

1090

WHAT SHALL BE, SHALL BE.

A NOVEL.



Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

WHAT SHALL BE, SHALL BE.

Sunday Review. 1838

21 Nobel.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MRS. MEEKE,

AUTHOR OF THE

VEILED PROTECTRESS; OLD WIFE AND YOUNG HUSBAND; THERE IS
A SECRET: FIND IT OUT; WHICH IS THE MAN? THE
SPANISH CAMPAIGN, &c.

Who is it, that will doubt
The care of Heaven; or think immortal
Pow'rs are slow, 'cause they take the privilege
To choose their own time, when they will send their
Blessings down? DAVENANT.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

A. K. NEWMAN AND CO, LEADENHALL-STREET.

1838.

WHAT SHALL BE, SHALL BE.

CHAPTER I.

THE second evening after the receipt of the letter from Russia, the four elderly gentlemen had just sat down to a rubber at whist, when the baron was seized with an apoplectic fit, which rendered him a corpse within the hour. Thus was this friendly comfortable party even more speedily dissolved than had been expected, as the doctor and his grandson departed for Vevay the next morning, not wishing to intrude at such a moment, having understood that Mr. Harland and the colonel

were appointed the baron's executors, and guardians to his son.

As it was not supposed that this melancholy event would long detain these gentlemen in Switzerland, the doctor promised to wait the colonel's leisure. As he presumed that Mr. De Melfort would now accompany the merchant into Russia, Welford Mirvan could have wished to remain with his friend; but he had no option given him, since his grandfather's will had always to him been as irrevocable as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

No sooner were these visitors gone, than the brothers told the sincerely-afflicted Edward that no difficulties were likely to arise respecting the settlement of his *father's* affairs, laying a sufficient stress upon that word, to prevent his making the various natural inquiries which the doubts he still entertained of his affinity to this said father rendered uppermost in his mind.

The colonel, who was a more able disciple

ciple of Lavater than the worthy merchant, perceived his disappointment, and therefore added—"We are bound in honour to the deceased, never to revert to the past. You were the son of his affection and adoption, and you would not be so ungrateful to his memory, as to wish us to gratify your curiosity at the expence of our words. The baron had unanswerable reasons for suffering a sort of mystery to hang over your birth and early residence in England. Could he have ordered matters, you would much sooner have been removed from thence, therefore shew your regard for his memory, by respecting his secrets; could I make you acquainted with his motives, they would redound greatly to his honour;" entering into various other details, which, if they did not exactly satisfy the youth, at least rendered him respectfully quiescent, as the greatest tribute of gratitude towards his late *father*, who, no doubt, wished to throw a veil over his mother's imprudence, since

he always mentioned her in terms of the highest respect; yet surely he might have been told why he had been placed at Broomfields.

The colonel, who rather guessed his thoughts, thus resumed—"The Mrs. Harland, whom you must remember having seen in Gloucestershire, was not, as you may have supposed, your mother. Were I not restrained, by the most sacred promises, I would be much more communicative. She was in the confidence—indeed the agent of those who wished to deprive you of your birthright, and in part their plans have succeeded, since, though I know it to be a fact, it is impossible to prove that you were born in wedlock; nor would it be either conducive to your interest, much less to your happiness, could we place that fact beyond a doubt. Your mother has been dead many years, and was not unmindful of your welfare. The wretched Mrs. Harland has also paid the debt of nature, to
the

the joy of some, and not, I believe, regretted by any one who knew her."

"Poor woman! she never seemed really to like me, though she sometimes, to mortify farmer Griffiths, affected to notice me very kindly; if she gave me any thing, it seemed done in scorn, as if she considered me beneath her notice, or wished to blazon her good deeds. The Griffithses detested her, though they spoke her very fair—the old woman in particular, who, when she was in liquor, was very communicative."

"You were indeed greatly to be pitied, my dear boy, to be thrown among such wretches, who grudged you the very maintenance they were overpaid for affording you."

"Oh! as I have already told you, sir, I was both happy, and really proud, when Mr. Carter so kindly noticed me; indeed, he led to my fancying myself wonderfully clever; and the excellent Mrs. Arlington prolonged my error, by the notice she be-

stowed upon me. Had I been blessed with such a mother, I used to think, I should have looked down upon even monarchs. To obtain a continuation of her regard, I first endeavoured to render the smattering of knowledge I then possessed subservient to her beloved Ellen's improvement in botany; and then, as I considered the dear girl as a beloved sister, I was more assiduous than ever at the turning-lathe, that I might offer her something worthy her acceptance. How I rejoiced when I procured the Indian shrub for her! Mr. Carter aided all my efforts, as he hoped my attentions might lead Mr. Arlington to take me into his counting-house; and my own views tended the same way, till my late *father* opened such a very different future perspective. But never, while I live, shall I forget the maternal kindness of Mrs. Arlington. I feel assured that she would have exerted herself in my behalf, had I remained at Westbury; she encouraged me to teach her lovely daughter

daughter the names and uses of the plants indigenous to the soil, and suffered me to assist her in the greenhouse; therefore I shall ever look back with pleasure to that period of my chequered life. By the way, my dear sir, I have completed an herbal, in the hope of some time or other transmitting it to Miss Arlington—as various circumstances, you know, prevent my offering it in my own name, will you take charge of it? and as you will, most probably, either see or hear of her, when you return to England, may I hope you will present it to her in your own name?”

“Certainly—to Miss Arlington, the elder sister—do not let me mistake.”

“That would be a great mistake, sir, as it is the lovely Ellen I mean.”

“Well, give me your herbal, and trust to my discretion, as you will not return to England so soon as I shall, since, if you have no objection, Mr. Harland means to propose your accompanying him into Russia.”

“I shall be most happy, and feel much obliged by your kindness, colonel.”

Thus the matter rested, as the brothers were now fully employed in investigating the affairs of the deceased, whose relations were very anxious to learn how he had disposed of his property, as they did not now scruple to declare, that they hoped he had considered their claims, in preference to those of an illegitimate son.

The heir-at-law, who was a man of some consequence, and of large property, declared he should dispute any will which was likely to interfere with his rights. As to the Melfort estate, that he knew had been purchased for the young bastard; his right to that he should not dispute, and that was a very handsome provision for a boy, who seemed to have dropped from the clouds. The late baron was easily imposed upon, and some kind friend might have induced him to believe that this *prodigy* was his son; however, the youth was not to blame—he was indeed
deserving

deserving notice; but he should decidedly oppose any attempt to establish his legitimacy, and in rather more polite terms he addressed the executors to this effect.

As this very pompous gentleman was as generally disliked as the late baron was beloved, and had never been upon even speaking terms with the deceased, who had acted up to the very letter of the law, as far as he was concerned, the brothers were fully prepared to answer all his demands; and, in consequence, having been informed of the threats he held out, and the unkind speeches of the other relatives, they desired to see them all together, at Berne Berg, on a day they appointed, previous to the funeral, that they might hear the will read, and conform to the wishes of the deceased.

Three gentlemen, accordingly, made their appearance, and introduced themselves as the only surviving relatives of baron Villars; Mr. De Courtenvaux adding—"And I am my late cousin's heir-at-

law. The personals. I shall not dispute with these gentlemen, though their affinity to the deceased is very remote when compared to mine."

Mr. Harland, who was perfectly acquainted with the late baron's family history, took upon him to be spokesman. Edward was, of course, not present. Having requested his visitors to be seated, the merchant told them he had required their presence to inform them how the baron had disposed of his property real and personal.

"He had no right to dispose of his real estates, sir," said Mr. De Courtenvaux.

"Then you must dispute that point, sir, with the senate of Berne, to the members of whom my friend has left the revenues of this estate, in trust for various charitable purposes—the castle itself he desires may be the future residence of the bailli of this district. As you, Mr. De Courtenvaux, for so many years disputed my late friend's claims to this estate, no one
can

can be better informed of the tenour by which he held it, nor of his right to dispose of it to whom or how he pleased; and as he was fully aware of your litigious disposition, he preferred purchasing an estate for Mr. De Melfort, to leaving him the one your father so cruelly endeavoured to deprive him of, since that gentleman took such advantage of his want of friends, experience, and money, that he was forced to seek a livelihood in a counting-house in Russia, where he certainly made a respectable fortune, and could have lived as became his rank in life, had not the senate finally adjudged him to be the real heir to this estate; and as you could not establish your claims to it before, they are not strengthened by its having been in the possession of the deceased; therefore you must again have recourse to law, if you still hope or expect to be baron De Villars.

—To you, gentlemen, whose claims upon his property would prove even more futile, he has left ten thousand pounds a-piece.

piece. The residue of his personal property he has bestowed upon Mr. De Melfort, though he has not forgotten his servants and dependants, who will remove to Melfort as soon as the funeral is over, with the horses, carriages, and other &c. also bequeathed to the owner of that estate. To myself and colonel Murray my late friend has intrusted the execution of his will; and, I repeat, if you are again inclined to go to law, it must be with the chief magistrates of this canton."

Never had Mr. De Courtenvaux been more completely mortified; to threaten the senate of Berne would be absurd; he therefore departed very quietly, merely observing that the deceased was more unforgiving than he could have supposed; however, he made no doubt of recovering the estate, by a proper application to the senate. While the less sanguine cousins thought themselves most amply provided for, not supposing that the baron had died

died near so rich as he really was, and both declaring that they should ever consider and respect Mr. De Melfort as the adopted son of their deceased relative; and as the executors promised to put them in possession of their money in less than a month, they were profuse in their thanks, and departed very much prejudiced in favour of the brothers, openly rejoicing at the disappointment of Mr. De Courtenvaux; and by having thus bestowed an estate upon the senate, which he could not, without exposing him to a lawsuit and to a very severe scrutiny into his pretensions, have bequeathed to his son, he rendered those magistrates his future friends and protectors, and prevented any impertinent and unfounded claims from delaying the final settlement of his affairs.

