

The Reward of Virtue;
OR,
THE HISTORY
OF
Miss POLLY GRAHAM.

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Miss POLLY GRAHAM.

Intermixed with several CURIOUS and INTERESTING INCIDENTS in the LIVES of several Persons of both Sexes, remarkable for the singular adventures which befell them.

To which is added

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF

BOUNTY HALL,

And its Inhabitants.

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MEMOIRS
OF
Miss POLLY GRAHAM.

CHAP. I.

THIS young lady was born in the year 1732, in London; her father, captain Graham, was commander of a 74 gun ship: he was a gentleman who bore an amiable character for honour and integrity; and had, besides, the reputation of a man of great courage, having given the most distinguishing proofs of his valour in many engagements. Miss Polly's mother was the daughter of a West-India merchant, named Mr. Summers, a person, who, tho' immensely rich, was nevertheless more respected for his good qualities, than on account of his wealth. Miss Polly had scarcely attained her tenth year, when she was sent by her parents to a boarding school at Putney, kept by one Mrs. Mann; a lady, who, in respect of her great abilities, was honoured with the protection of many persons of rank and fortune, who sent their children to her for education. Here Miss Polly remained untill she arrived at the age of sixteen, when an unfortunate event caused her to be called home, in order to give her mother, labouring under the severest of all afflictions, viz. the death of her husband, all the consolation in her power.

Captain Graham had been on a party of pleasure with some other commanders; and, having eat too freely of some choice pine apples, had taken a surfeit. A raging fever ensued, and the physicians, who attended him, soon pronounced his case desperate. He languished about three weeks, and at length expired in the arms of his loving wife; who was, by this stroke, so overwhelmed with grief, that she fell into a swoon, from which she was with the greatest difficulty recovered. When she came to herself, she wept most bitterly, called on his name, and her most ardent wishes were that she might soon follow him to the mansions of bliss, where she confidently hoped he was already arrived. Her intense sorrow having rendered her utterly incapable of giving the necessary directions for his funeral, a neighbouring gentleman, who paid a visit to the disconsolate lady, on this melancholy occasion, took on himself the ordering of the interment; and captain Graham was most magnificently buried in the abbey church of Westminster.

Mrs. Graham cautiously concealed from Miss Polly the death of her father; and the letter, which the mistress of the boarding school received, only intimated a desire that Miss should be sent home to pass a few days with her parents. This was complied with, and the young lady immediately set out for London.

She was greatly surprised, on her arrival, to see the whole family in mourning, although she soon guessed, by the cloud of melancholy which appeared in every one's countenance, the real cause of their grief; and was no sooner told that her suspicions were well grounded, than she was quite disconsolate at the loss of a parent, whom she so tenderly loved; yet her prudence, and filial piety, suggested every mean of consolation to

induce her mother to resign herself entirely to the divine pleasure, though she has equally in want of comfort.

Six months had passed in this manner, when at length the grief, occasioned in the family by the death of Mr. Graham, began to diminish; and a young gentleman, son to Mr. Wilson, a rich merchant in the city, struck with the beauty of Miss Graham, waited on her mother, and desired leave to pay his addresses to her daughter. He was about five and twenty years of age, and endowed with every good quality to win the affections of a young lady. Miss Polly was as much taken with him as he was with her, and their tempers agreed so perfectly, that the happiness of both seemed to center in each other. Mrs. Graham, however, did not approve of his suit, out of a spirit of pride. Her exalted notions would not suffer her to marry her daughter to any man whose condition in life did not promise a future promotion to some dignity; and she flattered herself, she should, one time or other, see her daughter an admiral's lady. She did not value riches, and would have been better pleased that her daughter should give her hand to a *gentleman*, though ever so poor, than to the richest merchant on the Exchange, whom she always esteemed as a *tradesman*.

She therefore resolved, that her daughter should either consent to marry a young gentleman, called captain Pierce, who had lately obtained the command of an India-man, or else forfeit all future claim to her favour. The young lady often reasoned with her mother on the impropriety of her marrying a man she could never love; told her how deeply Mr. Wilson was rooted in her affection; and at length vowed she would sooner die, than give her hand to a man, on whom she could not also bestow her heart. Mrs. Graham was quite inexorable to all her daughter's intreaties, and the persuasions of her friends had no influence over her inflexible temper, whose predominant passion (as has already been observed) was ambition. She lost all patience at hearing Miss talk at this rate; and, in the first emotions of her rage, ordered her to quit her presence, and never to come into it again, unless she resolved to listen to the addresses of him who was appointed her husband. The young lady retired to her chamber, and remained some time insensible to any other passion than sorrow. A flood of tears relieved her big swollen heart, and she had just power enough to write the following letter to her lover:

Dear Mr. WILSON,

MY cruel mother has just now been soliciting me to give my consent to marry one, whose very name is more hateful to me than I can express. I said what I could to persuade her not to sacrifice a daughter's happiness to her ambition; some friends, who were present, joined in the request; they expostulated with her on her conduct, but in vain; she was deaf to all they could say, and protests, that, if I do not obey her, she will for ever disown me for her child. My love for you overbalances every consideration; and her barbarous usage of me, in a point wherein she ought to shew most tenderness, forces me to be disobedient against my inclination. Her cruelty will, I believe, soon put a period to my life. Write to me, as often as possible, as that is the only comfort my heart is capable of receiving, while I am deprived of the pleasure of seeing you. To prevent any

discovery, direct your letters to my woman. I have only time to assure you, that I am, and ever shall be,

Your most faithful and affectionate,
till death,

M.G.”

This letter, delivered by her trusty maid, produced next morning the following answer:

“My dear Charmer,

I Never till now knew what it was to receive a disagreeable present from you. Yours of yesterday gives me infinite pain, and the more, as it is out of my power to relieve your distress. Our cruel fates have raised a new impediment to our happiness. My father, who, you know, highly approved of our marriage, has this morning forbid me, under the severest penalty of his displeasure, ever to think more of you. He is highly irritated that your mother should entertain so mean an opinion of our family, and he threatens to disinherit me, if I persist in the resolution of making you my wife. Believe me, my dear Polly, the enjoyment of all the riches of this world cannot yield me the least satisfaction, if I am deprived of you, on whom my happiness alone depends. I could cheerfully submit to endure the greatest misery, if I were in possession of her whom I love dearer than my life. But the thoughts of what you, and the dear pledges of our mutual embraces must suffer, rend my heart. We must wait a while with patience, till kind heaven shall please to point out a way to extricate us from our present difficulties. You shall hear from me every day, and as a token of my love, take this ring, by which I plight my faith to you for ever.

I am,
dearest Polly,
yours entirely,

T.W.”

This epistle, together with the ring, she received very joyfully. She was however concerned, that Mr. Wilson should have laid such injunctions on his son, but at the same time, flattered herself, that his good sense, and his great love for him, would make him change his sentiments; and a circumstance soon after happened, which gave her some room to hope; and the more, as it freed her from the disagreeable task of shewing complaisance to a man, whom she abhorred, by removing him from her presence. This event, though it gave no small uneasiness to her mother, afforded her much satisfaction, as it retarded her marriage with him whom she could never be brought to love.

About this time, captain Pierce, who, as may be remembered, was raised to the command of an East-India ship, was ordered by the company to go to Bengal. This gave him and Mrs. Graham as much pain as it was pleasing to Miss Polly and Mr. Wilson. To heighten his distress, his departure was too near at hand to allow sufficient time for the necessary preparations for the celebration of his nuptials with the young lady. The marriage therefore was obliged to be deferred till his return, and Mrs. Graham assured

him, that her daughter should not marry any one else during his absence. This promise afforded him some comfort, and in a few days he received orders to embark and proceed on his voyage.

The merchant's son, finding the greatest obstacle (as he flattered himself) to his happiness removed, renewed his suit with greater ardour than before, but had the mortification to find himself repulsed again by the young lady's mother, who still persisted in her resolution of not marrying her daughter to a *tradesman*, as she haughtily expressed herself. This refusal filled him with the most poignant grief, and on his return home, he fell ill of a violent fever; in the height of which, he betrayed symptoms of madness, by which the physicians soon discovered the cause of his illness. He called on his dear Polly incessantly; cursed his cruel stars which denied him the happiness of possessing her whom he loved to distraction; and gave evident signs, that, unless his request was gratified, death would soon put a period to his unhappy life.

To heighten our lovers distresses, the inexorable Mrs. Graham, who had an estate at Luton in Bedfordshire, set out for that place, and took her daughter with her. Here she continued to exercise still greater cruelty on her than before. She seldom suffered her to go out, and then only accompanied by herself or a trusty servant, in whom she could confide. She denied her the use of pen and ink; gave the servants strict orders never to mention the name of Mr. Wilson in her hearing. This made her often wish that death would put an end to her sufferings; and she had frequent temptations to lay violent hands on herself, but was prevented by the protection of kind heaven, which would not permit her thus to fall a sacrifice to her mother's mistaken ambition.

Her sorrow was not a little increased at hearing of the indisposition of her dear Mr. Wilson, which by the following accident she was acquainted with. A gentleman who was intimate with the old merchant's family, and who also knew Mrs. Graham, happening to pass that way, as he was going to his country house, which was a few miles distant from Luton, stopped at that lady's house, where he was invited to stay dinner. Miss Polly was present at table; and, among other topics, the discourse turned on the subject of love, and the fatal consequences of being disappointed in the choice of a partner for life. This conversation was very disagreeable to Mrs. Graham, though it afforded a melancholy satisfaction to the young lady, as it in some measure soothed her grief. He took occasion to mention Mr. Wilson's unhappy state, which had overwhelmed his aged father and all his relations with sorrow; and concluded his narrative, with earnestly requesting, that Mrs. Graham would restore tranquillity to his afflicted family, by giving her daughter leave to marry the young gentleman, as his father now most ardently desired it, how averse soever he might have heretofore been to the match, on account of Miss Polly's mother's mistaken delicacy, in refusing her consent to an alliance with the family of a merchant.

The reader may easily conceive what were the emotions of Miss Polly's heart at this discourse. She retired from table, and went to her apartment, where shutting herself up, she gave vent to her grief by a flood of tears. She remained in this deplorable situation several days without seeing any body, except her maid, who carried her what

she wanted. Her mother, at the end of a fortnight, during which time she had not once seen or enquired after her, went to her; and, in order to increase her pain, began with reproaching her for her meanness of spirit in condescending to listen to the addresses of a man, who was so much her inferior in every respect; called her refusing to marry captain Pierce an act of the highest disobedience; and vowed she would never forgive this obstinacy in persisting to love any other than him who was already fixed on to be her husband.

The young lady, who, by a series of the most cruel treatment from her mother, was grown quite weary of life, would gladly have embraced death, and often sighed for the hour in which she should be delivered from her present troubles. Her woman, who loved her tenderly, and who sensibly felt for her mistress's distress, resolved to try an expedient to deliver her, which she did in the following manner:

She procured for miss Polly the habit of a country girl, and took a place for her in the waggon which was to set out for London the next morning. The disguise was so artfully contrived, that she was easily conveyed out of the house undiscovered. She had succeeded thus far in her attempt, when having stopped at a little distance from home, to recover strength from the fatigue she had undergone in endeavouring to escape, she was accidentally met by her mother, who was returning from a visit, and who asked the servant, who attended her daughter, whither she was going with that young woman? The maid answered, she was carrying her to the inn, where the waggon, which was setting out for London, waited for her; and, without stopping for any farther parley, was going to continue her road, when the young lady, full of apprehension at seeing her mother, dropped down in a swoon. Mrs. Graham drew nearer, and, to her great surprize, found that the pretended country girl was no other than her own daughter.

The old lady immediately ordered her to be conveyed home, where she was no sooner arrived, than she was closely confined to her apartment; and for greater security, Mrs. Graham would not suffer any servant for the future to attend her, but carried her what she wanted with her own hand, and kept the key of her room herself. The unhappy young lady's case was now become more desperate than ever. She wept continually; sleep became a stranger to her eyes; and, in a word, she abandoned herself entirely to grief.

Her mother, who was under continual apprehensions lest her daughter might be more successful in some future attempt, took the resolution of placing her to board at a farm-house, where she could not so easily put her design in execution. She accordingly agreed with an honest farmer, whose name was Jenkins, and who lived at Warrington in Lancashire, to take her daughter, with an allowance of thirty pounds per annum for her maintenance. She also gave him strict orders never to suffer her to stir out alone; and, above all, carefully to conceal from her any letters which she might receive from young Mr. Wilson, when he should come to hear where she was. All things being thus adjusted, miss Polly was conveyed to Jenkins's house, attended only by two servants, who returned immediately to Luton, after having given up their charge into the farmer's hands.

Jenkins, though born and bred in the country, and a stranger to the politeness which is to be met with in great cities, was well acquainted with all the social virtues which serve to render a man a valuable member of society. He could feel for the distresses of disappointed lovers; and he no sooner heard the particulars of miss Polly's story, than he promised to lend her all the assistance in his power. He could not forbear exclaiming loudly against the misconduct of parents, who, to flatter their own ambitious views, entail perpetual misery on their offspring, and pave the way to their inevitable ruin. Miss told him her intention of going to London; which design, though it had been before frustrated, she hoped by his means would now succeed.

The farmer had a distant relation in London, whom he had not seen for many years, and had often told his family his intention of going to town on that account. He prepared for his journey; and Miss Graham, by his direction, quitted his house some hours before his departure, and met her at a village five miles distant from Warrington. She mounted behind him, and in this manner arrived in London. When she came thither, she thanked the farmer for his kindness, and prayed him to accept of five guineas as a reward for the important service he had rendered her, which he with difficulty complied with; and she went directly to the house of Mr. Wilson.

CHAP. II.

AS soon as she entered the house, she was received by her lover with all the ecstasy and joy imaginable. They for some time lost the faculty of speaking. When they had recovered themselves so as to be able to give utterance to their words, they poured forth their hearts in the tenderest accents to each other; and the young gentleman's father, who was present at this very moving scene, melted into tears of joy at the happy encounter of the two lovers. He resolved they should no longer sigh in vain for the completion of that happiness they both desired so ardently to possess, and therefore immediately gave his consent, and they were married privately the next day. No tongue can express the joy they experienced on this occasion; and Mr. Wilson rejoiced also that his son had made so judicious a choice. Their happiness was, however, of very short duration; for Mrs. Graham, having heard of her daughter's elopement, came to town with the utmost speed, fully resolved to make her suffer still greater cruelty, if possible, than she had ever before inflicted on her.

She flew to Mr. Wilson's, where finding the happy pair together, she began to upbraid miss Polly in the severest terms; and told her she would from that hour disown her. In vain did Mr. Wilson endeavour to appease her anger: all he could say to palliate her daughter's supposed crime, enraged her the more: she flung out of the house with the greatest indignation; and when she came home, sent for a lawyer, made her will, and cut her child off with a shilling.

Miss Polly in about two months proved with child; and this, though a subject of joy to her husband and his father, was no small grief to her, Mrs. Graham having, with no

less industry than malice, reported that the infant concealed in her daughter's womb was illegitimate, which made all her acquaintance, who had hitherto behaved to her with the greatest respect, now treat her with the utmost indifference. All this, though it deeply affected her, she strove to bear with the greatest resignation; and, at the end of ten months, she was brought to-bed of a lovely boy. She sent to her mother, acquainting her, in the most dutiful manner, with her situation, and earnestly intreated her to come and see her; thinking that her resentment would be cooled at the sight of the dear pledge of her marriage. She was unfortunately mistaken; and her mother shewed by her answer, that she was long become a stranger to those sentiments of affection which she ought to have entertained for her daughter's issue.

