so regardless of the customs of the world!"

"Oh! Mr. Montgomery, you are quite a cynic," said Miss Moreton; "I cannot, *will not*, have my fascinating favourite Delphine abused; what sensibility! what feeling! does she not display? In what interesting situations is she not placed? and how enchantingly does she conduct herself through them!"

"Enthusiasm and romance form the ground-work of her character," said Montgomery; "and these naturally draw her into those situations which you mention, from which a *common* character would have been exempt."

"Delphine's is no *common* character, certainly," said the Chevalier. "It is a character not to be found with *us*, I believe," said Montgomery. "And *can* you think so?" asked the Chevalier, turning his languishing little orbs, with melting meaning, towards Miss Moreton. "I think so, I had almost said (pardon the affront to your heroine, Sir"), said Montgomery, as if not understanding his allusion, "I *hope* so.—Our atmosphere is too foggy for such volatile spirits; it is not composed of such inflammable materials; the imagination of *our* ladies (bating a few exceptions) is not so vivid; and the genius of the nation yet makes the prudent conduct of our women its peculiar care!"

Miss Moreton knew not how to keep her seat; the matter of Mr. Montgomery's speech was not at all pleasant to her; but the *manner*, the sparkling of his brilliant eye, the graceful action, the mantling colour on his manly cheek! she was rivetted to the spot by the warring sentiments with which her fancy was teeming; and, prone to translate every thing as her own vanity wished, she immediately concluded, that the warmth of his manner proceeded from a secret jealousy which he felt towards the Chevalier D'Aubert. This had roused his indignant spirit; this had urged him to speak in so decisive a tone; and impelled by this feeling, surely nothing could be more natural than his disapprobation of any book which his rival had recommended.

It was the Chevalier, then, and not Delphine, which Montgomery had condemned; and at that moment, he was in her eye the personified image of Leonee de Mandeville. Turning towards him with a most insinuating smile, Miss Moreton asked Montgomery if he would accompany her in the landeau round the environs of the Villa. Montgomery, though surprised at the invitation, could not refuse, and bowed assent. Walwyn looked rather disconcerted at not being included. The Chevalier re-opened Delphine, and sighed over its soul-harrowing pages!—Mary did not expect to be admitted of the party; but the *perfect amiable* was the humour of the moment; she also was invited, and went to prepare herself.

## CHAP. XII.

> "The lovers of a tune urge no severe inquiries concerning the heart of a fidler. If he be a mercenary, while he teaches female pupils, he is watched; and if he performs in concerts, he is paid. If above pecuniary gratifications, he is rewarded with hyperbolical compliments. Articulate or inarticulate sounds is ample retribution."
> Biographical Anecdotes of WILLIAM HOGARTH.

MARY had soon put on her bonnet and cloak; a trouble which Miss Moreton had deemed unnecessary, for her hair and veil floating on the breeze together, she sprung into the vehicle, in her morning dishabille, reclining negligently on one seat of the carriage, whilst the one opposite was occupied by Mary and Montgomery. Four swift horses carried them through the park. Miss Moreton had all the conversation; Montgomery seemed very well contented to be a patient hearer; and Mary's monosyllable, of an affirmative or negative, was all which was required of her by her protectress.

Miss Moreton appeared to take no little pride in pointing out the extent of her demesne to Montgomery; and she talked of her improvements and plans with very great satisfaction.—"There is," said she, "so much pleasure in feeling one's self above the world; I mean, its customs and its foolish notions, and in having had spirit to break from its iron thraldom, that I only wonder there is any one left, who will comply with its arbitrary dictates! Don't you think, Mr. Montgomery, that every one is at liberty to do as they please?"

"Not knowing to what latitude you extend your question," said Montgomery, "I am at a loss to answer you; but if you mean, that people are always at liberty to follow their own inclinations, surely not. And think, if they were to do so, what a countless number of ills would ensue!"

"You take things in too serious a light," said Miss Moreton; "I am merely talking of those little gratifications of whim, taste, (*caprice*, if you will) which the tyrant world, and custom, would forbid our sex to enjoy; and which are perfectly harmless in their nature. To overstep these, is surely praise-worthy. In a mind, which has the capacity of thinking, to soar above trifles is laudable."