By a deed of gift, which he had had properly drawn up in England, and sent over by the solicitor whom he had employed, and which had been witnessed by Martin, the lawyer's clerk, and his Swiss steward,

steward, he bestowed all his property in the British funds, amounting to thirty thousands pounds, upon Edward De Melfort, appointing Mr. Harland and colonel Murray his trustees till the youth became of age. The Melfort estate brought in about six hundred a-year; and thus, as our hero declared to his kind friends, did he conceive himself to be amply provided for, though, if they had no objection, he should like to adopt some profession; his income would be more than sufficient to reside in Switzerland, still he did not like the idea of idling away the best years of his life because he had been thus favoured.

"I see no need," rejoined Mr. Harland, "though you are richer already than you suppose, as I hold ten thousand pounds in trust for you, that was given you when in your cradle by a relation of your mother."

"Whose legal guardian I was rendered by various circumstances," said the colonel; "therefore, when you come of age, I shall also prove myself your debtor; meantime,

meantime, as you are to accompany Mr. Harland into Russia, instead of my friend Martin, you will be initiated into the routine of a counting-house; and should you like to increase your fortune by going into business, we shall not object to the measure;" easily guessing that his wish to add to his income arose from a latent hope that it might enable him to aspire to Ellen Arlington.

CHAPTER II.

THE baron's funeral was conducted with the usual forms and ceremony which the Swiss republican notions admitted. The senate of Berne did all due honour to his remains, and his *son* was assured of their sincere regard and future protection. The executors lost no time in settling with the distant relations, and in removing the late baron's

baron's household to Melfort, where it was settled Rory Bean should remain, while his master accompanied Mr. Harland to Russia; as that gentleman agreed with the colonel in the impropriety of acknowledging to their *protégé* what his future expectations were, as the latter had resolved to make over to him, as soon as he became of age, his mother's fortune; and the merchant had determined to make him his heir, being convinced that he would do him the greatest honour, since, notwithstanding his early privations and want of advantages, he was not only a much better scholar, but really a finer gentleman than Mr. Mirvan, who had been his grandfather's sole care from his birth. He did not require to spend a couple of years at the university, as they did not wish him to form connexions that might unsettle his present excellent principles, without rendering him a better scholar. In Russia he would be removed out of the way of temptation, and would greatly

greatly conduce to soften Mr. Harland's exile. As to bringing forward his claims as heir to the Delmont title and estates, they had long since resolved, and now finally determined to suffer them to lie dormant for ever, except the earl should upon his deathbed do him justice, which was hardly to be either hoped or expected, as ere that lord Exmore would probably marry, and might have children, and his lordship would certainly not wish to deprive them of his honours and estate; thus therefore the matter rested; when having settled every thing relating to the late baron's succession, Mr. Harland and our hero departed for Hamburgh, where they proposed embarking for St. Petersburg; and the colonel and Martin joined doctor Welford and his family at Geneva. His long-tried, and now truly confidential friend Martin, proceeded post from thence, to prepare every thing for his reception in Hampshire, while he more leisurely followed with his newly-acquired friends, as
the

18. WHAT SHALL BE, SHALL BE.

the doctor, who was in his seventy-fifth year, was not equal to travelling post. He proved, as the colonel expected, a very pleasant companion, and Mr. Mirvan rose considerably in his esteem.

Mrs. Mirvan was a pleasant, well-informed woman, doatingly fond of her son, and looking up to her father as the guide of her most trivial actions, who certainly addressed both her and his grandson in a most dictatorial tone, appearing to consider them bound to conform to all his caprices. The colonel sometimes rallied him upon what he called keeping up his dignity, requesting he would allow Mrs. Mirvan and her son at least a negative voice when he issued his commands; but he soon found that he considered implicit obedience to his will as one of the cardinal virtues.

They made a short stay in Paris; at the colonel's suggestion, who wished to afford Mr. Mirvan an opportunity of taking at least a bird's-eye view of that celebrated city.

city. The doctor would have been more averse to the measure, if an English family, who had taken up their abode at the same hotel, and who had been upon very intimate terms with Mrs. Mirvan and her son in Switzerland, had not taken upon them to shew the lions to their friends, which enabled the divine to spend his evenings generally *tête-à-tête* with the colonel, to whose great surprise he frequently turned the discourse upon earl Delmont, giving due praise to his great talents, and contenting himself with alluding in general terms to his family, till growing bolder, as he met with no contradiction, he ventured to ask—"Was not his lordship's first wife a Miss Harland?"

"You are quite right, doctor, and that lady died Mrs. Murray; of course, of all men living I am the least likely to be acquainted with the earl's present family, since my friend Harland is not upon intimate terms with his lordship, for very obvious reasons."

The

The doctor apologized for having asked so improper a question, adding—"Yet as I have broken the ice, suffer me to ask whether you suppose the earl's eldest son is no more?"

"As I presume you have been told, doctor, that his mother made him the partner of her flight, I do not feel surprised at your curiosity, though I am not aware how the matter can concern you; but as I have no reason for refusing to gratify you, I assure you he remained in England when we sailed for Asia; how or by whom he was removed from Mortlake, I cannot inform you; the earl has assured Mr. Harland he is no more; and as he appears satisfied with the proofs adduced, no one else can have any reason to question his lordship's veracity."

"Certainly not," replied the doctor, immediately changing the subject, as if conscious that he had transgressed the rules of good breeding; but as the colonel was not apt to take offence when he could not
upon

upon reflection suppose any was meant, he behaved as usual to his companion, but agreed with our hero, in suspecting that more was meant than met the ear by the doctor having entered upon such a subject. Was his grandson related to the Delmont family, he wondered? Mirvan was certainly their name; if so, his grandfather's curiosity was natural; still what could it matter to him which of the earl's sons succeeded him? since no distant relative could entertain any hopes of coming in for the titles and estates while lord Exmore lived. At last he settled the matter in his own mind, by supposing that in the event of the earl's dying childless, Mr. Mirvan might have claims, which his grandfather would wish him to assert; it was therefore very natural that he should feel anxious to ascertain what had become of the elder son. Be that as it might, the doctor never renewed the subject during their journey, and when they landed at Dover he gave the colonel so pressing

ing an invitation to accompany him and his family to —, in the vicinity of Canterbury, of which he was rector, where he meant to spend a month before he proceeded with his grandson to Oxford, that he agreed to his wishes, writing from Dover to Martin, to inform him why he delayed upon the road.

The rectory-house was handsome and commodious; the doctor seemed to do his duty as a parish priest, and certainly appeared to great advantage in the pulpit, considering his advanced age. Yet comfortably as he was situated, and amply as he seemed provided for in the church, not to mention his private fortune, which he had hinted to the colonel brought him in near a thousand a-year, he seemed restless and dissatisfied with his lot, often throwing out hints to the disadvantage of earl Delmont, to whom he seemed to attribute his not having obtained a mitre, declaring that his word was very little to be depended upon where his own interest was concerned,

cerned, and appearing to rejoice at the severe animadversions which the opposition papers bestowed upon the minister, whom he pronounced to be the most arrogant of men, therefore he only wondered at his having retained his situation for such a length of time.

The colonel did his lordship more justice, but seldom dwelt upon the subject, though he wrote every thing that had passed between them to his brother, acknowledging his suspicions that young Mirvan was a sort of presumptive heir to the Delmont honours; therefore, probably the divine would rejoice to hear of lord Exmore's death; and of this he felt daily more convinced, since the news of the earl's youngest son having departed this life at Lisbon reached England during his residence in Kent; and he thought the doctor seemed more gratified by the circumstance than was becoming his cloth; since, though the colonel certainly did not sympathize with the earl, it was not in his nature

nature openly to rejoice because he had lost his son. The more he saw of Mr. Mirvan, the better he liked him; he seemed to possess an excellent heart, and an excellent understanding, and to have fully appreciated the very superior merits of our hero, which his grandfather was by no means so ready to acknowledge; to him there appeared a great deal of levity about the young Swiss.

"Mere constitutional vivacity, my dear sir," observed his grandson. "No one ever was in his company for half an hour without being prepossessed in his favour, and no one was ever thoroughly acquainted with him without feeling that prepossession strengthened into regard. His laugh is so natural, so perfectly in unison with his good-humour and excellent temper, that it always exhilarated my spirits, and seemed to increase my happiness."

The colonel was delighted by this warm defence of his favourite, and was sorry to remark that the doctor rather blamed his
modest grandson's

grandson's noble enthusiasm, telling him that he must form very superior connexions to Mr. De Melfort, if he hoped to make his way in the world.

Nature had been very bountiful to the young Swiss—fortune had not been so kind; and though he did not object to their continuing friends, nor to his adopting De Melfort's captivating address, he wished him to mix chiefly with his superiors while at college.

Colonel Murray did not choose to give his opinion upon the subject; but not having imbibed the same worldly notions, he admired Mirvan's disinterested regard for his *protégé*; and upon his account agreed to accompany the doctor and him to London, where they separated, the two to proceed to Oxford, the colonel meaning to pursue his journey into Hampshire in the course of a few days.

Martin was in waiting for him in Saville-row, where he spent a week, frequently seeing Mr. Du Verney, from

whom he learned the Arlington family were quite well, and just returned to Fir Grove, from a tour they had taken that summer to visit the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland. Miss Arlington, who was now in her twenty-first year, and had been introduced into the great world the preceding winter, was very much disappointed that no titled admirer had yet solicited her hand.

"The fact is," continued the worthy merchant, "he has not grown up so handsome as her younger sister, who, by her good will, would be kept totally in the background, since the inherent pride, vanity, and selfishness which are displayed in all her words and actions, are not calculated to please the multitude; and Mr. Arlington has so strictly tied up her fortune, that should either of his daughters die childless, even after marriage, the sister will become the other's heir."