Mr. Wilson, who studied to mitigate his wife's sorrow at her mother's ill treatment, was under the disagreeable necessity of leaving her for some time to go over to Jamaica, in order to settle some affairs of his father's. The old gentleman having received advice of the sudden death of a correspondent, it was absolutely necessary that somebody should be sent thither to secure some property belonging to him, and which he was in great danger of losing; so that, not being able to go himself on account of age, and other infirmities, he resolved to send his son to that island, with instructions and full power to act in every thing as he thought proper. The young gentleman accordingly embarked, and after a prosperous voyage of two months arrived at the desired port.

During her husband's absence, Mrs. Wilson had the mortification to see old Mr. Wilson fall dangerously ill of a fever, which, in about ten days, put a period to his life. She was now more perplexed than ever. He had made no will, and consequently there was no provision made for her. She immediately dispatched a letter to her husband, acquainting him with his father's death, and conjured him to return as soon as possible, to take care of his father's effects; and she acted with so much prudence till he returned, which was not till the end of four months, that he found every thing to his satisfaction. After having discharged all his father's debts, he found himself in the possession of 30,000 l.

He now began to act for himself, and for five years went on with the greatest success. After that he met with several misfortunes: two of his correspondents, with whom he was largely concerned, became bankrupts; and he was obliged at length to take refuge, together with his wife and child, in Holland. Here he endeavoured by all the means of honest industry to procure a subsistence for himself and family, but had the misfortune to fail in every attempt he made to that purpose. He was forced then to go to Paris, where, after experiencing the greatest misery, he at last resolved to return to his native country.

He had not been long in London, before he found an opportunity of employing himself in a way perfectly adapted to his capacity. An eminent timber-merchant, named Mr. Ward, had occasion for a clerk; and Mr. Wilson, by the recommendation of some friends, obtained the place. The salary was 100l. a year. Mrs. Wilson also, by working privately in the millinery way, contributed to the maintenance of the family, which was now increased to four: and thus living frugally on the fruits of their industry, they endeavoured to forget that they had ever been in a higher station.

It was at this time that captain Pierce arrived in England from Bengal. His great knowledge in naval affairs had caused him to be raised to the dignity of a commodore; and no one doubted but he would soon be created an admiral. He still retained the same affection for his former flame; and understanding that she had been married, and was now greatly fallen from the state of affluence she enjoyed when he first became acquainted with her, he determined to attempt her virtue with the all-powerful force of gold. He made an attempt by offering her 100 guineas, on condition that she would comply with his unjust request. Her virtue was proof against every attack he could make, and she told her husband of his behaviour. Mr. Wilson thereupon sent him a challenge, purposing rather to hazard his life than suffer such an insult on his wife's honour to go unresented.

The day was fixed, and the two combatants met in Hyde-Park. They pushed at each other vigorously for some time, till after a fierce combat of near half an hour, victory declared itself in favour of commodore Pierce, who unfortunately gave Mr. Wilson a thrust in the left side, near the heart. He fell down on the grass, and had but just time to call on his dear wife, before he expired. His antagonist immediately fled, and taking post-horses soon arrived at Dover, where the packet being ready to sail, he embarked, and landing at Calais, pursued his journey to Paris. What became of him afterwards is unknown.

Mrs. Wilson, when she heard of the death of her husband, was seized with greater grief than can be expressed: a high fever followed, which terminated in a violent madness, and made it indispensably necessary that she should be confined. Luckily for her children, she happened at that time to be at the house of a relation of Mr. Wilson's, who very humanely took care of them during her illness, which lasted above two months. When she recovered, she began to reflect on her unhappy situation; and the scene of complicated distress, which presented itself to her view, was so affecting as to drive her almost to despair. It was, however, a consolation in the midst of her misfortunes, that she still remained virtuous, which she preferred beyond all the honours and riches this world can afford.

Her mother dying at this time, she became possessed of an annuity of 30 pounds a year, which an aunt, who had inherited all Mrs. Graham's fortune, allowed her, on account of her great distress. With this small income, and what her business of a milliner produced, she hoped to maintain herself, and bring up her children. She took lodgings in Brewer-street, and was pretty fortunate in getting business, every body being eager to give her something to do, as they saw she took great pains to support her two infants.

She continued a widow for some years, and though several tradesmen of reputation had often addressed her, she never listened to any of them. She at length suffered herself to be over-persuaded by some acquaintance, to receive the visits of Mr. Jones a wealthy mercer in Cheapside. He bore the character of an honest man; and as he had already buried his wife, to whom he had proved a very good husband, Mrs. Wilson was induced to believe she was doing an injury to herself and her children by refusing to

marry him. She consented to the match; and the nuptials being celebrated, she removed into the city, and now began to enjoy the same affluence as formerly. She had, however, afterwards reason to repent of having acquiesced with those who persuaded her to take this step, as it involved her in still greater misery than she had ever before known.

The mercer behaved pretty well to her for the first five months that they lived together; at the end of which time she proved with child, and then a new scene of trouble opened, which began by his growing jealous of her, and ended in a separation from each other. She had been at the play one evening with a merchant's wife, whose son, a young gentleman of about twenty three years of age, and who possessed every qualification that could render him amiable to the fair sex, was one of the party. He was particularly charmed with Mrs. Jones, and when the representation was over, he insisted on accompanying her home. This she with some difficulty consented to, and a coach being called, they were carried to her house. They were no sooner arrived at the place than her husband opened the door; and seeing the young gentleman hand her out of the coach, he changed countenance, and all the signs of jealousy were visible in him. He could scarce even observe common decency to the merchant's son, who, perceiving his humour, took his leave immediately, refusing to stay supper, though hard pressed by Mrs. Jones.

When he was gone, Mr. Jones began to upbraid his wife with breach of fidelity to him, in terms which shocked her very much. In vain did she plead her innocence: he still continued to reproach her, and even declared his intention not to live any longer with her. Six weeks passed in this disagreeable manner, when at last he told her, that not being able any longer to cohabit with a woman who had once been false to him, at the instigation of his friends, he had taken the resolution of parting with her, and ordered her to quit his house without delay. He further told her, he would take on himself the education of her little son by Mr. Wilson, but that she was not to expect any farther assistance from him, and therefore he desired she would never make any application to him on that account.

She quitted his house that very day with a heavy heart, and took with her only what was barely necessary, leaving behind her several valuable things, besides some jewels, together with a gold watch, which he had made her a present of, and she took a ready furnished lodging in the same house where she had lived before her second marriage, and reassumed her former employment of a milliner. But business did not answer so well now as before, and she moreover found, that her husband's jealousy had reached the ears of her acquaintance in the neighbourhood where she now lived, who being more inclined to credit any false report raised to her prejudice, than to inquire into the truth of it, easily believed her to be full as guilty as she had been represented.

This gave her much pain, and seeing herself despised by those who before were her greatest friends, she resolved to make away with herself in the Thames. She was going to put the horrid design in execution, when a woman, who brought her some work, knocked at the door. The unexpected arrival of the stranger diverted her thoughts from this melancholy purpose, and the assurance she received of being supplied with as much as she could do, encouraged her so far, as to make her lay aside the intention of making away with herself, but her troubles and agitation of mind caused an abortion.

An unlucky accident happened soon after, which deprived her of her present means of subsistence. She went one day to receive a bill of about ten pounds which was due, and on her return home, found that her lodgings had been robbed of fine laces, cambrics, and other things to a considerable amount. This made her almost distracted; but recollecting her thoughts, she determined to advertise the things with a reward for the recovery of them. It was to no purpose; and not being able to discover the thief, she was forced to deliver all she was worth to satisfy those persons who had intrusted her with them.

In this perplexing situation, she took a new lodging in a court near Pall-Mall, and set up a little school, to teach reading and plain work: but nothing seemed to prosper with her; and she soon found herself obliged to throw up this undertaking. She next advertised for a place as a lady's maid; but nothing of that kind offering, she saw herself reduced to her last guinea, when an event happened, which afforded some present relief.

She happened one day to meet Mr. Jones, her husband, who accosted her, and perceiving she looked very melancholy, inquired into the cause of it. When he was acquainted with her misfortunes, since their separation, he told her he was extremely sorry for what had happened to her, and added, that if she would return home with him, his future behaviour should convince her how sorry he was for having treated her so cruelly without any just reason. This she absolutely refused; saying she could not entirely forget his former ill usage; and that she only desired a little assistance untill she could put herself in a way of earning her bread. He gave her two guineas, with a promise of a weekly allowance of half a guinea; which he caused to be punctually paid for some time. With this allowance she began to live comfortably, untill he, growing tired of contributing to the support of his injured wife, withdrew his allowance, and she was reduced to her former state of indigence.

She was now forced to dispose of the best of her cloaths to support herself, and must have inevitably perished for want, had not a friend of hers, with great difficulty, and much intercession, procured her a post in Drury-lane play-house, where she became dresser to one of the greatest actresses of her time. She remained there two years, and maintained herself genteelly with a salary of fifteen shillings per week, untill she met with another misfortune, which deprived her also of this mean of procuring a subsistence. This was no other than that of breaking her leg, by which accident, being destitute of friends, she was obliged to go to an hospital for her cure. Whilst there, a young surgeon, who attended her, became so much enamoured with her, that, after she was recovered, he offered an hundred guineas for a grant of that which she could not allow, without transgressing the rules of conjugal fidelity and chastity. Though she could not, in her then condition, avoid hearing his proposals, yet she remained inflexible against complying with his solicitations; and the young gentleman was at last so charmed with her laudable firmness, that he obliged her to accept, as an acknowledgement of his approbation of her conduct, the sum which he had importuned her to receive for the sacrifice of her virtue.

Soon after receiving this money, she had an opportunity of exercising her charity on an object truly deserving of it, and who was a very near relation of her own, but by a series of calamities was reduced to the greatest misery and distress.

She was walking in the ward one day, when she was met by a tall elderly man, who desired to speak with her in private. Surprised at being thus accosted by a person, who was an entire stranger to her, she was much perplexed what to do. She was a great enemy to private interviews with men, and her late rencounter with the surgeon had put her yet more on her guard. However, considering there was nothing to apprehend from a man, who seemed already emaciated with age and infirmity, she at last consented to retire with him to a remote part of the room, to hear what he had to say.

He began to tell her, he was greatly surprised that she did not know him, and calling her by her maiden name, acquainted her, that he was her own uncle by the mother's side, that a chain of unavoidable misfortunes had brought him to the lowest state of human misery, and earnestly intreated her to give him some assistance. She at first doubted the veracity of his story: but being afterwards convinced, that what he said was strictly true, from his mentioning several circumstances relative to her family, which, unless he had been nearly allied to it, he could never have known, she gave him ten guineas; and he then proceeded to lay before her the following account of himself.

CHAP. III.

“ABOUT the year 1743, I went to Turkey, in order to settle some affairs, the success of which depended on my presence. When my business was finished, I prepared to return home, and accordingly went on board a ship, whereof I was half owner, and which was to touch at a port on the coast of Barbary. We had a prosperous voyage for some days, when a violent storm overtaking us, we drove out of our course. We lost all our masts, and were become a mere wreck. The storm abating, we were employed in setting up jury masts, which we had no sooner done, than another storm, more terrible than the former, came on, and so disabled our ship, that we were obliged to take to our boat, carrying with us as much provision as we could conveniently come at, together with a compass; and thus we endeavoured to save our lives.

“Five days after we quitted the vessel, we happily made land, but endeavouring to run the boat into a little creek, she overset, and every soul in her perished except myself. I swam on shore, and when I had returned thanks to kind heaven for having thus miraculously saved my life, I walked about to see what sort of a place I was in. To my great disappointment, I found I was in an uninhabited country, and which seemed to afford nothing towards sustaining life. I now wished it had been my fortune to have shared the fate of my companions, who were drowned, as I had no other prospect before me but that of dying with hunger. To my great joy I found a spring of fresh water, of which I drank plentifully; and being weary I sat down, ruminating on my unhappy circumstances.

“I had not sat above half an hour, musing on my misfortunes, when, the sea being calm, I perceived a man of war’s long boat come on shore at the place where I was. They saw me, and called to me, demanding my name, whence I came, and by what accident I was there. I gave them a faithful account of what had happened to me, and afterwards, most compassionately, they carried me on board with them, after I had assisted in filling their water casks, which occasioned their landing on that island. I was kindly received by the captain and all the officers; who, having made me rehearse the particulars of my life, told me, “they would give me my passage to England, provided I would assist them in an attack on the island of Gomera, one of the Canaries belonging to the Spaniards, with whom we were at war.” This I agreed to, and having weighed anchor, we sailed away very joyfully, highly pleased with the flattering hopes of getting great riches in this expedition.

“In about four weeks time we made Gomera, and coming as close under the island as we conveniently could, and preparing to land some men, in order to begin the attack, we found, by their firing some guns from a battery which lay on the point of a rock, that they already expected us, and kept themselves in readiness to receive us. We accordingly manned our boats, and I had the command of the pinnace, in which were fifty men well armed. While the boat was getting on shore, we exchanged a great many shot with them, and could see our balls strike against the rock, but, by the dexterity of the rowers, theirs did not touch us. While we were firing at each other, we saw a vessel run out from under a point of land that lay about a league to the northward of us, and endeavoured to stretch over to the island of Teneriffe, another of the Canaries; as soon as we saw her, we hoisted a sail, which we had in the boat, and endeavoured to make towards her, she being then about a league to the windward of us. She put about, and stood close upon a wind. We chased her for some time, she endeavouring, as we imagined, to go round the west part of Gomera, but the wind being then N. W. she was not able to weather the point, but ran in, and came to an anchor within half a cable’s length of the shore.

“She was a bark of about sixty tuns burthen, and there being no battery at that part of the island where she lay at anchor, we imagined we could very easily board her. She was a Spanish barcalonga, and came from the island of Palma, was bound to Teneriffe, laden with sugar and brandy to put on board a galleon that lay at Santa Cruz. There running a strong current, and the wind being just in our teeth, we were not able to row the boat a-head with six oars, so made directly towards the shore, and rowed alongside close under the land, the current not running so strong there.

“We were three hours after we left the ship before we got within musket shot of the bark, and then we unanimously agreed to board her. Then said I, “my boys, the bark is our own, for the men belonging to her have left her. Let us give them one volley and then board the bark.” We had two swivels mounted on the bow of our boat, our master stepped forward to one of them himself, and ordered me to the other; he bid me take the best aim I could, and told me he would do the same. We had no sooner discharged the swivels, but two or three hundred men came from behind the rocks. We had been so long

time in getting to the bark, that the men who belonged to her had landed, gone up the country, and brought these people to their assistance.

“Our swivels being discharged, the men from behind the rocks kept a constant fire at us. Our master received a ball just above his right eye, and another grazed on my right shoulder. We rowed directly to the bark. The lieutenant, myself, and four more leaped into her, and those in the boat handed in our arms. As soon as we were in the bark, our lieutenant ordered one of our men to take an axe, and cut the cable, saying, “she would drive off.” I endeavoured to dissuade him, by telling him, “if the cable was cut, she would certainly drive on shore,” for she then was very near the land. He seemed a little angry at this, though had my advice been followed, it had been better for us all; for as soon as his orders were obeyed, she turned broadside to the sea, and in a few minutes after, struck a shore on the rocks.

