

1071

GEORGE THE THIRD.

VOL. I.



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GEORGE THE THIRD.

Surgeon General 1827

A NOVEL.

1071

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow white and smile with happier hours.
So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and as it runs, refines,
Till by degrees the floating mirror shines;
Reflects each flow'r that on the border grows,
And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shows.

CATO, Act I.

VOL. I.

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IN the work to which this notice is prefixed, the author has tried, and he hopes not unsuccessfully, to imitate what appear to him to be beauties in similar compositions.

Having always observed how much his own pleasure was in-

creased by the rational practice of placing the contents of each chapter at its head, he has accordingly followed this example carefully. He has inserted as many long conversations and amatory dialogues as he possibly could; and, in alluding to scenes of vulgarity and vice, has accurately copied the language of the ale-house and the night-cellar.

And as no man wishes to think that he has done badly what he has endeavoured to do well, he is willing to believe that

the commendations usually bestowed on good intentions will not, in this instance, be withheld.

CHAP. I.

*Containing matters not to be met with in
the second.*

UPON the first day of the month of July, in the year 17—, occurred the most, or one of the most important events of my life, whereof, however, I have not myself the smallest recollection; but then I have heard it so often from good authority, that I believe it almost as firmly as I do any fact recorded by Herodotus, or Sir —; I

have, in short, my mother's word for it; and, for want of better testimony, the world must now give me credit, when I assert that on the above-mentioned day I was born.

This alone was an affair sufficiently remarkable to render the day memorable in our family annals; but its celebrity was insured by several other circumstances; and amongst them by an eclipse of the sun, considered throughout the parish as a certain indication of my future consequence, it being plain to every body that there was an obvious connexion between my birth and the phenomenon; and that, like the mighty luminary, though obscured for a season by disastrous twilight, I should, when it was past, shine out with redoubled lustre.

During the first fifteen years of my life, I was I declare oppressed with a sense of obligation to Heaven, for taking so much trouble on my particular account as to make an eclipse on purpose; nor was my vanity reduced until I became capable of reflecting that a similar distinction was bestowed on five or six millions of my fellow-creatures, who chanced to be born into divers parts of the habitable globe at the same time, that I made my first appearance in the little village of Oakley in ———shire.

I have called my birth-place a village, and indeed so it was. By some arrogant persons it has, I know, been styled a town; but to such an honour I positively aver that it has no more claim, than a leg of mutton has to be denominated a sheep; for it was entirely too small, consisting

of about thirty houses; and moreover possessed neither magistrate, post-office, milliner's shop, nor circulating library. The latter ingredient in the composition of a town was, I allow, a disputed point with reference to Oakley, because Mrs. Strap, the barber's wife, did assert that she kept one; and notified the same to the public by the following inscription over the door of her husband's dwelling, taking all the responsibility on herself: "Abigail Strap Lic^d to sel sope candles forrin sperits, Tobacquo snuf; hard wear; oatmeale stockings; &c. buys olde rags; Childeren tote, and N. B. Boocks lent to read."

Now though I have been often in the shop, I never could discern any specimens of literature, save and except two copies of the Ready Reckoner, and as

many of the renowned history of Valentine and Orson : I have therefore a right to infer that this latter declaration was in some measure a flight of fancy on the part of goody Strap, intending to signify no more than that she was willing to lend books, if she had them.

Thus, in the spirit of humility, having resigned all pretensions to the eclat of being a native of either a capital, a metropolis, or even a town-corporate ; I proceed to inform my readers, that at one extremity of Oakley, and about one furlong from the parish-church, stood, and had stood for a century and a half, the parsonage-house ; and it was probably very much fatigued by so great an exertion ; for I remember that in my time it was with vast difficulty prevailed upon not to fall down.

By how many rectors it had been inhabited I cannot pretend to say, but the reverend Howel Ardent was the only one whom I recollect: he was also my father; yet the critic is requested not to conclude from hence that he was the father of nobody else; on the contrary, he had amused himself in his leisure moments by begetting eight children besides me. Some of these, to be sure, died in their infancy; but enough of them grew up, and of the survivors I am the eldest.

My father's income was merely what he derived from his benefice: had it been in proportion to the extent of his necessities, instead of the size of his parish, it would have brought him in something very handsome; but unluckily this rule is not observed with regard to church livings. In fact the poor parson of

Oakley found that in his case the matter was conducted on a diametrically opposite principle; and that the more he wanted the less he had.

After saying this, it behoves me to add, by way of explanation, and in defence of his character as a divine and a philosopher, that his patience increased with his perplexities: when these bore hard upon him he retreated to his study; and every new affliction was followed by a new sermon; — his collection of manuscripts was enormous.

Exclusive of my mother and his children, his chief treasure was a very tolerable stock of books in different languages; and as he had always made good use of these, he was exceedingly well acquainted with their contents. In the discharge of his professional duties he

was exemplary; and in his ordinary deportment, gentle and unassuming. He was a tall, venerable man, with silver hair and a benevolent eye; his voice solemn; his step slow and dignified; and if his manner of saluting his acquaintances, high and low, was not courtly, it compensated for that defect by being gracious.

A person answering this description could not fail to gain the respect and affection of those amongst whom he lived.

My mother, as the doctor's lady, came in for her share of public and private esteem, and was not without claims on her own account. Her maiden name had been Primrose; and my learned readers will not be surprised to hear that she excelled in the art of making

gooseberry wine, when I tell them that she was niece to the celebrated vicar of Wakefield.

She inherited much of her aunt's genius in the mysteries of housewifery, as well as her taste in dress; and at this moment I think I see her, with [a mixture of harmless pride and condescension in her face, curtseying to the right and left as she passed through the churchyard on her way to prayers of a fine Sunday in summer, receiving the homage of the rustics, who surrounded her and her children; and not a little elated by the praises lavished on her comely young ones and her pearl-coloured stuff gown.

From this slight sketch of my parents, it will be readily supposed that they were more likely to teach their offspring

pure morals, than elegant manners; and to be satisfied with the prospect of their turning out *good*, since they could scarcely hope to see them *great*.

It is not clear to me whether what I am now about to relate in the history of our family should be considered by myself as a blessing or a misfortune: perhaps the sequel may decide the question in the minds of those who are so complaisant as to accompany me to the conclusion of my adventures.

My father had an elder brother, whom I never saw, but have heard him spoken of in the family circle as an extraordinary man; and from what I could collect, he must indeed have been so. He never made use either of sugar or salt with his food, when he could avoid it; and was almost as sparing of soap; contriving

totally to dispense with it in shaving, and wearing a clean shirt only once a week. He was not however so strict an economist in every respect, for no spendthrift was ever more liberal of his money than uncle Philip was of paradoxes; and one day, when my father and he had dined together, the conversation took such a turn as obliged the former to observe, though with great diffidence, that impossibilities were not possible; and that, for instance, two and two could hardly be proved to make five. "I am not quite so sure of that," quoth uncle Philip; and immediately put on his hat and went to Calcutta, from which he never returned, but corresponded occasionally with an old female cousin of ours, who was so good as to send him a minute detail of my boyish enormities. Now,

though she was as ugly as a witch, and more malicious, she was not quite so cunning; for she could not foresee the consequence of her slanderous reports, the result of which was, that uncle Philip "though he never told his love," took a liking to my character, and in process of time, forgetting her, remembered me.

I had another uncle living in our neighbourhood, as little like my father as the one just mentioned. He was a rich farmer, and a bachelor; and distinguished in the ranks of this last-named amiable and useful class of persons for his moroseness and singularity.

From the period of his brother's marriage he avoided meeting him as much as possible; and swore he would not associate with a man capable of so weak

an action. Nor was this resolution the effect of any particular aversion to my mother, whom he never beheld, and who had never given him any offence, except by being a woman, an infirmity which she could not help.

This gentleman's extraordinary ill-temper was, as is generally the case with ill-tempered people, neither his only failing nor his greatest. He was particularly addicted to the pastimes of drinking punch, and going to law; and from this union of tastes had suffered some inconveniencies, such as an occasional fit of the gout, now and then a horsewhipping, several falls on the high road, and the detestation of almost every one that knew him.

His appearance would have been very prepossessing, but unfortunately his per-

son was marked by a few traits against which there subsists a sort of prejudice in this part of Europe. He was much below the ordinary height, and had as many bandy legs as he well could have; but in order to save him the mortification of seeing these, his belly, with great good-nature, projected itself about a foot and a half beyond the line in which they could have been visible. His face, if I may take the freedom of calling it by that name, was more like a certain sign usually entitled, "*The Saracen's Head*," than any thing else; and the sound of his voice when angry—i. e. always—though not so harmonious, was nearly as loud as the twanging of a postman's horn.

This charming man was, as I have said, wealthy and single, and might have

proved of the greatest utility to my father in his pecuniary distresses ; but surliness and selfishness combined to hinder his offering what the other's independent spirit disdained to ask : the account of happiness, however, was pretty well balanced between them ; and my father peaceably ate his dinner of herbs ; whilst my uncle had his stalled ox and hatred therewith.

Yet on our part no attempt to conciliate him had been neglected ; and amongst the instances of attention shown him, was one which my mother considered as a master-stroke.

Her first born was a son ; and was, in compliment to my uncle, at his baptism named after him, by my mother's advice : notwithstanding which he died shortly before my birth ; and my persevering

mother, in defiance of her own belief in omens, and of my father's declaration that he would not act in the business one way or the other, resolved to confer the name given to my deceased brother on me, trusting to time and chance for the good effects of her stratagem.

Whether she was aware of the extensive influence maintained over the human mind by what the moralists call *Philautia*, or self-love, I cannot exactly say; but it is certain that I owe a great deal to this her ingenious device; and my reader—should my memoirs only teach him the virtue of *patience*—has still greater obligations, because but for this circumstance they would probably never have seen the light.

My uncle happened to be particularly attached to his christian name. What

that was may appear in due time; for the present it is sufficient to assign a reason for his partiality, the cause of which was simply that his name was *his own*. This remark will be perfectly satisfactory to such as understand the general character of mankind; and Aristotle himself could never make it clear to those who do not.

It was out of my uncle's power to forget his christian name; by the bye, the only mark of a christian about him; but from the distance he preserved towards our household, he was very near going to the other world without hearing mine. An accident however produced the discovery; and the perverse disposition of the man turned it to my advantage.

When the occurrence took place by which I first became known to him, and

which shall speedily be detailed, I was about twelve years old, taller than boys of that age commonly are, straight, strong, and abounding in animal spirits. Dark curly hair, hazel eyes, white teeth, and ruddy cheeks, united with a suit of very ragged clothes and a constant propensity to laughing, singing, or it might be, weeping, rendered me altogether no every-day nephew: besides which there were some other accomplishments, that must not be left out of the account; I could read and write a little of the language of my own country, and that of the ancient Romans; sing the death of admiral Benbow with pathos; ride like a Tartar, and swim like a water-snake.

It is not to be supposed that I could have made such advances in literature, and the fine arts, without the aid of

others : my classical proficiency was the result of my good father's assiduity, who not being able to afford the expenses of a school education, instructed me himself for some hours each day ; and the free use of my lungs and limbs I owe to my associating with all the little blackguards in and about our village.

My father, with whom it was a rule never to lift his own hand for the purpose of punishing, had frequently spoken to me on my unworthy inclination to keep low company : but confining himself to expostulations, his remonstrances had little or no effect ; and I as seldom as possible complied with injunctions which I could not comprehend ; but stole away from a lecture on pretty behaviour to join my favourite companions ; shrewdly concluding that my father's

dislike to my running through the village without my hat, riding a jack-ass, and jumping into the river, proceeded from his unwillingness to see others do what he was afraid to do himself.

One day, while the rector of Oakley was holding a vestry in the church, I had got loose, and being near the place, with my accustomed thoughtlessness, I flung a stone directly at the east window of the sacred edifice; and without intending to hit any thing, or any body, ingeniously contrived to do both, for I broke to pieces the head of Pontius Pilate in the painted glass, and very nearly did as much for the parish clerk; who, attended by my father, and the churchwardens, forthwith rushed out, with a grisly wound in the centre of his forehead, like that which commonly marks

the face of Goliath in the picture of his affair with David; and surrounded me—not the youthful and triumphant shepherd, but a self-condemned and terrified delinquent.

I was very well inclined to run away, but that was out of my power; and it would be bad for the practitioners at the bar, as well as for some of their clients, if all law-proceedings were as summary and as equitable as what was now instituted against me; about too minutes serving for my being seized, accused, convicted, and made over unto the secular arm of my mother, who was desired to inflict on me such chastisement as the magnitude of my offence seemed to merit. This was decided to be two-fold; the first half, consisting of an exceedingly tedious invective against

the crimes of rebellion, sacrilege, and contempt of the established church, I endured, and I am afraid with a very bad grace: the remainder of my sentence comprised solitary confinement and fasting until the morrow; and though unable to determine which of these was most dreadful, and perfectly convinced that either was intolerable, I was not slow in resolving (if possible) to escape at least one of them; and accordingly, whilst my mother's eyes were directed another way, I darted into the passage, and out by the back door, with a degree of agility which would have done credit to any fox in the country.

I ran with the utmost speed, until, breathless and black in the face with my exertion, I could run no longer. I then sat down on the road-side, and

might have been about half a mile from the village, when I observed a person riding as I believed in pursuit of me: he soon came up; and eying me with an aspect inhumanly ferocious, informed me that I was a little scoundrel, and that he would dismount and whip me to death for attempting to break down the fences.

I denied the charge, and added, that I would tell him what carried me there if he pleased: upon which he called out, "who are you then, sirrah, and what is your rogue's name?" I answered that my name was a good name, and the same as my uncle's name; and that I had often heard my mother say my name would be the making of me. "Have you, you miscreant!" replied he; "and who the devil is your uncle?"

I told him he was squire Ardent, my father's brother. But I do not think I shall ever forget the expression of his frightful countenance on hearing these words: he gave a lash with his whip that caused the fur to fly off the sides of the poor jade he rode; and the animal starting and wheeling at the same moment, he lost his equilibrium and fell forward; and his foot catching in the stirrup, he would certainly have been dragged along, and probably killed, had I not dexterously seized the bridle, and given him an opportunity to disengage himself.

It was not even in *his* nature to resist such an appeal to his clemency as this was: when he got upon his feet, his manner of speaking to me was softer; he almost ceased to frown; and, in short,

seemed touched with gratitude;—so great is the force of that love of *self* inherent in us all!

He now listened with a kind of surly patience to my relation of the morning's adventure; in recapitulating which, though I designed to tell nothing that was not true, yet, according to the principles of mankind, my fault was converted into an accident, and the anger of my parents into an act of tyrannical oppression.

My uncle, for it was he, was a very wrong-headed man; the creature of impulse and caprice, and exceedingly obstinate: qualities, in the present instance, highly favourable to me. He knew that he deserved to be, and of course imagined that he was, disliked by his brother's family; he also sup-

posed that, as I bore his name, I must be, on that account, an object of their persecution ; and to spite them, resolved to take me under his protection and patronage.

CHAP. II.

*Full of novelty to such as are ignorant of
its contents.*

MY uncle remounted his horse, and ordering me to follow him, proceeded towards Oakley; when, as might be expected, we met my father, and several others, advancing in search of me.

The anxiety of the parties was quickly changed into amazement on perceiving me, not only in my uncle's company, but apparently on a very amicable footing with him.