"It depends on circumstances, whether even these may not be better observed than infringed on," said Montgomery; "in as much as things which are, in their nature, inoffensive, by encroaching too near the boundaries of decorum, break down those fences which she has raised for the safety and security of morals and manners."

"Decorum is so like my aunt Deborah," replied Miss Moreton, "that I declare to you, Montgomery, I think if you were but to use it in her presence, you would stand a good chance of becoming her heir—Apropos! I will take you to call on her; she will be delighted to see you."

They were arrived at the entrance of the village or the little town of Marlow, where Mrs. Deborah Moreton resided. As a plain but elegant chariot appeared at a little

distance to be coming towards them, Miss Moreton ordered her drivers to stop at a little public-house, where the sign of the Red Lion was meant to attract the attention of the passing traveller.

Neither Montgomery or Mary Cuthbert could divine her business at this humble house of entertainment, till they heard her order the man at the door to bring her a half pint of cider.

"I am very dry," said she, turning to Montgomery, as she put the cup to her lips. The chariot at that moment passed the landeau; a young lady of a very interesting appearance was seated in it. *Cup in hand*, Miss Moreton saluted her *en passant*. The lady returned the recognition with a stiff yet civil bow—"Thank Heaven!" cried Clarissa, "I have quenched my thirst, and given that notorious prude, Miss Davenport, a topic for a month. Miss Moreton *drinking* at an alehouse door in a morning! Oh! what a delightful incident to circulate through Marlow! Now drive on to Mrs. Deborah Moreton's.

"You look surprised, child," said Miss Moreton, turning to Mary; "but you will know me in time. This is a little gratification, which the unfeeling world would have denied me. Now tell me, Montgomery, was there any harm in it?" "Most assuredly, no serious harm," said Montgomery; "but as *Miss* Moreton's example may be brought as a precedent for others to do the same; as an *alehouse* is certainly not a proper place for females of delicacy to frequent; as evil reports are frequently raised from slighter foundations than this; and as Mrs. Deborah Moreton's residence is so very near, where you might have taken any refreshment you wished—I must confess that *I* think you might as well have driven by the Red Lion!"

"I can't be angry with you; for I asked for it," said Miss Moreton; "and yet in the whole circle of my friends, not one of them save yourself would have given me such a lecture!" Mary Cuthbert felt grateful to Montgomery for giving his opinion so freely, as she hoped it might have some influence on her cousin's conduct; for she saw, with the deepest concern, that she prided herself on setting all the common decencies of life at defiance. Montgomery felt that he had no right to talk in this manner to Miss Moreton, as neither his age, his sex, or the length of his acquaintance with her authorised it; but he found that his style, though novel, was not offensive to her; and, while his whole soul recoiled at her eccentricities, he felt that it was for the lovely Mary alone that he was interested in the conduct of Miss Moreton.

Mrs. Deborah Moreton received her visitors with some ceremony; but, notwithstanding her old fashioned formality, it plainly appeared, that she approved of the present companions of her niece.

Miss Moreton threw herself on an old settee, covered with tent stitch, and flinging off her slippers and gloves, declared that she was expiring from heat and fatigue.

"Then do take something, Clary," said Mrs. Deborah. "Oh, no, I thank you, I took a draught of cider at the Red Lion, at the entrance of the village."

"Clary—Miss Moreton—do I hear right? have I lost my senses; the Red Lion, a pot ale-house—my niece—no, you are only joking; or I must be mistaken. Pray, Sir, did you have any cider at the Red Lion? or is my niece tormenting me on purpose?"

"I had none certainly, Ma'am," answered Montgomery.

"There, there, I am really revived again!" said Mrs. Deborah, "how can you be such a tormenting girl!"

"But Mr. Montgomery only answered for *himself*, Ma'am; and I only spoke of *myself*; for, upon my honour, I stopped there to quench my thirst; and, if you will persist in discrediting me, ask your friend Miss Davenport, who passed in her carriage at the very moment that I was drinking it, and holding the cup in my hand. I dare say that puritan will answer for me, if you ask her; or rather that she will tell it you the first time she sees you; for surely the spirit will move her to tell of so *uncomely* an action."

"It will never move Miss Davenport to say any thing which will give another uneasiness," said Mrs. Deborah; "and she has too much respect for my family, to hurt the reputation of one of its members!"