“By the bark’s swinging round, our boat was exposed to the fire of the enemy, and while the Spaniards were engaged with the boat, we in the bark kept firing on them. These in the boat, unable to sustain the fight, sheered off. The Spaniards, seeing this, turned all their fury on us, and the engagement was very hot on both sides. We fired at them as fast as possible, and threw all our handgrenades on shore, which did some execution on those who lay on that side of the rock. Our lieutenant was shot through the head, most of our people, as well as myself, dangerously wounded, and our powder almost exhausted. We called a council to consider on what was best to be done; it was proposed that we should lay down our arms. To this I objected, saying “we had better die like men, for that they would certainly kill us when they came on board.” But they still insisting thereon, I agreed at last to it. However, I still kept a blunderbuss in my hand, being desirous of hearing what conditions they would offer.

“As soon as the Spaniards saw our men had laid down their arms, they came on board. The first man they saw was our lieutenant, whom, though he was dead, they began to cut in a most dreadful manner. They exercised the same cruelty on one of the wounded, several of them cutting him at once with their long hooks, though he cried out for mercy all the time: and every one except myself was served in the same inhuman manner. Seeing their cruelty to our men, I still kept the blunderbuss, and some of them advancing towards me, I pointed it as if I was going to fire. On this, they all ran to the other part of the bark, and from thence leap’d on shore.

“At that very instant a great sea running, turned the bark on one side with her keel towards the shore. This gave me an opportunity of pulling off my cloaths, and jumping into the water, in order to swim to our ship. I swam a considerable way before they saw me. As soon as they perceived I was endeavouring to escape, they began to fire at me from every side, and their shot wounded me in six places. I kept on swimming, until I was out of the reach of their balls; and doubtless I should have been able to have swam to our own ship, had not the Spaniards launched their boat (which before was hauled up between the rocks) and came after me; they rowed as fast as they could, and as soon as they came near me, one of the men who stood in the bow of the boat, and held a half pike in his hand, pointed it towards me, saying in Spanish, “down, down, you English dog.”

As I did not then understand him, he repeated the same words, and pointed to the water. I guessed he meant I should dive, which I presently did, and came up on the other side of the boat.

“As soon as I came up again, he pointed a second time to the water, and said the same words as before. I was resolved not to dive any more; chusing rather to be killed by them than to drown myself. Seeing I refused to obey their orders, they talked some time among themselves, and then beckoned to me to swim to the boat, which, as they lay on their oars discoursing together, was driven by the current a good way from me. When they found I did not come to them, they rowed to me, and pulled me into the boat. As I stood upright, one of them struck me a blow on the breast, with such violence, that it beat me backwards, and I fell to the bottom of the boat, after which they rowed to land.

“When they came on shore, they hauled me out of the boat, being very weak with swimming and the loss of blood. On their bringing me on shore, the enraged multitude crowded round me, and carried me a little way from the place where we landed. They then placed me against a rock, and threatened to run me through with a half pike if I offered to stir. Whilst I was placed against the rock, and expecting death every moment, I saw a gentleman expostulating with the mob, and endeavouring to prevail on them to spare my life. Afterwards he came directly to me, and said in English, “Countryman, don’t be afraid; they want to kill you, but they shall not.” He then turned his back, stood close before me, and opening his breast, saying, “If they shot me, they should shoot him also.”

“The Spaniards being a little appeased at this surprising act of humanity, my deliverer took that opportunity to plead in my behalf. He told them, that, If they had killed me, while we were engaged with each other, they would have been excusable, both in the sight of God and man, because it was by way of self-defence; but that now I was unarmed, and incapable of doing them any harm, if they dared to kill me, my blood would certainly be required at their hands, and God would surely punish them for it hereafter. He said, that at most I was but a prisoner of war, and having made a brave defence, I ought to be esteemed for my valour. He further added, that being dangerously wounded, humanity, and the religion they professed, obliged them to dress my wounds, and use all possible means for my recovery.

“He used many other arguments besides, but not understanding Spanish, I did not comprehend what he said. I saw, notwithstanding, he was very pressing with them in my favour, and at length, they were entirely appeased. He led me home with him, caused me to be put to bed, and provided me with a good surgeon, and all other necessaries, where I remained five months before I was completely cured. My generous deliverer then gave me a handsome sum of money, procured me a passage in a ship bound to Portugal, from whence I got a passage to England, where I arrived about a year ago, and then considered what I should do to gain a livelihood. I had about twenty guineas left, after having discharged the expences of my voyage, and it was my intention to live on that money until I could obtain a place in the Customs, which I sollicitated, and to which I was

promised I should soon succeed. My friends kept their words, for I was admitted an officer on the first vacancy.

“I did not however long enjoy this turn of good fortune; being once on board of a ship which was unloading, I accidentally fell down into the hold, and had the misfortune to break my thigh. I was carried on shore directly, put into a coach, and conveyed hither. I have since learned that another has been put into my place; so that I am now destitute of every means of subsistence”.

CHAP. IV.

MRS. Jones listened to this mournful relation of her uncle with great attention; and when he had done speaking, she told him she would think of some way to procure him a livelihood, and bid him not be disheartened, for that he should never want while she could assist him.

She quitted the hospital about a fortnight after this, taking her uncle along with her. At the persuasion of some friends, she took a little retired house near Hammersmith, and put up a bill for lodging and board for single and widow ladies. Her affable behaviour procured her many friends; and it was not long before four gentlewomen of good family agreed to lodge and board with her at the rate of 40l. per annum. She had also the satisfaction to see her son, by her first husband Mr. Wilson, settled in business as a linen draper, and going on very prosperously. He was married to an agreeable young lady called Miss Sally Thompson, whose virtues are too conspicuous not to deserve a part in this history.

She was born near Barnstaple in Devonshire, and, for her beauty, might justly be esteemed an angel. She was the youngest daughter of the Rev. Mr. Thompson, an honest clergyman, who had a numerous family. He had no benefice, and the income of a curacy maintained his offspring. He was possessed of no more than twenty-five pounds a year, though he did all the duty; the rector, who lived 150 miles off, never coming thither above once a year, notwithstanding the living was worth 500 l. per annum. Mr. Thompson was greatly beloved by all the parishioners, as his life was an exact representation of the doctrine he taught. This good man kept also a little school, which brought him in twenty pounds a year more; so that these two salaries, together with some presents from the most opulent in the town, enabled him to keep up his family in a tolerable decent manner. I shall say nothing of the manner how the other children were introduced into the world, but confine myself to Miss Sally, who, being about fifteen years of age when her father unfortunately died, was, by the assistance of some friends, placed out an apprentice to Mrs. Martin, a milliner of great repute near St. James's.

She had not been long at the business, before her mistress found, to her great satisfaction, her trade increase greatly to what it was before Miss Sally engaged herself

with her, especially amongst the young gentlemen who frequented the shop, to whom she always behaved with a most becoming modesty, and great complaisance.

The fame of Miss Sally's beauty had, by this time, reached all the smarts and beaux in town, so that she had an infinite number of admirers, many of whom were dying for her, or at least pretended to be so. Among these was a young gentleman whose name was Lloyd. His father was a captain in the army, and, besides his commission, had a considerable estate in Scotland. This young gentleman was of a sweet disposition, and an only son. His father was consequently as fond of him as the most indulgent parent could be. However, the young gentleman, fearing his father's displeasure, endeavoured for the present to control his passion for his adorable goddess, as he often called her; and therefore tried as much as possible to divert his thoughts from the object of his love, by going to his father's seat in the country, where he employed himself in hunting, and other rural exercises; at the same time, visiting all the gentlemen in the neighbourhood, and receiving visits from them. This lasted near three months, when he was in hopes he had gained an absolute conquest over Cupid; and doubted not, but that he might safely return to London, without the least fear of a relapse. But how much he was mistaken the sequel will evidently demonstrate; for, meeting his charmer by chance in St. James's Park, he was so surprisingly affected at the sight of her, that he could hardly support himself on his unnerved legs; but recovering a little, after turning pale several times, he thus addressed himself to the idol of his soul.

“Dear Miss Thompson, though I have not the pleasure of being known to you more than by speaking to you once or twice at Mrs. Martin's, and consequently you may naturally suspect my design not to be so honourable as it really is; I have only this favour to beg at present, that you will not engage yourself to any body, until such time as I shall find an opportunity of informing you, in a more particular manner than I have now leisure to do, what advantageous proposals I shall be able to make you, and which I will satisfy you of by a letter in about a week; for I am not ashamed to confess that I doat on you more than on any woman in the universe.”

Miss Sally, upon hearing this, was greatly astonished; and, though she endeavoured several times to answer the young gentleman, yet she could utter nothing more, than, “Sir, you do me too much honour,” which in her confusion, she repeated several times. Mr. Lloyd perceiving her much discomposed at what he had advanced, soon construed it to his own advantage, by concluding that it proceeded from the sincere profession he had made of his inclination for her, and began to hope, that what he had expressed to her was not in the least disagreeable. He therefore took his leave of her in a most obliging manner, after having offered his service to wait on her home, which she would by no means accept of. He went directly to his father's, but could not rest all that night for meditating on his late interview with his queen of love. Notwithstanding Miss Sally was not so much enamoured as her spark, yet, when she consulted her pillow on the subject, it raised some emotions in her mind, which she had never experienced before; and, being much perplexed with doubts and fears, she was once going to communicate her thoughts to her fellow prentice who lay with her; but thinking that might be of dangerous consequence to the young gentleman, as probably the affair might, by that

means, reach his father's ears, she then, upon mature consideration, chose not to entrust, even her bosom friend, with the secret. She had no sooner fixed on this prudent resolution, before the watchman, who drowsily cried "Past three o'clock," seemed to intimate the necessity of composing herself to sleep, which she accordingly did.

Mr. Lloyd did not fail punctually to perform his promise to his dear Sally, by sending a letter at the appointed time, which she received by a private hand. When she opened it, not having power to do so for some time, she read as follows:

"Charming SALLY,

I Find it impossible to survive any longer without you, and therefore beg you will write to your mother, in order to solicit her concurrence in regard to the enclosed proposals. I have given some distant hints to my father concerning you, and he told me, that if I married a virtuous, discreet woman, of an honest reputable family, he should not be over anxious as to her fortune; but hoped I would not be too precipitate about it, as I was full young enough to be embarrassed with the cares of the world. Hitherto I have always obeyed my father in every respect, with the utmost submission, as really no parent can be more fond of a child than he is of me: but, should he thwart my inclination towards you, I cannot answer what may be the consequence; for, although my duty to him is very great, yet my love to you, if put in competition, will be found to be much greater. But supposing any obstacle should fall in the way to prevent my gaining his consent to marry you, and as I am not yet of age, and therefore cannot inherit the large fortune which I am intitled to by the will of an uncle of mine, yet I have already an estate of 200l. a year, which is in my own power, being left me by my mother, to commence as soon as I am twenty years of age, and which will be sufficient to support us, until I am in possession of the other. The truth of this you may easily be convinced of, by consulting counsellor M—hy in Lincoln's Inn, who has the deeds of the estate in his custody, and will satisfy any friend of yours, whom you may choose to confide in.

Farewel, my divine angel,

Yours with the utmost sincerity,

ANDREW LLOYD."

"P.S. I should take it as an inestimable blessing, if you would favour me with a line or two in answer to this, directed for T.S. to be left at the Rainbow Coffee-house, Temple-bar."

This letter puzzled Miss Sally very much; for, though she knew that the young gentleman was really son to captain Lloyd, and might be thoroughly confirmed of all he had mentioned in regard to his fortune, yet she thought it advisable to be better informed

of his temper, before she suffered herself to be more deeply engaged with him than she was already. Indeed she was not insensible, that the offers he made to her were infinitely beyond what she could ever, in all likelihood, expect from any one else, nor was she at all averse to his person or behaviour, both which were unexceptionable. However, before she proceeded any farther in the affair, she thought it her indispensable duty to let her mother know the true state of the case, and be entirely governed by her directions. After reading the letter, as she was coming down stairs, she saw her mistress sitting behind the counter, and two ladies richly dressed talking with her, wherefore she endeavoured to slip into the kitchen unperceived; but the ladies, being extremely desirous to converse with her, begged Mrs. Martin to call her back, which she did instantly. One of the ladies asked her, "how she liked London; and whether she had not found it a very wicked town. She answered, "She liked it extremely well; that she thought it a most wonderful fine place; and as to the inhabitants in general, considering that it consisted of people of almost all nations, she was very much surprised to find so many worthy persons in that noble city, as there certainly were. For," continued she, "in all the market towns and villages wherever she had been, the country folks have a notion that London is the most profane, licentious spot in the whole world." "And so, Miss Thompson," said the other lady, "you really find that this is not so detestable a place as it is commonly reported to be." "Indeed, Madam," answered Sally, "it is absolutely my belief, and I have heard several judicious persons remark the same, that take any city in England whatever, and, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, the people are fully as profligate, as they are here." The ladies were highly charmed with the opinion she seemed to entertain of their native place; and whispering Mrs. Martin, assured her, that Miss Thompson infinitely exceeded their expectation, both as to beauty and good sense, with many other such encomiums. They took leave of her, stepped into their coach, which waited at the door for them, and drove home.

Mrs. Thompson, having perused her daughter's letter, was much perplexed with scruples and doubts, lest Mr. Lloyd's proposals might be only a contrivance to seduce her. She therefore wrote to Mrs. Martin, unknown to her daughter, desiring her to inquire into the whole particulars of the amour between Mr. Lloyd and Sally; begging her likewise to inform herself what estate he had at present, and what more fortune he was likely to expect. Mrs. Martin, being very well acquainted with captain Lloyd's sister, took the opportunity of making her a visit, when she intimated, among other topics of conversation, that it had been hinted to her a few days ago, that Miss Forward had fallen in love with Mr. Lloyd. To which Mrs. Lloyd replied, "She had never heard a tittle of it, and hoped her nephew would not be in haste to marry as yet, as she thought it would be better to stay until he came of age, when he would be in possession of an estate of near 1500l. per annum, which was left him by her brother; though, said she, he has now 200l. a year in his own hands, which was my sister Lloyd's jointure; besides, when the captain dies, he will have another estate of 400l. per annum." This account Mrs. Martin faithfully transmitted to Mrs. Thompson immediately, and thereby solved all her suspicions in regard to Mr. Lloyd's circumstances. She had now no other fears, than that he should by some stratagem deceive her daughter, under pretence of making her his wife; and therefore sent Sally the following precautions:

“Dear Child,

I find by a letter from your mistress yesterday, that Mr. Lloyd will have an exceeding great fortune, but still that does not entirely make me easy at his courting you, for young gentlemen of this age find many ways to impose on the credulity of our sex, therefore remember the advice I gave you in my last letter. There is one thing I look upon as absolutely necessary, which is, that Mr. Lloyd should, by all means, obtain his father’s consent before he proceeds any farther, without which I can never think of giving you mine.

I am your affectionate mother,

MARY THOMPSON.”