My father first addressed him, and

in his usual gentle and cordial manner:
“ Brother, I am glad to see you ; come to our house and rest yourself.”—“ I have something else to do besides resting myself,” replied the other; and then entering directly on the subject, that filled his mind, added, “ I’ll be at a word with you: it is my wish to save, at least one of your miserable children from destruction, by removing him beyond the reach of your virtues, and those of your wife, forsooth! You’d spoil the devil himself with your lessons of piety and all that; and have already nearly ruined this boy, whom, with your good leave, I should like to make a man of. There’s some ‘stuff’ in him, I see that; he must, however, away from you, and soon, to a good school, and I will be answerable for his expenses.”

Joy and astonishment kept my father mute: yet though his tongue was motionless, his countenance was eloquent; but my uncle did not understand reading countenances, and thus continued: "So, I suppose you wo'nt comply; for fear of your wife, I dare say: with all my heart—I shall not repeat my offer: she would be the death of the child, I doubt not, because he is my name-sake: I am much indebted to her——And you, who as a *man* ought to have *some* sense, to go and frighten the fool out of his wits, only for breaking one of your superstitious windows!"—"Brother," exclaimed my father, "it was not so much the window as the poor clerk's head that I——." "Damn the clerk's head," cried my mild protector; come to the point; is it yes or no? answer me at

once, and let me go about what I have got to do elsewhere."

My father acceded, as may be imagined, most willingly; and, with every expression of thankfulness, assured his brother that I should be fitted out and sent off to an eminent school at a considerable distance from home in the course of a few days.

Satisfied with this promise, but without one word of kindness or civility, this original turned his horse's head, and speedily disappeared; while my father, taking me by the hand, led me home, congratulating me, as we went, on my good fortune, and exhorting me to conduct myself accordingly.

On our arrival at the parsonage, and my adventure being related to my mother, her anger was lost in triumph and

exultation. She attributed, and indeed with more justice than she was aware of, this sudden turn of affairs to herself; and, in less than half an hour, had not only preferred me to a bishoprick, but married off one of my sisters to a young baronet, and provided for brother Dick in the church through my interest.

My sensations on this great occasion were tumultuous: nor am I quite certain that I was either as joyful or as grateful as I ought to have been. The best method I can pursue, in order to account for this, will be to give a candid description of my own character at this period.

It has already been seen, that I was volatile; and having admitted this, I shall be so bold as to add, however extraordinary it may appear, that I had

then no other fault ; but, on the contrary, a great number of those amiable qualities and goodly propensities, which every one who examines the young and innocent carefully, will be sure to find ; which are indeed the seeds of all that is great and noble in man, but which, by communion with the false ones of the world, are perpetually converted into follies that degrade and vices that destroy. Oh ! happy days of early life, when, as Rousseau beautifully says, “ le rire est toujours sur les levres et l’ame est toujours en paix ; ” when to-morrow is disregarded and yesterday forgotten ; when every sun-beam sheds delight, and health is wafted with every gale that blows ; often have I wished that I had never known you, or known no other !

Yet this exclamation is not, what it

may appear to be, the dictate of remorse, resulting from the consciousness of criminality ; for of actual crimes I have not to accuse myself ; but it arises from a lively recollection of the manifold absurdities I have fallen into, and the vexations I have suffered, by being of a nature not suited to the scenes into which my untoward fate has plunged me.

With sorrow have I frequently recalled the image of my childhood, and compared what such a creature *might* have been, with what the perverse customs of mankind have made of me ; nor can I, with any tranquillity, reflect on the metamorphosis I have undergone.

Some knowledge of the world, indeed, I have obtained, but at what a price ! I

have bartered a pure heart, for one thoroughly acquainted with evil; simplicity, for artifice; universal confidence, for almost universal mistrust.

Virtue was my father's idol: he taught me her lovely precepts; and I remember them, for first impressions are never lost; but he should have done for me either more or less; have left me in the state of obscurity for which I was naturally designed; or sent me into life, armed for the conflict. Alas! he did neither; but having incessantly told me of the beauties of moral rectitude; the high estimation in which mankind held him who persevered in his integrity; the prosperity which awaited the good, and the downfall of those who do evil, he thrust me forth, that I might myself witness the truth of his assurances.

With what success this experiment was attended will presently appear: I shall only hazard in this place one general observation, without any reference to myself; that the person who goes abroad provided with the above-recorded exalted maxims, and means to adhere to them, had better abstain from making bargains!

A celebrated boarding-school at a distance of fifty miles from Oakley was made choice of, and our family put upon short allowance for a month, that I might be supplied with a proper stock of clothes, linen, &c.; and the day of my departure by the stage-coach being fixed on, I was desired to write a letter of thanks, and promises of good conduct, to my uncle, who had given orders that I should not wait on him.

The composition of this same letter was to me a very formidable task: I was in a fever during the process, and destroyed no less than four copies before I could please myself; the fifth was of course by no means the best, unless its being the shortest might make it so; but I thought it equal to any thing of the kind from the pen of Cicero, who, I am firmly persuaded, wrote his most finished epistle to Atticus with less trouble, and even less self-applause.

This choice production was, as far as I can remember it, exactly as follows.

“Honoured uncle,

“I return you many thanks for the passion you was in with me, and for all other kind marks of regard you have showed me. I am to set out for

school on Thursday. I know Latin pretty well. I can read Phædrus and Eutropius. I do not know Greek grammar, which is hard. My father and mother, and brothers and sisters, send you their humble duty. I am, honoured uncle, your dutiful and obedient nephew."

The day of my departure at length came, and I beheld it dawn with a heavy and foreboding heart, which will appear extraordinary to any one who considers that I could not possibly be aware of the character of that world into which I was going. Besides, my affectionate father and mother did all they could to raise my spirits: the latter made me a present of a Bible with brazen clasps, and hoped I should not be

flogged *very often*; and my father complimented me with a repetition, that lasted about two hours, of all he had ever said on the subject of good behaviour, and its happy consequences; and then (having previously by letter advised the superintendant of the academy of my coming) gave me in charge to the driver of a *Diligence*, who early next day set me down at the gate of a large antiquated brick building, nearly surrounded by trees, and apparently the forsaken mansion of some family of distinction in former times.

I was here received rather graciously by the master, and introduced by him to about thirty boys, who were, like myself, boarders under his tuition.

Our ruler was a very peculiar personage both in appearance and manners;

of his exterior, which I shall try to delineate, I despair of being able to afford an adequate idea: he was a short, middle-aged man, extremely corpulent, with a broad round face of a deep purple colour, which, aided by the constant embellishment of a highly-powdered wig, looked exceedingly like a red cabbage after a heavy fall of snow: his dress was composed of a suit of bluish-grey cloth, adorned with large jet buttons; plaited cambric ruffles, and black worsted stockings; at his knees a pair of immense ornaments of cut-steel, and huge silver buckles in his shoes.

He was a good classical scholar; very strict in maintaining proper discipline; and upon the whole honourable and impartial in his treatment of such as were committed to his care. But these excel-

lencies were in some measure counter-balanced by his possessing an inordinate share of self-conceit; and such confidence in the efficacy of birch-rods, that there was no fault which man could be guilty of, or misfortune he could suffer, that was not attributed by doctor Flay-bottom to the neglect of whipping.

How often the cuticle of a certain portion of my system was lacerated during my career at his school, I do not wish to remember; but I am perfectly sure, that on quitting it there was very little of the original left; and yet the inflictions I endured were trivial, compared with those of many of my companions. And here it may not be improper to observe, that the consequence of corporal chastisement is *always* detrimental; it hardens the untoward and

vitiates the generous disposition : if it should produce assiduity, which it hardly ever does, study ceases to be a pleasure, and the allotted task is performed under the impression of what is most unfriendly to the due exertion of the human faculties, *terror* : it inculcates falsehood, the basest of all worldly qualities ; by which faults are concealed and changed into habits, instead of being corrected by exposure : and it teaches, in language intelligible to every capacity, the grand mystery of tyranny,—the art of governing by force. And indeed it is perhaps as much owing to this part of the management of public schools, as to any thing else, that the corruption of public morals is so general : and that depravity of mind is not only cherished by such an institution as an extensive

boarding-school, but the necessary consequence of it, will I believe be readily granted by any person, who, having received his education in a place of this description, takes the trouble of recalling *some* circumstances to which he must have been witness, while residing in the society of "miniature men," as school-boys have very justly been styled.

Can he avoid recollecting that himself and his associates were perpetually practising in little, what he has afterwards observed to constitute the chief occupations of men on the great and busy stage of life? The pursuits and the motives of each are the same; battles are fought, alliances formed, animosities kept alive, and plots and counterplots devised. The thirst of gain, the love of command, the pride of wealth, the meanness of the flat-

terer, the haughtiness of the bully, belong as incontestibly to boys in the school, as to their fathers in the world.

These reflexions I assuredly did not make, when first I bowed beneath the sceptre of doctor Flaybottom; but I felt the fact even then; and passed the night, which followed the day of my arrival, in sighs and moans. I summed up every instance of tenderness in my affectionate father, my mother, and my sisters; I remembered the fields wherein I had so often strayed; and even the meek and amicable countenance of our pet dog Trout, my constant playmate, was not forgotten: in short, I thought on sweet home, and all its dear accompaniments, with such intenseness, that although sleep at length surprised me, it did not by any means destroy the images which

engaged my fancy; for in my dream I found myself once more at the parsonage of Oakley, and was in raptures at the discovery, when the loud tolling of a bell, and the noise of many strange voices, put an end to my slumbers and my happiness. It was the time of prayer, and I was ordered in an imperious tone, by one of the elder boys, to rise and join the rest.

This ceremony was distinguished by every thing appropriated to an act of piety, except devotion; silence, solemnity, and sad faces; and amongst the most dismal visages was mine, for many strong reasons: but this horror wore off by degrees; and though I learned nothing of the nature and attributes of Deity, and disliked the bare idea of kneeling down, I did not while in that

attitude lose my time, having, before I left school, carved my initials with a penknife on all the forms, and counted all the cobwebs that festooned the ceiling.

For this I ought to have been punished, and was not; but I received on one occasion some blows for inability to explain a chapter in the Apocalypse, which, as may be supposed, made me very fond of reading the New Testament.

Instead of advancing, as I did, rapidly in my studies, I should in all likelihood have been moulded into a pusillanimous, mischievous, and ignorant idler, had it not been for a most excellent practice of an usher we had, who was a young man of deep erudition, and of a temper so philosophic that nothing could discompose it. He totally disapproved of

the use of the rod; and was so wise as to perceive, that to inspire fear was not the best method of restraining youth from the commission of evil actions, or inciting them to good; but that these great and desirable ends were to be attained, with nine boys out of ten, by bestowing *praise* or withholding it. And this principle he pursued so judiciously, as to produce the most astonishing effects: for he actually elicited, and might almost be said to have created faculties where they seemed not to exist.

If, for example, in the compositions handed to him for perusal before they were presented to the doctor, he discerned that the writer evinced a lively imagination and an unfaithful memory, he took occasion, a day or two after, in a serious tone to compliment him on his

possessing this latter quality of the mind; and invariably the result of this excellent artifice was, that the boy endeavoured to maintain his supposed reputation, until he really acquired what he had not before.

Mr. Gay, which was the name of this assistant in the school of doctor Flay-bottom, was, when I first knew him, about three-and-twenty years of age; descended from an ancient but impoverished family, and, like myself, the son of a clergyman. On quitting the university he had taken orders, having left Oxford with the highest character for talents and moral worth; and his father, being very poor, encouraged him to accept the situation in which I found him, until he could obtain a curacy for his support; but immediately after, his

father died, and he was left destitute. His salary from our governor was very small, yet his humility was such that he always appeared contented: he was not indeed cheerful, but usually wore a look of mild melancholy, which I remember attracted me the moment I beheld him.

His countenance was amongst those rare ones that bring glad tidings to the unhappy; banish all suspicion, invite the timid, and say to those who are troubled, "I will help you." I instinctively fled to him for shelter from the rudeness of my school-fellows in the commencement of our acquaintance: and he did shelter and sooth me; and under many a future tribulation and difficulty, was my solace and support.

Possessing uncommon penetration, he quickly saw into my character, and

treated me accordingly: he strewed with flowers my painful up-hill path as a learner; and my progress was, as I have already said, a rapid one.

It was not, however, in his power to do much for me during my first year; when I was, agreeably to the custom of the school, more particularly under the care of the master himself. In this period, therefore, unthinking and bewildered as I was, I gained little else than unmerited floggings, a portion of syntax, great dexterity in plundering orchards, and numberless black-eyes.

Nature had not intended me, as I very well know, either for a thief or a prize-fighter: but wonderful is the force of example, and more wondrous still that of ridicule; I was laughed out of both my ~~pride~~ and my gentleness;

and with an unimpaired abhorrence of dishonesty and quarrelling, I nevertheless became expert as a boxer and a robber.

CHAP. III.

*Which they who are unacquainted with know
nothing about.*

ABOUT this period my dear friend Gay came seasonably to my aid, encouraged me in my literary pursuits, and, by his advice in other matters, contributed most essentially to my benefit. Whatever philosophy I possess, I owe to his kindness: nor should I have had so much occasion for it as I afterwards found, had I attended to all his valuable counsels.

In one instance particularly I neglected his repeated warnings, and at a

future day suffered the merited punishment.

I had kept up a constant correspondence with my father, and occasionally with my uncle. The latter declared himself satisfied with the improvements I had made, and both agreed that on all accounts it was advisable for me, instead of returning home at vacation-time, as most of the other boys did, to remain where I was.

Under this necessity I was consoled by having the society of my friend Gay; but I discovered a still greater source of consolation in that of a boy somewhat older than myself, whose name was Markham. He was an orphan, heir to a very large fortune, and had for his guardian an old dignitary, to whom he was distantly related; and who, unwill-

ing to take more trouble about him than was absolutely unavoidable, indulged him with an immoderate allowance for his pocket, and left him for some years a permanent inmate at Dr. F.'s.

It should be observed, that I was of a character by no means uncommon among the weaker and less vicious classes of mankind,—*I could not exist without a confidant*: some one I must have, with whom to repose my joys, my sorrows, my wishes, and my fears; and Markham appeared the person formed for the participation of my friendship.

His manners were insinuating; he sought me out, and made me his inseparable companion; and was the foremost to condole with me for any mishap which had befallen me: when I was melancholy, he was silent and serious; when

exhilarated, his spirits rose in proportion.

He indeed was dull as a scholar, and far from diligent; but I was the reverse, and gaye him often considerable assistance. Besides, on all occasions of mutual misdemeanor, though he had his full share in each, I could not but notice that the punishment lighted upon me.

Gay, without knowing much of the world, was not quite such a believer as my father in the universal existence and prosperity of virtue. He discerned, with his usual acuteness, Markham's real disposition, as well as mine (and doubtless the sagacious reader has by this time done the same), and cautioned me in the most persuasive language against him. Alas! his endeavours were thrown away: I could not be convinced

that his admonitions were not the dictates of prejudice: or even admitting them to be founded in fact; could I forget that I had one evening vowed to him unalterable friendship, after having read together the story of Damon and Pythias, and covenanted to know each other only by those immortal names, and to sustain to all eternity the characters we had assumed? It will be seen, that, although our compact of attachment did not last *quite* so long, it lasted full long enough. Let me however advance gradually in my story.

As reason opened, my literary ardour increased; and I applied myself to books with such avidity as pleased Flaybottom exceedingly, and left him no longer any excuse for the administration of his birchen panacea in my case, or even for

scolding; on the contrary, he seemed to take delight in every effort I made to excel, particularly when my Latin compositions in verse or prose answered his idea of pure writing; on which subject he had published an ingenious essay; for, to do him justice, he was thoroughly acquainted with the various styles of the great writers of antiquity.