"I positively fear it will prevent their forming any very superior connexions,"

forming

replied the colonel; "as I shall spend my autumn at Bath, I shall take an early opportunity of paying my respects to the widow," detailing why Mr. Harland had returned to Russia—who was his companion, &c.; and during the ensuing week, he proceeded to Smallbury Priory, where he resolved to wait for letters from Russia before he proceeded to Bath.

Martin, now his land-steward and amanuensis, was his constant companion when he had no company, since he was so thoroughly acquainted with all his concerns, that to him he could open his mind, even more freely than to Mr. Harland.

CHAPTER III.

EARL Delmont had learned with unfeigned satisfaction the death of baron Villars, which had placed his son's illegitimacy beyond a doubt, since, like all ambitious people, he could not bear the idea of this Swiss shining at the expence of his heir; and though no one was more ready to blame lord Exmore, or to discover his deficiencies, mental and personal, yet he had never forgiven our hero's having displayed his spirit at his expence, notwithstanding his polite letter, which Edward had so properly understood; but now he appeared to be removed from all possibility of ever again coming in competition with his son, since he supposed Mr. Harland meant to settle him in Russia, in some mercantile house, as he had heard

heard the late baron had made but a very slender provision for him; his superior talents would therefore be completely buried in a counting-house; and as he should derive neither honour nor gratification from their being brought into action, he felt happy at their thus being condemned to obscurity; little supposing that both Mr. Harland and the colonel only waited his coming of age, to purchase him an estate in England of sufficient value to enable him, if he chose, to get into parliament.

He was also very well informed of doctor Welford's movements; and, in his own mind, had now perfectly accounted for his grandson's bearing the name of Mirvan, laughing in scorn at the divine's vanity. As the youth was gone to college, he presumed he was to tread in the old gentleman's steps, resolving, should he be ever applied to, to procure him a living for *auld lang syne*. As for his youngest son, though every proper honour was paid to his remains, he rejoiced at his death,

c 3

even

even more sincerely than doctor Welford had done, since to have had such an idiot produced as his offspring, would have been truly mortifying to his overweening pride, which certainly rather increased with his years.

The countess had visited their seat in the north during the summer, and had, in the Cambridge vacation, which lord Exmore had spent with her, to amuse him and her daughters, taken the tour of the lakes; she had been perfectly candid with her dear George, as we have already related, acknowledging that his father certainly had had a son by his plebeian wife, whose fate had long been veiled in an impenetrable mystery; the earl declared him to be no more, and she hoped he spoke truth. Certainly his early confident, Mrs. Harland, had disappeared; perhaps this proscribed son had been the partner of her retreat, and, like many other of the earl's puppets or phantasmagoria, might reappear when least expected; therefore, as

a pre-

a precautionary measure, she recommended to her darling George to make an early choice of some very rich woman, to whom his rank would serve as a talisman to endow him with every virtue and talent yet discovered among the male genus, declaring she had been so dazzled by the earl's superficial advantages and future expectations, that she had fallen blindfold into his snare; and as if to bring all her wise schemes to bear, she stumbled, during her tour, upon the Arlington party, who travelled in a style suitable to their fortune; and as she was upon the look-out to turn every circumstance to her advantage, or rather to that of her son, she soon learned that the mother was a widow with a very large jointure, and that the young ladies were the coheiresses of a rich Bristol merchant, whose fortune was greatly exaggerated, for which, making every allowance, they seemed exactly likely to suit her son.

A countess is seldom at a loss to introduce

duce herself to a commoner; her condescension surprised Mrs. Arlington and Ellen, while it delighted the haughty Anne, who supposed herself the magnet of attraction to this high-born dame; and certainly, the earl's rank and official situation considered, her condescension was exceedingly flattering.

Mrs. Arlington met her advances with propriety—Miss Arlington with the eagerness she ever evinced to engraft herself into the society of nobility—and Ellen, who found the ladies Mirvan very well-informed, pleasant young women, or rather girls, as they were her juniors, was very cordially inclined towards them; she was the original magnet to which lady Delmont wished to direct her son; and she was so much handsomer than her sister, not to mention her being nearer of his age, that he resolved to gratify her vanity, by attacking it in form. Unfortunately time was not allowed him to make his passion for her *reputed fortune* known,

known, as Mrs. Arlington, before the acquaintance could repose into love, was obliged to return to Fir Grove; but in consequence of the countess's regrets at being thus prevented from cultivating so agreeable an acquaintance, she was induced to invite her to visit her villa, should chance ever incline her to bend her steps towards Bristol.

The countess, who if she did not possess her husband's talents for intrigue, had a degree of cunning not much inferior to the late Mrs. Harland's, declared she should spend the autumn months at Bath; in consequence of an obstinate stomach complaint, for which she had been repeatedly advised to try those waters; and the vicinity of that city to Bristol would prove an additional inducement, as it was really a luxury to her to mix in friendly society, such as Mrs. Arlington's; they must be better acquainted; her daughters were no less eager to keep up an acquaintance with the Miss Arlingtons; and her
c 5
darling

darling and now only son had a tact and a discernment, that enabled him to form a very proper judgment respecting female excellence.

Possibly had Mrs. Arlington been as vain as the countess, this display of interest would have been very flattering; as it was, she presumed her ladyship thought her daughters' fortune a full equivalent for their want of birth; this she observed to them during their journey home, but Miss Arlington by no means coincided with her; lord Exmore certainly need not seek for money in a wife; still he might not object to marrying a rich woman, if circumstances had thrown him in the way of discovering the merits of one; he was certainly very young—but he had seen so much of the world, that many men of thirty were not so well informed; his sisters were charming young women—and who would not wish to be related to the great earl of Delmont?

Ellen could not conceive lord Exmore
would

would make the better husband; nay, she much doubted the earl was not a very domestic man.

Miss Arlington requested she would not give her opinion unasked of people so much their superiors, again launching forth in praise of the viscount.

Mrs. Arlington spoke very judiciously of both, but prudently suffered the subject to drop, not supposing that Miss Arlington, except out of contradiction, would consent to marry a boy two years her junior; and having no fear of his rank having made any impression upon the lovely Ellen, who thought him a mere titled *dandy*, not three degrees above the common run of modern fine men she had chanced to see or hear of: thus were matters situated, when colonel Murray returned to England.

The countess, who made no doubt of succeeding, had resolved the viscount, under the plea of ill health, should accompany her to Bath, when he might easily

secure the hand of Miss Arlington; but this sprig of nobility gave the preference to the youngest sister, possibly because his mother proposed the other, since their reputed large fortunes were to him their greatest charms. At last he compromised the matter, by agreeing that the countess should break the ice; should Ellen appear at all likely to encourage him, she was his choice; but as he agreed that such fortunes should only fall to the share of nobility, he was not averse to transferring his regard to Miss Anne, who might do equal honour to his choice; and as she had laid herself most out to please, she was decidedly the countess's favourite, who hoped to put every thing in train ere it would be necessary to mention the business to the earl, who might, merely from a wish to keep her dear George in the background, object to his marrying so early; and she supposed the merchant guardians would require his consent, and chapter and verse as to settlements, before they

they came down with a penny ; this would be of little consequence with respect to the elder sister, who would be of age early in March, when she might dispose of herself and property as her heart or feelings directed ; but Ellen, who was a few months younger than her son, must go through the regular forms ; she had therefore decided to throw a damp upon his marrying her, as her sister offered so many more advantages ; and never had the earl been more anxious respecting a foreign treaty, than this weak woman was to bring this wise project to benefit her darling to perfection.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. Harland and our hero both wrote the colonel upon their arrival in Russia; the former expressing his hopes that he had arrived in time to prevent the failure of his successor; the latter entering into many interesting and entertaining details respecting Russia; acknowledging that he enjoyed the idea of seeing frost and snow in the perfection he was likely to do in that climate, merely regretting the impossibility of his hearing so often from England as he could wish, after the winter set in; he therefore hoped the colonel would answer their letters ere the ice prevented the navigation.

Colonel Murray, who had long considered our hero as his son, and now felt the affection of a parent for him, hastened his de-

departure for Bath, that he might mention Ellen Arlington in his answer, should she still appear to remember her early favourite. Of this he rather doubted, as she had made her *entrée* into the world the winter before; therefore the new scenes into which she had been thrown, and the variety of men of fashion to whom she had doubtless been introduced, might have effaced from her mind every recollection of the *peasant boy*, to whom she had been so kind. He was therefore no sooner settled in a comfortable house in Bath, ere he drove over to Bristol, and proceeded from thence to Fir Grove.

Mrs. Arlington and Ellen only were at home, and both received him as an old and much beloved friend; the former returning him thanks for the kind accommodation he had afforded her by the loan of his town house, the situation of which was so quiet and airy, that her health had not suffered by the ricketing life she had led during the preceding winter.

The

The colonel, whose esteem for this excellent woman had been much increased by Edward's communications, made a very suitable reply; and next asked the fair Ellen what she thought of the world of fashion?

"I am not yet sufficiently fashionable, colonel, to be able to form a correct opinion. I have certainly learned to laugh at my own chimeras, and to form some sort of judgment of its votaries; but as yet I am rustic enough to prefer Fir Grove, and my dear mother's society, to the suffocation of a London at home, particularly when your only estimation, in the eyes of the assembled crowd, is your money. I believe, as Coleman asserts in 'John Bull,' a gentleman going to be married is oftener asked '*to how much?*' meaning the lady's fortune, than any other question."

"Why, my sweet young friend, you are severe," replied the laughing, but delighted colonel, rejoicing in the conviction that
her

her heart was as free, and her spirits as light, as when they had last met.

"Ellen will never be a fine lady," resumed her no less amused mother; "and I am very happy to find she will be content to shine in the sphere I hope she is likely to illuminate, and does not wish to glare like a meteor, merely to attract the notice of her superiors in rank, if not in worth. Excuse the moralizing of a mother, colonel, and permit me to offer you some refreshment."