The next time Miss Sally saw Mr. Lloyd, she disclosed to him her mother’s sentiments of obtaining his father’s approbation in his keeping her company as a material point before they were too far engaged to each other. He answered, that he did not in the least doubt his father’s compliance, and, to satisfy her, he would endeavour soon to procure it; but at the same time gave her to understand, that she shewed but little regard for him, to be so nicely scrupulous, after he had dealt so ingenuously with her; that she studied nothing so much as to make every thing agreeable to her, and solemnly protested, he had no other view than to render her life as comfortable as might be, and was extremely disappointed to find his honourable proposals had met with no better success. This last sentence he spoke with a kind of warmth which she had never before observed in him; and therefore she replied, that what she had imparted was without any design to offend him, since it was her mother’s earnest request, which she must beg him to consider on, for his own sake as well as hers. She plainly saw, by the abrupt manner with which Mr. Lloyd took his leave of her, that he went away not so well satisfied at her discourse as she could wish; but as all she had mentioned, was done purely with an intention to preserve a perfect tranquillity between his father and him, she was not so concerned at it, as she would otherwise have been. The next morning, Mr. Lloyd came to her in a much pleasanter humour than he had left her the night before: he had prevailed on his aunt to intercede with his father in her behalf: Mrs. Lloyd had seen her often, both at Mrs. Martin’s and at the captain’s, where she used to carry things for her mistress; and Miss Sally was a great favourite with Mrs. Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd acquainted her with this, and likewise assured her, that his father had actually promised his aunt, that he would go to Mrs. Martin’s, and if he found Miss Sally was so agreeable as he and Mrs. Lloyd had represented, he would not be against his marrying her in about half a year’s time.

In a few days after, as captain Lloyd had given his word to his sister, that he would call to take a view of Sally, he took an opportunity of going to Mrs. Martin’s to bespeak some linen, where he saw Sally sitting in the shop at work. She was dressed, as usual, very neat. Tho’ there were other apprentices in the shop besides her, he needed not to be informed which was she; for fixing his eyes on her, he immediately asked her several questions concerning her country, to all which she answered so pertinently, that

the old captain began to be almost as much enamoured as his son; so that when he went home, he told his sister, that he thought Andrew had an excellent taste, for he must needs confess, he never beheld a more sensible and beautiful girl in his life. This gave Mrs. Lloyd infinite joy, as she was sensible her nephew doated on Sally; and therefore, as soon as she saw him, she communicated to him the agreeable tidings. At the news of his good fortune, he seemed quite transported, but did not forget to return his aunt thanks for her kind services to him in favour of his lovely Miss Thompson.

Mr. Lloyd now thought of nothing but going to his dear charmer, to beg her to write to her mother for her permission to hasten the auspicious hour, wherein he should join his Sally in the honourable state of wedlock. When he had dined, he set out with the utmost expedition to acquaint his nymph with the issue of his father's visit to Mrs. Martin, and what he said in commendation of her. All the way he went, he was pleasing himself with the thoughts how surprised and overjoyed she would be at this turn of affairs in their favour. But when he came to her mistress's, and found she was not at home, he was greatly disappointed, being forced to return to the captain's without seeing her.

CHAP. V.

SALLY had been sent out, about half an hour before Mr. Lloyd came, to a lady near Grosvenor-square, who insisted on her staying to drink tea. As she was going back to Mrs. Martin's, she unluckily mistook her way, and the evening approaching, she inquired of a woman, very gaily dressed, the way to St. James's-street, who told her, she would conduct her thither, if she would go along with her. Accordingly they both went together, but before they had proceeded far, the woman knocked at a door, which Sally perceiving would have taken leave of her. The woman desired her to step in, telling her, she was going immediately to St. James's street herself. Sally, thinking it would be safer to have some body with her, than to go through the streets alone as it was now dusk, went in with the woman; which she had scarcely done, before she, and another woman (the skin of whose face resembled the rind of a coarse grained Seville orange) compelled her to go up stairs into a room that was pretty well furnished, and both threatened, if she offered to make the least noise, to murder her that minute. It was in vain to resist, so she submitted herself to the will of the two women, and seemed to be tolerably well composed, while they stayed with her: but when they were gone, ruminating on the terrible situation she was in, she could contain her grief no longer, and began to weep most bitterly; and at the same time, threw herself on the bed in a fit of despair. This lasted not long, for a young girl, who over-heard her, came up stairs, and begged her to seem as easy as possible; since, if she shewed any discontent, the women of the house would use her extremely ill, but if she would only disguise her uneasiness two or three days, very likely they would let her have her liberty again. The girl left her, and returned soon after with some cold roasted mutton, and some small beer. Sally told her she had no stomach to eat, and desired she would take it away again; but the girl answered, her mistress had ordered her to eat something lest she should be sick, which when she had done, she might go to bed

as soon as she thought proper. Sally, fearing to disoblige her, endeavoured to eat a little, but in vain, so that the girl was forced to take the victuals away.

The girl soon after came to tell Sally that she was to lie with her, and that her mistress would have them go to bed directly. This message was not at all agreeable to Sally, who dreaded the consequences that might ensue; but on being told, she need not be apprehensive of any surprise in the night, she then undressed, though not without shewing some signs of diffidence. When Sally and the girl were laid down, the latter told her, that Mrs. D—y had trepanned her in a very artful manner, when she first came to London; the particulars of which, are as follow:

“I was born at Birmingham in Warwickshire: my father was an exciseman. Some time since, a gentlewoman of London, who saw me at Birmingham, hired me to be her chambermaid. The gentlewoman, going to London, ordered me to follow her; and as the expences of going in the waggon are much less than in the coach, my father thought that would be the best way. When the waggon came to St. Giles’s pound, two women passengers and I agreed to get out and walk over the stones. At St. Giles’s church there were a man and a woman singing ballads, so the two women mixing with the crowd that was gathered about the singers, I soon lost sight of them, and could not find them again. While I was looking after them, Mrs. D—y came up to me, and she asked me which way I was going. Upon this I told her what had happened. She said she lived just by where the Birmingham waggon put up, and would shew me the way thither. I did not in the least doubt the truth of what she said, and was very glad of a guide to a place, to which I was an utter stranger. I had not long reason to be satisfied with my conductress; for, instead of carrying me to the inn as I expected, she brought me hither. Mrs. D—y, and her cousin, the other woman whom you saw, put me into this very room, and behaved to me much in the same manner as they have done to you.

“Thus I continued for about two days, when an elderly gentleman, called Mr. O—y, came with her to see me. She ordered me not to disoblige him in any thing whatever; threatening, in case I did, to punish me most severely. She told me he was her brother, and that in all likelihood, if he approved of my behaviour, he would marry me; that though he was not so young as I could wish, yet he was very rich, and would give me a coach; and that above all he was very good natured. By these and such like artful insinuations, she gained an easy conquest over my unexperienced age, especially as I much feared her ill usage if I did not comply.

“Next morning, the old gentleman came to the house to breakfast, and an elegant dinner and supper were also provided for him, at which he behaved with gaiety and good humour. The wine and punch went freely round; and though I drank very moderately, yet I do not remember being put to bed, or any single circumstance that occurred, till I found myself in the arms of my lover at daybreak. Matters were then gone too far to shew any regret at what had passed; so I resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and make myself as agreeable to him as I could.

“He quitted the house in about a week’s time, and made me a present of five guineas; but what he gave my mistress I know not. However, when I came to reflect seriously on this affair, it gave me inexpressible concern. When he was gone, Mrs. D—y told me, if I would live with her, I should want for nothing that love or money could obtain; should be drest in the richest cloaths, and frequent all places of public diversion; and farther, if I was a good girl, and minded my business, I could not fail of getting a great deal of money and rich presents, as none but persons of quality frequented her house. Finding I was obliged to comply, I agreed to her proposals, though I intended to make my escape the very first opportunity.”

Poor Sally, on hearing this, began to lament most bitterly, for fear she should also undergo the same fate. She begged the girl to assist her, which she faithfully promised to do. She tried several times to close her eyes, in order to forget her wretched state, yet the distraction of her mind would not suffer her to take any rest for that night. About six o’clock the next morning her bed-fellow got up, and left the deplorable Sally to meditate on the dismal prospect before her. Two hours after, she thought she heard a man’s voice below stairs, which she supposed might be the old gentleman’s, of whom the girl had been speaking to her. Upon this she listened at the top of the staircase, and heard Mrs. D—y say, “that she could not deny, but she had a *delicious fresh* damsel *in petto*; but she was sure none of her customers, but Mr. O——y, would go to the price of her, for she would not take under fifty guineas.” At which the person damned her heartily, swearing he would immediately inform against her. Soon after the man was gone, the girl went up stairs to Sally with her breakfast. While she stayed, she told her she had some joyful news for her, which was, that her mistress’s cousin had been to acquaint Mr. O——y that she was there, but that he was at his country-seat, and would not be in town in less than three days at soonest. “And I know,” said she, “Mrs. D—y won’t let any body have you but him, because he is so generous a gentleman: however, I’ll talk no more on that subject at present, lest my mistress should overhear me, but we’ll contrive some expedient, when we go to bed, to make our escape, if possible.” After saying this, the girl went down stairs.

Sally, who never neglected, night and morning, to implore the blessing and assistance of Providence, thought she could not spend her time more advantageously, during the calamitous situation she was in, than by pouring out her complaints before the throne of that Almighty Being, in whose protection alone she confided. Hearing the girl coming up soon after, she got off her knees, and went to open the door: the girl entering told her, there had been a gentleman that morning, one Mr. Israel a Jew, who inquired if there was any new *ware*? and who, with difficulty, was prevented by her mistress, and her cousin, from coming up stairs to see her, but they would not let him, which occasioned a sad quarrel, and provoked Mr. Israel so much, that he threatened, in revenge, to get a constable and take them both up, by which means, said the girl, we shall be released of course.

This welcome news quite inspired the *fair captive*, especially when she was farther informed by the girl, that Mrs. D—y seemed to think the Jew would keep his promise, as he went away in a terrible passion. It is now, however, time to return to Mrs.

Martin and Mr. Lloyd, to see what effect Sally's absence had on them. Mr. Lloyd sent a footman to Mrs. Martin's between ten and eleven o'clock that night Sally went on her errand, to inquire if she was returned home. He saw Mrs. Martin herself, who expressed a great deal of concern at her being out so late, for fear any accident should befall her, and was very sorry she had not sent one of the apprentices with her. When the footman told Mr. Lloyd, that Miss Thompson was not come home, he was like one frantic, and running up and down the parlour, it was a considerable time before he could be appeased, even by his father and aunt, notwithstanding the many arguments they used to induce him thereto. When he had recovered himself a little, he desired his father to let the footman go once more to Mrs. Martin's, and if she was not come home to go where Sally had been, to ask what time she went from thence. But all this did not answer the intent, for though the footman sought her with the utmost care, and inquired of every person that was likely to give him any intelligence about her, yet he could meet with no body that had seen such a one as he described. The footman brought word that Miss Thompson went from the lady's house about eight o'clock at night. Mr. Lloyd, being dissatisfied with the unsuccessfulness of the first search, ordered men to go the next day to seek her with all possible diligence, even four miles every way round London; and in case they did not find her then, he resolved to advertise her immediately in the news papers. Mrs. Martin likewise sent a messenger to every one of her customers houses, and to every other place she could think of, where Sally usually went, but this also proved ineffectual. At last she determined to send a person to inquire, at all the wharfs below bridge, if Miss Thompson had been seen any where thereabouts, as it was not improbable, but that she might be kidnapped away, as it was then a common practice in London, for fellows called kidnappers, to decoy young men and women, together with children, in order to send them abroad. As an instance of which, some years ago, the son of a gentleman in Surry was bought of some kidnappers by a captain of a ship trading to Maryland, who sold him for fifteen pounds. The captain was taken up, committed to prison, and sentenced at his tryal to pay a large fine. However the young gentleman, by conveying a letter directed to his father, on board a ship bound for England, found means to procure his freedom. All their inquiries were fruitless, and chance alone brought about, what their most strenuous endeavours had not been sufficient to accomplish.

Mrs. Martin had been out on some business, and in her return home happened to pass by Mrs. D—y's, where a great mob and constables were assembled. She inquired into the cause; and was told, that two vile infamous women had decoyed several young girls into their house with an intent to prostitute them. This excited Mrs. Martin's curiosity; and, imagining that perhaps Sally might have been trepanned thither, she resolved to go in. The constables soon broke open Mrs. D—y's door, which the mob had no sooner entered than they presently went up stairs, but found only Sally, and the other girl. The two daughters of Lucifer had decamped, making their escape through a back alley. However, the mob instantly began to break the windows, and plunder the apartments of all the furniture; and it was with much difficulty that the peace officers could restrain them from levelling the house with the ground. Mrs. Martin was surprised with horror and distraction at the wickedness of these infamous wretches, who make no conscience of corrupting the unwary and innocent, and involving them in all the disgrace and misery that attend prostitution. She followed the mob into the very room where Sally

was, who, seeing her mistress, ran immediately to her, and embraced her in the most tender manner. Mrs. Martin was for some minutes unable to speak; but at length recovering herself, she acquainted the constables who Sally was; and the young lady informed them how she had been seduced by Mrs. D—y. A coach was immediately called, and she went very joyfully home with her mistress. As soon as they reached Mrs. Martin's house, a messenger was sent to Mr. Lloyd, to acquaint him with the agreeable news of Sally's return; of which he had no sooner received notice than he took coach, and went instantly to her. He asked her where she had been all the time she was missing: and she related to him every circumstance that had happened to her during her absence. Being extremely affected with this account, he begged of her mistress that she would never for the future let her go any where without somebody to attend her, and Mrs. Martin assured him that she never should. Mr. Lloyd enjoyed the pleasure of her company all that day; and in the evening on his return home, acquainted his aunt with the disaster which had befallen Miss Sally. He concluded with imploring Mrs. Lloyd to join him in requesting his father to let the nuptials between Miss Thompson and him be solemnized as soon as possible, for fear of a worse misfortune happening to her, which his aunt kindly promised to use all her endeavours to accomplish, and was as good as her word; for she prevailed on captain Lloyd to assure her, upon his honour, they should be married as soon as it was convenient. Mr. Lloyd was in a very little time informed by his aunt of this particular, which he did not fail to communicate to his lovely Sally; desiring her at the same time to write to her mother to acquaint her of his father's kind resolution. She did so, and by the return of the post, received the following answer:

“Dear Child,

I Beg you'll tell Mr. Lloyd, that I think myself infinitely obliged to him for the honour he designs you and myself, and should be glad to have it in my power to make him amends for his great condescension: but as I have little hopes of that, I shall always make it a part of my daily prayers, that Heaven may pour down the choicest of its blessings upon him, and preserve him in health and long life, and that my dearest daughter may ever retain a grateful sense of that generosity and benevolence which he has so kindly bestowed on her. Pray tell him likewise, that I am sorry I cannot possibly wait on him against the day he intends to bless my dear Sally; for, alas, the poor worthy lady, with whom I live, is dangerously ill of a pleuretick fever, and her life is despaired of, and will by no means suffer me to be absent from her a minute, night or day; so that I desire you will let him know, that I heartily wish you both all the joy and prosperity imaginable, and present you my blessing.

I remain your loving mother,

ANNE THOMPSON.”

Sally had no sooner read the letter than she sent it to Mr. Lloyd; who, when he had perused it, sent it back to her, inclosed in another letter, wherein he earnestly entreated her to be as expeditious as possible in getting the necessary preparations, since she found

her mother was prevented from coming, and therefore he hoped that she would do all in her power to hasten the happy moment, which he now so impatiently wished for. In the afternoon, Mr. Lloyd went to Sally's mistress; and inquiring when she thought all the things would be ready, was told, that in about ten days at farthest all should be prepared. He drank tea with Mrs. Martin and Sally; and afterwards insisted on their going with him to the Star and Garter in Pall-mall, where an elegant supper was provided. As soon as the repast was over, Mr. Lloyd presented Sally with a bank bill of an hundred pounds, and desired her mistress to assist her in buying the wedding cloaths, and whatever else she thought necessary. He also gave Sally an exceeding neat gold repeating watch, with a gold chain, &c. and a diamond ring; and told Mrs. Martin, that as for the residue of the time which Miss Thompson was to have served, he would make her ample satisfaction. Mr. Lloyd likewise promised Miss Sally, that he would settle two hundred pounds a year on her, in case he should die before her, and that in case of his surviving his father, he would add two hundred and fifty more to that sum, all which should be executed, by his father and himself, in a deed engrossing under the direction of counsellor M——hy, beforementioned. He then addressed himself to Sally, and proposed, if it was agreeable to her, to fix the nuptials for a fortnight thence at farthest, as Mrs. Martin thought that all things could be got ready before that time. Sally answered, that as her mother had been invited to be present at the wedding, she should be glad to hear from her before the day was agreed on, and that she would write to her again by the first post, to know whether she could come; promising, that as soon as she received an answer, she would acquaint him with it. He was highly pleased with what she said, and after spending the evening most delightfully, he took his leave, and Miss Sally returned with her mistress.