One of the consequences of my assiduity was, that he reported me favourably more than once in letters to my father, who sent them regularly to my uncle; and thus ensured me a continuance of his protection; and when five years had elapsed, and I was past seventeen, obtained for me not only his consent for my going to Oxford, but a promise of enabling me, whilst there, to support the appearance of a gentleman.

On his promise I relied with confidence; for amidst all his faults a breach of his word could not be counted; and filled with thankfulness, I wrote to him, requesting he would permit me, as I designed visiting Oakley before I went to the university, also to pay my respects to him. This, in his reply, he peremptorily refused, concluding the letter in terms which I then thought very enigmatical: he had private reasons, he said, why I should not go to him.

These private reasons were afterwards sufficiently explained; but for the present his rejection of my petition to wait on him confounded me: nor could I comprehend why a near relation, who expended his money liberally for my advantage, should dislike to see the object of his bounty. I communicated

this circumstance to my father, and acquainted him with my intention of passing a few weeks at the rectory, a happiness I longed for most eagerly; and that then it was determined I should proceed to Oxford, and join my friend Markham, who was going as a gentleman-commoner to Christ-Church, while I designed to enter as a commoner at — college, with Flaybottom's recommendation, who had been a member of that society.

Previous to my departure from school, the good and attentive Gay sent for me to his room, and there taking my hand in both of his, in a manner so affectionate and impressive that I shall never forget it, wished me prosperity; renewed his admonitions against associating on too familiar terms with Markham,

and such as were like him; and added, "I have frequently presumed on the strength of our intimacy, and the accident of being older than you, to give you general advice as to your conduct: we are parting; and in separation we may correspond;—but, unless you ask it, my character as a *monitor morum* ceases to-day. On another subject I cannot so readily consent to yield my place, but am desirous that you should carry with you some token of my anxiety for your welfare as a student, and have therefore drawn up a few directions, which, if you will use them, for want of better, may be of some service, and prove no unpleasant memento of the happy hours we have passed in the innocent and delightful employment of reading."

He then gave me a small manuscript; and hearkening with polite and friendly attention to my thanks, and assurances of lasting gratitude and esteem, bid me farewell.

The contents of the little book were indeed of a nature not to be despised; and I am willing to hope that Gay's excellent hints for a course of study were not entirely lost on me. Nothing could be more luminous, more eloquent, more enticing, than the style employed by this young man in the view he had taken of general literature, and in recommending particular authors in science, *belles-lettres*, and moral philosophy.

In this treatise, which is now before me, though decidedly partial to the ancients, he does not by any means exclude the moderns from a claim to ad-

miration and applause ; but he takes pains to show, and indeed does it I think successfully, that the eminent of former days were our masters in almost every part of intellectual excellence ; and that, at least as far as the historians, poets, and orators are concerned, the greatest beauties which shine in the pages of modern composition, already exist in the works bequeathed to us by Greece and Rome.

After these and similar prefatory observations, he proceeds to discuss most ingeniously the advantages that a man acquires in attempting to procure a well-stored mind : he expatiates on the sublimity of astronomical inquiry ; the satisfaction arising from the discovery of mathematical truth ; the charms and wonders which natural history unfolds ;

the calmness of soul and invincible fortitude produced by perusing the precepts of the philosopher; and the knowledge, not merely of human affairs, but of human character, contained in the volumes of the historian.

Had I not before been addicted to study, this would have made me assiduous: I was fascinated; and on reaching home, showed Gay's present exultingly to my father, with an assurance that I intended scrupulously to make it my guide.

He seemed gratified by my resolution, and on perceiving that I had not wasted my time while absent from him.

On inquiring for some of my former humble friends, I found that most of them had left Oakley; several in the capacity of soldiers and seamen, and not a

few of them charged with the sin of poaching. Amongst the exiles I particularly lamented a hardy fellow, one Ned Blunt, to whom I was under weighty obligations; as he had been my constant champion, and once, at the hazard of his life, had saved me from being drawn under a water-mill and crushed to death; and afterwards suffered a severe whipping in silence, rather than tell why he came home so wet!

I shook hands cordially with the clerk, whom I may call the founder of my greatness. It must nevertheless strike my indulgent reader, as it has frequently struck me, that affairs in this world are strangely conducted. My father's exemplary life and virtuous struggles were rewarded by his being almost starved through want, and heart-broken

with cares; while, on my part, I was taken up from the depths of neglect and obscurity, and put into the high road of fortune, by the happy casualty (for as I did not intend the act, I disclaim any share of the merit) of cracking the *os frontis* of a laborious and innocent poor devil, by throwing a stone at a church-window. This I consider as one of my lucky hits:—better deeds have not always produced such agreeable consequences!

While I remained at home, my feelings were all of the most pleasurable kind; my father repeatedly expressing the comfort he derived from my having obtained so good a character at school; encouraging me to persevere, and assuring me that my becoming a great man was altogether unavoidable; “for

your uncle," said he, "although he is rather of an extraordinary disposition, and never lets any of us know what are his circumstances, will undoubtedly provide handsomely for you: and indeed, even without his farther assistance, you may depend on getting forward in the world by your learning and virtue: and above all things, my dear boy, remember what I have so often endeavoured to impress on you and others, that the righteous man is never forsaken, but, on the contrary, that every good act he performs is certain to be followed by its recompense. The reward of virtue is"—he grew warm—"is most sure and ample: its greatest and best is, you know, reserved for a future state of being; but in our present condition, where the wicked are troubled and the good are

happy, goodness confers on those who practise it perpetual self-satisfaction and ease of mind; and procures them the respect, admiration, and gratitude of their fellow-creatures. Have we not hourly instances of this fact?"—At which moment a letter was delivered to him that threw him into some agitation; on reading it, he exclaimed, "Was ever the like! was ever any thing so unfortunate, and just at this time too!"—I asked what had happened; and he informed me that the letter was from a man of large property in London, to whom, several years before, he had shown much civility; and lent fifteen pounds upon an urgency; "And now," said he, "that I apply to him for it, he actually denies that he ever had a farthing of my money, and adds, that, with all my appa-

rent sanctity, he is afraid I am no better than a swindler."

As I knew it was on my account that my father wanted the money in question, I satisfied him, by displaying a large sum, the fruits of my uncle's bounty and my own economy; and soon after took leave of my family, and proceeded to Oxford.

CHAP. IV.

*Various particulars supposed necessary
to the progress of this history.*

ON arriving at the university, I found Markham and several more of my former acquaintances at different colleges. With them, however, for a long time, I had scarcely any intercourse; and indeed made the most of my time and opportunities during my two first years; particularly in the vacations, when I remained at the university, and read with the utmost constancy and attention; profiting greatly by Gay's memoranda,

and occasionally receiving from him the most agreeable letters, as well as from my father : but, and it will appear extraordinary, not a line from my benefactor, except when he sent me a remittance ; and then only to desire an acknowledgment by return of post.

Instead of inserting a minute account of the multifarious pursuits, literary and licentious, of my fellow-students ; or giving a history of the discipline observed in the celebrated seat of letters where I resided, I shall present my readers with a compendious view of these matters by transcribing the contents of a small pamphlet, which I wrote and privately printed at the time, in order to raise a laugh at the expense of a certain set of idlers, with whom, I confess, that I now and then used to mix ;

and as one "cannot touch pitch without being defiled," it may easily be imagined, that I was not barely a *spectator* of the absurdities I attempted to expose.

In this slight performance it will be seen that, leaving the castigation of *crime* to abler hands, I have but glanced at formidable debauchery, and taken my steadier aim at those childish and low and pitiful practices by which the most precious period of human existence, the "*Mây* of life," is so often lamentably and irretrievably lost.

This trifle had for a title—

A FEW
GENERAL DIRECTIONS
FOR THE CONDUCT
OF
YOUNG GENTLEMEN
IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD*.

“ Having a very great regard for the honour of the University of Oxford, and being desirous that the youth who are placed there to receive a polite education, should reap the advantages of it, by knowing how to make use of the time commonly dedicated to that purpose, I beg leave to offer a few directions and rules of behaviour to their serious attention, which, carefully ob-

* Printed at Oxford in 1795.

served, can scarcely fail of rendering them very amiable in the character of gowmsmen, and, at a future period, very respectable members of society.

“ The benefit resulting from an education at the university has been generally allowed; nevertheless the ‘fond parent is often heard to lament the vast expenses attending it; and, deterred by a prospect of these, and by the reflexion that his boy, like others, may, on leaving Oxford, return vicious and ignorant, instead of virtuous and learned, refuses his son the opportunity of acquiring liberal endowments; and condemns a young man, perhaps of a docile disposition and brilliant genius, to drudge all his life either at a desk or in a farm-yard.

“ I shall at once remove the chief

subject of a father's apprehension, the expense, by acquainting him, that he has been misinformed.—At present in Oxford, *money* is nearly useless: an assertion which no one, who knows that place now and its manners and customs, will dare to dispute. And of this I hope to convince my young reader also.

“That I may be more intelligible, I shall address an individual in the situation that first entitles him to the name of an Oxonian; as a *freshman* just matriculated; trusting, that if I give him good impressions in the beginning of his course, he will not lose them as he advances.

“After being indulged by your destined tutor with an entertaining walk to the top of *Headington-hill*, or through *St. John's* gardens, you are now, sir, to

all intents and purposes, a gownsman; and, for reasons of my own, I shall suppose you a gentleman-commoner.

“Instinct will tell you not to be guilty of paying your tailor for your new cap and gown: these you *must* have, and *must* wear, or be punished; and it is the tailor's business to supply you. As to what he may suffer by non-payment, make your mind easy, by the following reflexion on tradesmen of every description: Oxford tradesmen are such for the express ends of being ruined by giving credit, and kicked when they complain: and admitting that not to be the fact, still, as it is generally their fate, you are not to imagine that a conduct on your part different from that of others, would have any effect in their favour; and you ought always to join

with the multitude, rather than appear singular.

“ Like every spirited young man, you will doubtless be ambitious of exhibiting your new ornaments in public ; —but, do this gradually; first lounge, and study attitude before your college-gate ; when you may practise *dashing* things on a small scale ; such as staring at ladies as they pass ; spitting on an old woman’s cloak ; or laughing at some plodding servitor ; a man, who, nine times in ten, deserves every kind of insult, because he is usually poor, modest, and learned ; circumstances which have been always considered as sufficiently provoking.

“ You may then venture to the *parks* ; and, at last, into the *High-street*, which is to be so often the scene of

action, while you reside at the university.

“There the resources to an ingenious mind are numberless. You may be intellectually employed in watching the arrival of stage-coaches; or, you may fasten your face to the window of the print-shop for half an hour, and be thereby almost as much enlightened as entertained: this may be called, without a pun, a standing fund of amusement.

“I need not insist on the delight of parading up and down this beautiful avenue during the whole day; where you may examine, with critical attention, the proportions of cart-horses, the canvas coverings of waggons, and the complexions of servant-maids.

“At college, also, you have much

to do : for instance, to make acquaintances, and fill up the desiderata in the furniture of your rooms.

“ On the first of these points, I recommend your making as hasty a choice as possible ; that is, weigh circumstances, yet lose no time. In the first party to which you are introduced, give up your whole confidence to those who swear with most spirit, talk most, and drink most. You may be sure they are men of a superior cast, or they would never shine in any of these qualifications : whereas, they who say little, and drink less, are timid, cautious reptiles, and are probably making remarks on the innocent gaiety of the rest.

“ Be particularly careful to find out those who are men of good families and profuse extravagance ; they are of

course persons of consequence, understand *life*, and will teach you liberal notions. From them you will learn all that I could tell you on various topics; and to encourage you, you will have the advantage of example, which you know is beyond precept.

“ They will tell you, and indeed with great truth, that learning, as that phrase is vulgarly understood, is a farce; that religion is a *bore*; your tutor a *quiz*; and college discipline, monkish absurdity.

“ In the choice of your rooms, contrive, if you can procure such an agreeable situation, that they shall look upon the street; thus consulting a most delightful plan of instructive relaxation.

“ Order a large soft sofa, because you cannot long remain alone in your

room, on a hot or rainy day, without falling asleep, and this piece of furniture is infinitely more convenient for the purpose than an arm-chair.

“Purchase a flute, or borrow one, whether you know how to play or not, and let it be always in sight; then whoever sees it will give you credit for an elegant accomplishment, because, who could suppose you would have a musical instrument merely to look at?

“Get the most expensive prints you possibly can: they ornament a sitting-room prodigiously, and, in the end, need not cost you more than sixpence to the porter who carries them back to the print-shop.

“Upon the same principle, and at as small expense, you may enjoy the luxuries of a handsome carpet; a set

of china ware ; chairs, tables, window curtains, &c. If the tradesmen are silly enough to let you run in their debt, you will not be silly enough to pay them: their object is to get your money; yours is to keep it from them; and every body should mind his own business. This argument would not, I flatter myself, be easily refuted; and I wish I could in like manner teach you to avoid every sort of expense; but this is not possible; though I hope to reduce the articles under that head to a small number.

“ Every man of sound sense desires to be dressed as fashionably as he can, and this harmless gratification may be procured in the same way with others above-mentioned; at least such necessities as thirteen or fourteen coats, as

many pairs of breeches, and three or four dozens of waistcoats.

“ In the colours of these, your own fancy will assist you; the lighter the better, because agreeable to the statutes, and least apt to soil; and be sure to have a scarlet coat, which is always genteel. •

“ Keep a horse; it will do you credit, and afford you a good diurnal amusement, in conformity to the rules of the university; as riding every day from breakfast till dinner-time implies neither idleness nor dissipation.

“ I advise you not to get dead drunk every night; by no means from an idea of there being any impropriety in that indulgence; but that you might not deprive yourself of many pleasures reserved for a man who can walk about:

thus, instead of going to bed as early as the shopkeepers, you can stay up until three or four in the morning; and make the time pass pleasantly enough by burning the chairs, splitting the doors, fighting, and turning religion into ridicule. In short, a person who is only half-drunk doubles all his enjoyments.

“ With respect to the amusement of ridiculing the established religion, I must observe, that nothing can be more justifiable: Addison and Newton were of a different opinion: but who are Addison and Newton! or, why should you and I be expected to think as they did? Besides, they were no judges of the subject in question; for, by all accounts, they were a couple of *flats*, without any taste for the innocent re-

creations morosely prohibited by Christianity ; a system full of inconsistencies, by the bye : amongst the rest, I remember it says something of Omnipotence being both just and merciful, which philosophers know to be an absolute impossibility. This is a fine hint, which you may enlarge upon at your evening meetings, where you should remain to cultivate free inquiry and improve your reason, instead of going to chapel or lecture, where, depend upon it, you could learn nothing.

“ Your tutor is probably what has been denominated a *quiz*. His being a clergyman, is of itself enough to render him ridiculous ; but he is worse ; he understands Latin and Greek, goes regularly to chapel, reads much, and acts

and dresses in conformity to the statutes :
this is a *quiz*.

“ Amongst other absurdities, he lays down a course of reading for the instruction and amusement of his pupils, specifying authors, who afford those that study them neither the one nor the other.

“ For instance, Homer and Virgil; which I believe to be heaps of lies; at least, I very much doubt whether there ever were any such gods and goddesses as Hercules, Jupiter, Helen, Thersites, &c. Besides, how could Homer or Virgil know, with certainty, what was done before they were born ?

“ Cicero and Demosthenes are two more; but masters in the art of abusing their fellow-creatures, are pretty examples to set before young minds !