A tray was brought in, and Ellen was gaily doing the honours of various delicacies, when Mrs. Arlington was called away to a person upon business, thus leaving our nabob and her fair daughter *tête-à-tête*.

Ellen longed, yet dared not ask after the peasant she had never forgotten; the colonel, who read her wishes in her speaking eyes, seized the opportunity to say—
"We must continue to banish the name of Mansel from our memories—it must never

never be whispered even to the winds; but he who once bore it will never forget that of Arlington. Your mother he absolutely adores; and he is truly grateful for the notice you bestowed upon him. He has given me an Alpine herbal, being still so situated that he dare not present it himself, so you must receive it as my present, since, believe me, I scarcely know in whose future welfare I feel more interested, yours or my ward's, for such is now your former friend. I cannot be more explicit; but what I have said must convince you, that I consider him as my equal. I mentioned the herbal, to prepare you to receive it as from me; ere long, I trust I shall be able to introduce you to your play-fellow, who is almost as much improved as you are since we parted."

Ellen, who felt quite at her ease with this excellent man, renewed her promises of secrecy; and, though very curious, evinced her discretion by asking no questions—merely declaring she was rejoiced

to her fortune had been so propitious to her early friend; assuring the colonel that she should willingly receive the herbal, as a proof that her playfellow had not forgotten "*auld lang syne*."

The return of Mrs. Arlington gave a very seasonable check to the conversation, as the colonel by no means wished to talk Ellen into love with his *protégé*, nor to encourage the tincture of romance he had perceived in her disposition; that she would be much happier with him than with many men of acknowledged rank, he thought very probable, yet he wished her choice of him to be unbiassed by any prejudice in his favour; when they met, Edward might plead his own cause. He should not marry for money; nor should either her mother or guardians have reason to suppose he was guided by interested motives; he should therefore never mention him again, as he conceived he might be aiding an early prepossession, that time and absence would otherwise have

have damped, and he wished her heart and judgment to be allowed fair play. Yet he felt a thrill of pleasure upon remarking how much his communications had raised her spirits; and when he departed, he readily accepted an invitation to meet a party of friends to dinner, at Fir Grove, the ensuing week.

To Edward he candidly gave his opinion of his favourite, adding—"I wish you ever gratefully to remember both her and her mother; but do not give the reins to your lively imagination, and fancy that this charming girl considers you in any other light than as a clever boy, superior to your then situation, and who contributed to her amusement. She is much improved within the last two years, and her judgment seems to have ripened with her years. Should she not have made another selection ere you meet, and should you see her with the same partial eyes you did when you parted, it will be time enough to dwell upon the future; so henceforth I shall

shall not renew the subject, as I think it very probable she will be either married or engaged ere you return ; so do not make her the subject of your evening reveries, or your "future day-dreams, but leave every thing to Providence, which often forwards our wishes more in one hour, than our own efforts can in twelve months."

And be it recorded to our hero's credit, that he felt grateful for the colonel's advice, as when he communed with his own mind, he hardly dared hope to be again distinguished by this lovely and now rich heiress, whose name he never again mentioned in his letters to the colonel, declaring, that he was entering heart and goodwill into the settling Mr. Harland's business, who overpaid his exertions by fancying they were of great use ; leaving him, therefore, to exert his talents at calculation, and to devote his time to Mr. Harland, who grew daily more attached to him, and more resolved to bring him forward.

ward, as became his real rank and expectations.

CHAPTER V.

THE countess of Delmont, in pursuance of her wise scheme, told the earl she should spend the autumn at Bath, as her physicians had recommended those waters, as highly beneficial in stomach complaints; and, little as the earl cared about her, he paid sufficient submission to the opinion of the world not to oppose a plan suggested for the benefit of her health; indeed, as her death would have deprived him of her jointure, which he had left at her disposal, merely stipulating that she should render it adequate to all her own expenses, and to the education, &c. of his daughters, he had as lieve she lived as died.

died, though he often regretted she was such a mere automaton, little supposing she was planning to procure him so agreeable a surprise as a rich daughter-in-law; and as he thought keeping his terms at the university, or, at all events, spending a few months at a time there, was sufficient for lord Exmore (whom he rather wished to render a man of the world than a deep scholar), he did not object to his being of her party, as it might keep him out of harm's way, and he was not so likely to get into quarrels while with his mother, as at Cambridge, where he had already given some offence to the fellows of the college to which he belonged; therefore, within the week after colonel Murray had taken up his abode at Bath, he read the countess of Delmont and her family among the arrivals; but was rather surprised to see their cards displayed at Fir Grove the day he dined there, and to learn from Ellen when and where they had met during the summer.

She

She received the herbal with sparkling eyes, and declared herself greatly the colonel's debtor; and had he seen her examining it the next day, he would have been convinced the real donor was by no means indifferent to her. She had excused herself from accompanying her mother and sister to Bath, to return lady Delmont's visit, and was very sorry when she understood they had met the colonel on horseback, on the road, who had insisted upon their taking bachelor's fare with him; and even Miss Arlington agreed he was a gentlemanly sensible man. They had not seen lord Exmore, but the countess was so anxious to be nearer them, that she had resolved to remove to Clifton, for at least a month, merely to enjoy their society.

Ellen, not having the same degree of vanity her sister had ever possessed, expressed her surprise. Her mother presumed it was a mere compliment of courtesy, as she supposed, as the lady Mirvans were partial to riding, they gave the preference

ference to the environs of Clifton. Miss Arlington smiled superciliously, conceiving, as was the fact, that she was the magnet which drew the countess into their vicinity; and as lord Exmore still fancied he gave the preference to Ellen, the countess seized the first opportunity after she had removed to Clifton to sound the sweet girl upon the subject; and, strange as it may appear, the recollection of the handsome *farmer's boy* had served as an amulet to guard her heart against all the attacks of the brainless fops who, from the moment of her first appearance in London, had swarmed around her with unremitting assiduity. Certainly her early favourite had been formed in Nature's finest mould; and notwithstanding his then disadvantages, she thought she had never seen his equal; therefore, though lord Exmore was what might be termed a handsome young man, and did bear a faint resemblance to his much-handsomer father, and when he was in a good-humour, could be

very agreeable, she had scarcely noticed him; indeed she considered him as a mere boy, a sort of spoiled child, who obliged his mother to conform to all his fancies to keep him quiet. She had suspected that she was the plaything he had now in view, and had resolved to treat him with more reserve in consequence, when the countess began her premeditated attack.

Ellen, who was an excellent horsewoman, had rode home with the lady Mirvans, and had, at their mother's request, alighted, to inspect a caricature the earl had sent her of some popular orators, when having adroitly dismissed her daughters, after an appropriate preface, she gaily asked her visitor—"What she thought of lord Exmore?"

Instantly taking the hint, Ellen spoke freely in his praise, adding, with equal gaiety, as if proud of having guessed a secret—"As a brother-in-law, I shall admire him, though I cannot, as your ladyship may suppose, answer for my sister's sentiments;

sentiments; she must, and ought to speak for herself."

The countess was completely the dupe of Ellen's manoeuvre, and instantly hoped "she would second her wishes, as she was most anxious to be allied to the Arlington family."

"Surely" your ladyship had better apply to my mother. I am too young to offer my advice upon so important an occasion;" and as the countess no longer wished to detain her, she returned home, undecided whether or not to relate what had passed to Mrs. Arlington; but her better judgment induced her to make the communication.

Her kind mother was much amused, agreeing she had turned the tables very adroitly upon her ladyship, but recommending her suffering her sister to remain in ignorance of the application, since she would most probably refuse the viscount upon the plea of his youth; at all events, she had better be suffered to form her own

conclusions; and if his rank biassed her in his favour, she must please herself.

The countess was able to convince her son, that the volatile Ellen either did not choose to marry yet, or hoped she should have a better offer, or had already made her election, therefore he ought immediately to turn his attention upon her sister; and what her advice or persuasions would not have done, pique induced him to do. Miss Arlington was invited to return with the countess and her family to Bath, where she courted her most assiduously for her darling; and though the ambitious girl thought his youth an objection, his prospects were so great, and she should tower so much above her equals, that she listened with due complaisance to his conversation; danced with him sufficiently often to lead the world to suppose they were engaged; and found it very pleasant to move about, not in the countess's suite, but as the adopted daughter of this great lady, who flattered her vanity, by observ-
ing

ing she would take place of the lady Mirvans another winter.

The earl, who, of course, was informed of this reported alliance, had seriously reflected whether he should not lower his family by suffering his heir to form such a plebeian connexion; but as he was perfectly aware of his deficiencies, and considered that no daughter of nobility could bring him so immense a fortune, he thought he would suffer the matter to take its course, as he should not be called upon to open his purse-strings very wide if he married so rich a woman, and the countess stood pledged to allow him half her jointure when he settled; yet as his intentions had not as yet been made known to him in due form, he merely laughed when addressed upon the subject, observing that Exmore was such a mere boy, he could not suppose there was any serious intentions on the lady's side, except she was so anxious for a coronet, she grasped even at one upon a baby's head.

The colonel, who was a more frequent visitor than ever at Fir Grove, and who grew daily more attached to the amiable Mrs. Arlington, as she seemed to consider him as a disinterested kind friend, learned from her, under the seal of secrecy, what had been the countess's original plan; adding, that as matters had turned out, she had resolved not to interfere, as Anne had long been superior to her control, and would so soon be of age, that the little power Mr. Arlington's will had given her would prove of no avail, were she inclined to exert it.