"My dear aunt, *my* reputation is perfectly safe, believe me; though I cannot but be wonderfully indebted to you, for the prodigious fuss you make about it."

"*You* obliged to *me*, indeed! Ah Clary, Clary, I wish you *meant* what you said, for then you might pay a little more attention to my advice. Indeed, indeed, child, you are going the very way in the world to be the general talk!" A pleased expression on Miss Moreton's countenance seemed to infer that this was precisely what she aimed at, as, turning to her aunt, she said, "Dear Madam, you must be surely complimenting me!" "I say, complimenting," said Mrs. Deborah; "I believe there are few persons who would accuse me of complimenting—If I can do any good, by advice and by plain speaking, I am very ready; but as to complimentary, fawning civility, 'tis Frenchified, and finical, and I hate it! What's become of the Chevalier, and the fidler, and your Italian Madam?"

"All safe at the Villa, my dear Madam, thank your kind inquiries; which I will not neglect to repeat to them."

"My inquiries, niece, extended just as far, as to know if you had sent them a packing yet, and this is the only information with respect to them, which could give me any kind of satisfaction. How long do you intend to maintain them?"

"Maintain them? what a question! Oh! Madam, when will you learn to expand your ideas, and dilate your mind?"

"When I become the tool of the whole world, and call myself a Sentimental Philosopher," said Mrs. Deborah, and turning up her lip, and frowning with acrimonious severity; "I would not care, if the *fidler*, the *squaller*, and the *whiner* were to hear me this minute; for I speak my mind, when I say, I think they are not proper associates for a young woman, and that they are a disgrace to you!"

Miss Moreton rose from her reclining posture; and, making a mock curtesy, was leaving the room—"O, stop a minute," cried Mrs. Deborah, "I will put on my hat and cloak, and go with you; I intended to dine at the Villa to-day, if you had not come, and now I can have a seat in the carriage!"

"If you please, Ma'am, I will let it return again for you," said Miss Moreton; "for you must recollect, that I have already two companions, and that I always engross one of the seats myself."

"Pray, Mrs. Moreton, take my seat, and suffer me to walk to the Villa," said Montgomery. "Or me," said Mary, with earnest simplicity.

"Neither of you shall stir an inch for me," said Mrs. Deborah.

"Oh! by no means," said Miss Moreton.

"No, no, we will see if you can't for once sit upright, like a human being," said Mrs. Deborah. "*I* will be your supporter!"

"What! in that odious red damask, Ma'am? You will give me a fever fit!"

"Perhaps it may do you good, child," said Mrs. Deborah, pinning up the train of her gown, with great *non chalance*; and, having put on her hat and cloak, and made a curtesy to her niece and Mary Cuthbert, saying, "I will follow you ladies," she accepted the proffered civility of Montgomery, and held by his arm, as she walked to the door, where the carriage was in waiting.

The respectful politeness of his manner seemed to have some effect on Miss Moreton; for she suffered her aunt to take her seat very quietly, and, putting Mary Cuthbert by *her*, she got into the vehicle herself, and, notwithstanding that Montgomery several times requested to be allowed to walk, she insisted on his sitting next her.

"I am glad you are coming to the Villa to-day, Ma'am," said Miss Moreton, addressing Mrs. Deborah; "as, perhaps, the Signora may be in tune to give us a song; and she is going to leave the Villa very soon, and the dear Monsieur likewise; they are engaged to attend a music-meeting at Lord ——. I am sure I think myself in high luck, to have retained them so long; for they are in general requisition in the musical world."

"Now that's what I think so very improper in the customs of the present day," said Mrs. Deborah; "every thing is carried to an excess, and *music* in particular, as if that word was an incantation, which bound up every sense but *hearing*."

"Music has charms to soothe a savage breast,
"To soften rocks, and bend the knotted oak!"

said Miss Moreton, in the true pathos of tragedy.