“ And as for English writers, be careful not to follow your tutor's directions with respect to them; he will probably entice you into the perusal of a work called ‘ Paradise Lost,’ written by a person of the name of Milton, whose head, if I recollect, was cut off in the time of king James the First: I solemnly warn you against his book, which is flimsy stuff, chiefly stolen out of the Bible, and the verses all jumbled together.

“ Your tutor perhaps may recommend ‘ Thompson's Seasons’ for an idle hour; but it is a poor thing, and perfectly destitute of novelty, not having even lies to make it palatable; so exactly has the author copied from nature.

“ Then there is Doctor Johnson's Dictionary; an useless book, because every

Englishman understands his own language; and as for entertainment, I never could extract any from it, for the words have no connexion whatever with each other; and the writer flies from subject to subject, for no other reason except that each begins with a particular letter of the alphabet!

“The enumeration of books which you will be desired to look into, would, in short, take up too much time: I shall therefore advise you not to read at all; or if you will, read precepts which you can reduce to practice; such as the works of lord Bolingbroke, for your religion; lord Chesterfield, for your morals; and Paine, for your politics.

“Exclusive of your studies, your tutor will think it necessary to interfere in several other matters, and be apt to in-

sist on your going upon Sundays to St. Mary's Church. This is not so absurd an injunction as at first it may appear; go there by all means, or you will lose a great deal of fun, arising from scraping with your feet, and coughing to drown the preacher's voice.

“ A lively imagination will strike out various resources for its possessor; it is therefore less requisite for me to dwell longer on the subject of petty contrivances to pass away time; and I proceed to observe, that nothing can give a higher flavour to the pleasures of an Oxford life, than now and then changing them for others. To do this in the most sensible and salutary manner, you must not run off to *Woodstock* or *Abingdon*, but go directly to London. This is the scheme which best proves the taste and

fire of a young fellow: you must, however, do it with circumspection; and not only have money for the purpose, but, if possible, your tutor's permission; and the obtaining of these requisites is one of the sublimest efforts of human genius.

“In the first place, you should write, or get a friend to write, a letter to yourself, with a detail of some severe family misfortune; and your tutor, who may have many faults without being either suspicious or hard-hearted, will give you leave to go home, where your friends were in such confusion that they had not time to write to any one but you.

“So far so good: but the money may be wanting; and here again the pen will assist you: remember then, a week or fortnight before you attack your tu-

tor, to write to some one at home: if you are blessed with an old aunt or grandmother, you are secure of a supply; should your father be a veteran soldier or fox-hunter, who has never been at the university, he may be imposed on; but if a clergyman, your case is a nice one, and I scarcely know what to advise: try the success of a pathetic comparison between *his* times and *yours*; or send him in a list of books which you *must* have; and are sure he *has not*.

“ Having got the money, go next to the *Angel*, or *Alfred's Head*, and engage a seat in one of the London coaches: then dress yourself as much like the driver as you can; wrap your head in that genteel covering called a *Welsh-wig*, and your person in a *bear*—i. e. a coat

which weighs about one hundred and fifty pounds: the inconveniencies of this, if any, are far exceeded by its advantages; as no one who sees you in it will suspect your being a gentleman.

“At going off, sit on the outside; and besides hearing polite conversation, you may thus ingratiate yourself with the coachman, by paying for his gin and beer; he, in return, will allow you to take the reins; and if by overturning the machine a child should happen to be killed, or the leg of an inside passenger broken, those are accidents for which you are not accountable.

“For your amusements in town I shall not give you any directions; and only recommend it to you to live entirely at a coffee-house near St. James's, as least expensive.

“ This is a plan of true rational pleasure, and should be repeated frequently: you will always return improved in morals and manners, and with a double relish for your studies. Indeed, so great is the benefit derived from such trips, that you are authorised to find money for the indulgence in any way you please: when the end proposed is good, no matter for the means.

“ On your return to Oxford, after having sported in the sun-shine of *Bond Street*, you will find a cap and gown a great *bore* for some days, and be inclined to wear a hat; be careful, at the same time, to have a large stick in your hand; and when you see a *proctor* approaching, begin to limp, as if you had dislocated your knee, and unless very *knowing*, he will not *take to you*. But should

this ingenious device fail, you may say you are going to walk in ^{the} country, or returning from it; but then he must not meet you again, whereas lameness is a most excellent excuse, because you may be a great while recovering.

“ I hope not to be censured for supposing these brief directions of some value: they are all practicable, and have the advantage of being easiest to those whose capacities are most limited.”

I had now nearly completed my third year at Oxford, and in some respects established a character for diligence and sobriety: yet it is with a considerable sense of shame I am forced to acknowledge, that, though both decorous and assiduous, I had but little merit for being so: timidity, rather than virtue, made me seclude myself; and solitude compelled me to be studious: my reward of approbation was, however, the same as if I had resisted temptation and been victorious in the contest!

Reflecting on this, and conscious that I had, in fact, made greater advances than many others in the road of literary attainments, encouraged me to hope that I might venture to taste of the cup

of pleasure, to which by nature I was strongly inclined, and still preserve my fair fame unsullied. Hitherto I had abstained totally from excess in wine, and from play; had been an early riser; had never contracted a debt; nor once slept out of college.

Now I began to revive my intimacy with Markham; and through him got an introduction to the parties which he frequented. The consequence may be easily conjectured: very speedily my glass of port was magnified into a bottle; from a looker-on at cards, I became a *sure hand* at guinea whist; and soon there was scarcely a statute of the university that I had not violated.

I cannot exactly say that I was elevated in my own esteem; but as my irregularities were not detected, I per-

ceived that I had not lost the regard of my tutor, or of other orderly persons of my acquaintance. This, thought I, is admirable; my father's maxims, then, are not to be *always* relied on; and to acquire the approbation of mankind, it is not so necessary to avoid doing ill, as it is to escape exposure! This philosophical idea shows that I had studied ethics, and knew when to apply them.

CHAP. V.

Comes in between the fourth chapter and the sixth.

How long, and with what effects, I should have gone on in the above-mentioned way, would be difficult to determine; but the following circumstance obliged me to change the course of my proceedings for another. I received a letter from my father, with which I cannot present my readers; but if a copy of it will answer, they are welcome to it.

“My dear boy,

“It is with most heart-felt regret and sorrow I write to inform you

that your uncle is no more; and with him your hopes and prospects are terminated; for I find that he had for several years been married to a person, who, having been his servant, became his mistress, and then his wife. By her he has left a son; and to them his entire property belongs, as he died suddenly without making a will.

“The first thing to be done, is to submit to the calamity with patience; and the next, to withdraw as soon as you can from your present situation, and come home to your poor but affectionate parents.”

Behold me now, for the first, time, the victim of misfortune; and such it really was; but which my own misconduct

did not give rise to, any more than my merits did to the prosperity that made me feel the reverse so severely: yet I was fool enough to think, that, as I had not deserved it, it ought not to have fallen to my share. And I must also acknowledge, that my distress on the occasion was not at all alleviated, by observing Markham, just as I had read my letter, enter with a joyous air to inform me, that by the death of a relation he had obtained a substantial addition to his already ample fortune. He had dissipated his time; lived free from controul; treated all subordination with contempt; and, in short, done with impunity what would have put some people into a 'gaol, and promoted others to a gibbet!

Pride assisted me to conceal from him

what had happened to me, and saved me the pangs which his pity would have inflicted; but it was not in the power of pride and philosophy combined, to rescue me from those which my own thoughts had in store for me. I passed the night in soliloquies, and vain attempts to conjecture what my future destination would prove; and next day bidding adieu to Oxford, returned, pennyless and disconsolate, to be once more the tenant of my apartment at Oakley.

Here, in conversation with my father, was developed the mystery of my uncle's unwillingness to let me visit at his house. He who disclaimed dominion of all kinds, and particularly that of a female, was under the government of one of the lowest and most vulgar class of women; who having tyrannized over him in

quality of *chere ami*, did not, by all accounts, permit marriage to diminish her authority.

My father endeavoured to find excuses for my uncle's behaviour towards me; but my mother would not hear a word in his favour: her schemes, her hopes, her predictions, had failed; and she was outrageous; but, charitably refraining from abuse of his memory, always referred herself and me for satisfaction to the Day of Judgment; "when," said she, "I rather think *somebody* will come off but second best."

My sisters were for the present obliged to lay aside their prospects through my means; as well as poor Dick, who, notwithstanding, went, in the family, by the name of the archdeacon, from the preferment I was to have

procured him; and Howel, his elder brother, not choosing to be indebted to me for his advancement, had gone on board of a king's ship in the capacity of a midshipman.

For a great length of time I had not written to Gay: but we are very apt to remember our friends when we ourselves are in adversity; and accordingly I now addressed a letter to him, with a full relation of my recent mishap.

In reply, he recommended to my consideration a proposal lately made to himself, but which he had rejected; and this was, to become a member of Dean ——'s family, with a tolerable salary, and a place at his reverence's table; upon the conditions of being a sort of half-tutor and half-servant to the great man's only child, a boy of ten years old.

Under any other circumstances than those in which I was placed, I should have disdained such an offer; but now, with the utmost dislike to the plan, I wrote to thank Gay for his friendly intimation, and declared my readiness to accept the post he had refused, provided I were considered eligible. In consequence, Flaybottom was applied to, and forwarded so strong a recommendation of me to the dean, that every thing was soon adjusted, to the great satisfaction of my father; and I once more left Oakley, to wear the chains of servitude in a rich man's house.

I went, however, with the strongest reluctance; nay, with such a sense of horror and distress of mind as could not be exceeded, if equalled, by the stings of remorse; and yet this was as fine an op-

portunity as ever presented itself for the consciousness of Virtue to come into play, because I was now making a painful effort to earn a reputable independence, and relieve a parent from the burden of supporting me!

What Virtue was about at the time, I cannot pretend to guess; but I am sure I have not the smallest particle of obligation to her for any assistance on this occasion.

I perspired at every pore on catching the first glimpse of a large and stately mansion, whose long parlour-windows were occupied by several showy figures, male and female: and had the steps I was now to ascend been those of a scaffold prepared for myself, I might have felt less embarrassment on ap-

proaching them, but I doubt if I could have experienced more terror.

And here methinks the question may be asked by some one,—Wherefore this fear? why these agitations, and qualms, and tremors? —are you not a man; and are not they your fellow-creatures whom you are going to face; and is not this morbid anxiety very like the vanity that induces some people to suppose themselves of more importance than they really are?

It is excellently well said, my good and philosophic sir: but you are yourself, perhaps, one of the great, and never were one of the little amongst the sons of men; and have therefore no right to put the query. Or perhaps you are of that race of aërial sages,

who know little or nothing of what is going forward in this lower world: it may be you are at this moment seated in all the pomp of metaphysics, old slippers and a thread-bare coat, by the side of a fire-place, in some lonely attic, where you are as remote from the possibility of *becoming* a patron, as of *finding* one; and may freely expatiate on the native dignity of man, or any other subject you please: but, beware, should you ever be in the predicament which I have just described as mine, that you do not comport yourself even worse than I did. I am besides, what it is possible my critic may not be,—a *diffident* person; and let me say, that, for one of that description, it was doing wonders ever to get up the steps at all. However, I surmounted them at last,

knocked at the already open door, sent in my name by a servant, and was desired to enter.

The vulgar are guided by exterior; and mine, though I then did not think of it, was in my favour, and impressed the fellow with something like respect: I was tall, strong, and well made; and my dress, which I had arranged at a public-house in the vicinity, was such as became a gentleman.

On entering the drawing-room, I beheld an assemblage of twelve or fourteen persons of both sexes, apparently waiting until summoned to dinner, and was requested to take a chair, in a condescending voice, by a portly gentleman, whose habit and look announced him to be the dean himself.

He was tall, fat, and shapeless; and

wore his own hair; or at least much of it as chose to remain on a head of some sixty years' standing, but it was made the most of by the aid of powder and pomatum. His face was far from being destitute of expression, being incontestibly the best representation of stupidity that I think I ever saw. His voice was effeminate; and his style of conversation, for he was a great talker, had not a tincture of the scholar or the man of talents, but was evidently the nauseous refuse of the eating-room and the card-table, which every one can utter and every one retain: but, as he was a man of great connexions, and still greater wealth, he was universally asserted to be a pattern of wisdom, wit, and benevolence: and this must have been true, as the observation was usually

made in his presence, when he might have contradicted it, which he was never known to do.

My future pupil introduced himself to me by pulling my handkerchief from my pocket; for which act of dexterity and politeness he was applauded by several young and old ladies, and not chidden by his admiring father, who observed, that his vivacity was uncommon, "Quite uncommon, Mr.—hem!"—and that we should speedily be very good friends; his little white eyes doing all they could to sparkle with satisfaction at the praises of his boy, which were audibly whispered throughout the surrounding circle.

I could not for my soul say a word on the occasion, as I really felt something of disgust towards the child, who

was as different from what a fine boy should be, as it is possible to conceive. He was as impudent and as incapable of blushing as a Bath demi-rep; his face was long, pale, and pitted with the small-pox; his hair red; his legs thin and feeble; and his words appeared to come through his nose, though his mouth was very wide, and constantly open. Having lost his mother in his infancy, he was, in short, what is commonly called spoiled, by the ridiculous fondness of a silly father.

Upon the whole, the circumstances of my reception were rather discouraging; and I believe I had already come to a resolution within myself to run away by the earliest opportunity, when dinner was announced.

As the company was rising, I ven-

tured, for the first time since my entrance, to look around me; perhaps in search of such a face as poor Gay's, for whose presence I would then have given a great deal. A haughty dowager or two passed me; next, three or four young, skinny, rouged and feathered *fashionables*, followed by as many of those short-sighted, yawning, insipid puppies, called very elegant men; and then the dean desired me to advance; but I hesitated, on perceiving a young lady near the door, in order to make way for her. "It is only Miss Rivers," said the dean, seeing the cause of my backwardness: she passed me, and bowed *good-naturedly*; and shortly after, I found myself seated opposite to her at table.

We were prepossessed in favour of each other, without having interchanged

a word: I had shown her a mark of respect, and she looked graciously at me: I looked at her; and the more I did so, the more I was astonished at my not having looked at her before, for now it was with difficulty I could persuade myself to look at any body else.

The best excuse I can make, to the well-bred part of the world, for this behaviour, is to describe the object that attracted my attention.

Miss Rivers seemed to be about nineteen years of age: her form was an assemblage of beautiful proportions, and her face so lovely, that it would have been admired even if Miss —— had sat by her side. It was a countenance such as the pencil of *Angelica* loves to draw, and resembled in profile the noble style we sometimes see in ancient gems.

It had besides in it some traits, which have always passed with me for irresistible charms,—it was pensive, and almost pale;—a complexion admirably suited to her black, intelligent eyes.

I was at a loss to understand why so much loveliness, dignity, and elegance of manners, as Miss Rivers displayed, remained nearly unnoticed by the men of the party, till I discovered that they were merely parasites, and adapted their behaviour to what they supposed their entertainer's inclination; and his want of affability to the young lady was evident.

The disdain and coldness of those of her own sex who surrounded her, could be easily accounted for: they none of them addressed her; and I can scarcely say that I had heard the sound of her voice.

In all this there was an appearance of mystery which excited my curiosity; but fortunately my knowledge of the laws of politeness, though not extensive, was enough, aided by my bashfulness, to prevent my committing my thoughts to speech, and directly asking the lady who she was. I resolved, however, to find this out as soon as possible; for what I heard during dinner, convinced me that she resided in the house of which I also was become an inhabitant; and with this information for the present I was obliged to content myself.