The colonel was quite of her opinion, observing it was much more prudent to let matters take their chance, than by an impolitic interference to hasten the crisis; seriously resolving, as soon as this important business was settled, to offer himself to the widow. Her jointure he should request she would give up to her daughters, not knowing that she would forfeit five-sevenths of it, should she make a second

a second choice, since the fortune he had honourably acquired in India, in addition to the noble property he had inherited from his uncle, would enable him to make an ample provision for her, and yet to return to our hero every farthing he had received with his mother; and as he looked forward to a connexion taking place between him and the fair Ellen, he meant to constitute them his joint heirs. He rather regretted the probability of Miss Arlington's marrying into the Delmont family, as the earl and him could never meet as friends; still as he supposed, to judge from her character, that this ambitious young lady would soon look down upon her untitled relatives, he did not suppose that his marrying her mother would make any alteration in her sentiments. To Martin alone did he impart his projects, who warmly urged him merely to consider his own happiness; declaring he could have no doubt of Miss Ellen

liking Mr. De Melfort, even were she not already prejudiced in his favour.

CHAPTER VI.

THE countess continued so fond of Miss Arlington, that she easily obtained her consent to spend her Christmas with the family at Mortlake; the earl could not go into the North, and there she should only have a select party; and as it was necessary to pay Mrs. Arlington the compliment of asking her leave to make her daughter the companion of her journey, and also to invite her to join the party. Miss Arlington having assured her ladyship her mother was too much of the old school to leave Fir Grove at that season, where she distributed beef, coals, and blankets, and, as her late father used to tell her,

her, suffered herself to be imposed upon by all the idle people in the neighbourhood; now she was her own mistress, she was more bountiful than ever; and Ellen, who was equally anxious to render herself popular, would not leave mamma at such a season, whose pet she had always been, because her ideas never soared above her own rank in life.

The countess was delighted by the wit of her dear friend; the viscount declared such mistaken charity deserved to be termed insanity; while his sisters envied the fair Ellen the power she possessed of doing good, and still more her having a mother whom she might consider as her best friend.

As it was hoped and expected, Mrs. Arlington, and, of course, Ellen, politely declined the countess's invitation, promising to be in town before the end of January, to receive Miss Arlington, when her ladyship removed to town for the winter.

Miss Arlington protested against ever again returning to Saville-row. Mrs. Arlington assured her she had no such intentions, since colonel Murray would doubtless reside there himself; and Miss Arlington's women being left to pack her wardrobe, she returned to an eight-o'clock dinner at Bath, highly amused by her mother's primitive, and her sister's Gothic notions.

The colonel also chose to spend his Christmas in Hampshire, hoping to meet Mrs. Arlington very soon in town.

The countess had thought it necessary to write the earl her plans for her son, ere she brought his intended bride to Mortlake. He had not answered her letter, but did condescend to join her there at dinner the day of her arrival; and as Miss Arlington was a fine figure, and certainly highly talented, in addition to her reputed fortune, he laid himself out to please so successfully, that she would readily have exchanged the son for the father, who, when

when *tête-à-tête* with the countess, agreed that an early marriage might preserve his son's morals—the girl was very well, and as she possessed some spirit, she might keep him in order; declaring that he would not apply to her merchant-guardians till they had no authority to withhold their consent, as he should make a much better bargain, and George would just have entered his twentieth year. It would be advisable to persuade Mrs. Arlington and her younger daughter to reside with the new-married couple—her jointure, and the girl's allowance, would enable them to set off in a very high style, and would introduce the sister into such society, that she might form an equally respectable match, as he should dread her selecting a merchant—if she did, they must cut the connexion.

The countess was perfectly acquiescent, though she felt assured Mrs. Arlington would never come into their plans; but at

present she had resolved to keep his lordship in good humour, though she did not relish his hint respecting her jointure, well knowing that she had, in an evil moment, tied herself down to allow her son four thousand a-year when he married; but she had too good an opinion of George, to suppose he would accept it, amply as he would be provided for; at all events some arrangement might be made when matters came to a crisis.

Nothing of moment occurred till Mrs. Arlington came to town in January, and took up her abode in a ready-furnished house in Albemarle-street, where Miss Arlington, who could hardly condescend to enter any but a coronet carriage, joined her; but though her mother's house was her nominal home, she spent most of her time with the *darling countess*; and she did tell Mrs. Arlington that she had accepted lord Exmore's proffered hand, adding—"As we shall not marry till I am of age,

age, I merely mention the circumstance to prevent your hearing of it by any other means."

Mrs. Arlington hoped she had given the matter a serious consideration—the viscount was very young.

"As the business is absolutely decided, spare your advice, my dear mother, and rejoice that by this connexion Ellen may marry equally well. The earl takes the greatest interest in your and her welfare: by the way, it will be necessary to drop colonel Murray's acquaintance, as I suppose you know he first seduced and then married earl Delmont's first wife; of course we cannot consider him as our friend."

"I should certainly never invite the colonel to meet earl Delmont, Anne; but as for dropping his acquaintance, or rather giving up so sincere a friend, because you have selected lord Delmont's son, that I shall never do. We shall move in such different circles after you marry, my friends will never interfere with yours."

Miss

Miss Arlington was very angry, and foresaw Ellen would reap no benefit from her marrying so well, since she had hoped they would have lived together at least for some years.

"Never, Anne; and no mother, who is really anxious for her children's happiness, will ever reside with them after they are married. You have made your own choice—I trust it will prove fortunate, as neither my advice was asked, or my consent required; I may surely expect to be allowed to select my own friends, without requesting your permission."

Thus the matter dropped, Miss Arlington's plans which had been suggested by the earl, having entirely failed; but not choosing to acknowledge that her mother had a will of her own, she gave the Delmont family fully to understand, that as soon as her mother could make proper arrangements, she would accede to all their plans; and now she had been made acquainted with his character, she intended to

to quietly drop the colonel, who was so intimate with the Du Verneys, they would resent her doing so abruptly, little supposing that a treaty of marriage was actually on foot between this proscribed colonel and Mrs. Arlington, who merely waited her being engrafted into the Delmont family to join their destinies, as each felt convinced that they had met with their counterpart, and should much increase their own happiness by ministering to each other.

When the colonel made his first proposals by letter, he hinted, that as he would settle an equal sum upon her, he rather hoped she would surrender her jointure to her daughters; she was very much struck with his liberality, and immediately wrote him how she had been left by Mr. Arlington, who, no doubt, thought he had effectually prevented her making a second choice.

Never had the colonel been more pleased; and it was finally agreed that she should

should not even retain the small pittance allotted her by her first husband, if she ever changed her name; and as even this possibility had been foreseen by the miser, the principal was equally tied up with the rest of the money.

To Ellen only did Mrs. Arlington now choose to mention her intentions; she was delighted at the idea of being thus connected with so amiable a man, politely and feelingly congratulating herself upon the happy prospect, the first time the colonel called declaring, that though she might sin in point of etiquette, she would always address him as father; agreeing, that it would be as well to allow Anne to take the *pas*, who was so seldom at home, that she was not aware of the increasing frequency of the colonel's visits; and as Mrs. Arlington never, except by special invitation, visited at Delmont House, and the countess merely called upon her, either to fetch or bring home Miss Arlington, who continued wrapped in her fool's paradise,

the ladies were much less intimate than while lady Delmont was forming her plans; and as Anne was very jealous of her more lovely sister, she was as little noticed by the noble family, though the first time the earl saw her, he declared Exmore was a fool, not to have selected her in preference to the elder sister.

The winter soon slipped away, and the viscountess expectant became of age; she had decidedly objected to her birthday being celebrated, at the suggestion of lord Exmore, the earl having observed, there was no need to publish to the world that he was going to marry a woman so much his senior; a private party at Delmont House, therefore, merely met upon the occasion; Mrs. Arlington and Ellen were the only guests, and certainly the most sincere well-wishers to the now haughty Anne, who appeared so anxious to shine as viscountess Exmore, that the earl desired his law steward to inspect Mr. Arlington's will, preparatory to her intended

com-

communication to her late guardians, who to his serious disappointment, he found how her fortune was settled, which must, in the event of her not having children, revert to her sister.

Matters had gone too far to admit of his breaking off the match; nay, so well was he acquainted with his son's disposition, that he made no doubt of his marrying Miss Arlington, maugre every entail which the old miser had had recourse to, to prevent his money from being squandered; he therefore succeeded in concealing his chagrin, declaring that he was happy Mr. Arlington had so amply provided for his daughter's children, and prevented the necessity of encumbering his estate with a jointure for his daughter-in-law; he should give up his villa at Mortlake to his son, and purchase him a town house; and as half his mother's jointure would be his upon his marriage, he should make him no farther allowance till he came of age; and though every one concerned, but

It more particularly the viscount, did not feel absolutely satisfied, no one could retract; and thus matters were finally arranged. As the lawyers were likely to have a very easy task, the marriage was fixed to take place in May; and thus might Miss Arlington be said to have purchased a coronet; since, while the earl lived, she was not likely to derive many pecuniary advantages from her marriage, as the proposed allowance for her lord, he declared, was hardly enough for his own private expences.

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Harland had been able to settle every thing to his satisfaction by the time the navigation was sufficiently open to admit of his returning to Hamburgh, having still some accounts to settle with various Hanseatic merchants. Nor was Edward sorry when they landed once more in Germany, and took up their abode, early in May, at a Mr. Rosenhagen's villa, in the immediate vicinity of Hamburgh.

Both the merchant and his nephew had found letters from the colonel waiting their arrival; to the former the colonel had mentioned the approaching marriage of lord Exmore, giving his reasons for not entering upon the subject to their ward, whom he was resolved should not suppose that he wished to remind him of the Arlington

ngton family; and possibly fearing that some obstacle might yet arise to postpone, if not to prevent his marrying the widow, he merely gaily hinted that he had of late often thought an amiable female would prove a most desirable companion, could he meet with one who would not object to his broken constitution and premature old age. To Edward he wrote a still more lively letter, desiring to have due notice of their return, that he might give them the meeting in London.