She took the first opportunity of writing to her mother as follows:

“Honoured Mother,

MR. Lloyd has desired me to acquaint you, that he has appointed this day fortnight for our matrimonial union, and would be glad to have you in London at that time. However, he desires an answer as soon as possible. He has generously promised to settle two hundred pounds a year on me if he should die first, and in case of his father's decease before his own, he will add two hundred and fifty more to it. He has likewise made me a present of an hundred pounds bank note for wedding cloaths, &c. a repeating gold watch, with gold chain, &c. and a valuable diamond ring. Pray let me know if you can come, for Mr. Lloyd very impatiently waits the nuptial ceremony.

I am your most dutiful daughter,

S. THOMPSON.”

The return of the post brought Miss Sally an answer, intimating that her mother intended to be in London at the time appointed for the marriage. Mr. Lloyd, in consequence of this intelligence, acquainted Mrs. Martin, that his father, aunt, and

himself, intended to breakfast with her, Miss Thompson, and her mother, at eight o'clock precisely, the morning of the wedding day. When that long wished for day arrived, they were very punctual; for the clock had hardly done striking before the captain's coach came to the door. Mrs. Martin and Sally met them, and conducted them up stairs to the dining-room; and when breakfast was over, they set out in two coaches for Westminster Abbey; every person who saw Sally agreeing that she never appeared so lovely and charming as on that occasion. When the hymeneal solemnity was ended, the bridegroom and bride, with their attendants, went directly to the captain's house, where a most splendid entertainment was provided. Joy appeared in every countenance, and the evening concluded with inexpressible felicity. As soon as the bride and bridegroom were put to bed with the usual formalities, the company retired, and Mrs. Martin went to her own habitation in the captain's coach.

CHAP. VI.

THE happiness, which the loving couple enjoyed in each other's company, received no small addition from the agreeable intimacy between them and a certain society, lately instituted, at the expence of some ladies of quality and fortune, for the reception of such women as were of family, and who had been bred in credit and reputation in the world. This place, which was known by the name of Bounty-Hall, and of which I shall hereafter give a more full account, was erected as an asylum for the innocent and virtuous, where they enjoyed not only the common conveniences of life, but also many of its superfluities, yet not so as to render them incapable of occupations suitable to their sex and condition. The time of this female community was employed either in the exercise of social duties, or in those fine works which are only proper for female fingers. The politeness and affability, with which they treated strangers, charmed all who saw them, and endeared them to every person of virtue who heard of their manner of living. New plans of charities engrossed a good deal of their attention; and among these they formed one for the benefit of those whose minds are not properly instructed in their youth, and who, as they are not destitute of the necessaries of life, are too seldom considered as objects of charity: for the patronesses and inhabitants of Bounty-Hall, far from thinking poverty the only evil which Christian benevolence should remove, did not even look upon it as the most important, but esteemed the soul, which is the noblest and most durable part of us, as the chief object of their care and solicitude. It appeared evident to them, that the imprudent and frequently vicious course of life, into which too many fall, proceeded most commonly from a defect in education; and that the case was the same with regard to both sexes: but the education of boys was out of their sphere. They aimed no farther than to rectify some of the errors in female education. I shall, however, dwell no longer on their institution at present, as I shall give a full description of it at the end of these memoirs, but proceed to the narration of the most remarkable incidents relative to some of the principal inhabitants of this truly virtuous and happy abode.

One day, these ladies paid a visit, as they usually did two or three times a week, to Mrs. Jones, who, as has been already observed, kept a house of boarders; and the

conversation turning on the subject of gratitude to our friends and benefactors, one of them spoke to the following effect.

“Our satisfaction is certainly complete; and it is not possible but that we should be truly thankful for it, if we are not uncommonly prone to discontent and ingratitude. We enjoy not only every circumstance of comfort, but every rational pleasure. All the benefits, which society can afford, are within our reach; all that competence can yield is ours; we have every thing that attends plentiful possessions, but the trouble of taking care of them. We are indeed dependant, but it is only want of due reflection that can make us uneasy. Our dependence exists without any of those chains and fetters which too often render it more galling than the most pinching necessities of life. When we see our benefactresses feel such true joy in bestowing, it would be ingratitude even to wish not to receive it at their hands. In accepting their bounty, we seem to confer an obligation, and do in reality confer a benefit, by being the cause of so much refined pleasure to them. This is the most exalted part of their bounty; their wealth gives us ease and plenty; but it is their generous and noble way of bestowing that gives us happiness. Nor does this alone constitute our felicity: it is still heightened by comparing our present situation with the past. Light appears with additional brightness, when set off by shade, as the recital of my misfortunes will plainly evince.

“My father, though he outlived my mother four years, died when I was but eighteen years old. As his fortune was good, I was well educated, and besides being taught fashionable accomplishments, was bred to a proper share of good housewifery. I had taken care of my father’s family from the time of my mother’s death, her infirm state of health having induced her to qualify me for that office, before the usual age for such occupations. I was therefore able to govern a house, but had little chance to have a house to govern; for at my father’s decease I learned, that his whole estate was entailed on my brother. It had not been in his power to charge it with any fortune for me, and as he had lived to the full of his income, I was left entirely to my brother’s generosity. This piece of information shocked me extremely, although I loved my brother well enough, to be content to accept, as an obligation, a provision to which nature seemed to give me a right; and had so good an opinion of him, that I did not doubt of his providing handsomely for me, were he left to himself; but unfortunately for me, he had married a young woman of low birth, though tolerable fortune, of whom he was so fond, that I was sensible my dependence must be rather on her than him; and I was not sufficiently acquainted with her disposition to know what expectations to form in that respect. My brother, however, judged that the concern I was under, for my situation, joined with the grief for the loss of my father, must make my anxiety too heavy a weight on my spirits for the strongest constitution to support; and therefore, gave me many kind assurances of his generous intentions towards me, and took me home to his house, where I was well received by my sister-in-law, to whom I endeavoured to render myself useful, as well as agreeable.

In this view, I shewed a readiness to assist her in the economy of her family, and the care of her children; no unacceptable service, as her mean education had rendered her but ill qualified for either. She knew not how to govern her servants with that composure of temper, and steadiness of conduct, which commands respect; and therefore had been

troubled with their negligence or insolence: and as for her children, she was capable of giving them but little instruction; working tolerably with her needle being the utmost extent of her knowledge. As almost a continual pregnancy gave her an excuse for indolence, I soon found my desire of serving her would bring a burthensome office upon me; for she constituted me house-keeper, and, soon after, nurse; and to shew me that my services were necessary, she lessened the number of her maid servants, frequently saying, that, as hers was an increasing family, she could not afford any other addition but that of children. On the same principle of economy, finding I understood a good deal of cookery, she changed her cook for a girl who could not perform the easiest things without direction; and referred her to me for the requisite assistance, introducing me into a third office, and that a very laborious one, as my attendance in the kitchen could seldom be dispensed with for the greatest part of the morning.

I was in no danger of falling into idleness, my time being well filled up. My first business was to dress the children, and give them their breakfasts. I was then to see the same prepared for their parents and myself. The parts of housekeeper and cook would have sufficiently employed the rest of the morning, but that of nurse was added to it; for the three eldest children were generally with me the whole time, to my great interruption, and their danger, as a kitchen is no safe place at that age, and indeed, I was forced to be very careful, lest they should scald or burn themselves, or some other accident of the like nature befall them. But their mother complained they were too noisy for her, which, in some degree, might be true, considering her frequent indisposition; but this was magnified by her knowing no other means of assuming gentility, except that of appearing sick, which led her to add much pretence to a little reality.

“As it would not have been decent to have reduced me to the appearance of a servant, I was expected to make one at the dinner I had dressed; and therefore was obliged, when we had company, which was frequently, to huddle on my cloaths in the little intervals which the office of cook would allow me, and always to take the same opportunities to new dress the children, who were sure to be soon soiled by the place they inhabited.

“The afternoon seldom brought me more leisure, for I was then to teach the children to read, to walk out with them, mend theirs and the family linen, until it was time to give them their suppers, and put them to bed. Though I had always been used to business, yet my strength was not equal to the fatigue I underwent, and I felt bad effects from it, but I bore them contentedly while my sister seemed well pleased with my services. I did not long enjoy this gratification. As my brother was a great sportsman when the season continued favourable to field amusements, he spent a very small part of the day in the house, and therefore was ignorant of my various avocations: but, when frequent interruptions to these entertainments occasioned his living more at home, he perceived how diligently, I may say laboriously, I was employed in his service, and expressed some unwillingness to give me so much trouble; at the same time, complimenting me on the manner in which I acquitted myself. He observed how much the children were improved by my care, how well his table was ordered, and how quiet his family; asking me, by what art I managed the servants, to make them do their duty so

well, and so readily, in a country where they were in general so idle and insolent, that it was scarcely possible to bear with them for a quarter of a year together; for such he imagined the case, because his wife had seldom kept one two months. He at the same time made me a present of a few guineas, which by that time were become highly necessary; and told me, that the obligations he and his wife had to me, deserved an earlier acknowledgment, but he had really until that moment forgot how much occasion I might have for such a supply.

“From the first period of his conversation, my sister began to redden, but the conclusion completely provoked her. She was glad of my services, but so far from chusing to acknowledge herself obliged to me, she was desirous I should think they were but a very small return for the support I received from her and my brother: and without leaving me time to express the pleasure I felt from his approbation, she said, with some sharpness, that he was wonderfully tender of me, in thinking I had so much trouble, strong and healthy as I was, in doing what she with her unfortunate delicacy of constitution had done for so many years, without exciting in him any of these tender apprehensions; that there was no very great matter in keeping a family in order, when it was once put into a right way; and that she, who had bore all the trouble of regulating it, to be sure had, in his opinion, no merit at all, as he had attributed all to me, who had only gone in the way she had planned out for me, a thing any girl of twelve years old might do. She further added, that indeed she thought herself very unlucky in being prevented by ill health from doing the whole herself, as a house could never be well managed but by the mistress of it; and that nothing, but her too delicate constitution, obliged her to submit to the inconveniences that naturally arise from the want of a mother’s and a mistress’s eye.

“My brother, who feared as well as loved her, was vexed at finding he had offended so undesignedly; and in his confusion, by way of excusing himself, replied, that he had no thought of drawing any comparison between us; that he never entertained the least doubt of her skill in managing her family; that what he had said of the advantages arising from my care, alluded only to those things which had before been in the hands of a house-keeper and nurse, and by no means to any particulars wherein I might supply her place.

“If I did not feel myself extremely flattered by being told, that I excelled two of his menial servants, his answer was not more pleasing to my sister, who did not much like to have it observed, that I performed the office of two of them, besides doing various other things which would not have been expected from persons of their education. She therefore dropped some hints how necessary it was, when new expences occurred, to retrench it in others; complained of the inconvenience of lessening the number of servants, and how hard it was to be forced to undergo it, and yet to be out of pocket; observing that the board of people who eat in the kitchen costs little, and that servants wages were small in comparison of what people might lavish away in presents.

“I was so much shocked at these ungenerous hints, that I feared I could not remain mistress of my temper, and therefore thought it adviseable to retire. I was never inclined

to draw an exact balance between obligations conferred and repaid. A person must be of a very sordid temper who can keep an account of debtor and creditor in generosity; but yet could not help making some little degree of comparison, which shewed that my services, in the various departments of his family, fully compensated for the pittance which he had occasionally bestowed on me, though that was far less than I might have expected as a sister, even if I had not been of such use in his house. I was desirous to make all the return in my power for what he should be pleased to do for me; but to be made a slave, and yet reproached as a burden, was more than I could well bear. Since I was doomed to do the office of a servant, I only desired to be thought to deserve my wages; and now felt all the bitterness of my situation, which cost me some tears, and many heart-felt pains, which I endeavoured to conceal.

“From the behaviour of my brother and sister at supper, which assembled us about two hours after I had left them, I perceived the conversation had continued after I withdrew. They were both in very indifferent temper; silence and sullenness appeared in her; vexation and fear in him; she treated me with formality, and he with coldness, being afraid, as I guessed, to exasperate her if he shewed any thing like affection to me. It is hardly possible for any one to be in a more disagreeable situation. My heart had not lost all its resentment; but my indignation for my sister’s treatment of me was not greater than my concern for the uneasiness my brother visibly suffered, of which I was, though innocently, the cause. I should have found it impossible to conceal my sensations, had I not been employed in mending one of the childrens frocks, which gave me an excuse for paying less seeming attention to the discourse, though, in reality, it engaged all my thoughts.

“The consequences of this quarrel did not end with the evening. My sister, who had fancied herself lowered in her importance, by the merits which my brother attributed to me, thought she might raise her dignity in the house, without giving herself the trouble of re-assuming the care of it; and for that purpose determined to be more particular in her directions. Accordingly, from that time, she interrupted me in whatever I was doing; if I was dressing the children, she would order me first to hear them read; and, on the contrary, if they were reading to me, I must then make a pie. She could not, indeed, find more business for me, than I had been employed in, before she had taken this resolution; but by not suffering me to do it in a regular method, I lived in a continual hurry; and seldom being permitted to finish the thing I was about, it required double the time, and at last was not half so well done. She took occasion likewise to find fault with almost every performance, to shew her superior judgment, though it frequently failed of the designed effect, and as it was generally causeless, so every one saw her motive. She sometimes erred so grossly as to blame where most commendation was due. She was also fond of contradicting every order, which my offices obliged me to give the servants; and did all in her power to hinder them, or the children, from paying me the least respect, or shewing any obedience to my directions. But, in these particulars, I fortunately did not suffer: the former had enjoyed so much ease and peace, from the time I had been made house-keeper, than they had done before, that they were, in spite of her endeavours, sufficiently observant, from a fear, lest, out of disgust, I might relinquish my charge; and the most difficult part of my work was to make them properly respectful to her, whom

they before despised for her ignorance in family affairs, and now contemned for her low jealousy of me, tho' that I would not suffer, always endeavouring to teach them what was necessary on their part.

“I was not less fortunate as to the children. The nurse, whom I succeeded, was very ill tempered, and they had suffered a great deal from her, as their mother had left them totally to her care. The comparison, therefore, between us, had rendered me very welcome to them, and they were fonder of me than they were of their parents. The best obedience springs from love: this they readily paid me, and I desired no more. They were fine children both in person and disposition, and I was truly fond of them. They were my best consolation under the various vexations I suffered; and though they increased my business, they repaid me by rendering it agreeable. But this became at length the subject of severe mortifications: my sister grew envious of the pleasure she saw I took in them, and jealous of their affection for me, which her pride considered as an affront to herself; and every mark of regard or tenderness which they shewed me, brought them severe chidings and sometimes punishments, though seemingly inflicted for other causes, or imaginary offences, which her invention suggested as an excuse, and became more frequent, as she perceived that she thereby most sensibly affected me.