The conversation that ensued on the departure of the ladies, though it did not last very long, made some impression on me; and as I attended to it in laudable silence, I am able to recollect the leading topics.

The recapitulation of these may not be quite devoid of instruction; I shall therefore set down what was said; and leave my acute and gentle reader to make his or her own comments, as to him or her shall seem meet.

Dean. "We'll drink the King. You take port, Mr. Ardent?"

Here a pause of five minutes.

First Gentleman. "Most uncommon large that turbot: you're fond of turbot, major!"

Major. "Very."

Another pause of ten minutes.

Second Gentleman. "Pleasant size this room."

At which interesting period a servant entered to say that coffee was ready; and we rose and joined the ladies.

Here I found Miss Rivers presiding.

at the tea-table. In the course of her administration she asked me if I wished for sugar; a simple demand, and not absolutely unprecedented, nor very difficult to answer. I could, however, have more easily replied, had I been asked by any one else to explain Philo's method of finding two mean proportionals! I felt my face grow extremely hot, and said something that was neither yes nor no; in consequence of which I got a lump of sugar in my cup more than I wanted.

My sudden incapacity to speak intelligibly may seem marvellous to one who peruses in plain black and white the question put to me; but when such questions are accompanied by a full gaze from the two radiant eyes of an ex-

ceeding fine woman, aided, comforted, and abetted by an intoxicating smile, and the extension of a most lovely hand and arm, the affair takes quite another turn !

The ceremony of tea-drinking, &c. being concluded, Miss Rivers retired, accompanied by my young disciple; and shortly after the company withdrew to their respective homes; leaving me to a very agreeable tête-à-tête with the dean; who having acquainted me with his principles in civil policy and church government, and his taste in reading, informed me that he had the greatest possible respect for my father, whom he had known many years ago; and that there was nothing he admired more in his venerable character, than the pa-

tience with which he endured the hardships of a small income and an obscure situation. And indeed to this assertion I could not refuse implicit belief; for his admiration was such, that, although he knew my father extremely well, had some obligations to him, and often promised to serve him with his interest in the church, he never did him any service whatever: not being, I suppose, able to deprive himself of the pleasure he took in seeing with what composure and resignation the parson of Oakley could bear "the pelting of those pitiless storms" which in this transitory state are so often the good man's portion. He insinuated, however, that his respect for my father induced him to take me under his protection, and that he had

my advantage very much at heart: he then wished me a good night, and I retired to a tolerable apartment, and to bed.

My mind, after I lay down, was so much engaged with reflexions and projects for the future, that instead of becoming drowsy, I grew still less sleepy; and at the expiration of two hours was broad awake; when I thought I heard something like sobbing in the adjoining room, and fancied it the voice of a female in an agony of grief. At length all again was silent; and in the midst of vain endeavours to account for the noise, I fell asleep.

When morning came, I rose early, and left my chamber, not without hopes of learning from some servant who the mysterious beauty was, whose bright

eyes had so perplexed me the evening before.

The mansion was as yet so profoundly still, that as I descended I despaired of meeting even a housemaid ; and taking it for granted that a dean must have a library, I opened a parlour-door in search of it, and of some book for my amusement.

And here were books in abundance ; but I paid little regard to them, and fixed my eyes on a female figure reclined upon a sofa, in a loose morning-dress, and leaning on her arm, with a handkerchief applied to her face : I thought her asleep, but on my entrance she started, and rose ; when I saw that it was Miss Rivers.

I bowed, and she curtseying gracefully, and sitting down, assured me, in

answer to my excuses for intruding, that she was glad to be relieved from solitude, which, she added, to those who have neither present enjoyment nor happiness in prospect, is always a state of pain. My reply was, "I regret exceedingly that the remark should be applicable to you." Compliments in general are not delivered in such a tone of sincerity as this was; nor are they always received like it; for Miss Rivers's eyes were instantly filled with tears;—but she brushed them away, and looking firmly at me said, "Mr. Ardent, I am so unused to sympathy, that I scarcely understand its language; but *that* I believe is not confined to words: the countenance may speak as intelligibly as the lips, and I think I comprehend yours. You are, I suspect, very humane, and a

little curious: the first-mentioned quality I shall put to a trial by attempting to gratify the second: after this warning, shall I proceed?"

The offer was not to be withstood; and the occurrence had an air so romantic, that it looked exactly like one of those plots for an interview which novel-writers keep by them ready for use. I accepted it with eagerness, and many expressions of thanks for her condescension; requesting, however, before she began her story, that she would, if possible, let me know whether she had been alarmed by sounds of lamentation, which I had heard in the night; and, as I imagined, in the chamber adjoining mine. She coloured at my question, and with a heavy sigh said, she was afraid she was herself in fault; but that

not being accustomed to have a neighbour, she had heedlessly given vent to the anguish of a tortured bosom: "You shall not, however," she continued, "be so molested again; yet I am not displeased, I confess, at discovering, that if I have had a witness of my weakness, he is more likely to pity than to deride it." I declared in the most respectful terms that she was not mistaken; and, apologising for the interruption, begged of her to proceed.

She smiled compliance; and would, I doubt not, have immediately fulfilled her promise, but for the intrusion, at that very instant, of my young charge, whose face, as he rushed violently into the study, looked to me twice as ugly as it seemed the day before.

It is scarcely possible to describe the

vexation this disappointment inflicted on me : instead of listening to the narrative of my lovely new acquaintance, who immediately left the room, I was now compelled to enter on my office of governor ; at best one of the most odious of occupations ; and to me so disgusting, that while I appeared to hearken to Master Gregory spelling his way through the first stanza of Pope's " Universal Prayer," I silently addressed one to Heaven, that I might be gifted with sufficient firmness to throw up a situation so unsuitable to my disposition ; determining to incur my father's displeasure by the step, and encounter the hardships of the world, unprotected and alone, rather than live dependant on the dean, or indeed on any one.

CHAP. VI.

*Wherein it was thought fit to insert what
has not been left out. will be found
by those that look for it*

I HAVE said that I already wished to escape; and need hardly add, that I was at no loss for a good excuse to myself; as I pretended to believe it dishonourable in me to remain under the shelter of the dean's roof, without strictly fulfilling my part of the compact; and that I felt to be impossible, as nothing could exceed the stupidity of the pupil, except it might be the impatience of his preceptor.

Before, however, I could execute my scheme of decamping, two or three things were absolutely necessary; such as giving some kind of reason for going away; and fixing on a place to which I should go: above all, I wished previously for information respecting Miss Rivers; in whom I perceived I had taken a violent and unaccountable interest, yet by no means sufficiently strong to detain me.

In this my plan of elopement, and the virtuous reason I had discovered for putting it into effect, may be discerned a degree of inconsistency, not at all peculiar to my character, but which I possess only in common with the rest of my fellow-creatures; for while I supposed myself acting in conformity to the virtuous precepts inculcated by my father,

I was meditating how to put the laws of reason to defiance; and sooner than contend with the inconveniencies of a state of dependance, was going to plunge into an ocean of difficulties and dangers.

During several days I turned in my mind the design I had formed; and every morning for three weeks resolved that it would be the last of my stay. The cause of my hesitation lay in Miss Rivers's attractions: but a moment's serious reflexion on what the consequence might be of indulging sentiments of a tender kind, both with regard to her and to myself, decided me; and I had taken my measures, when one morning, to my great satisfaction, Master Gregory proposed an airing with his father in the carriage, in preference to re-

peating a lesson with me. With pleasure I saw them drive from the door; and with still more delight found Miss Rivers seated at her working-table in the parlour.

I addressed her, and said, "You will perhaps, Miss Rivers, think more strangely of me even than you do at present, when I tell you, that I do not intend to remain any longer with the dean, or indeed in this part of the kingdom, as my dislike to my situation is insurmountable."—"However I may regret the circumstance," said she, "I cannot say that I am in the least surprised; though I *should* have been, had I perceived that one of your disposition could have become reconciled to a condition for which you appear every way unfit: nor I believe will what I have to say contribute

to diminish your dislike, or change your determination. My story is short; and as we are not likely to have a better opportunity than this, I will now relate it.—

“ I was born in Cumberland; to the most retired part of which my father, who was a gentleman of small property, withdrew on marrying a very accomplished woman without the approbation of her family, and in consequence of that step, without fortune. By her he had two children; myself and my dear and lamented brother, whom I may well regret; for had he lived I should not now have been without a friend and protector. My father took the utmost pains with poor Robert's education, and he was at thirteen I think as fine a boy as could be seen; but just at that pe-

riod, an offer being made to my father, by a distant relation, to carry the youth out with him on a well-known voyage of discovery then undertaken; and he having no means of providing for him so eligibly himself, nor any better prospect, was prevailed on to comply. In less than two years after the sailing of the expedition, the public papers teemed with the dreadful particulars of its failure; and contained a minute account of the loss of the principal vessel, in which our Robert was, who shared the sad fate of his companions that were buried in the waves.

“From that time his name was no more mentioned by any of us: but my father and mother survived his loss only a year and a half; he dying three months before my other parent; and

both were I am convinced, if ever there were such, the victims of sorrow. They had been already depressed by pecuniary difficulties ; and this last blow proved fatal at once to their happiness and their lives.

“ They were not less fond of me than of my brother ; but, their anxiety on my account was relieved considerably by the solemn assurances of the dean, who is our relation, that I should never be deserted while he lived, nor left without a genteel provision in case of his death.

“ Immediately on my becoming an orphan, he came for me ; and treated me with as much tenderness as his cold and selfish nature is capable of feeling. With him I have ever since continued ; but indeed on a footing more disagree-

able than can be imagined by a stranger to situations such as mine. Would to Heaven I were at liberty to seek for subsistence elsewhere, and by the exertion of what little talents I am mistress of! but the opinion of the world forbids my making such an effort, and I must submit!

“The necessity is however very cruel; for though I possess neither genius nor erudition, I am fond of books; and can use my needle with as much dexterity as many who earn their bread by their labour. How much sweeter would that be to me, than what I am now doomed to eat! I am here absolutely without rank in the creation; neither enjoying the prerogatives of a gentlewoman, nor the freedom of a domestic; and am forced to perform the duties of both:

indeed, to play as many parts as the chief actress of a strolling company. I am housekeeper, seamstress, and sometimes cook. When we are without company, I am obliged, as you must have perceived, to read the dean asleep; or what is a great deal harder, to keep myself awake when he is talking: and when we have a party, I am slightly introduced as Miss Bell, and generally overlooked, as on the day of your arrival: besides having my feelings hurt by frequently hearing the dean enlarge on the calamitous state in which he found me, and from which he never scruples to insinuate that his benevolence has rescued me.

“This conduct you may suppose to proceed from the meanness of a sordid disposition; but, to do him justice, it

does not originate in so base a principle, and arises merely from his stupidity. Folly often bears a complete resemblance to vice in every point except the motive by which its actions are regulated; and if you continue with us, the dean will many a time put you to the blush before strangers, without intending to pain or affront you, and probably without perceiving that he has done so!

“Irksomeness is not all I have to complain of here: occasionally I have suffered, for two years past, the insults of a coxcomb, whose name you have yourself mentioned more than once, and whose alliance with the dean you are acquainted with. I need not say I mean Mr. Markham; or that, knowing what I know of him, I am sorry to hear you]

call your friend; a lofty title, which can never properly belong to any but the good.

“ Fortunately for me, his visits to his guardian have not been very frequent; but whenever he comes, his conduct towards me is of the strangest and most provoking description: in company he scarcely condescends to appear as if he knew me; in private, on the contrary, he is so base as to affront me with what the vulgar call love: and though I have repeatedly summoned all my spirit and my best elocution to resent his insolence, or mortify his vanity, he is neither to be intimidated nor abashed. I delayed for some time complaining to the dean, through an apprehension of his resenting Mr. Markham’s behaviour in too severe a manner; but when com-

pelled to make it known, I found that my caution was entirely out of place; for the dean has as little of delicacy as he has of genius; and by his interference made things worse.

“And here my history is at an end; nor of it or of me will you probably ever hear any more; for, if I am not deceived, your mind is fixed on a speedy departure.”

I assured her, with a sigh, that it was most firmly fixed; and that in going, I had only to regret the loss of her society, and of the opportunity I might hope to have of proving myself in time not altogether unworthy of her friendship; adding several strong expressions of indignation at the conduct of Markham, whose intimacy I resolved to drop for

the future; and lamenting my own inability to meliorate the hard lot of a lady entitled to one of a very different kind. And this, though an exceedingly false inference, was far from being an unmerited compliment; as Miss Rivers was really calculated to adorn the highest station.

Selfishness in the extended sense of the word is the very source of love; in its more confined meaning it is an enemy to that passion; and in the present instance for a short time protected my bosom from its inroads. My thoughts on Miss Rivers's troubles were soon lost in thinking on my own: fate or frenzy hurried me away; I respectfully took her hand; and hoping that Fortune would hereafter be kinder to her merits, and that I should yet see her in the en-

joyment of the prosperity she deserved, I left both her and the great house, and retreated to the humble inn at which I had stopped on my arrival.

I there inspected the state of my possessions, amounting to fifteen guineas, a small gold watch, and a few changes of linen; and foreseeing that an interview with the dean would be somewhat embarrassing, sat down and wrote him a letter, to be delivered when I was gone.

Lies are bad things; and I advise every one, young and old, to avoid telling them; there are, nevertheless, cases in which mankind agree to think lying expedient. My letter, in this instance, was a falsehood from beginning to end. I informed the dean that I was flattered by his kindness; that important business

called me elsewhere: that I left him with much concern, and was his most obedient humble servant. The world ought to be greatly pleased with such a proof of conformity to its laws; for this act was what the world calls an act of politeness.

I then determined to go immediately to London; and when there, make the best excuse in my power to my father by writing to him. Before the evening, an opportunity offered for completing my elopement, by means of a public conveyance which passed through the place where I was; and the next day, having exchanged dependance and support for freedom and a very fair chance of being starved, I made one of the million in the capital.

This was not my first visit; having

before I forsook Oxford, been of a party to the metropolis. I did not, however, now inhabit, as then, an apartment in a splendid hotel at the west end of the town, but made choice of a very cheap and private lodging, in one of the most obscure courts eastward of Temple Bar; considering that an expensive style of living was not quite suitable to the finances of a man who had nearly as many fingers as he had pounds.

Such an instance of wisdom, in the conduct of one who had done so foolish an action as leaving a state of security, and throwing himself into the arms of the wide world, may appear improbable and inconsistent; but it is neither: we see such things every day, as men doing *great* acts of weakness, while the minutiae of their conduct shall be the quintessence

of rationality, and evince the utmost degree of magnanimous self-denial.

What else does he, who, shut up in the silence of the cloister for twenty or thirty years, disdaining to mingle with his fellow-mortals, and conversing only with the illustrious dead, exerts the brightest faculties with which heaven has endowed him to explore all the heights and depths of science, and to store his mind with the riches of literature; and, when he has done all this, dim eyes, gouty legs, and a shaking head, inform him that the season of enjoyment is gone by; and that he must neither take delight in nor illuminate this world, but prepare to go immediately into another, where happiness is complete, and knowledge is vain.

But a still more striking instance of diminutive wisdom and gigantic folly, is displayed in the carriage of what is usually termed a *Great Man*; who, for the hundreth part of the pains he takes to be miserable, might have secured to himself a very large share of real felicity, and a tranquil old age.