Mr. Harland had business at Dantzic and Lubec; but hoped, he wrote his friend, to be in England by the latter end of July, or early in August; but whether he should embark at Hamburgh, or proceed by land to Ostend, to shew Edward more of the country, he had not yet decided; but rather supposed he should content himself with the shorter passage, having, within the given time, thanks to Edward's exertions, who was now become Mr. Harland's right hand, settled his business

business at Dantzic and Lubec, and even visited some places upon the frontiers of Poland; the uncle and nephew returned to the hospitable Mr. Rosenhagen's villa, where, having dedicated a week to repose, they asked their friendly host whether he recommended their embarking at Hamburgh, or proceeding by land to Ostend?

"The latter most certainly, as I wish to enjoy as much of your company as possible, and I stand engaged to accompany a Mr. Falkland, who is in a large line, to Ostend, within the fortnight, upon a business nearly as unpleasant as that which induced you, Mr. Harland, to revisit St. Petersburg; indeed he might prove an equal loser, had he not, like you, resolved to settle matters in person; and as you wish Mr. De Melfort to see as much of Europe as your time will admit, you cannot object to accompanying us. My travelling carriage will convey us four very comfortably; the seat behind will accommodate your servant and mine, and we
can

to mount the coach-box, should we choose to look about us. Mr. Falkland is at present at Bremen, where we can call for him, as such was my arrangement, and I have a friend there, who will give us a very cordial reception."

Mr. Harland made no objection, and Edward was much gratified by the plan; and matters being thus settled, they left Hamburg, and reached Bremen in excellent spirits and perfect safety.

Mr. Rosenhagen's friend proved a very pleasant host; but they did not see Mr. Falkland till they were ready to recommence their journey; and certainly his appearance denoted any thing rather than a rich man, since it was shabby in the extreme; and the sly reserve of his manners was perfectly in unison with his mean-looking figure.

Edward feared he had lately met with some heavy pecuniary losses, sincerely pitying a man of his advanced years, for having been obliged to take so long a journey,

ney, probably more upon account of his successors, than with any view to his own immediate interest; while Mr. Harland presumed, from his connexion with Mr. Rosenhagen, that he was an eccentric miser, whose sole happiness consisted in increasing his hoards, and who would, according to the celebrated Richardson's view of such a character, "*go on heaping up, till death, as greedy an accumulator as himself, gathered him into his garner.*"

After a few very short compliments, the travellers set forward, Mr. Falkland, in spite of his age and infirmities, choosing to ascend the coach-box, declaring he should be stifled, were he to be cooped up inside; and as Mr. Rosenhagen requested he would please himself, neither Mr. Harland nor Edward interfered.

They were no sooner upon the move, than the German merchant regretted Falkland was seized with one of his *fits of the fool*—"For such I style his caprices: since, had he joined us inside, shabby as he

He always appears, and would have proved both a pleasant and an intelligent companion; his talents as an accountant are unequalled, and he has an intuitive knowledge respecting mercantile transactions, that renders him a treasure to the firm to which he belongs, who were very happy he undertook to bring their foreign correspondents to book. The house at Bremen is nearly connected with the one at Ostend; and I scarcely make a doubt of his obliging them both to come to some advantageous settlement with his partner and himself. He was for many years a travelling clerk, and is now the travelling partner, for the firm of Johnson, Adderfield, and Falkland, merchants, of Crutchfield-friars, one of the first houses in our line—indeed their foreign trade extends much beyond the Hans Towns, as they have great connexions in Norway, Holland, and even Brabant. The old gentleman speaks six languages very correctly, and is no less *au fait* respecting the differ-

ent modes of book-keeping. He is indefatigable where his own interest is at all concerned, though I positively believe he is the richest man in the firm, since it has been his sole study, from his youth upwards, to get money--as he has done such things, and gone such lengths, as neither his employers in the first instance, nor his partners in the second, would have ventured to do; yet no one ever impeached his honesty; but we be to those who attempt to evade coming to a settlement with him, as they must come into his terms sooner or later. I can give you no insight into his family history, since I merely know he is a bachelor; and when his heart has been opened by a few glasses of wine, when my guest, I have heard him say, that he had not a relation in the world; and he is not a character either to make, or to have many friends, since he very seldom joins in discourse, and keeps aloof now to avoid joining in our extravagance, as I dare say he will contrive to travel

live at much less expence than we shall, he is abstemious to a degree, and considers sobriety in a man of business as one of the cardinal virtues."

"Then let us endeavour to warm his heart" said Mr. Harland, "since I should like to study such a character; avarice displays itself in such various shapes. I now know a nobleman, who, when he was a young man, thought all money wasted that did not contribute to his comforts, pleasures, or advancement—now this poor man seems not even so well acquainted as he was with the use of coin, as he seems to think even comforts extravagance; how difficult it is to draw a line between economy and parsimony!"

Mr. Rosenhager agreed few people hit upon the happy medium, adding—"I will produce some Rhenish where we dine—I know we shall meet with some very good, and this may render our companion more sociable. He would fancy you, sir, had some view upon his purse, were you even

to press an extra glass upon him—may, even doubt his pledging me, he is so ve cautious, else the juice of the grape does sometimes raise his spirits above par.”

As agreed upon, when they stopped, neither Mr. Harland nor Edward were more than commonly civil to the old man, who complained of thirst, owing to the heat of the day, declaring he should have been stifled had he rode withinside.

Mr. Rosenhagen joined in his complaints, taking and recommending to him a bumper of Rhenish, before he ventured upon any mixed liquor.

The miser, who thought he might suffer were he to drink merely water, took his prescription, and during dinner relaxed from his usual taciturnity; and as no wine but the best Rhenish and claret appeared upon the table, which Mr. Rosenhagen both ordered and paid for, he presumed the treat was intended for the other gentlemen, therefore he did not refuse to take his share, which rendered him so communicative,

nificative, that he was very much pleased when Edward, who had been highly amused by their manœuvre having succeeded, declared his intention of riding with him upon the coach-box.

Mr. Harland gave his nephew a nod of approbation, and thus they again set forward, as the merchant wished Edward to study mankind, preparatory to his entrance into the great world, where his present fortune and future expectations might enable him to play a distinguished, if not a brilliant part.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAVING remarked the weather, compared the German to the English roads, and thus exhausted mere general topics, the old man came to closer quarters, not having the same dread of opening his mind to a gay frank-hearted youth, he would have had to addressing Mr. Harland.—“Are you in business with your friend, young gentleman?”

“Mr. Harland has relinquished his concern in Russia, but he rather wishes to qualify me for the mercantile line; and I am very anxious to increase the number of British merchants, who rank among the first and most independent class of men in Europe—nay, I might say in the world; but it requires a fortune to begin in any great way.”

“By

"By no means—character, connexions, and a thorough knowledge of business, have brought many men very forward, who began with very slender means—nay, real industry, and known honesty, will often place a man in the road to fortune. I began with no other stock."

"Not to mention very superior talents, if Mr. Rosenhagen may be believed."

"I have certainly now a thorough knowledge of business, but that I have acquired by experience, since, I can assure you, I began the world—nay, I may say life, with scarcely a shilling in my pocket, not exactly through the fault of my parents, who merely erred from having too good an opinion of mankind. I was an only child; and as my father was in business, I was sent to a commercial academy; and at sixteen I was articted to a merchant, who took me without a premium, from having some knowledge of my mother's family, and knowing that

my father, who kept what he called a glass and china warehouse, but which was, in fact, a retail shop, could not spare any money out of his business, my parents only hoping that I should rise a step beyond them in the commercial world. But not to dwell upon particulars, my father was ruined by becoming security for a friend, and I became an orphan before I was of age; therefore, had I not been fortunately secure of bread for another twelvemonth, I might have starved, or have been doomed to become a runner to some house, like the one I was in; but Providence still farther stood my friend, as soon after my father's failure our counting-house was broken open, and though the loss that ensued, thanks to the iron chests, was trifling, the firm resolved that the porter should henceforth sleep there. Now, as I suspected this man was in a league with the thieves, I offered to take the charge upon myself, which would en-
title

title me to a small remuneration, which might enable me to keep my parents out of a workhouse.

“ My employers were more generous than I expected. I redoubled my efforts to please and serve them; and as my parents did not, as I have told you, long survive their misfortunes, I had saved twenty pounds before I was of age, with which large sum, like Whittington of renowned memory, I commenced merchant upon my own bottom---that is, the captains of vessels in the employ of the house being very kind to me, for a little assistance over hours, took out little ventures for me, with the free consent of the firm, as I was always for fair and above-board---underhand doings never prosper in the long run.

“ My industry, and continued attention to the interest of my masters, induced them, before I was two-and-twenty, to make me their second clerk, with a salary of eighty pounds a-year, and a promise

to give me ten pounds a-year, if I continued equally industrious and deserving; and as I continued to sleep in the counting-house, thus saving rent, fire, and candle, I now began to lay by money apace. My first twenty pounds had soon increased to a hundred; and thus I continued for thirty years to trade in Holland, but in a very sure manner. But I run on too fast, as I should have told you, that before I was eight-and-twenty I was promoted to be first clerk; and having now made myself master of various languages, and the house having greatly extended their concerns, now trading as much with the East as with the West Indies, my salary was increased to three hundred a-year. I thought myself O ceils the Second; but when advised to give up sleeping in the counting-house, I declared my intention of doing so till I married, as I could not be more comfortable in my own opinion. Nor did I remove my quarters, till, in consequence of the death of the junior partner,

artner, I was prevailed upon, since I was now rich enough to be courted by those who had aided my endeavours, to take his share in the business, and the charge of the house, &c.