“My abode at my brother's now became very irksome. He indeed, privately, was more generous to me than I wished, though still it was only in presents, which put me in affluence in my then state, but by no means afforded me a possibility of living independent, as the utmost I could have saved, would not, even if I had remained there until the decline of life, have been sufficient to maintain me during the remainder of my days. What comfort could affluence give me, when I was deprived of ease and quiet? I was sensible that I did great service to my brother and sister in the economy of their family; but this did not recompence them for the uneasiness I innocently occasioned, as her temper would not suffer him to enjoy peace while she was out of humour. The children, no doubt, received improvement from my care, but this part might certainly be more judiciously performed by some other person more completely qualified, without exposing them to the treatment they received on my account. Thus I saw, that I rather troubled than increased the happiness of those, for whom I sacrificed my own. I represented the case to my brother, and entreated him to permit me to leave his family; only desiring him to secure me even less than I received from his generosity, as I was determined to live on whatsoever sum he should allow me.

“My brother seemed to think my request not unreasonable, and gave me hopes he might grant it; but I found, that he durst not come to a resolution without first consulting my sister, and she received it less favourably. Some people take pleasure in making others unhappy: I would not be so uncharitable, as to say, this was absolutely the case with her; but if it was no part of her motive for chusing to detain me, she had certainly a very great regard for her pecuniary interest, to which she thought my presence was of use. I was kept in suspence above half a year, my brother still finding pretences to delay giving his consent, until at last my solicitations for an explicit answer grew so importunate, that he told me, in very kind and civil terms, he could not part with me, talked of the use I was of to his children and family, and endeavoured, with no small

uneasiness and confusion, to varnish over his unkind refusal. I pitied his weakness, by which he was in many respects as great a sufferer as myself, but severely felt the cruelty of this proceeding. It almost drove me into despair; my present situation appeared the more disagreeable, as the hopes I had entertained of being freed from it were almost vanished; and being unable to support the thought of a bondage for life, I determined to spend as little upon myself as possible, and to lay up as great a share as I could of what my brother gave me; and, resolving also to leave his house as soon as I had accumulated the small sum of two hundred pounds, and seek a lodging in some cheap place, even at the hazard of disobliging my brother, and never receiving any farther tokens of his favour.

“I suppose, in the altercations between my brother and sister, he had expressed dissatisfaction at her treatment of me; for, after that time, she was more civil to me before him, though I suffered the more for it in his absence. She then made herself full amends for the restraint his presence laid her under, and I accidentally discovered, that she endeavoured, by every means her malice could suggest, to injure me in his opinion; and though I believe she was not able to make any lasting impression on his mind to my disadvantage, yet she frequently succeeded so far as to put him out of temper for a time, and thereby to subject me to new vexations.

“I had passed near seven years in this situation, and had not completed the sum which I considered as the ransom to procure my liberty, when I was told of a community of good ladies at Kensington just instituted. I received the account of it with a joy not to be conceived by any one, who has not been as severe a sufferer from dependence as myself. Hope and distress gave me courage; I wrote a description of my situation to them, referring them to all the gentlemen and ladies in the neighbourhood for a confirmation of the truth of my representation, and for my character. Herein I ran no danger; I had the good fortune to be a favourite with our neighbours, and the transactions in neighbouring families are too well known to each other for my situation to be any secret.

“When the happy intimation of my admittance reached me, I summoned all my courage, and communicated my resolution to my brother and sister, who were exceedingly enraged at my disgracing them, (as they termed it) by entering a charitable foundation. I frankly told them, that I thought myself a proper object for it; and that, while I suffered the worst of evils, which could attend poverty, I did not feel them at all alleviated by reflecting that my father had enjoyed a good fortune, and my nearest relations were rich. I set out the next morning for this place, without any damp to my joy, but the pain I felt at parting with my nieces, who took leave of me with many tears. As soon as I came to the place where I now am, I wrote to my brother and sister, in order to pacify them. In this I succeeded pretty well, and we now correspond on very good terms. My nieces are also permitted to keep up an intercourse with me, from which I receive infinite pleasure.”

“How pure, and unmixed with any painful sensation, is the gratitude,” said another of the company, “we feel in this place! Except that which we pay to the Supreme Being, no sensation can be so delightful: they differ only in degree, for they are of the

like nature. If we have any cause of complaint, it is the too great delicacy of our benefactresses, which makes them sparing of their advice, lest respect for them should induce us to follow it, in opposition to our own judgments; and however great necessity there may be for reproof or admonition, they would not give it without the greatest reluctance.”

CHAP. VII.

ANOTHER lady begged leave to illustrate what had been already said in commendation of this noble institution, by a brief narrative of the sufferings which a gentlewoman (not present) had undergone, before her admission into the community; observing at the same time, what various uneasiness arises from poverty.

“Indeed,” said she, “those, who are born in indigence do not feel the variety; the evils it inflicts on them are generally much the same, because they are chiefly corporeal; but in those who unfortunately have been educated in a superior manner, and in their youth placed in a rank which they have not afterwards the power of supporting, the mind becomes the seat of greatest suffering; the pride they acquire during their affluence, and a delicacy of sentiment, which, tho’ amiable, is ill suited to the treatment which the indigent too often receive, prove continual sources of mortification and anxiety.”

Mr. Creswell, this gentlewoman’s father, was a clergyman; who, though he enjoyed some preferment in the church, was promoted too late in life to provide for the independence of his family. His rank required him to live in some degree of dignity, which frustrated his intention of leaving fortunes to his children; who, at his death, after all his effects were divided, found their whole inheritance amounted to no more than 100*l.* each. She was the only daughter, and being by her sex rendered less capable of getting a livelihood than her brothers, was in the most distressed situation; for her father had found means, before he died, to advance them so far in the world as to set them above necessity, though they fell far short of affluence.

Her mother had been dead many years, and her grief for the loss of a parent had reduced her to so melancholy a state, that she joyfully accepted the invitation of an old lady who was nearly related to her family, and as soon as she conveniently could, after her father’s death, went to live with her.

This lady, whose name was Barton, professed great love for Miss Creswell on her own account, as well as on that of her parents, and assured her she should always be welcome to remain with her; which greatly revived the young lady from her melancholy. She lived in a very splendid manner, and saw much company; a circumstance at first not disagreeable, but which was afterwards productive of many inconveniences. Mrs. Barton did not chuse to maintain an useless person in her family, and therefore expected her to do every little trifling thing in the house that no one else cared to perform; which really proved no small business, but by no means irksome to her, for she would have cheerfully obliged her patroness in that way, had she required nothing more difficult from her. But this was not the case: she soon found she had a most odious task to perform, which was that of flatterer; and as she acquitted herself very ill of it, Mrs. Barton would frequently, by opposite questions, reduce her either to give the lie to her own conscience, or put an absolute affront on her benefactress’s vanity. Mrs. Barton would on all occasions ask her opinion; an honour, which, like many others, was very burthensome, since the old lady’s only view was to have her own intentions commended. If Miss expressed sentiments contrary to those of Mrs. Barton, it excited the indignation of that lady to such a degree,

that she would expatiate on the odiousness of a contradicting spirit, and hint that conceit and obstinacy never failed to make people disagreeable, as they led them to oppose every opinion but their own, and to think none wise but themselves. It would have availed little, if Miss Creswell had told Mrs. Barton, that she was unwilling to contradict her, that the greatest favour she could confer on her was not to ask her opinion; for though belying her sentiments was very painful to her, yet she never officiously endeavoured to confute any of her patroness's arguments. She found it best to acquiesce in her condemnation, and suffer herself to be declared a lover of contradiction, opiniative, conceited, &c. until the old lady's resentment had found sufficient vent, and then, as in the case of other storms, a temporary calm succeeded. But she had still harder trials in the same way: if, in company, any one differed from Mrs. Barton in opinion, or in the relation of a fact, that lady would immediately apply to Miss Creswell to assist her in defending the one, or to corroborate the other; neither of which could, perhaps, be done without a manifest breach of veracity. To have dissented from the old lady in opinion, would have been an unpardonable fault. Thus she was forced to confirm every error, and bear witness to every blunder of her patroness; who, had she observed Miss, would have perceived it was little to her purpose, as the confusion in that young lady's countenance, when she could not help giving a direct answer, convicted her of falsehood; which was so obvious, that the greatest part of the company would often smile at her distress, while perhaps only one or two had humanity enough to pity her, and to endeavour to relieve her by an interruption, of which she gladly took advantage. The mean part, which now Miss was obliged to act on these occasions, might probably have rendered her contemptible, if people had not had good nature enough to excuse it, by considering how dangerous it was for her to oppose a woman who could not endure the least contradiction, even from her superiors.

Disagreeable as this blind obsequiousness was to Miss Creswell, she would nevertheless have been content to stay with Mrs. Barton as her surest resource, could she possibly have afforded the expence. But this could not be done without a gradual diminution of her very small fortune. The old lady expected she should be always well dressed, that her appearance might not disgrace her. Miss Creswell could not avoid going sometimes abroad, yet she would not suffer her to walk, because it was not proper, that a young person, who lived with her, should appear in so ungenteel a light. If her card party was deficient in number, Miss was required to play; an expence her pocket could not possibly support. Mrs. Barton's natural disposition, which was by no means ungenerous, would have inclined her to make these things more easy to the young lady, if she had not been straitened in circumstances. But vanity led her to spend so very great a part of her fortune in the articles which raised her figure in the world, that she could scarcely allow herself the necessaries of life, and was really destitute of the conveniencies which people possessed of a moderate fortune usually enjoy. It was not therefore to be supposed, that one, who sacrificed her own ease to vanity, should make it submit to the convenience of another. Great part of Miss Creswell's money being spent in little more than three years, she found herself under a necessity of altering her scheme of life, though she was greatly at a loss what course to take. In this dilemma, she applied to one Mrs. Lewis for advice, as that lady was not only a woman of sense, but had shewn her particular attention, and professed no small regard for her.

Mrs. Lewis very generously desired her to perplex herself no farther with the various schemes she had formed, but to come to her, with whom she should find none of the inconveniencies which obliged her to leave the house of Mrs. Barton, as she was able, by her large income, to be useful to her friends; which was her greatest pleasure. Miss Creswell felt some reluctance to accept so plain an offer of pecuniary favours: it was exposing herself to receive obligations, for which it would never be in her power to make a suitable return. But her affection for Mrs. Lewis inclined her to think that no situation could be so agreeable as living with her. She examined the source from whence this reluctance flowed, and considered it as the result of pride. What else could make her unwilling to receive obligations which she could not repay, when by accepting them she was giving the highest pleasure to her benefactress? The best return (said she to herself) is a grateful affection; a sincere and tender attachment may afford her a gratification, which no pecuniary acknowledgement could give one, who was as rich in generosity as in fortune: pride alone could make her wish to put herself on an equality with her, and in happiness she must be a loser thereby; she was under a necessity of beholding her benefactress as one to whom she was indebted, as her guardian angel, for all the comforts of life; and each pleasure, which she enjoyed, would lead her thoughts to her benefactress with tender gratitude. With this agreeable prospect before her, she told Mrs. Barton, that the smallness of her fortune put it altogether out of her power to continue with her; expressing, at the same time, the gratitude due for the goodness she had shewn her.

Mrs. Barton easily comprehended the justness of her objection; and not being able to remove it, kindly approved Miss Creswell's design of leaving her; wishing she had been able to make a continuance in her family agreeable to her. This kind behaviour completed the satisfaction with which she went to Mrs. Lewis; who received her in the most generous and affectionate manner, and, for some time, every day gave her fresh motives for tender gratitude. But the bounty, which seemed to flow so freely in the beginning, as its object was really in need of it, became painful by its continuance. What Miss absolutely wanted, she received with pleasure, knowing that Mrs. Lewis must enjoy a rational satisfaction, by the relief she afforded her. She however soon found herself oppressed with presents, which would have been proper ornaments to a woman of fortune, but were not suitable to her circumstances, unnecessary in her situation, and made her feel herself a burden on Mrs. Lewis's generosity. She endeavoured as much as possible to restrain the hand of her patroness, but found it more easy to offend her by the attempt, than to render it effectual. Mrs. Lewis persisted in her too lavish bounty, and insisted in so peremptory a manner on Miss's accepting of it, that a refusal would have been an affront.

This is no uncommon complaint, tho' perhaps it does not seem to many a very heavy grievance. Miss Creswell, however, at first thought it a real one, as it rendered her more expensive to Mrs. Lewis than she wished; but, in a very short time, she had more substantial reasons to lament it. Strong passions rendered the temper of her benefactress various and uncertain; and when she was out of humour, every action, even such as were done out of the most studied desire to please, offended her. On these occasions Mrs. Lewis would reproach her with ingratitude, and enumerate the favours which she had conferred on her. She would even cast oblique reflections on her, as being mercenary in

accepting obligations which she did not leave her at liberty to refuse. Miss now perceived, what she before had no idea of, the wide difference between a giving hand and a generous heart. True generosity of the mind is proof against the most violent starts of ill temper: for though they can awaken the avarice, that before lay dormant, yet they cannot make us repine at, or, according to the vulgar expression, *grudge* those bounties, which true generosity inclined us to bestow. A generous person sets so small a value on his noblest actions, that he scarcely sees he confers obligations. For generosity does not consist in gifts, but on the value we set on them, though we are apt to mistake the fruit for the tree; and yet vanity, a good natured but transient desire to please, and various other motives, frequently produce the same effects. In this situation, Miss Creswell often resolved to leave Miss Lewis, and be no longer indebted for a subsistence to any thing but her own industry: at other times, she only determined not to be prevailed on to accept any presents, but such as were absolutely necessary for a proper appearance in her benefactress's house; but she always found herself unequal to the execution of either. When a calm returned, the kindness of Mrs. Lewis banished the young lady's resentment; she seemed desirous of her company; and the gratitude she owed her would not suffer her to resist the inclinations of her patroness. When she was offered useless presents, she refused to accept them, until she saw her benefactress grow angry: her spirit then sunk, and submission made her take what her heart refused.

She had lived about three years in this fluctuating and disagreeable state of mind; too proud to bear humiliation without severe pangs, and yet so enslaved by gratitude and a submissive spirit, that she had no power left to free herself from it. When she first heard of this community, she felt a strong desire to become one of the members, and made several attempts to bring Mrs. Lewis to approve her applying for admission; but with so little success, that she would never have attained that happiness, had not her patroness been prevailed with to enter into a party, who were going to make the tour of France and Italy. Mrs. Lewis was designed to have taken the young lady with her; but sensible of the inconveniencies arising from an increase of numbers, and being in no danger of wanting company, she relinquished that intention; and Miss found her better disposed to listen to her proposal, and she was fortunate enough to gain her consent.

As the truly generous are more ready to give, than the necessitous are to ask, no difficulties impede the admission into this society, if the person, who applies, has preserved a good character in the world: her desire therefore was soon gratified, and here she has refuge from distress and insult. Her joy was afterwards entirely completed, when experience had taught her, that she here obtained a degree of happiness far beyond her hopes, or even her wishes. She expected only ease and tranquillity, but she likewise has every additional pleasure the world affords, from hands which are the most obedient servants of the noblest hearts: hearts, which feel themselves obliged to those, who give them leave to make them happy."