Let us suppose him by his efforts to have attained a throne; and then it would be difficult to say, whether his prospect or his retrospect is most horrible. He has for years scarcely ate one full meal, had an entire night's rest, or known the calm delight of domestic life: has created foes that he might destroy them, and yet by every fresh triumph added to the numbers of his enemies; has been tost by the tempest, and bled in the battle: at one time

freezing amidst the snows of the north; at another, scorched by Indian suns; and has faced and inflicted death in a thousand fearful shapes, and overspread whole regions with desolation and sorrow: and now, though his end be accomplished, his hour of repose is almost as far off as ever; for now it is that his assiduity must increase, his vigilance be doubled, and his courage be perpetually within call; because he who gains a lofty station must also keep it. But, fortunately for the human race, and for the great man himself, he is not immortal; and at length lies quiet in the grave.

Immediately on becoming the inhabitant of my humble abode, I wrote to my father, assigning the best reasons I could devise for my sudden desertion of

the dean, and assuring him, that I had not the smallest doubt of being one day in possession of splendid emoluments from my exertions in a literary capacity; and to ensure my success, had come to the emporium of talent, the mighty city, where virtuous industry was certain of its reward, and where true genius never failed of finding friends.

In answer, the good man expressed himself as somewhat astonished, and not a little disconcerted by my conduct; declaring at the same time his total inability to assist me, otherwise than with his blessing, and a letter of recommendation (which he inclosed) to a fourth cousin of my mother, a printer and publisher dwelling near the Royal Exchange.

I accordingly presented myself and

my letter to my citizen-relative; whom I found a smooth, rotund personage, clad in a prodigiously neat suit of broad-cloth; and who, as my habiliments were still in tolerable preservation, and my figure imposing, received me with some civility—that is, he did not send for a constable to take me up on my entrance. Indeed he even politely told me that he was sorry to learn the indifferent state of my circumstances; sorry to see I had no great eye to the main chance; and sorry to observe that your *deuced* clever folks were seldom good for much! “And as to any matters in my way,” said he, “I should be as glad as another to lend you a helping hand; but business never was so dull as it is now. For my part I believe people have left off reading, and I have at this moment

no less than five of my best workmen standing idle! They had each of them contracted with me to bring out a new novel once a quarter; and they are *smartish* fellows too; but I cannot tell how it is, we have no buyers—no buyers, sir; and my men, I am afraid, must go back to their old employments.”

I supposed, of course, that these fabricators were at least barristers or clergymen, whom the love of letters had drawn off from more serious studies; and having hinted as much, I asked Mr. Type to introduce me to the gentlemen; concluding that their conversation would enlighten me, and their knowledge of the town prove essentially useful to a stranger. But Type undeceived me directly, by saying, “O my

dear sir, as to that, not at all, not in the least; quite of a different stamp; they are all in trade."

I was rather amazed, and requested to know how it was possible persons of that condition could be authors. Mr. Type, smiling at my ignorance, replied: "Ah hah! I see you are quite *fresh*: why now, Mr. Ardent, what an error you seem to lie under! is it from fellows of colleges, or from men and women of fashion, you expect just descriptions of the manners of high life! A smart staymaker, a milliner, or an artist in tooth-powder and artificial flowers, will collect more morsels of *bon tong* in one week—ay, and toss them up in a neater style—than the best lawyer in Westminster Hall, or the brightest scholar in the universities, would scrape to-

gether in a twelvemonth: besides, these same well-informed men, whom you appear so mighty fond of, have their scruples about morals and decency; so that they are really very troublesome gentry to deal with: a novel from one of their *decent* pens would have but a bad chance of sale amongst the young ladies of Bath and Brighton! I lost, I remember, a good round sum by one of these enlightened gentlemen two years ago; being fool enough to publish at my own risk a work for him, which did not sell at all: and no wonder; half of it indeed was unintelligible, and might have gone down; but the rest was intolerable; nothing but sarcasms against intrigue and politeness; and in several parts of it the fellow had cast reflexions on kings and churchmen.—Never was I

so taken in before; but I'm resolved the same shan't happen again!"

I have given the above as a specimen of Mr. Type's communications during our first interview; we had many more such conferences, and at length came to a mutual understanding. He found that I was at least willing to labour; and I discovered, that, so there were any chance of sale, and none of his being put in the pillory, he was as willing to publish whatever was offered him.

CHAP. VII.

In which the contents of the other chapters are not repeated.

TYPE'S manner of proceeding, when a manuscript was presented to him, was curious enough. If it proved to be a novel, stuffed with trite and vapid observations, and in which equal violence was done to decorum and grammar, he seized greedily on it, and soon after issued it from his press in as many volumes as the work could well be stretched to, with the aid of a large letter, a wide margin, and a coarse blue-and-white

paper: then the newspapers teemed with advertisements of the book; praises of Mr. Type's liberality in giving the author so many hundred pounds for the work; and passages selected in order to whet the curiosity—not quite of the public, but of all the boarding-school misses, governesses, dress-makers, and Abigails throughout the British empire; whose *moral agents*, the keepers of circulating libraries, immediately order each a certain number of copies: and thus a large impression has been quickly dispersed, and considerable profit produced to Mr. Type and his fraternity.

But if, instead of a novel, the offered manuscript should happen to be a series of poetical effusions; such as elegies upon kittens, tomtits, and broken tea-

cups; or a journey from Hyde Park Corner to Uxbridge, with remarks on the natural history, manners, and customs of the people; illustrated by views of the hedges, milestones, and waggon-ruts on the way; then things must be *got up* in a different taste; and Mr. Wirewove, Mr. Type's friend at the west end of the town, has instant notice; when the parties join to bring forth the volume in the shape of a cream-coloured quarto, with designs by the *most eminent artists*: and this sort of job, if judiciously puffed, usually turns out the most lucrative of any.

To this great man, Mr. Wirewove, I was presented by Mr. Type; and again, by both, to several of their brethren; and through their means was very speedily initiated in all the mysteries of author-

ship, and grew into intimacy with vast numbers of its professors.

Amongst these I discerned, indeed, that there was a considerable share of talents and knowledge; but they appeared to me to be influenced by a most perverse fatality, and to have their multifarious powers strangely misapplied. For example, our best pastoral poet confessed to me, that, having lived all his life in London—*inter fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ*—he had no higher conception of rustic innocence, than what he derived from occasional confabulations with those nymphs, worthy of the golden age, who superintend the cows in St. James's Park: the squares supplied him with verdure, and Kensington Gardens with romantic scenery; and from Shenstone or Theo-

critus he disdained to borrow, because they were *low*:—judge, kind reader, what must have been the creative vigour of his imagination!

I have known more than one volume of very entertaining voyages and travels produced by a city curate, who was afraid to venture on the Thames as far as Battersea; an eloquent eulogium on the personal security and happiness of an English subject, by a gentleman who resided chiefly in the King's Bench prison; and Sermons addressed to Youth, by one of the most debauched and profligate characters of the whole association.

With as slight pretensions as any of them, I made my *début* in a few months after my arrival in town, by carrying a novel in MS. to my friend Type; for

which, owing to the interference of an acquaintance in my favour, he complimented me with five pounds; and by the publication, realized at least one hundred for himself!

My gains however, though small, were, I am sorry to say, fully adequate to the merit of my book; which was in truth a lamentable farrago; flat, stale, and unprofitable; containing manners which have never had existence, incidents which could not possibly occur, and such an exaggeration of all the passions, especially that of love, that the most phlegmatic of my personages was mad enough to deserve the strictest discipline of Bedlam.

The reviewers spoke of this, my first-born, in very flattering terms; and it was dispersed throughout the realm: but

as I had the grace to be heartily ashamed of it, I concealed my name; and must confess, that I could not see a copy in a bookseller's window, or elsewhere, without feeling the utmost confusion. I hope God will extend his forgiveness to me for having written such a work, but I'm sure I shall never obtain my own.

Whilst engaged in the composition of this brilliant performance, it may be supposed that I found myself obliged to eat and drink; and though nothing can be more easily imagined than such a necessity, the business of providing for these periodical demands of nature is a serious matter, and one wherein fancy is of very little use; and I will maintain it, in defiance of a well-known anecdote of the famous Sir Isaac Newton, that it

is not in the power of the greatest abstracter or the most lively genius that ever existed, to work himself into a belief of having had his dinner before he gets it!

Both my wardrobe and my purse were rapidly assuming what a certain wit has called a very poetical posture; I perceived poverty approaching, and with sadness beheld the last of my guineas.

In this dilemma I determined to take counsel of some of "our gentlemen," as Type called them; and accordingly addressed myself to one whose pale face, long fits of silence, and frequent walks in the Park, made me think him an adept; and indeed, I was not mistaken. I one afternoon sought for this melancholy wight, and, as I expected,

found him about the middle of the Mall, seated on a bench, and with an air of profound thoughtfulness employed in scoring diagrams in the gravel with the end of his stick.

I sat down beside him; and to avoid committing myself rashly, took a wide range in the commencement, narrowing as I advanced. I began with European politics, and touched on the theatres, the state of literature, the pressure of the times, and the merit of his last publication; till at length I fairly popped the grand question, and asked him how the devil he contrived to live at all!—taking care, however, to qualify the acid in this interrogation, by observing, that for my part I made it out with the greatest difficulty. He comprehended me with

admirable quickness; his hard face displaying something as like a smile as it was capable of putting on, and betraying the pleasure he felt, in common with the whole human race, at finding another man as calamitously circumstanced as himself. Such a discovery lightens the burden of misfortune surprisingly; and was evidently acceptable to Tom Dyer; for so he was called. Nor does the remark at all reflect on his heart, which was in fact a great and good one. But such is the nature of man: the sensation arising on an occasion of the kind, is, "let schoolmen tell us why," delectable; though, there is, I admit, one still more so, but which does not fall to every body's lot, and this is, the transport of seeing a fellow-creature

miserable,—when one has both the inclination and the power to make him happy.

Dyer said he perceived, from the question I had asked him, that my affairs were not in a very flourishing condition; that they were likely to become still less so; and that I did not exactly know how to prevent that catastrophe.

I nodded assent to this curious arrangement; and could not help smiling at the droll gravity with which he delivered himself.

“I also perceive,” he continued, “that you appear rather elevated than depressed, as in reality you ought to be, by a circumstance, which does not attend every body who has to endure the frowns of the world, and which, instead of alleviating, adds to human sufferings:

I mean, your being what is usually termed a gentleman. Now, as a member of that order, you have to struggle with a double portion of evils, and are called upon to bear *relative* ills as well as real ones. You cannot stretch yourself upon a homely bed, or feed on coarse and scanty fare, without the recollection of better times and happier fortunes: what to another are trifles, are not so to you; and you require at least four times as much philosophy to support you, as would suffice for a poor fellow who never knew better.

“ I doubt not moreover (you will excuse my freedom) that you have cherished in your mind several lofty notions respecting your own excellencies, and the injustice of mankind. Alas! you must, I see, be new-modelled altogether;

and if you think it not beneath your decaying dignity to receive lessons from such as I am, I could, methinks, be of some use to you.—Pray, may I ask if you have dined?" I acknowledged that I had not; "nor I," said he: "but most probably you have not quite relinquished the project; and though I had designed to postpone that ceremony until to-morrow, yet, for the sake of enjoying your good company, and to gain time for discussing at large our original subject, I will strain a point, and attend you; only you must condescend to do as I do on those occasions, and that perhaps will not suit you *as yet*."

I understood the sarcasm implied by his emphasis, and assured him I embraced his proposal with eagerness, and had not the slightest objection to begin

the study of cheap eating under his auspices as soon as he pleased.

We then rose, and rather ran than walked into town; my conductor exhibiting a most wonderful degree of activity, and a thorough acquaintance with what may be termed the science of the streets; such indeed as none but an expert practitioner could have been master of. Nothing seemed to obstruct him; he jostled no one; never lost a stroke of his foot; knew precisely when to dart across the carts and carriages, and never missed a short cut. And instead of being confused, the keenness of his eye and the alertness of his movements seemed to increase as we proceeded; till at length he announced our arrival at the place where he usually dined.

We entered by a dark and narrow

passage, into a long eating-room, in which at different tables were seated several men, some waiting for their food, some devouring it, and others reposing after the fatigue of having done so.

Dyer whispered me, as we took our posts in a retired corner, that there was perhaps at the moment in that room more genius and less money than any one could guess, who was a stranger to the ways of London.

Our frugal meal soon made its appearance, and disappeared with even greater celerity: on which I was going to propose another allowance; but here Dyer showed his skill, by saying that such voracity was not only unphilosophic but unnecessary: "At first," said he, "I myself was guilty of a like error; but I quickly grew wiser; for I

found that if, after eating ever so small a quantity—just as much as will take off the edge of appetite—a man stops there, he will in about ten minutes perceive that his hunger is greatly diminished, if not entirely gone, and that much less is required for human support than is generally believed.”

To prove my sincerity as his disciple, I made a sacrifice to philosophy at the expense of my stomach, and acquiesced. But as we designed remaining in the house after others had retired, I petitioned strenuously for the honour of treating him with a bowl of punch; and he gave his consent, though with much seeming reluctance; which, in justice to him, however, I must say vanished as soon as the exhilarating fumes of the liquor reached his nose.

Nor had we drank above two or three glasses, when my self-denying anchoret was converted into one of the merriest and most entertaining fellows I ever encountered. His eyes flamed with animation, and he amazed me with the variety of his knowledge and the eloquence of his language: his anecdotes were inexhaustible; and the severity of his general satire as great as the delicacy with which he applied it was striking. But his heart was not malignant; for he passed gently by the individual, and showed me that *Man*, as a class, was the object of his attack. He was, besides, a cheerful satirist; and told me in confidence it was his real opinion, that almost every thing, good and bad, in the history of human feelings, was a subject rather of laughter

than of mourning ; and that the faculty of discerning the ridiculous where it existed, and of fancying it where it did not, was more beneficial to its possessor, than an estate of a thousand pounds a year. “ As to yourself, my dear friend,” said he, “ I advise you to try and smile at what has heretofore made you sigh ; and by all I can observe, you will grow into a very merry personage, if you follow that precept, and resolve, in short, to laugh perpetually at the world. And you must not only reduce your wishes to your means, which every booby might do if he pleased ; but you must do it without feeling any pain in the effort, or any consciousness of merit from having made it : and the criterion of your success will be your arriving at a conviction, that what you

now believe to be necessities are in truth superfluities, and when you are able to *enjoy* what you now suppose yourself unable to endure, and living wisely, can feel the truth and beauty of Cato's heroic address to his soldiers: *'serpens, sitis, ardor, arenæ dulcia virtuti!'*

“ You must abandon the doctrine which has taught you to respect the opinion of mankind, as *you* respect it; and learn to despise the sentence of that tribunal; remembering, that the contempt of society is not always the consequence of vice, nor its applause the recompense of virtue; and most especially, Ardent”—(and here he laughed outright)—“ you must drop that precious system, which seems to have actuated you as yet so forcibly, and

whereby you have been led to imagine, that in life, when you act from a motive of virtue you will be successful, and when otherwise that you will fail: I am tempted to assure you, from my own experience, that the opposite result will more probably ensue: but, indeed, success and disappointment in human schemes, are but other names for good and evil fortune, and not the effect of our own foresight or blindness. Believe me, you must pursue what you deem right, and avoid what is *rationaly* counted wrong, from very different principles, and look for your reward, not at the hands of your fellow-creatures, but in your own bosom, and in that state of existence which begins when this has ceased."