"It seems, indeed, to be a magical art," said Mrs. Deborah, "and to have the power of transforming every thing. The difference of rank, and the different classes of society, are entirely overlooked in the pursuit of this tweedledum and tweedledee; and my lord is to be seen walking, arm in arm, with his fiddler; a *bishop* has been known to sing Goosy-gander with a shoe-black, if he had but a voice; and a *young lady* is on terms of intimacy with an abandoned courtezan, merely because she can pitch her pipe to an Italian bravura. What the world will come to at last, I know not; for it is not that people are fonder of music than they were formerly, when the 'Dusty Miller,' 'Farewell Manchester,' and 'Lady Coventry's Minuet,' were as much as a young lady, in *your* station," addressing herself to her niece, "was expected to know of it; and these good old tunes she kept herself in constant practice of, by playing them on her spinnet at least *once* a week."

"Charming, charming!" said Miss Moreton. "You really, my dear Madam, draw a most accurate description of the *taste* and the *talents* of *your* century. The spinnet, the hurdy-gurdy, and the jew's harp! what an harmonious combination of sounds!"

"You may laugh, Miss Clary Moreton, but every thing was done decently and in order in those days. There was some method, some regularity, let me say, some *modesty* observed; a young woman would as soon have thought of flying to the moon, as of asking two profligate foreigners to come and stay in her house, merely because they could squall and squeak."

"What words for expressing the most celestial melody," said Miss Moreton.

"I do not stop to consider my words, when I am speaking my mind," said Mrs. Deborah; "and I am heartily glad that you are likely to be rid of two such disgraceful

inmates; their shameful intimacy is very generally spoken of; and I have been told that they live like man and wife, even at your house, and I believe you can't deny it."

The whole countenance of Mary Cuthbert was suffused by crimson at this coarse speech of Mrs. Deborah Moreton, but more so at the disgraceful information which it contained; and, without daring to look at Miss Moreton, she painfully waited to hear a refutation of the charges which were brought against her favourites.

Montgomery looked at the prospect; whilst, with the greatest *sang froid,* Miss Moreton said, "Dear Madam, I never troubled myself as to the exact nature of the intimacy which subsisted between these souls of harmony; but, if to live like man and wife, is to have a perfect concordance of sentiment, of similarity of idea, and of unison of taste, *then* most certainly, do the Signora and the Monsieur resemble a united couple; *then* have you paid the highest possible panegyric to the married state, for it must be a state of undisturbed harmony and love!"

Mrs. Deborah lifted up her hands and eyes, and heaving a bitter sigh, she said, "this comes of my brother's giving you what, poor infatuated man! *he* called liberal notions!"

"It does, Madam," said Miss Moreton; "I must ever honour the memory of that parent who saved me from the narrow opinions, and the circumscribed and illiberal notions of most of my sex; who, valuing themselves on one single virtue, give reins to all the acrimonious spleen, with which their minds are fraught."

The landau, at this moment, drove up to the door of the Villa; Montgomery handed out the ladies; Mary was the last who wanted his assistance; but he held out his hand in a mechanical *distrait* manner, and hurried to the shrubbery; where, flinging himself on a rustic chair, he gave loose to reflections the most painful. All the pride of his soul was roused at the idea of staying longer the guest of a woman, whose principles and whose conduct he held in such low estimation as he did Miss Moreton's. The blunt speeches of Mrs. Deborah Moreton had wounded him to the quick. Might she not have asked him when *he* meant to leave the Villa; and had *he* even the excuse of scraping the fiddle to allege as a reason of his stay? Must he not be classed with the herd of Miss Moreton's sycophantic dependants? and could his visit be interpreted into any thing else, than a design on her person and fortune?

No! he would leave the Villa the next day; he would fly from a place which had afforded him uneasiness instead of entertainment; he would offer up prayers for the happiness of Mary Cuthbert, and then try to forget that such a being existed.

But of all created beings, the gentle Mary seemed the one whom Montgomery was the least likely to forget. There was such a touching sweetness in every thing she said; such a blended look of intelligence and of timidity, that he should continually bear her image in his mind's eye, and not want the talents of a Copy to pourtray it on canvass!—He must leave—he must go to-morrow;—but that to-morrow was *Sunday*, and to travel on a Sabbath-day was what Montgomery had never done, so of necessity he *must* remain *one* day longer at the Attic Villa.

He did not take into his calculation the practicability of walking over to Coventry the next morning, and of spending the Sunday, both publicly and privately, in an observance of its duties; he reasoned a little sophistically on the subject, it must be allowed; but which of my female readers will refuse to plead for him?