"I was just turned of fifty when my name was added to the firm, and I have continued to be the acting partner from that time to this. I have now shewn you how a man may rise from very small beginnings. I have been pitied by some, and applauded by others, in the first instance; and have since been laughed at—nay, abused, because I did not squander away my property; even my partners have often asked me who I was saving for, and I could not absolutely answer their question, so I merely requested they would take the *dashing* part to themselves, and suffer me to plod in my own way—somebody or other would benefit by what called my parsimony, therefore the world had no business to interfere with my —meaning a stroke at themselves: as

can assure them they will not inherit the miser's money—their fine lady-wives and daughters shall not revel in my spoils.

“ I have also many acquaintances—friends they call themselves, who are very lenient to my foibles; but they are too lavish of their praises; they have taught me not to become their dupes, as they are all ready to advise me how to dispose of my money; and, in fact, what strangers in blood can care three pins for an old man of seventy-four, who gives no dinners, sees no company, and only lives for himself? The gentleman who received me into the house without a premium, died childless some years since; his immense fortune descended to his two nephews, who were rolling in money before, and are now living in fashionable splendour.

Take my hat off to one of them, out of respect to his uncle, when he was passing in his curriole at Whitehall, and he returned the salute with a stroke of his whip; therefore, like Guy, Gresham, or Harpur,

Farpur, my money shall be appropriated to charitable uses, which will at least procure me a degree of posthumous fame; had I married and had children, I might have been happier, or, more probably, more miserable, so future ages may benefit by the parsimony of the miser Falkland. Should you go into business, Mr. Melfort, don't take me for your absolute model; but, depend upon it, industry and attention are absolutely necessary to succeed; and there never was a better lesson given to young men, than in Hogarth's prints of the idle and industrious apprentices; they are gone out of fashion, but they ought to ornament every counting-house."

Edward, who had listened very attentively to this summary of his companion's life, assured him that he was more to praise than to censure in the methods he had pursued.—"Possibly, in your situation," he continued, "I should sooner have exchanged my lodging; and I might have displayed a little *dash*, when I could

afford it

afforded it; at all events I should probably have married, and thus have seen my riches descend in the direct line, and as I grew old, have lived again in my children and grandchildren."

"You are a sensible and an honest young man—not ready to praise the follies of an old one, because report has made him out rich." Should you go into business, steer a middle course, and do not let prudence beget parsimony, and her cousin-german avarice. My early misfortunes soured my disposition, and I never associated with real liberal minds, till too late in life to imbibe their notions. It is not to be wished that many should follow my example; but such as circumstances have made me, I shall ever remain; habit is second nature, and the prudent, saving youth, too soon degenerates into a miser as he grows old."

Edward, who had not the most distant idea of courting his companion, agreed that every one was, more or less, the slave of

of circumstances, or of early impressions.

Their arrival at where they proposed to sup, broke in upon their discourse. Mr. Falkland never supped, therefore he retired immediately, when our hero related what had passed between them to his companions, who both agreed that there was as much to be said in praise of this eccentric miser, as in his disfavour; Mr. Rosenhagen declaring, he must have felt his heart warmed towards his companion, to have been thus communicative, as he merely knew that he was looked up to by the heads of the firm, who gave him *carte blanche* upon every occasion, and paid him a degree of abject court, more likely to annoy, than to flatter the shrewd old man.

But while our travellers are pursuing their journey, we must take a few retrograde steps, and return to the Delmont and Arlington families, whom we left upon the eve of being nearer connected.

CHAPTER IX.

THE more earl Delmont had reflected upon Mr. Arlington's will, the less satisfied he felt himself, since, in fact, his son would never have more than a life interest in his wife's fortune, admitting she lived and had a family; he was therefore angry with the countess for having, like all fools, as he told her, defeated her own ends; since by allowing the boy time to look about him, he might have met with a woman of equal fortune, which would have been at her own disposal. The countess, who certainly participated in his chagrin, agreed she had been too precipitate, but the harm was done; regretting the earl had offered to resign the villa at Mortlak, hinting that the Welch castle, which was a mere incumbrance, might have been substi-

substituted in its place; if the bride elect
 preferred a villa near town, let her hire
 one; and as to a town house, till George
 was of age she thought he could not re-
 quire one—let them be their inmates dur-
 ing his minority; as Mrs. Arlington did
 not choose to reside with them, the earl
 might take that his plea; and for a mi-
 racle his lordship thought there was some
 sense in her arguments, since as lord Ex-
 more would neither enlarge his political
 connexions, nor increase his consequence,
 by marrying a merchant's coheiress, whose
 fortune might, after all, prove a mere
 blank, and as no man could more adroitly
 change his plans when requisite for his in-
 terest, nor could more easily bring even
 his enemies into his way of thinking, he
 succeeded in persuading his son that till
 he became of age it would be both to his
 interest and advantage to continue the in-
 mate of Delmont House, since he was too
 young to do the honours of a distinct es-
 tablishment, with due propriety and regard

to courtly etiquette; and if he once
 loved his wife to consider herself as the
 ruling power, he would never after be able
 to recover his consequence; therefore, in
 his place, he would tell her, that upon con-
 sideration, he had determined to reside
 with his father and mother till he became
 of age, promising, if he adhered to his ad-
 vice, to give him a situation in his office,
 which would prove a mere sinecure as to
 trouble, and very lucrative in point of
 emoluments; besides, as soon as he was
 in parliament he could make other and
 more permanent provision for him, hold-
 ing out the Welch castle in perspective,
 &c. &c.; and as the viscount had more
 than a spice of his father's avarice in his
 composition, he was convinced by his rea-
 soning, and communicated these recent
 plans to the bride elect, as likely to be
 more conducive to their comfort and in-
 terest, till he could act for himself. She
 was by no means pleased, as the idea of
 having a house of her own had taken full
 possession

possession of her mind; but as she should bask in the sunshine of the earl's greatness, and be the principal personage at the countess's fates, she acquiesced with a very good grace, and was by no means aware that the even ceremonious politeness with which the earl now treated her in private as well as in public was no proof of his increasing regard, since, could he have done so without incurring (what it was his sole care to guard against) the general odium, he would, without a moment's hesitation, have broken off the match; but as he was more than ever the slave of the world's opinion, since he felt that his power rather declined than increased, as his pride rendered even his colleagues anxious to oppose his opinion, he suffered matters to take their course. To her mother and sister Miss Arlington declared these new arrangements were her own suggestion, as she was now accustomed to the splendour and magnitude of Demont House, she should feel cramped in a man-

a mansion of smaller dimensions; the viscount and she were to make the tour of Wales, as soon as they married, as she was to give her opinion of Eskdale, which was to be fitted up in the Gothic style, for their summer residence, she having objected to the *villakin*, at Mortlake, which she considered as a mere citizen's box, merely fit for a country nursery for an earl's family; it was to be at her disposal whenever health or inclination induced her to sleep in the country, adding—"As I suppose, madam, you and Ellen will return to Fir Grove after I am married, the viscount and I may pay you a flying visit."

"My plans are not absolutely decided, Anne; but, wherever I am, I shall be always happy to see you; and I hope, as it is your own choice, that you will have no reason to regret becoming the inmate of the earl's family."

Ellen spoke in high terms of the lady irvans, who she was sure would prove very pleasant companions: and the bridal para-

paraphernalia being ready, the ceremony took place at Delmont House, with the usual splendour and eclat, suitable to the rank and situation of its owner.

Ellen and the bridegroom's sisters officiated as bridesmaids; the earl gave the bride away, as she had refused, even with scorn, Mr. Du Verney's kind offer to represent her father.

Mrs. Arlington was of course present; and as few people could form more accurate judgments of the feelings and inclinations of those with whom she associated, she saw through the thin veil of satisfaction the earl had assumed, contempt for the bride, and any thing but parental love for the bridegroom.

The countess, who never appeared to so much advantage as when doing the honours of her superb mansion, carried it off much the best; but she took an opportunity to whisper Mrs. Arlington, that she had found it a much more difficult task than she had expected, to reconcile the earl

earl to the match, as he, and perhaps with reason, looked much higher for his son.

To the lovely Ellen, who completely bore away the bell upon this grand occasion, her appearance was so elegantly appropriate, and her manner so correctly gay, the ladies Mirvan secretly regretted their brother had chosen her elder sister; while she gave him great credit for his taste, declaring that lady Exmore was much better calculated to do the honours of his magnificent establishment.

The earl fully coincided in his daughters' opinion, as he felt that Ellen, in all the witchery of youth, beauty, and vivacity, would have made a serious sensation in the world of fashion. To her he was sincerely polite—to Mrs. Arlington courteously so; and as that lady chose to leave Delmont House when the bride and bridegroom set off for Mortlake, from whence they were to proceed upon their Welsh tour, Ellen felt no regret at returning to their comparatively small mansion,

n, declaring, as soon as she was alone with her mother, that she was more than ever prejudiced against unequal matches; however, if Anne was but happy, her dislike to the Delmont family was of little consequence.

Mrs. Arlington feared, that she who had, even in her father's lifetime, regulated even his actions, would find some difficulty in conforming to the pompous caprices of the earl, and to the sulky obstinacy of her husband.

Colonel Murray made his appearance in the evening, and to him Ellen gaily expatiated upon the splendid wedding; and as Mrs. Arlington had promised to bestow her hand upon her very sincere admirer, within the month after lady Exmore's marriage, every thing was put in train to accelerate that event; the colonel relinquished all claim to the five hundred pounds a-year the widow might have retained, settling the same jointure upon her Mr. Arlington had done, and
him.

hundred a-year pinmoney, making M Du Verney and Mr. Felton her trustees who, by his desire, notified his approaching nuptials to lord Delmont, and the accession of income which would in consequence fall to the share of lady Exmore.