I could not but admire his senti-

ments, the justness of his remarks, and the engaging manner in which he uttered them; nor help feeling a mingled sense of pity and indignation at the thought of such a man as Dyer being a prey to misfortune; and that a creature, invested with qualities to delight society, and powers of mind to enlighten a world, should be compelled, by his ungente fate, to find his habitation in a sordid hovel, doomed to mean attire and insufficient fare, and exposed to the slights of men, who, in point of intellectual worth, were so far his inferiors. And, as I afterwards found, he had also the ordinary claims to that respect which the world pays to genteel descent and a polite education; but these circumstances he disdained to mention spontaneously: and only, when I asked

him, replied shortly, that his family was respectable, that he had lost his parents in his youth, and was a graduate in the university of Cambridge: "I am," he added, "poor, but I am free; if I am not fat, I am healthy; a thread-bare coat gives me no uneasiness, because, as Swift has said, I am too proud to be vain; if I have not friends, neither have I enemies; and, as long as health remains, I can, with the aid of a quill and a quire of paper, preserve myself from famine and a prison."

CHAP. VIII.

Contains what it does not omit.

I ASKED Dyer why, with such capabilities, he had not employed himself in writing some extensive and useful work, which would at once produce him profit and reputation; and reminded him of Dr. Johnson's observation, that now a patron was not a requisite, as formerly, but that, at present, in every bookseller an author could find a Mecænas.

He answered, that I had not considered the question sufficiently: "It is

true, I grant you, that the publisher is now the patron; but it is equally certain, that the writer is most wofully in his power: your modern Mecænas does not know his trade, if he cannot keep the wretch who writes for bread in a constant state of subjection and dependence. A little further acquaintance with our profession will show you, that it is not a display of transcendant talents and profound erudition, but some lucky accident only, which will rescue a man from the bondage of authorship, and establish his name.

“ A labourer in the literary mine has a thousand difficulties to contend with. Should he sell his copy-right, he gets little or nothing for that which is still to be tried by the ordeal of public opinion; should he choose to wait for

his profits till that is passed, a year or more probably must elapse, and the writer, in the interim, must exist as well as he can: let him work by the *piece*, and toil in the capacity of translator, abridger, or compiler, and he scarcely earns as much as the cripple who sweeps the crossings; nor can he hope for more than to lie down at night as poor as he rose in the morning: and as for the stage, one of the roads of literature, which a person might be tempted to prefer, because there the bookseller has no concern, it presents the adventurer with more obstacles than one man in a myriad can surmount; for I need scarcely tell you, that this is no longer to be ranked amongst the *commons* of Parnassus; and hedges, ditches, grass-

snakes, and spring-guns, await him, should he encroach upon the territory."

Speaking presently of literature in general, I said that his estimate of the successes and failures of its votaries did not appear to be altogether a fair one; and, that I might learn the opinion of one who was so good a judge as Dyer, I mentioned the names of several writers of the day, who had acquired both praise and profit by their pens; and, amongst these, cited the accomplished translator of *Anacreon*: "Why, yes," replied Dyer, "but you must not rank such a man as that with the ordinary herd. It falls to the lot of very very few indeed, to have such pretensions as he has to the admiration of mankind. Uniting in himself so many rare excel-

lencies of mind, he stepped forth with irresistible claims. I know him, and whenever he is named, though anxious to do him justice, am at a loss for expressions suitable to my high conception of his qualities: his wit and his learning are almost unequalled, and the Graces wait on every page of his works. Look at his poetry, and you are astonished at the inexhaustible riches and splendor of his imagination; examine his notes, and they abound in proofs of solid understanding, penetration, and indefatigable research; for, wonderful as are his talents, they are not greater than his assiduity. That he has faults, as a writer and a moralist, I shall not deny; but, might I venture to anticipate the sentence of after-times (and of immortality he is certain), I should say, that posterity

will wish some of his lines had been lost, and sigh to think that he did not bequeath them a thousand for every pure and beautiful one that remains.

“Of the rest whom you have specified, and placed on the lists of celebrity, I can count but two or three who are likely to maintain their stations for any considerable period, and must say, that I think their good fortune is at least equal to their merits. The success of one of them particularly astonishes me whenever I reflect on it; for I cannot conceive how his enormous tomes, of what he chooses to call blank-verse, can possibly give pleasure to the reader of genuine taste. Epic poems they may be, and fine ones, if you will; but, for my part, I protest, that were I condemned to purchase them,—peruse

them again, or—carry them on my back, I know not which act would be to me most difficult.”

After a pause of some minutes, he continued: “With regard to yourself, it is hard to say what you ought to do; but I think I can promise to procure you a few pounds for any thing you write in the form of a novel; provided you permit me to take the liberty of correcting it before it goes to press?” I thanked him with sincerity, and said I should esteem his doing so as the greatest favour; but he interrupted me: “You mistake my meaning, good sir; my intention is only to suggest such alterations in your composition as will render it palatable, and prevent you exposing yourself by introducing any thing like nature or common-sense;

both of which, you ought to be aware, are not barely thrown away on ladies' *gentlewomen*, ensigns, and the *literatæ* of female boarding-schools, but would actually disgust them: we are apt, you know, to reject with contempt what we cannot comprehend."

I then told him of the work already alluded to, and requested his assistance in revising the manuscript; but am sorry to observe, that upon his looking over it a few days after, he found very little to amend, and drily assured me, "it was as near the thing as possible!"

We had now passed several hours together, and it was necessary to separate; previous to which, however, we agreed to meet in the same place, and elsewhere, as often as we could; and this we accordingly did, very much to my

advantage both in point of entertain-
 ment and instruction. So much so in-
 deed, as to recompense me many a time
 for what I endured when alone; for
 then, exclusive of the drudgery of writ-
 ing for a maintenance, my own thoughts
 preyed upon me. In spite of Dyer's ex-
 hortations, and all my efforts to arrive at
 a state of Stoical tranquillity, my mind
 suffered innumerable pains: the affecta-
 tion of philosophical indifference and
 unshaken fortitude, answers extremely
 well, when a man has spectators of his
 magnanimity; but a hero, poor, friend-
 less, and alone, cuts rather a sorry figure
 in his own eyes: and I am inclined to
 be of the opinion of a writer, who says,
 that "*it is great folly to affect to be wise
 by one's-self.*"

In my various lonely reveries there

was one thing which still appeared to me more grievous than the ordinary miseries of indigence, or the pangs of disappointed ambition ; and often have I moaned, in the anguish of my spirit, to think that the want—not of wealth, but of what to a moderate temper would have been competence, should have prevented my converting the admiration and respect I had for Miss Rivers into sentiments of a warmer and more exalted nature ; and deprived me of that, without which existence is to man rather a burden than a blessing,—the transporting pleasure of loving and being beloved for life—by an amiable woman.

Sometimes I deemed myself fortunate in not having remained in a situation where these wishes must have ga-

thered strength; and sometimes cursed my impetuosity, which had hurried me from her.

It may, to some, seem incredible, that so short an acquaintance could have given birth to such a partiality for Miss Rivers; it is, notwithstanding, perfectly certain that it did; and I can safely declare, that from the first moment I saw her I was affected with violent emotions of what is usually called love; that night and day her image haunted my fancy; whether depressed by adversity or elevated by the hope of better times, cheerful or melancholy, in society or alone, under every change of scene and circumstance, still was Arabella Rivers present to my mind's eye, and the recollection of her allurements deeply seated in my heart. When all chance

of ever beholding her again was at an end, still the beautiful phantom pursued me, and became so familiar to me, that I was frequently in the habit of expatiating aloud on her perfections: and though none of these, as far as related to her person, were imaginary, many of her mental excellencies, and those graces of the soul with which my glowing fancy had endowed her, were, strictly speaking, ideal: that she actually possessed all those advantages, although I believed, yet I did not know; but I should have esteemed it an insult to have entertained a doubt of their existence during these my visionary moods.

As these pages profess to contain the real, unembellished, and candid memoirs of an individual, not the fictitious incidents of a romance, I shall not at-

tempt to apologise or account for the singularity of what I have just related, nor indeed for any part of my narrative; but humbly beseech my readers not to condemn the particulars recorded as improbable or false, only because they have never experienced the like themselves. Such an argument would be most unfair and illiberal, and lead them to throw aside, weary and disdainful, many a rational and amusing volume. Upon this principle, the ingenious, minute, and faithful Mr. Lemuel Gulliver, would have lain neglected on the shelves of the bookseller, or been dispatched in reams to the pastry-cook's and the trunk-maker's, instead of being, as he is, proverbial for veracity, and the model of several travellers who came after him,

and have enriched these kingdoms with their stories: luckily for their reputation, as well as that of Captain Gulliver, all the world are not like that incredulous though acute prelate of our holy church, who averred, that for his part he rather disbelieved the accounts of the Lilliputians, giants, and so forth.

Besides, the doctrine which teaches the possibility of love at first sight, and that too on the part both of the lady and gentleman, is not so much at variance with fact as some rash persons have supposed; and I am convinced that I myself could particularise several instances wherein that passion, in its wildest degree, has been the consequence of a momentary interview between the devoted parties; the proof of

which is, that had they known one another, reciprocal hatred, instead of love, would infallibly have been the result.

But to return to my history. One evening it happened that I had dined at the usual place of rendezvous unaccompanied by Dyer; and was seated, with contracted brows, now musing on my darling theme, and again repining at my condition, when I observed a person approach the table at which I had dined, and seat himself opposite to me. On examining his countenance, I recollected having frequently seen him before, and remarked that he was often as richly dressed as the prevailing fashions will permit; occasionally slovenly, and almost ragged; always in an apparent hurry, and generally alone. I had also met him more than once at

Type's house; and on that account thought myself authorised to address him, and ask when he had seen the citizen: he answered me courteously, and we gradually got into conversation; in the course of which I discovered this to be a philosopher of a different description from Dyer.

He maintained it as his opinion, that the appetites of men were given them for the purpose of being gratified, not restrained; and that he who passed his twenty-four hours in breathing the air, thinking, feeding, and sleeping, could not with more propriety be said to enjoy existence, than a miser's strong-box the gold which it enclosed: "I admit," said he, "that indulgence is expensive; but I also contend for it, that a much less effort of the mind is required to pro-

cure the means of gratification, than to conquer the desire of enjoyment; and can see no moral necessity that binds a man to prefer the most troublesome method of attaining his object. Apropos; where do you usually loiter away your evenings?"

This appendix to the preceding remarks, though very abrupt, was very intelligible; but when he began to speak, I conceived that my new comrade was either an *alchymist* about to communicate the *grand secret*; or a highwayman: by the concluding interrogation I found he was only a gamester; and in my reply told him, that the evening was the time I devoted to business. Every man may be said to think *professionally*; and this was the case with Mr. Fullam; who supposing that he under-

stood me, observed, that it was just so with himself; and then, eyeing me steadily, and with one of his eyelids more closed than the other, said, "if you have no objection, and will walk my way to-night, I believe I can introduce you where something lively is going forward: strangers are not asked to touch card or die, unless they choose: only one is expected not to blab;—you understand." I did understand my gentleman most fully; and with a little hesitation agreed to go along with him; though not with any view similar to his, but in order to escape from myself.

I accordingly attended him to a place which, on entering, I conceived to be a tavern or coffeehouse of the inferior sort: the floor was coarsely sanded; a varnished clock ticked in one corner;

and a man, who seemed to be a tired traveller, snored in another: on a table before him stood a glass of brandy-and-water, and near this lay a pair of long-necked spurs, extremely bloody; the stranger's boots were covered with clay; and from his attitude his face was concealed.

At the farther end of the room appeared the bar, dimly lighted: and there in an arm-chair sat, or rather lay, the landlady, as I supposed her. This being Sunday, she was clad in a profusion of tawdry finery, and, like her solitary guest, was asleep.

My conductor requesting me to wait a minute for him, left the room, and gave me an opportunity of contemplating the figure of our hostess. She was a tall, masculine woman, in the decline

of life, and enormously corpulent; her face was dotted with carbuncles; the snows of time had fallen thick upon her head and bushy brows; and the traces of stormy passions, legible on every feature of her visage, were but little, if at all, softened by the tranquillity of slumber; "so looks the strond where-on the imperious flood hath left a witnessed usurpation."

I had scarcely finished my view of this divinity, when Mr. Fullam returned; and desiring me to follow, opened a small door in the wainscot of the room, and darted up a narrow winding staircase perfectly dark; but my guide was well acquainted with its intricacies, and on reaching the top opened another door, leading by two or three steps, which we descended, into a long apart-

ment, strongly lighted in the manner used for billiard rooms, and containing more than a score persons; some of whom were employed in throwing dice at a table, and the rest looking on. Amongst these spectators I took my place; none of them noticing me or Fullam,—nor, as far as I could perceive, even turning round at our entrance.

Though I had gone thus far, I intended nothing more; and being at liberty to make my observations on what passed, promised myself some amusement from an exhibition, the like of which I had never before been witness to.

Fullam, who soon evinced himself a practised person, previous to sitting down performed several preliminary ce-

remonies that attracted my attention; he first swallowed the contents of a tumbler of lemonade; next, turning up the sleeves of his coat, he placed his hands up to the wrists in a basin of cold water, and held them there for a minute or two; after which he produced from his side pocket a canvas bag apparently filled with guineas, and putting it into one within the bosom of his waistcoat, sat down.

Few of the men about him were even decently dressed; yet I thought some of them seemed men of talents and good-breeding; whilst the aspects of others amongst them, though still composed, inspired me with a kind of horror which I cannot describe.

As yet, calm and serious thoughtfulness was the general character of the

surrounding countenances: no voice rose much higher than a whisper; and coolness and caution seemed to influence them all. By and by, as the passions were roused, *curses not loud but deep* were murmured here and there; and very speedily the visages of each were so altered, the scene was so changed, that I began to doubt where I was, and almost to fancy myself in an assemblage of demons instead of men!

Anger inflamed the face of one, while that of another was overcast with the pale hue of despondency; their eyes flashed, their hands trembled, and they might be said rather to growl than to speak!

My feelings on seeing all this were not only more acutely affected than

they had ever been on any occasion, but the pain I suffered was of a nature altogether new and alarming: my mind was tempest-tost; and, rapid and active as thought ever is, mine appeared then to have acquired additional vigour: I condemned myself for being present at such hideous orgies: I imagined that the gentle, the dignified, the lovely Arabella, looked reproaches at me; and that my father, with his hoary hair and saintly mien, stood before me, and upbraided my degeneracy. "Not thus," I said to myself; "not in this way, miscreant, wert thou used to pass thy Sabbath!" The remedy was however still in some degree in my power; I had exposed myself to the effects of temptation, had sunk in my own esteem, for-

saken the paths of pleasantness, and consorted with devils; but I might yet retreat: and Reason said, withdraw; hasten, and find the air of the damp court where your dwelling is, the air of Paradise; and your ill-accommodated chamber, a sumptuous palace; compared with the atmosphere of pollution you now breathe, and the temple of vice in which you now stand!—and I was about to rush to the door; but thought was too alert, and arrested my steps. It struck me, that if Fortune were but to prove my friend, I might in the space of ten minutes gain what would to me be affluence for as many months.

The suggestion was more that of insanity than avarice: I had in my pocket but a crown; to lose it, was to

be impoverished;—to win but a farthing beyond that sum, was to be a villain! Respect for the moral principle is incompatible with madness, and mad I was: I turned back; staked my money; threw the dice; won, and doubled my possessions: this success increased my disorder; my pulsation was violently accelerated; my ears burned; my forehead throbbed with eagerness; I continued to play, and to accumulate: my avarice swelled into rapacity; my boldness into heedless temerity; and at last, as may *not* be conjectured, I saw myself master of above one hundred pieces of gold!