Montgomery determined, however, on leaving the Villa on Monday; and, having dressed himself, sought the company in the Lyceum, where, as usual, in stately effect, as Censor-General of the group, sat Mrs. Deborah Moreton.

The Monsieur was trying his cat-gut, and squeaking it, and tuning it, most scientifically (but not very harmoniously) at her ear; at every shrill tone, the old lady's brow became more deeply indented, but she observed an inquisitorial silence, as though something might escape her observation, if a word issued from her mouth.

The Signora lounged negligently on a sofa, with her fat and naked back turned towards Mrs. Deborah Moreton; Mary Cuthbert, in a corner, was quietly pursuing her netting; whilst the mistress of the mansion, as if determined to redouble her civility to Signora Grosera, after the conversation which had passed between herself and Mrs. Deborah Moreton in the morning, said, "Dear Signora, I shall be quite *au de despoir*, when you and the Monsieur leave the Villa; I shall pant for your society, for your soul-subduing strains, which touch the heart to rapture and to love!"

"You do us ver great tres honneur," said Monsieur, bowing, grinning, and taking more than half the compliment to himself and his Cremona; "we shall often, ver frequently, talk of de plaisir, de felicité ve both enjoy at de Villa Attic—shall we not, Ma Signora?"

The Signora gave an assenting nod and smile; for the trouble of conversation was too much for her, and she generally gave up her sex's prerogative to the officious Monsieur.

The rest of the gentlemen soon entered the room; the pensive Chevalier seemed not to have recovered the disappointment of the morning; his sighs and his looks, when turned towards Miss Moreton, were evidently intended to upbraid her with cruelty. Not so Walwyn;—his light heart soon forgot a transient mortification, and, with renovated spirits and hilarity, he addressed Miss Moreton.

The day went off much as the preceding one had done; Montgomery kept his ground in the good graces of Mrs. Deborah, by again officiating as chaplain at table; and Mary retained her's by the undeviating modesty and sweetness of her behaviour.

At the accustomed hour Mrs. Deborah got up to leave the room; and in the exact precision which she had observed the evening before, Montgomery attending her to the door.

Mary Cuthbert saw that she was considered as a perfect cypher by Miss Moreton; this did not hurt her, for Mary had no undue ideas of her own importance; and she felt that her sentiments were so little in accordance with Miss Moreton's, that it were better that she should withhold them, than to excite useless argument and disputation, from which the peaceful breast of Mary recoiled.

But Mary had her doubts, whether a residence at the Attic Villa would be compatible with female delicacy and propriety; yet where, and to whom, could she go? Could she at once act in direct opposition to the will of her father?—a will so binding in its injunctions, so express in this point, that in Miss Moreton's hands were already placed the few hundreds which were to form her future subsistence, and which she had orders not to relinquish, till Mary should attain the age of twenty-one, or should marry.

Mary found that it would require much forbearance and fortitude, to sustain her present situation; but there was something consolatory in the approbation which would

follow her good conduct; and the words which had fallen from Montgomery on this subject sounded yet sweetly in her ears.

The Signora and the Monsieur were going from the Villa; they might not renew their visit for some time. If the Chevalier D'Aubert would but take his leave also, Mary would feel more comfortable; for the knowledge which she had unexpectedly obtained of his character, made her feel an unconquerable repugnance towards him.

## CHAP. XIII.

"It is difficult to say, whether the instrumental
duties of religion, as they are usually termed,
have been more misrepresented by superstition and
hypocrisy on one hand, or by vicious *refinement*
and *vain philosophy* on the other. By the *former*
they have been extolled, as if they were the whole
of religion; while the *latter* have decried them as
vulgar, unavailing, and insignificant."

FORDYCE.

SUNDAY morning arrived. The inhabitants of the Attic Villa appeared to hold it in general observance, by keeping their apartments an hour or two later than usual. And this observance extended even to the domestics; for when, at nine o'clock, Mary descended into the little apartment, where she had usually sat when alone, she found it just as it had been left the preceding day; and presently the house-maid appeared, rubbing her eyes, and saying, "Lord bless'ee, Miss, I didn't think as how you would be up yet, as 'twas Sunday." "That was the very reason which impelled me," said Mary; "I thought I would walk to Mrs. Deborah Moreton's, and go to church with her, if Miss Moreton does not go herself."