A lady in company, who had not yet spoke, and whose name was Baldwin, delivered herself as follows: "Happy are those who are sequestered from the tumultuous noise of the busy world! They fear not the frowns of inconstant fortune: they are not subject to the caprice of others; they disdain riches, and despise all the grandeur of this

world; and satisfied with the present happiness they enjoy, they are without any solicitude for any other earthly comforts than those they possess. Happy in themselves, they do not seek any addition to their present felicity. This is exactly our situation: busied in praising the Supreme Being, we have no room for thoughts of any other tendency. We are happy in each other's intercourse, and we pass our time agreeably in the performance of those obligations which are annexed to our state. We are under no compulsion at all, but each one is at liberty to chuse her own employment or amusement; and we live in general harmony, though we naturally form more intimate connexions with some than others. That you may have a clear idea of the blessings we enjoy, I shall make bold to give you the following history of my adventures.

"I was born at Rochdale in Lancashire, my father, a wealthy farmer, rented above 300l. per annum; and was, moreover, possessed of an estate of 156l. a year, that was left him by my grandfather. My mother died before I was nine years of age; at which time I was sent to a boarding-school of great repute at Chester, where I had not been above six years before my father took me home to look after his house. I may without any imputation of vanity affirm, that he was a man universally esteemed in our country, so that most of the gentlemen, our neighbours, were very fond of his company. Besides, he was an excellent boon companion, though he seldom exceeded the bounds of sobriety. About a mile or two from us, lived a person of quality called Lord G——, a very polite gentleman, who is now dead. This nobleman, coming frequently to my father's house, took an opportunity one morning, when he knew my father was gone to see an uncle of mine who lived about the distance of seventy miles from us, to call at our house, all the servants, but one of the maids, being then at the hay-harvest.

"He had no sooner alighted from his horse, than giving it to his man, he desired him to call again in about an hour; and at entering the door took me by the hand, and squeezing it, embraced me with inexpressible ardour. This behaviour affrighted me a good deal; but considering it was to no purpose to shew any concern, I endeavoured as much as possible to appear undaunted, and entreated his lordship to walk into the hall, which he did. We talked of indifferent things for some time; but observing his lordship's eyes sparkling with fire, and continually fixed on me, I began to be apprehensive lest something worse might ensue: nor were my fears altogether groundless; for seizing my hand again, he kissed it with such eagerness, as left me no room to doubt, that his intentions were not confined to the strictest rules of virtue. He then attempted to thrust his hand into my bosom, but I luckily sprang from him, and running up stairs, locked myself up in my chamber, where I staid till his man returned with the horses, and saw him ride away before I ventured down again.

"My father came home next day after lord G—— had been at our house; and whether the maid had told my father in what manner his lordship had behaved to me, I know not, but from that day forward he purposed to have me married, as soon as he could conveniently do it to advantage. For that purpose, he consulted with a few of his acquaintance; who all agreed, that one squire Smallwood would be the most suitable match that could be proposed in point of fortune. My father readily joined in their

sentiments, for he knew the squire had a very large estate, and was also a downright honest man.

“My brother, one day, walking in the garden, asked me how I should like squire Smallwood for a husband. This question at first put me to a nonplus, as I remembered that the squire had some time before made a proposal of that kind, but my father thought me then too young. However, I told my brother, that it was time enough for me to engage in so hazardous a state, and that I hoped my father would not think of such a scheme as yet. Besides, said I, though the squire is allowed to have an ample fortune, and may be very good natured, I cannot think him a suitable person for me, as there is so great a disparity in our ages; and likewise he is a very disagreeable man as to shape and features. My brother soon intimated the result of his conversation with me to my father, who was by no means pleased therewith; and, as I found he still persisted in his resolution to sacrifice me to his sordid views, I resolved, at all events, to baffle his design. Accordingly, the night before squire Smallwood was to have paid me the first visit, I eloped from my father’s, with only a small bundle of clothes, and the little money I had in my pocket, to the cottage of an old woman whom I had often relieved with victuals and drink; and with her I concealed myself until the next night. Then setting out about twelve o’clock, I went to a place called Middleton, four miles distant, where I arrived about half an hour past one.

“Every body being in bed, I was forced to take shelter in a barn, wherein was plenty of clean straw; and laying myself down, as I was a good deal harassed with my walk, I suddenly fell asleep. About six o’clock in the morning, I was awaked by two threshers coming into the barn; who, supposing me to be some vagabond, after discharging a volley of oaths, asked me what business I had there: to which I answered, being afraid of telling the truth, that I had been visiting a relation, and in going home I unfortunately mistook my way. This presently pacified them, especially when they perceived that I was dressed in a very different manner to those kind of people, of which they had taken me for one. I then gave the men six pence to drink, and wishing them a good morrow, made the best of my road to Henton, about two or three miles further, where I put in at a neat public-house, and got some tea, with toast and butter, which I eat with a good relish, having had very little victuals since I left my father’s.

“After breakfast, I set out again, and soon reached Manchester, where lived an apothecary, who had just set up there, and one who had privately paid his addresses to me while I was at the boarding-school, he having served his apprenticeship to an eminent apothecary in Chester at that time, and after I came to my father’s, used to meet me at the old woman’s before mentioned. In going over the bridge, which divides Salford from Manchester, I met the apothecary, who seemed very much surprised at seeing me there; and after asking me several questions very complaisantly conducted me to a private house that took in boarders, where he constantly visited me, and having in a short time prevailed on me to consent to be his spouse, we were married at the Collegiate church. This rash acton was the source of the many disquietudes which I have since undergone.

“I have all the reason in the world to believe, that he courted me more for the sake of the fortune he expected I should have, than my person, as he knew my father had but two children, and could provide for me very handsomely. Nay, my father had told several of his friends, that he would give me at least 2000l. on my wedding-day, if I married with his approbation, and leave me 1000l. more at his death: but instead of that, when he heard of my marriage with the apothecary, which he did about three weeks after I left his house, he protested, that he would never see me more, or give me one farthing. As soon as my husband saw his expectations vanished, he began to behave very coolly towards me, though I often insinuated, before we were married, the hazard we both ran in disoblighing my father. However, in a little while, he grew totally abandoned to drinking and women, notwithstanding I did every thing in my power to attract his affections, by all the endearing arguments I was mistress of, but to no purpose. In less than a year’s time he lost all his patients, got considerably in debt, and being afraid of a gaol was forced to abscond.

“Nor was this all, for unknown to me, he took with him a young woman, who lived a little way out of Manchester; and thus was I left almost destitute of money or clothes, and must inevitably in a short time have been drove to the utmost necessity, had not an innkeeper in Salford, who formerly lived in the capacity of bailif to my father, sent for me, and generously offered me lodging and board, ’till something better might occur. While I staid with the hospitable innkeeper, I wrote to my uncle, representing my miserable condition; and as he was a very humane man, begged that he would remit me a little money, and that he would use his good offices with my father to persuade him to give me leave to prostrate myself at his feet, and implore his forgiveness for my folly and undutifulness. In a short time after my uncle had received my letter, he sent a man and horse to bring me to his house; where I lived almost three years before my father would condescend to see me, though some of the country gentlemen reproached him for his intention of marrying me to squire Smallwood, who, it was well known, was my utter aversion. When my father came to my uncle’s, and first saw me, he had much ado to govern his passion. But at last, after calling me ungracious wretch, and such other names, he permitted me to ask his blessing; which I did with unspeakable sincerity and pleasure, though almost drowned in tears of sorrow and joy. He told my uncle, before he went away, that he would give me money to pay my husband’s debts, and set him up again in business, provided he would discard the young woman, promise to reform, and be more frugal and industrious for the future. My husband joyfully accepted the proposal, and faithfully complied with the conditions of it. Our credit was re-established; but my husband died before we could reap any considerable benefit from his practice; and I have chosen this asylum, where I hope to end my days.”

Another lady then said, “I do not wonder, Mrs. Baldwin, you feel so much happiness in the company of the good ladies with whom you live; I have indeed little to complain of but what the greatest part of the world also experience, and shall therefore beg leave to relate the adventures of a nobleman, whom I shall call Mr. Dennis.”

CHAP. VIII.

HE was a distant relation of Lord L——e, but, as that nobleman had no children, was unquestionably next heir to his lordship's title and estate. When his father died, he found his inheritance reduced to fifty pounds a year; and he farmed that estate himself, living in the only house that was upon his land. His education had been on a level with his fortune, and his manners were those of a plain honest farmer. But though ill qualified for higher company than that of yeomen, yet his birth and descent procured him, notwithstanding his straitened situation in life, a due respect from all the neighbouring gentlemen, among whom he took pleasure in being received, and kept up an interchange of visits. He was honest, sober, sensible, and industrious; but was not free from pride of family; and thinking it beneath him to match with any but a gentlewoman, he married the indigent daughter of a deceased lieutenant of the army.

However, Mr. Dennis was more fortunate than he had reason to expect: his wife proved very notable and industrious, and prolific, having five sons and three daughters. This last was a circumstance which might have been attended with great difficulties, if he had not been to succeed to the opulent estate of his cousin lord L——e; but the thought of that was a sufficient consolation to him and his wife, and made them behold so numerous a progeny with joy. In this satisfaction Mrs. Dennis had the greatest share; for tho' she could boast of no noble blood in her veins, yet she was more proud in being allied to it, than her husband was of possessing it, and felt more severe mortification from their poverty. When in her utmost dignity, mounted on a hard pillion on a trotting cart horse behind her husband, or his ploughman, she would blush to think how unequal her appearance was to that, which the wife of one who was hereafter to become a nobleman might expect; and when milking her cow, or churning butter, she could not forbear venting her passion against their ungenerous kinsman. It must indeed be allowed, that they had reason to be provoked with indignation at lord L——e, who, though a man of perhaps more real worth than many of his ancestors, could see his nearest male relation and presumptive heir remain in such a low station of life, and leave the children, who must in all probability inherit his title, to be educated in a manner that must ever disqualify them from wearing it with dignity, or propriety; a circumstance of which Mr. Dennis was so sensible, that it was the most afflicting part of his poverty.

At the distance of about two miles from Mr. Dennis's house, lived a gentleman, one Mr. Creighton, who had inherited a good estate from his father; but being extravagant in his youth, had reduced it within very narrow bounds, and involved himself in difficulties which had greatly soured his temper, and converted his extravagance into parsimony. His company would not have been very agreeable, had it not been for an only daughter who kept his house, whose beauty, accomplishments, and excellent qualities, rendered her one of the most distinguished among the other young ladies in the neighbourhood.

A little farther off dwelt Mr. Scott, a Scotch gentleman of great merit, who, by a due mixture of study and conversation, and a judicious observation of men and manners, had greatly embellished his conversation, and very much improved an admirable

understanding. He had spent many years abroad, at an age when the mind is most capable of exerting its faculties; and had then entered into the most learned societies in his own country, and enjoyed the friendship of men most distinguished for virtue and abilities; until at length growing old, and his spirits being much affected by the profligacy and disobedience of an only son, he chose a rural retirement, which he dignified by his extensive knowledge, and uncommon politeness.

On the other side of Mr. Dennis's house, and about five miles from it, lived young Mr. Scott, son to the gentleman before mentioned. His father had given him an estate, with a good house upon it, at his nuptials with a young woman of family, whose beauty had captivated the young man; being glad to encourage his son's inclination, in hopes that the society of a woman, whom he chose for love, might reform him from his vices. But success had not answered his wishes: young Mr. Scott soon grew tired of his wife, and returned to his bottle, to hunting, gaming, and loose women; and at length behaved with such insolence to his father, when he reprimanded him for his dissolute course of life, that the old gentleman banished him his presence, and declared his resolution to disinherit him.

Next door to old Mr. Scott, there lived a young lady named Miss Simmonds, upon whose virtue his son had made several attempts. She was an heiress of 30,000*l.* under the guardianship of an old uncle, Mr. Groves, who had resolved to give her in marriage to Mr. Dennis's eldest son, a young man of about twenty-two years of age, sober, industrious, and who had a good share of wit. Young Dennis had, moreover, the advantage of a tolerable education, from the munificence of the neighbouring gentlemen, who, seeing him a youth of parts and good morals, had caused him to be brought up at the university. Miss Simmond was elegantly formed and extremely genteel: her features were regular and beautiful; and her motions easy and charming. Her eyes, of the darkest blue, at every glance beamed forth sweetness and sense: equally penetrating and tender, they affected all they beheld, and told that she could not only discover their faults, but could also forgive them. Her nose was after the Grecian model; her mouth beautiful to excess; her lips were of the finest red; and her teeth could not be excelled. Her complexion was extremely fine, clear as alabaster, and heightened with a gentle blooming red in her cheeks, to which their dimples added inexpressible graces; and her hair was of the nicest brown. Her charms were not confined to her person. She had great sweetness of temper, and exceeding good sense; and had received excellent education: she played on the harpsicord with an elegance and facility well calculated to assist one of the finest voices that ever was heard. She understood French, Italian, and Latin, perfectly well; had read a great deal with admirable taste and judgment, having been assisted in her studies by her uncle; and with all these accomplishments she was modest, humble, and unaffected. Her address was polite, and possibly the more easy for having been long accustomed to do the honours of her uncle's house, her aunt having been dead some years; and a regular life and country air had contributed not a little to heighten the lustre of her natural charms.

Young Mr. Dennis's strict application to his father's business had not rendered his heart insusceptible of the force and power of beauty, and he became an easy captive to the amiable charms of Miss Simmonds, who was besides nearly related to a nobleman;

which was another incentive to the young man to address her, as it entirely coincided with his father's desire of marrying some person of distinction.

An inclination, which we chuse to encourage, is very quick in its operation. Mr. Dennis, the father, had not long taken the resolution of asking Mr. Groves's permission for his son to address his niece, before he put his design in execution; giving him to understand at the same time, that though his fortune at present was very small, yet from the great expectations he had in the event of lord L——e's death, he doubted not to be able to make a proper settlement for Miss Simmonds. This was no small incentive to one of her uncle's disposition; for Moliere's *Miser* was not more sensible than Mr. Groves of the defect of that part of a lover's address, *sans dot*. Mr. Dennis, therefore, had not only his consent, but likewise his promise to use all the influence of his authority in the young man's behalf.

The joy of young Mr. Dennis, on hearing this joyful news, was however soon damped: having gone to visit his charmer, whilst he was expatiating on his expected and wished for happiness, she burst into tears; and the more generously and pathetically he expressed his affection, the faster her tears flowed. Her lover, alarmed by the tenderest fears, begged to know the cause of her distress; but before she could assume sufficient power over herself to comply, they heard Mr. Groves coming towards them. Dreading her uncle's presence, she requested Mr. Dennis to take no notice of her uneasiness; and promising to lay open her heart to him the next time they met, she went out at one door as Mr. Groves entered at another.

Young Dennis was not much more able, than his mistress, to support an interview with her uncle. The most artful hypocrite would find it difficult to dissemble with a heart so painfully oppressed as his was at that instant; but a tender regard for her peace did more than any thing else could have effected; and eluding the old gentleman's questions, in such a manner as gave him no suspicion of what had passed, he pretended business that obliged him to return home directly. Happily it was only a pretence, for he was entirely incapable of transacting any. When he got to his father's, he shut himself up in his room, in a state of mind which may be guessed, but cannot be described. He passed the night in an agitation and anxiety that he had before no idea of; the hope, which self-flattery would sometimes suggest, only served to prevent his exerting his reason to support what his fears anticipated. He rose before the sun, with a resolution to know his fate ere the day was passed, but wished to have it without Mr. Groves's knowledge.