This change of circumstances was not more wonderful than what at this stage of my career took place in my

temper: I secured my gains; gave a guinea to the attendant, as the winners were expected to do; and slightly bowing to Fullam, whom I left still engaged, resolutely walked down stairs and quitted the house.

CHAP. IX.

Omits what it does not contain.

WHEN I issued from this cavern of iniquity, St. Paul's clock was striking twelve, the night was extremely dark, and the streets deserted; and I ought to have hastened homewards; but my frenzy was exasperated, not allayed, by all that had occurred; and instead of hurrying on, I chose to stop and meditate.

Although the base and despicable process by which I had transferred the

property of others to myself, stung me sorely, yet when I grasped my treasure, my heart bounded with exultation, and I triumphed with unholy joy in this complete and decisive refutation of my father's often-repeated prescription, to follow virtue regardless of all impediments; and in defiance of temptation to resist the allurements of evil, *because* the one would lead to temporal happiness, and the other to ruin. Long ago I had called in question the soundness of the doctrine; I now discarded it with contempt, and perceived, that, though a man would do well to love Virtue for Virtue's sake, and to adhere to her dictates with reference to a higher and purer state of being, he would act wisely to surrender all hopes of her affording

him any worldly recompense. And could my memoirs be supposed to have any precise object, to combat and overthrow this ridiculous, yet prevalent principle, is I own what I should chiefly aim at. It is, in truth, more than ridiculous; it is most extensively pernicious, and the parent of innumerable ills: it has seduced thousands of the weak and unthinking from that fealty which man owes to rectitude, and brought virtue into disgrace. Were the mass of mankind capable of reflexion, this could not happen: but ninety-nine out of a hundred are unequal to the task: they receive what is taught them, in a literal sense; it passes unexamined; the well-meaning and youthful pupil proceeds upon it as on sure ground; his heart

overflows with benignity; and he goes about doing good. His first act of generosity is repaid by ingratitude: his sensibility takes the alarm; he turns him about, fastens his purse-strings, and shuts up his heart; and he who might have been a Howard, is changed into a misanthrope.

I have already mentioned the deep impression these precepts had made on me: I was yet young; a child in respect to my knowledge of the world, and possessed by almost ungovernable passions; it was therefore natural that I should act and reason as I did, not alone in this instance, but in many others of my variegated life; in the course of which I have, I allow, done much for which I ought to be sorry, and little to make me

vain. But I have undertaken to be my own biographer, and as such it is my duty not to palliate or conceal, but to relate the truth.

My late exploit most justly entitled me to punishment; it had an opposite consequence; and without entering into any express stipulation with myself on the subject, I can pretty safely affirm that I was secretly determined at no very distant time to make a second experiment. Nor was this laudable resolution laid aside by the intervention of any qualms of virtue or integrity on my part; but owing to the following accident.

As I drew near my lodging, I heard a confused noise in a neighbouring court, and listening attentively, distin-

guished the voice of supplication for mercy and forbearance. Several heavy blows and groans ensued: I deliberated no longer, but advanced to the assistance of the sufferer: by the light of a lamp, I observed two men leaning over a third who lay stretched upon the ground, and whose pockets they were rifling. With a strong cane which I had in my hand I struck one of the ruffians on the head, and saw him fall; his companion in return assaulted me, and laid me senseless upon the pavement.

When I recovered the use of my reason, or at least of as much of that faculty as I could be supposed to possess previous to this affair, I perceived that I was in the custody of about a

dozen watchmen, and that I had lost some ounces of blood, and one hundred and four guineas. To make me some amends for this petty embarrassment, my guards saved me the trouble of walking to the watchhouse, and dragged me there.

Here was an occurrence perfectly in course: and I was now in a very fair way of being sent to Newgate, and hanged, as a footpad and a murderer, for performing the highest duty of a brave man and a good citizen.

I was moreover bound with ropes, and flung into a corner; but my tongue was at liberty, and I employed it to inform my conquerors that it would be agreeable to me to be unbound and sent to my lodging: whereupon they all

laughed very heartily. I said I was a gentleman, and had not murdered any body; and at this they laughed again: but when I petitioned them to stop the blood which flowed profusely from a wound in my head, the idea was so comical that their mirth became immoderate.

Their pleasantry was now interrupted by a tumult from without; and after great vociferation and loud swearing, the trampling of feet and creaking of rattles, admittance was demanded, the door was thrown open, and two men were committed as prisoners, who had been taken shortly after I was secured, and when searched, were found to have a better claim to the honour of being hanged than I had. One of them had

about him a vast store of money ; and his partner was possessed of a rich pocket-book and a gold watch : and though the law says nothing against the criminality of such facts, it leans rather hard upon persons who entertain themselves by walking about after midnight, with ragged clothes and bloody faces : they were therefore seized ; and were followed to the watchhouse by several neighbours who were disturbed by the uproar. Amongst these came my landlady ; an honest woman, professing the craft of a laundress ; and who being endued with an equal portion of strength and curiosity, forced her way into the place where I was, and recognising her tenant, with many exclamations of “ Lord look upon me ! ” and, “ Here’s

to do!" proclaimed her knowledge of my person and her conviction of my innocence. This might not have proved quite sufficient evidence before the court of King's Bench, where suspicion prevails most abominably; but the gentleman who was stunned and pillaged by the marauders now made his appearance, and deposed that the two last were they who had assailed him; and that he believed me to be the person who came to his assistance. In conformity to justice I was therefore immediately liberated, and desired to go home: in conformity to some other principle, my guineas were thought proper objects of detention by the constable who presided: so, thanking my good-natured hostess for her timely interposition, I

accompanied her back to her house, where she assisted me in dressing the hurt I had received; and at last, I got into my bed, with a slight head-ach, attended by a small sense of chagrin, and some little doubts as to the meaning of the words good and evil.

The next morning I had a visit from my philosophic friend Dyer, to whom I recounted my adventures. He expressed no emotion whatsoever, either of pity or surprise; said that all I had suffered might be unpleasant, but was certainly natural; criticised a new work just published and much talked of; spontaneously lent me seven shillings, and went away.

In the evening I walked out, and bent my steps towards that asylum of

the friendless and unfortunate, St. James's Park, which I entered by what is called Spring-garden gate.

I had not gone far when I perceived three young men approaching arm in arm; and noticed that he who was in the middle was my old acquaintance Mr. Markham, and that his companions were to all appearance men at least of equal rank with himself: the three were fashionably dressed; and one of them, whose face was much sun-burnt, wanted a hand. My attire was completely plebeian, indicating that although the wearer might have seen better days, his situation was changed confoundedly for the worse. On this I reflected; and Pride, which usually speaks a sort of double language to its victim, urged me,

at one and the same time, not to accost my former friend, and not to avoid him. I therefore paused, stood firm, and looked him full in the face. His confusion confirmed me in the belief that he recollected and was unwilling to acknowledge me.

A man of a truly great soul would have considered such an instance of baseness with contempt; but I was not a man of a great soul; besides, my temper was hot: the wrongs of Miss Rivers rose to my view, and I was just as arrogant as I was poor: I therefore resolved to affront this false Damon, and accordingly addressed him saucily, "So, Mr. Markham." His comrades smiled, and he colouring with indignation replied, "You're very free, sir."—"I am,

sir."—"You're troublesome."—"I intend to be so." His associates parted from him; and the one-handed gentleman said to me (as if he saw through the affair), "Perhaps you have business with this gentleman?" I turned to him, bowed gently, and said; "Not at all; I do not even desire any further communication with one who is as silly as he is ungrateful, unless, and I frowned significantly at Markham, he should insist upon it." He was now what I wisely wished him to be, exceedingly angry; and stepping up to me fiercely, said somewhat indistinctly, stamped with his foot, and lifted his hand; upon which with my cane I contemptuously knocked off his hat.

Before he could retort, both of the

others interposed; and he who had spoken to me already, observed that there was something very extraordinary indeed in the transaction, and such as required explanation. I said I was very ready to explain myself, if Mr. Markham thought fit to make his demand personally, or by message, at the York coffeehouse in St. James's Street, and I presented him with my card.

Both gentlemen exclaimed that an inquiry was indispensable; the first speaker still treating me with a show of deference and respect, which appeared to me rather unaccountable, for I could not recollect having ever seen him before; and it must be confessed that neither my appearance nor demeanour were very prepossessing. The truth was

(as I wished to persuade myself), that he had a quick apprehension and a high spirit; contemned the meanness of Markham's carriage; and reflected that a gentleman might be poor, and that poor gentlemen are inclined to be peevish.

This scene, although short, and conducted without tumult, was not barren of incident; and shows, as well as some other passages in my history, how much an ingenious person may do in a little time. Here, in a few minutes, I had dexterously renewed one acquaintance, made another, involved myself in a duel, and gathered a crowd round me. On perceiving this latter circumstance I withdrew; not observing that Dyer was amongst the spectators; and, as he since

told me, had been present from the commencement.

He laid hold of my arm, and proposed our dining together as usual ; to which I objected, pretending business, and designing to go directly to the appointed coffeehouse, and there wait till midnight, rather than miss my expected interview with Markham or his plenipotentiary. But, Dyer was too sagacious to be misled : " I know," said he, " your meaning ; the evasion cannot deceive me ; so, with your permission, we shall dispatch our meal, and be in sufficient time for your business of importance, in which I intend to have a share : but you need not be at all apprehensive of any attempt on my part to dissuade you from your purpose. I am

not fond of trouble, and to correct the opinions of the world, and make mad men wise, would require a good deal; but, to use the cant phrase of fashionable murderers, you may be in want of a *friend* on this occasion, and I am at your service."

I saw that any farther reserve was needless, and with many thanks accepted his generous offer. We then hastened to get dinner over, and that done, adjourned to the York coffee-house, where I occasionally received my letters, and read the daily papers; and where I made no doubt I should speedily have some communication from my antagonist. We asked for a room, desiring the waiter, if any one inquired for me, to show the person in.

By way of filling up the interval, I tried to draw Dyer into conversation on indifferent matters; but he exhibited none of his habitual promptitude: on the contrary, assuming a severe satirical look, and mimicking the broad accent of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, he said; "I am considering, Mr. Ardent, whether you had better be pickled and sent home, or be put to lie in the Abbey: not that I stand in much awe of the temper of your adversary; but there was in the manner of his chief friend somewhat alarming. His perfect coolness was evidently professional, and his alertness, when the affair threatened hostilities, was national: I am much mistaken if he prove not a man of the sword, and a native of Ireland; a coun-

try of which perhaps you do not know as much as I do. Instead of talking of the French Assembly, I will tell you in confidence what I think of our sister island. The inhabitants of it are the most extraordinary people on earth; and a better system of education than they generally partake of, is only wanting to make them the most respectable.

“The worst and the best characters I have ever met with, were the children of that soil; which, by the bye, should not be entitled, as it vulgarly is, the land of fogs, or bogs, or brogues, or potatoes; but the land of *energies*, where nothing good or bad is supposed to be done properly unless done vigorously! And I really think, as was pleasantly observed by one partial to the country, that her very vices are but vir-

ties gone astray. When a true gentleman there takes the field for single combat, he has to contend with an opponent more formidable than his armed adversary,—his own warm, tender, and generous heart; which is brave enough to dare every thing except the force of prejudice: neither with him is there (bold as the assertion may be) one particle of criminality in the act; all is principle, and a strict and rigid conformity to what he has been taught was his first duty. Very absurd I confess such education to be; yet is it impossible to avoid feeling reverence for the man, who, in compliance with such a sentiment, encounters those evils our nature tells us to fly; and hazards laceration or death, sooner than endure contempt. As for you, you have reduced

yourself to a vexatious dilemma; and the absurdity of your conduct will one day perhaps strike you more forcibly than it does now; you have committed a deed of folly without provocation — if any thing *can* authorise foolishness; and have pledged yourself to support it by committing one still greater.” At which consoling period of his speech entered, precisely as I expected, Mr. Markham’s ambassador; and seeing me in conversation with a stranger, requested a moment’s audience apart. I begged of him to sit down, and observed that I guessed the object of his visit; adding, that Mr. Dyer was my most particular friend. “Then sir,” said he, “I shall be brief: I stand in the same character to Mr. Markham; he resents your behaviour to him this afternoon,

of which I need not remind you; and conceives, as indeed I do, that there is but *one* method of adjusting the affair: he did, to be sure, say something of an apology, but I told him the thing was impossible, and that after a blow implied, unless there were some *shooting* I could have nothing further to do with the business: and here, you see, I consulted your good as much as his; because I take it for granted that if you had not thought him brave enough to go out with you, you would not have affronted him."

There was so much magnanimity in the conclusion, and so much blood-thirsty complaisance in the foregoing part of this address, that for an instant I was undetermined how to reply; and began by saying I was very much

obliged to *him* however: but he pretended to understand me literally, and observed, that he could not take all the merit of the intended meeting on himself either; "for I do believe," said he, "that Mr. Markham would have had you out of his own accord; but for fear of accident I just threw in a word." I could not resist smiling when I repeated my sense of obligation, and was proceeding, when this extraordinary person interrupted me: "My dear sir, I hope you do not really mistake me! If you knew me better, you would also know I am not fond of fighting; I am not, upon my honour; but there are cases where one fights to avoid trouble: I was fond of it once: like a great many others, before I knew what it meant; but I have

had my full share. It does not much signify who I am, yet as I was not introduced I may as well tell you that"—(Here he rung the bell and called for a bottle of wine; insisting on our helping him to get through it in so pleasant a manner that his invitation was not to be withstood)—"My name is Lewis Orlop, and I'm a lieutenant in the navy—Gentlemen, your good healths." We then expected—at least I did, and probably my reader does, a long history of hard service, embroidered with much cursing and swearing; various battles, and allusions to merit unrewarded, and wounds recompensed by neglect; and were I composing either a novel or a comedy, such touches would I suppose have been requisite, to complete the picture of our

valiant seaman : but he—without using any maritime phraseology, or swearing one oath—dropped all further mention of his private concerns, and politely said, “ I have, Mr. Ardent, formed to myself a conjecture as to the cause of the unfortunate altercation which has made us acquainted : I shall tell you what I think of it, and if I am in error, I will ask pardon of Mr. Markham ; if not, I shall ask yours : your feelings were wrung on finding yourself slighted by one who had been your friend ; is it not so ? ”

I expected this observation in substance ; but there was exquisite delicacy in the expression ; it acknowledged my quality and my claims as a gentleman, without glancing at my decayed condi-

tion, which must have been obvious to him. I was charmed with the man; and not less so Dyer, who had hitherto remained silent and wrapped up in himself, though not inattentive; but this last stroke of character roused him; and I saw that his philosophy was giving way: he cast a most expressive look towards me, yet still persevered in his silence. I then told Orlop, that the motive he had assigned for my behaviour was the true one; but that I should not conceal from him a circumstance which had contributed to enrage me with Mr. Markham; who, previous to our interview, had fallen in my esteem, having conducted himself unhandsomely towards a lady whom I particularly respected.

“ With that at present, however, interrupted the lieutenant, we have nothing to do : I am sorry to have engaged myself in any thing like hostility with you and your friend : but I *am* engaged, and must fulfil my promise.”

After some further conversation, a spot in Hyde Park was fixed on for our meeting at eight the next morning, where I assured him I should not fail to be; of which he did me the honour to say he had not any doubt; and then observing that he had outstaid his time, and shaking hands with me, took his leave.

Immediately after, Dyer and I also left the coffeehouse; and he not making any comments on what had passed, but desiring me to be ready for him early

the following day, left me, when near my lodging, and went in search of suitable weapons and ammunition, which he designed to borrow of an acquaintance.

END OF VOL. I.