"Oh no, Miss Moreton never goes," said the maid; "*she* doesn't much hold with church-going; and the company as visits here be most of 'em *Meetingers* and *Romans*, I believe, for they never goes none of 'em to church."

"But surely the servants go," said Mary. "Law, Miss, how can us? Now think if the family is all of 'em in bed, how is it possible to be done?"

"But in the afternoon?"

"Why, Miss, just as evening prayers goes in, cook must set about getting her dinner; and we be well worked all of us in the week; and we likes a little rest *one* day in *seven*; though, for my *pertickler* part, I should have no objections to go to church once a day myself, for I'm a church of England, born and bred to it all my life; I don't hold with the Methodists at all."

"You appear to be a zealous church-woman," said Mary; "but if you never enter its sacred walls, I fear the mere profession of religion will not avail."

"Oh! I ben't at all fond of Professions, Quakers, nor *Floss-all-overs*, nor *Byterians*, I stand fast by the Church, and always will to the last!"

"As one of its *outside* props," thought Mary, who found it was useless to try to argue with such unparallelled ignorance. "Alas!" sighed she, "if *such* only were its supporters, how soon would the venerable fabric fall; but firm is its foundation, for it rests on the Rock of Ages!"

Mrs. Deborah Moreton's house was very near the parish church. Having taken her solitary breakfast, Mary set out to call upon the old lady, and to ask her leave to accompany her to it. Mrs. Deborah Moreton received her young visitor with much formality; but good humour might easily be discovered under her ceremonious politeness;

and though her manners were reserved, and her appearance stiff, yet her words were in direct contradiction to them.

"You did right, child," said she, "to make your escape from the tents of ungodliness, to visit the house of your God! I shall always be happy to see you; the family pew is large enough—*too* large," said she, lifting up her hands and eyes, "for I only make use of it. Miss Moreton *never* comes; *she* lives without God in the world!"

There was much to interest Mary Cuthbert in Mrs. Deborah Moreton; under all her peculiarities, she discovered warm affection for her niece, and deep sorrow for the eccentricities of her conduct. A near and beloved relative going so far astray from every thing that was right, was surely a painful subject of contemplation. And Mary's respect and attention insensibly heightened towards Mrs. Moreton, as these reflections passed in her mind. With surprise, not unmixed with satisfaction, Mary Cuthbert distinguished Montgomery amongst the congregation assembled in the church; and when the service was ended, and she was moving slowly along with Mrs. Deborah Moreton through the crowd, in order to leave the church, he joined them, and his compliments were most graciously received by the old lady, who insisted on both her companions resting themselves at her house before they returned to the Villa. This invitation they did not refuse; and, on entering the house, Mary recognised Miss Davenport sitting on the sopha, not without a suffusion of crimson at the recollection of where she had last seen her.

In the most unaffected and prepossessing manner, Miss Davenport advanced towards Mrs. Deborah Moreton, who welcomed her with much satisfaction; and introduced her particularly to Mary Cuthbert, as to the ward and first cousin of Miss Moreton, and then to Montgomery.

Miss Davenport immediately inquired after Miss Moreton, and said, "had I known she had so near a relative at the Villa, I should have made a point of calling; but I shall certainly not fail in paying my respects very soon." Mary curtesied, and Mrs. Deborah Moreton said, "Do so, my dear Miss Davenport, you will find this young lady one of the right sort, one of the old school; and I shall take it as a particular favour done to me, if you will visit a little more frequently at the Villa, for your example may do wonders."

Miss Davenport seemed confused, and turned the conversation, by saying "It was in my way to church that I heard of Miss Cuthbert; I accidentally called on a poor woman, whose husband has been very ill, and she spoke to me in warm terms of the goodness and sympathy of a young lady lately come to the Attic Villa." Mary turned towards the window.

"I knew you would suit exactly; I said so from the first; I said that you would do exactly for one another," said Mrs. Deborah, a pleased expression gradually softening the asperity of her harsh features.—"One turns away from hearing her own praises; the other always calls *accidentally* on the poor objects of her bounty—I said so, I said from the first, that you would do exactly for one another!"

Montgomery followed Mary to the window, and while his eyes flashed intelligence, he said in a low voice—

"Do good by stealth, and blush to find its fame!"