Unable to contrive any means of effecting this desire, the restlessness of his mind led him abroad, and the impulse of his heart directed him towards Mr. Groves's house. He wandered in the adjacent fields a long time, uncertain what method to pursue, fearing to create uneasiness to the woman for whom he suffered so much. At length Miss Simmonds, who had not rested much better than her lover, going to the window in hopes that new objects might divert her thoughts, saw him in a field adjoining to the garden. The delicacy of her mind bore so great a resemblance to his, that she imagined the cause which brought him thither; and desirous to conclude their interview before her uncle rose

from his bed, she immediately set out to meet him, though conscious that what she was to disclose to him would involve him in the greatest affliction.

When he saw her approach, he had scarce courage to meet her; dreading the explanation which he so impatiently longed for. Maiden bashfulness, with a mixture of concern on one side, and extreme agitation of spirits on the other, rendered them equally unable to speak; but with common though tacit consent, they sat down together on a green bank at the foot of a tree. A long silence ensued, and it is difficult to say when it would have ended, if Miss Simmonds had not sooner recovered her spirits than her lover. She tempered the disagreeable intelligence, which she was going to impart, with very sincere expressions of concern at the necessity she saw herself under of giving him pain. She professed a due sense of his merit, and lamented, that, when they first met, her heart was not so free as his, since in that case, in all probability, they might have constituted each other's happiness, instead of mutually destroying each other's peace. She then told him, that she had, with her uncle's consent, been engaged above a year to Dr. B——e, a young physician in the neighbourhood. Miss further declared, that their marriage had been so long deferred only by the difficulties which her uncle had started, as his parsimonious temper made him imagine thirty thousand pounds too great a portion; that she received the doctor as her husband, at her uncle's desire, when her heart was so little prejudiced in his favour, that she could, without any severe pang, have been equally obedient, had he ordered her never to see him more; but since she had considered it as her duty and happiness to increase the little prepossession she had conceived, the case was much altered, and she was now as strongly engaged to him in affection as in honour. She added, that she was determined not to violate that engagement, though she despaired of seeing it fulfilled; for she had received an express command, from her uncle, never to entertain the least acquaintance or correspondence with Dr. B——e, but to look on Mr. Dennis as her husband, and she feared he would never revoke this decree; since, besides the many reasons which she was sensible there were for preferring him to the doctor, his future expectations of a considerable estate, besides a title, were of no small weight with her uncle. She likewise said, that having nothing to expect but her uncle's anger, which was impetuous and dreadful, all she had to ask of Mr. Dennis, who, she hoped, would rather think her unfortunate than ungrateful, was, that he would, as far as lay in his power, mitigate her uncle's rage, and prevail with him to let her live peaceably in her present condition; for she relinquished all desire of changing it; and did it with the less concern, as she imagined his partiality for her might render it more vexatious to him to see her married to another, than merely to be disappointed of her himself.

I shall not take upon me to describe the effect which Miss Simmonds's words had on Mr. Dennis. The young lady felt so lively a compassion for him, that she forgot her own grief, and said every thing that she thought might contribute to his consolation, except that which alone could prove effectual: but as she was fully determined to adhere to her engagement, she carefully avoided giving the least encouragement to hope a change in her sentiments.

Although this declaration of Miss Simmonds seemed to deprive young Dennis of the hopes of ever obtaining that beloved object of his wishes, yet he could not help

admiring her sincerity and ingenuity: and he even expostulated with the young lady's uncle on the impropriety of attempting to make her violate her engagement to Dr.

B——e: but an incident, of which we shall have occasion to speak, put a stop to that intended connexion, and proved favourable to young Mr. Dennis.

In the mean time, old Mr. Dennis used his interest with Mr. Scott to effect a reconciliation between him and his son; and had in a great measure succeeded, when the profligacy of young Scott rendered the good man's endeavours abortive, and occasioned the death of his father. As the latter died intestate, his son succeeded to all his estate; which he squandered in a short time. Young Scott, with his wife and two children, being thereby reduced to the greatest penury and distress, he was sent over by a relation to be overseer of a plantation in Jamaica: and his wife was admitted into Bounty Hall by the patronesses of that excellent institution; who likewise established a fund for the support and education of her infants.

Soon afterwards, lord L——e gave up the ghost; and by his death Mr. Dennis succeeded to his title, and to an estate of 7000l. a year, besides 20,000l. in ready money. By this increase of fortune he was enabled to gratify his desire of beneficence to the necessitous and indigent, as well as to provide liberally for his own family.

A little before that, the death of Dr. B——e had removed the only obstacle to the completion of the happiness of young Mr. Dennis with his amiable Miss Simmonds. He had bore his before-mentioned disappointment with great resignation; and as his hopes of obtaining her seemed to be entirely frustrate, studied to efface the idea of his charmer from his heart: but, as love once well rooted can never be totally eradicated, all his endeavours were in vain, even when his expectations seemed to be the most groundless. However, as the young lady was, by the death of his rival, at her own disposal, and freed from that engagement to which she had so scrupulously adhered, during the life of the person with whom it was made, young Dennis, in whose breast the flame of love had been smothered but not extinguished, renewed his addresses to Miss Simmonds, with such success, that they were with mutual desire soon united in wedlock, and exhibited an excellent pattern of conjugal love and felicity. Mrs. Simmonds, as she had shewn a surprising regard to her connexion with Dr. B——e, displayed, in the sacred character of a wife, an invincible fidelity to her husband; a quality for which some of the neighbouring ladies were not very renowned: and Mr. Dennis's behaviour in the matrimonial state was such, that it ought to have been imitated by his licentious neighbours. Old Mr. Dennis, soon after the dignity and estate of lord L——e devolved on him, had the additional happiness and pleasure of having his family enriched and strengthened by the birth of a grandson; and, in less than a year afterwards, stood also godfather to another.

CHAP. IX.

I SHALL now fulfil my promise to my readers, and give them as exact an account of the first forming and establishing of that worthy community at Bounty Hall, of which I have so often made mention. A company of ladies, having considered the great inconveniencies which many virtuous women of family labour under from being reduced, through unavoidable misfortunes, to poverty, took the generous resolution of providing an asylum for those unhappy persons. The design was no sooner formed than executed. A handsome commodious building was erected, and furnished in a very genteel manner, capable of admitting twelve inhabitants, and 100*l.* per annum was settled on each of them for their maintenance. The content and harmony in which they lived, made them beloved by all their acquaintance, and they were patterns of virtue and good conduct to all the young women about the country. They were continually contriving something for the advantage and profit of their neighbours. They were very diligent in visiting and comforting the sick, and relieving them if they were in distress. But they were still more anxious to bring about a design which they had formed for the general good of society.

As these ladies lived free from crowd and bustle, it is not strange that their way of thinking on various subjects should be a little out of the common taste; and perhaps it was not more so on any point than that of education; which, though the most material, was, in their opinion, greatly erroneous: but, in general, they thought parents more deserving of compassion, than censure. They observed that many were incapable of directing the education of their children, having received little improvement themselves, either from early instruction, or later voluntary application. Bred in ignorance, they had acquired a narrowness of mind, which conceives no more extensive idea of virtue, than what serves to screen us from public infamy and the rigours of law; and that too many were insensible to all those various duties, and social good offices, which are essential to the happiness of mankind in general: for a woman may be a very disagreeable wife, a tiresome friend, a harsh mistress, and very deficient in the duties of a mother, and yet, according to this narrow way of thinking, be honest, chaste, prudent, and, in the common way of expressing, good-natured. To acquit ourselves well in any of these capacities, we ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the extent of every virtue; from whence we shall learn, that there is no action so trifling but what virtue is affected by it, or that scarce any action is trifling, since in some degree, it affects the ease and satisfaction of another; and if not immediately hurtful, becomes so by taking up that time and attention, which might be employed either to our own or some other person's benefit. Thus those actions which are called totally indifferent, if we consider them properly, we shall see are so far bad, as we waste on them the hours which might be used for better purposes; for an extensive view of religious or moral duties will teach us, that every action of our lives ought to be useful. Upon these common or frequent acts depends, in a great measure, the happiness of those connected with us. Great injuries, or great benefits, are seldom in our power. There is an elasticity in our spirits, which enable them to rise again after a great and sudden blow, while a frequent repetition of vexations keeps them down, and deprives them of all power of exertion. But a narrow mind does not see in a right light the iniquity of such oppression, because the evils it inflicts are not expressly included either in the prohibition

of the decalogue, or the laws of the land: Blind to the spirit of the law, they attend only to the words. Those therefore, whose ideas are circumscribed within such narrow bounds, are ill qualified to cultivate the minds of their children. But yet it is not from the imbecility of mothers, that children chiefly suffer: there are now few who apply even what talents they have to domestic duties. Amusement is too often the business of their lives, and in the round of diversions, which they pursue, their children are sometimes forgotten, but always neglected. If they are admitted into their company, the person, whose instructions and conduct should lead them to virtue, whose prudence should warn them against vice, and defend their unexperienced youth from the dangers to which it is unavoidably exposed, sets them a pattern of nothing but levity and indiscretion; teaches them by example, the surest means, that dress, cards, and dissipation are the great business of life: and thus habit or custom, which reason would lead, even in infancy, some of the best disposed to condemn, becomes sanctified by the practice of her whom they are taught to obey in every respect.

Some mothers have sense enough to see, that the company which they themselves keep is not proper for their daughters; but instead of changing their acquaintance, and their way of life on that account, and considering that what will corrupt their children cannot be innocent in themselves, they take another method, and confine their daughters in a nursery: assigning over all maternal care to a governess, who, though low in birth and indigent in circumstances, is supposed equal to a trust, for which but few parents, with all the advantages of their fortune and station, are sufficiently qualified; and for the poor emolument of a small stipend, she is expected to take that care, which natural affection, and all the tender ties of maternity, cannot induce the mother to perform. Masters, indeed, are procured, external accomplishments are sometimes cultivated, and the young ladies may unfortunately excel in a minuet, on the harpsichord, or with a pencil. This may be truly looked upon as unfortunate, because it only serves to lay them open to flattery, and vanity destroys what little merit remained; for the plant, weak from the barrenness of the soil, and want of cultivation, makes but little resistance. Parents, who pique themselves most on the education of their daughters, generally usher them into the world thus provided with every thing that can render it dangerous, without having attempted to fortify their minds against the temptations that await them, or to give them one qualification fit for domestic life; their attention being wholly fixed on externals, while the hearts and understandings of their children are wholly neglected. Few good or useful principles are inculcated; no true knowledge is acquired; to improve their public appearance being the great object, no domestic qualifications, no amusements for retired hours are taught them; their pleasures depend solely on others; and the time which is not passed in company, becomes burdened with all the miseries of ignorance and idleness. In these they must languish, if debarred of dissipation; as incapable of amusing themselves, as of being useful to others. French (and some Italian perhaps) makes a part of their education; but as they generally learn the one out of novels, and the other chiefly in pastorals, their hearts acquire corruption and folly faster than their heads do the languages; and their understandings, instead of being improved, are perverted by their studies.

The patronesses of Bounty Hall knew very well, that to endeavour to teach ladies the full extent of maternal duty, and to prevail on them to sacrifice the love of gaiety and dissipation to the due care of their children, would prove an arduous task: but they imagined it possible to mend public education, and with this view they determined to establish several schools on the following plan.

Having qualified several young women for the purpose, they resolved to unite four or five in society, who should take boarders at the usual prices, but never above twenty in number, that they might be able to keep a vigilant watch over them, and instruct them fully. The different geniuses of these young women had caused them to excel in different talents; one in music, another in drawing, and a third in writing and arithmetic, while another had penetrated more deeply into science. These qualifications enabled them, when united, to teach the young ladies, committed to their care, every branch of education except dancing, for which alone they would have occasion to seek for foreign assistance. Their patronesses had rendered them thoroughly sensible, that they were not to undertake this office, merely with a view of procuring themselves a subsistence, but as persons who were to render an account at the last day of the manner in which they had executed it; and who were conscious, that since it had pleased God to place them in that situation, it was their duty to act therein like his faithful servants; breeding up those, who should be placed under their care, in the manner most pleasing to him, and qualifying them, as far as they were able, to perform well the duties of any station to which they should be called. For this purpose, the first and chief endeavours were to be directed towards fixing deeply in their minds the great principles of religion, guarding them equally from superstition and fanaticism. As one mean of attaining this great end, they were to cultivate the childrens understandings, and teach them those languages which are most useful and ornamental, and such polite arts as are considered as proper accomplishments for young women of fashion, whereby they would acquire so many laudable and pleasing ways of amusing themselves as would secure them against the melancholy necessity of being obliged to seek diversions from abroad. These ladies considered, that persons of all ages, especially the young, must have amusements, otherwise their spirits will languish, and their minds grow too dull even to perform serious duties with vigour; and thought nothing so likely to preserve them from giddy dissipation, and a mad pursuit after public entertainments, as so enlarging their minds by reason and knowledge, that they might see the futility of idle diversions, and be unsatisfied with every pleasure which reason disapproved. They likewise thought it convenient to give them a variety of useful employments to amuse their leisure hours at home, which every one, who aims at any permanent felicity, or at performing well the part of a daughter, wife, or mother, should make the principal scene of her pleasures; for we may wildly traverse the whole world in search of happiness, yet we shall never attain it but in our own houses, and in the sincere performance of our respective duties.

In consequence of this attention to the improvement of the understandings of these young ladies, care was taken to direct their reading in the most instructive course. To trace out for them a regular series of history, and in every other branch of knowledge, to lead them through the proper gradations with the like regularity, confining them on every subject to the best authors, and not suffering them to fall into that incoherent

desultory manner of reading, too usual in women, which rather confounds and dissipates, than instructs the mind, and is indeed no better than a serious kind of idleness, productive of little more improvement than more lively sorts of dissipation. Geography and chronology went hand in hand with history. The less abstruse parts of astronomy, natural philosophy, ethics, and the rational parts of metaphysics, were admitted to their studies.

The second rank of schools, that came into the plan which these ladies had formed, was chiefly designed for such as had no prospect of considerable fortunes, and therefore were not entitled to any higher expectation, than marrying good tradesmen, country gentlemen of small estates, and others whose income disqualified them from getting wives of fortune, as they could make no adequate settlement on them. The accomplishments to be taught at these schools, were of a more humble kind, than at the former. Here the children were to learn all of branches economy; writing and arithmetic were particularly attended to; they were taught to make their own gowns, caps, &c. besides the most useful parts of needle work, in the best manner, and with the most housewifery countenance. They also learned cookery in its various branches; also distillery, as far as it related to domestic use; how to make jellies, sweet-meats, &c. and likewise every other branch of good housewifery. Music was forbidden, as taking up too much time for persons in a middling station, and as proficiency in it would prove only a dangerous excellence, since it might induce a young woman of small fortune to endeavour at mending her circumstances by performing in public, or introduce her into company of a superior rank, who would think her sufficiently rewarded for the pleasure she gave them, by the honour of their acquaintance. Even drawing was not taught, except where so extraordinary a genius appeared as might give room to believe it might prove a useful and profitable art; French was also cultivated, as the general use of it gave reason to suppose it might be of service: geography was likewise allowed, because it took little time, could never be hurtful, and rendered reading more instructive. Dancing was of necessity permitted, as it was feared that no parent would bear the thought of her daughter's not receiving what she esteemed the most necessary part of education. But though the accomplishments of these scholars were circumscribed, no restraints were laid on any thing that could improve their understandings, as good sense, and a liberal mind, are equally desirable in every situation.

Having now, according to my promise, given as full a description of Bounty-Hall and its inhabitants as possible, I now take leave of the reader, with acquainting him, that Mrs. Jones and her family, as well as the community already mentioned, all continued to live happy in the intimacy and friendship of each other.

FINIS.