So grateful is praise from characters whom we have reason to respect, that perhaps Mary Cuthbert had never felt more happy than at this moment. The reserve incident to her disposition seemed to fall off; and she joined in a general conversation with readiness and spirit; which the good sense of Miss Davenport, the vivacity of Montgomery and the quaint remarks of Mrs. Deborah Moreton rendered very agreeable and animated.

The two young ladies seemed equally reluctant to separate; but Miss Davenport had an indispensable engagement, and Mary found it time to retrace her way to the Attic Villa.

Montgomery was but too happy in the prospect of being her escort; but, when he took leave of Mrs. Moreton, and mentioned his intentions of leaving the Villa the succeeding morning, that lady loudly expressed her regret; Mary Cuthbert was silent, and her eyes sought the carpet.

"I do not wonder at your going; I cannot say that I do," said Mrs. Deborah; "for a man of sense and understanding must feel himself in a very awkward situation, in that temple of folly!—I had hoped that my niece—I was in hopes that she might have had discernment to have—but you are going, Mr. Montgomery?" Mrs. Deborah Moreton, paused again, and curtesied slowly to Montgomery, as she bade him farewell.

For some minutes the walk was pursued in silence. Mary Cuthbert was the first who broke it, by saying, "Miss Davenport appears a charming young woman."

"She does," said Montgomery, "and much do I rejoice in your introduction to her; for, deeply interested as I must ever feel for you, my dear Miss Cuthbert," (and the dear Miss Cuthbert was expressed with unwonted emphasis), "I must consider the countenance of Mrs. Deborah Moreton, and the friendship of Miss Davenport as great ameliorations to your situation."

"You are very good," said Mary, "I think I feel them so; I am grateful for the kindness and sympathy of every human being, and to you, Mr. Montgomery, I owe a great deal, for the consideration and attention which you have manifested towards me!"

"Grateful! grateful to me! Oh Mary," said Montgomery, and he paused and looked in her speaking face; but, checking the instantaneous impulse of his feelings, by remembering their respective situations, he said, "I should have been unworthy the name of a *man*, Miss Cuthbert, if I had not been interested by your introduction here, being privy to all the circumstances of it; and had my dearest sister been thus situated, I could not have wished her to deport herself in a more becoming and exemplary manner than you have done!"

Mary tried to vary the conversation; but she did not find her ideas very prompt. Montgomery was not peculiarly brilliant in his remarks, and made none but indifferent ones, till they had nearly reached the house; when, hastily turning, and taking Mary's hand with emotion, he said, "this may be the only moment allowed me of saying, that I must always feel interested for your happiness; and that, though my lot in this world may throw me at a wide distance from you; yet shall I ever fervently pray for your felicity, and bear about me the remembrance of your wondrous sweetness; even though I should never meet you more—God bless you, farewell, Miss Cuthbert!"

The last words were spoken with peculiar emotion; they forced the tears to the eyes of Mary; but, luckily, Montgomery saw them not; for, relinquishing her hand, he fled

from her, and turned by another path into the shrubbery, instead of accompanying her into the house.

Mary's full heart overflowed at her eyes; and she was glad to escape from the observation of the family, and to gain her own room, where she tried to restrain her emotions; emotions for which she could not account, as her acquaintance with Montgomery had been too short, she thought, to justify them. "To be sure, his manners were particularly pleasing; his respectful attention to her had been peculiarly grateful; and I feel it now," thought Mary, "because the loss of my dear parents has left me a forlorn and isolated orphan on the world!"

Mary soon gained her accustomed composure, and went into the Lyceum to seek Miss Moreton, not having paid her compliments to her for the day;—but Miss Moreton was not there. Mr. Germ was employed in sorting shells, and designating them under their respective classes, as he put them into little paper boxes; while Copy, with his pallet and easel before him, had sketched the outline of Superstition, and a Gorgon front he had given her; notwithstanding that, it bore a slight resemblance to the harsh features of Mrs. Deborah Moreton. In the viranda was seated the Monsieur in his morning robes, his hair "en papillot," with his Cremona on his shoulder scraping, "Go to the Devil and shake yourself;" and several other dances which bore equally elegant appellations.

Mary was leaving the room again, when the Monsieur cried out, "Oh now, Ma'amselle, now don't leave us, me pray you, Ma'amselle Cuthbert, do not leave us—we be only little *tranqueel amusement*, just to pass away little time in absence of les belles Damoiselles." "Where is Miss Moreton, Monsieur?" asked Mary, "I was come to seek her." "Oh she be gone with Monsieur Walwyn or the Chevalier—Oh! you would have been delighted, if you had been here just now; we look all about, but we could not find you; 'twas ver fine, ver fine, indeed. She perform in one tragedy the character of one *Madame Caleesta*, and the Monsieur Walwyn was *Lothario*, the grand hero of the piece; one ver fine man, ver great man, indeed!—we look all about for you, Ma'amselle, and for Monsieur Montgomery, but they said you vas gone to church—he he! he! he! varm weather for church, Ma'amselle, ver warm weather, indeed! Oh! Ma'amselle Cuthbert!" and he tapped her cheek with the end of the fiddle stick, "what beautiful, ver fine colour in your cheeks, they look like the Provence rose!"

At this moment, the Signora's large person passed through the door of the Lyceum; and, in a louder key, with more vivacity, and in better English, than she generally used, she said, "Monsieur, where have you been? I have been waiting for you this half hour; and here I find you fooling with your fiddle-stick! do come and braid my hair!"

"Oh, Ma chere Signora, why did you not ring your bell, *den* I fly to execute your commands!"

The Signora said no more, and without noticing Mary Cuthbert, returned to her apartments; whilst the agile and light-heeled Monsieur skipped after her, practising the newest cotillion step all the way.

The remainder of this day was passed like any *day* but Sunday.

Miss Moreton cast a hasty glance of inquiring scrutiny on the ingenuous countenance of Mary, when she heard that Montgomery had been to church; but reading nothing there, she returned to her own easy and conscious superiority.

The Signora thought it right to be obliging on the eve of her departure, in order to ensure herself an invitation to repeat the visit; and some of the amatory effusions of the Italian poets were sung by her, and accompanied by the Monsieur, with expressive attitudes and gestures. The Chevalier appeared to be heart-struck, Miss Moreton was charmed, and every moment turned to Montgomery for his approbation; who rejoiced at hearing Mary Cuthbert say, she had not the slightest acquaintance with the Italian language. Her ears at least were not offended, though he perceived that the extravagant gestures of the large and half clothed warbler; and the fantastic attitudes of the Monsieur were not calculated to give her satisfaction.

Before Miss Moreton left the room for the night, Montgomery advanced towards her; and, gracefully thanking her for her politeness and hospitality, he mentioned his intention of quitting the Villa in the morning.

Miss Moreton was surprised and hurt to hear him announce his departure. She tried to dissuade him; but, not being able to prevail, she extended her fair hand, and gave him a most pressing invitation to renew his visit. Mary Cuthbert received another fervent farewell, as he quitted the room, and soon retired to her own apartment; where her best wishes were offered up for the safety and welfare of the amiable Montgomery.

Miss Moreton retired also, but not to rest! She had been foiled in her dearest wishes, "the cold, the insensate Montgomery was going to leave the Attic Villa!"

"And is he then cold? is he insensate?" asked she. "Ah no, no; it is the very magnitude, the warmth of his passion, which drives him from me; he fears to stay, he fears to trust his own heart in my presence!"

This was a more pleasant idea than the first; and, prone to construe every thing as her wishes would have it to be, Miss Moreton had soon resolved that this was actually the case. She was really charmed with Montgomery. The eloquence of his manners; the manly beauty of his person; had raised a passion in her bosom, which she had never felt before. But vanity was still the ruling feature of her mind. It was not according to her disposition to let Montgomery know the progress he had made in her affections at present; nor, till she should have acquired yet greater influence over him, and enveloped his whole soul, as it were, by the irradiation of her talents and her virtues. Then, when he should have worshipped her at a distance, as do the Persian idolaters the Sun, she would beam resplendently upon him, and raise him to life and happiness!

A perfect Machiavel in art, nobody guessed at her secret sentiments; and, when she met her company in the morning, the softened voice, in which she addressed Walwyn, the sentimental effusions which she poured forth to the Chevalier, led each to imagine that he was the favoured object of Miss Moreton's preference.

Montgomery had quitted the house at break of day. The Signora and the Monsieur took their departure about noon.

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