The earl returned a proper answer, hoping Mrs. Arlington had consulted her own happiness, as she was aware of the penalty annexed to her again changing her name. He congratulated her upon having selected a man who could make her such ample amends for having given him the preference; lamenting that, considering her very near connexion with lady Exmore, he and the countess must decline the future visits of *Mrs. Murray*; they should always be happy to see Miss Arlington, in whose future prospects they must ever feel interested, and to whom they both desired their kindest regards, in which the ladies Mirvan sincerely joined: thus did this proud, and, we may say, able man, vent his spleen upon the widow;

widow; who, perfectly prepared for this polite *congé*, as she told the colonel, laughed at his folly, since he might have spared himself the hint he had given her, as she should never, uninvited, have reentered Delmont House.

Ellen was most surprised at his lordship's want of policy; could he suppose that either colonel Murray or his wife would ever expect to be upon friendly terms with his pompous self? and, as to her, she should decline his future protection, and never again enter his doors, except invited by her sister.

The colonel, whose good sense induced him to consider the earl as rather an injured man, undertook his defence, and induced Ellen to declare—"Well, my dear sir, then we can only regret poor Anne's marriage; had she chosen any other man, we should have continued a most united family."

Neither the colonel nor Mrs. Arlin contradicted her; but lady Exmore

ply to her mother's letter, communicating her approaching marriage, fully convinced them all three that this newly-titled lady already looked down with contempt upon her less-ambitious mother and sister; and was really happy the former's choice had afforded her so excellent an excuse to cut the plebeian connexion; as she gave her opinion of what she called Mrs. Arlington's egregious folly in such impertinent terms, that had she been that lady's favourite daughter, she must have resented her insolence.

"As Mrs. Arlington," she wrote, "you would have been noticed and respected by the noble family to which I am now so nearly allied, and poor Ellen might have formed a connexion that would have thrown her very much in my path; but now I can never risk hurting the earl's feelings, by visiting the wife of *colonel* *ray*—a man whose early errors (I not to offend) have banished him from all good society. He does well to make

It of giving up the small an-
 es you might have retained,
 's law steward has assured
 his lord. at the will was so loosely
 worded in that respect, he makes no doubt
 you would have been obliged to surrender
 what you tender as a free-will offering.
 As to Fir Grove, we know it cannot be
 disposed of till Ellen is of age; but it may
 be let for our joint advantage; and as I
 propose taking a small villa when I return
 to town, I shall select what furniture may
 suit my rooms, making a fair allowance
 to my sister, to whom I desire my kind
 love. I knew she is unfortunately obliged
 to reside with you; but I hope she will
 have the good sense to devote most of
 her time to me. Believe me, it is with
 regret that I have been so candid; but as
 this is probably the last time I shall ad-
 dress Mrs. Arlington, here closes our cor-
 respondence. My best wishes will always
 attend you, &c."

Though seriously hurt and extremely
 F 2 vexed,

vexed, Mrs. Arlington could smiling at this impolitic epistle who was even more provoked amused, declaring she pitied more than envied the writer; while the colonel would have it the delectable *morceau* was the minister's composition, therefore recommended Mrs. Arlington to treat it with silent contempt, as she must, like Ellen, be more inclined to pity than to blame the writer, who seemed to have met with her counterpart in her father-in-law.—

"Let Ellen rally her upon her fears of our intruding ourselves upon her notice," he continued, "and let us ask Du Verney's opinion respecting Fir Grove, since as lady Exmore has thrown down the gauntlet, I will not suffer it to fall to the ground; and the five hundred a-year you had resolved, my dear friend, should revert to both your daughters, shall now, with your leave, be made over solely to Ellen. I am not to be threatened out of what I was most ready to relinquish."

"Then

"to oblige me, my dear *father*,"
 fascinating Ellen, "suffer my
 retain the money. I agree
 as misconstrued your liberality;
 but I could not bear to be a gainer by
 her folly; since, had I had the power, my
 mother should not have given up a far-
 thing to her children, who are already as
 rich as any reasonable women can require."

The colonel promised to consider of her
 proposal; and as Mr. Du Verney and Mr.
 Felton were both consulted, they both
 declared that Fir Grove was absolutely at
 Mrs. Arlington's disposal, till her younger
 daughter became of age, furnished as it
 stood; and when the house was to be sold,
 the law gave all it contained to the widow;
 and the jointure or annuity bequeathed
 was so strangely worded—*loosely*, if lady
 Exmore chose, that Mrs. Arlington would
 be warranted, were she so inclined, in re-
 taining the whole—the professional man
 who had made the will having omitted
 various formalities which were requisite

to render it lawful for her daughter to claim the forfeiture.

The first counsels' opinion was in consequence of these representations; and as they all agreed with the executors, their view of the business was clearly stated to the earl by one of the crown lawyers, who concluded by informing him, that as Mrs. Arlington was resolved to act up to the spirit, if not the legality of the will, she had resolved to relinquish three thousand five hundred a-year from the day of her marriage; the other five hundred she should, contrary to her first intention, retain, in consequence of a letter from lady Exmore, of his lordship's advising or dictation; and she should also retain Fir Grove to the very last moment; and when she gave it up, she should claim the furniture, &c. as her right; concluding with the usual forms.

The earl had never been more provoked; lady Exmore was an idiot not to have better disguised her views; and he certainly

wrote her a few lines, which she
ately consigned to the flames, re-
now it was of no avail, she had
ed herself to have been dazzled with
title.

The colonel led the amiable widow to
the altar at the appointed time; Ellen ac-
cepted a very pressing invitation from Mrs.
Du Verney to spend a month with her
and her daughters at Ramsgate, whither
they were going, for the benefit of sea-
bathing, rather earlier than the full season,
and where the colonel and Mrs. Murray
promised to join them in July, as they
had proceeded into Hampshire from the
church door; and by way of enlivening
the generally-gay Ellen, Mrs. Du Verney
proceeded with her and her daughters, the
same day, to Ramsgate, where they took
up their abode in a handsome house, upon
Albion Hill, where we will leave them
to return to the hero of our tale.

CHAPTER X.
~~~~~

EDWARD, who greatly enjoyed the eccentricities of Mr. Falkland, and who found him a most intelligent, amusing companion, generally took his seat on the box, "to profit by his instructions," he told him, "should he, after due consideration, resolve to increase his fortune by going into business." Still he did not exactly approve of some of his notions, as he seemed to consider that a man's sole study during life ought to be to get money, as honestly as circumstances admitted; not that he had ever been guilty of any malpractices, as he bore, said Mr. Rosenhagen, a most excellent character; but he now and then boasted of having outwitted some less keen speculator, and seemed to think that a penny saved was worth twopence; strongly



ly inculcating the virtues of frugality and self-denial upon his juvenile auditor, as the first foundation required towards making a fortune.

Our open-hearted hero now and then dissented from his conclusions, observing, that surely a little was required where much was given; and though he, young as he was, was the decided enemy to extravagance, he did not consider that money, when honestly acquired, ought merely to be hoarded.

Falkland sometimes agreed with him, at others disputed the justice of his conclusions, and finally acknowledged, that he might have been a happier man, had he taken an equally enlarged view of the subject, adding—"But you were probably educated upon a more liberal scale; your early impressions were very different from mine."

"Positively no; circumstances, that am not at liberty to detail, placed me a state of absolute obscurity and indige-

till I was turned of fifteen; indeed I might, from the time I was able, be said to have earned my own bread by the sweat of my brow; and I did not live luxuriously, you may suppose. My late father then took me under his own protection. I was not absolutely born in wedlock; at least there would be some difficulty in proving my birth to have been legitimate, and this led to my early hardships; of course, my youthful habits were not those of extravagance. Baron Villars was the best and kindest of parents; and, while he lived, bestowed upon me every advantage of education; and when he died, he left me a gentle independence. But I must not launch out into extravagance. You have really led me on to say more about myself than I had intended; may I request you would consider my communications as sacred, as I cannot fully explain what would perfectly exonerate my late father from blame?"

Young man, I honour your principles;  
what



what has escaped you, will ever remain locked in my breast. I only rejoice that your early life has so well prepared you to resist the temptations that are likely to assail your riper years. You know the value of money, and will make a good use of it. My best wishes will henceforth attend you."

Thus insensibly was a sort of confidence and friendship established between this elderly miser and the young and open-hearted Edward De Melfort, who greatly contributed to the old gentleman's comforts, by merely paying him those attentions he thought due to his age.

Having reached Ostend, Mr. Harland agreed to remain there while Mr. Falkland settled his business, as Mr. Rosenhagen would bear them company; and as the former was now obliged to look over various documents, and some very intricate accounts, he shewed our hero his method of calculation, convincing him that the most difficult rules of arithmetic were

at his fingers' ends; and that notwithstanding his advanced age, he could still write a most beautiful hand.

Edward had taken great pains to improve his writing after he came abroad; but declared his were mere pothooks and hangers in the comparison.

Mr. Harland did him more justice; and Mr. Rosenmagen declared he had received better worded and more intelligible letters, upon the Russian business, from Mr. De Melfort than from many experienced mercantile clerks.

"Then I may have recourse to your superior abilities, my young friend," resumed the old man, "as I know these quirking rogues will give me a fine ruffled skein to unravel, and there is one among them who would deceive Old Nick by his plausibility; he has, by his speculations, brought them into difficulties, which he hopes his oily tongue will gloss over; and to me he will make their affairs appear in a most flourishing condition; but I know him,



him, and old Falkland will not be the dupe of such a scamping rascal. Indeed I hope to profit by his roguery, which will induce him to borrow money upon any terms, to deceive me into a belief that every thing is going on well."

But not to dwell upon his excellent management and prudent foresight, which really astonished our hero, suffice it to say, that in the course of four days he settled every thing perfectly to his satisfaction, having, as he hoped, completely outwitted the acting partner, who had drawn in some very responsible men to join in their securities.

"Now I have them snug," said the old man, chuckling over his triumph; "I could have crushed the reptiles, but that would not have answered our purpose; we shall now slide out of the connexion without exposing their knavery. Let others take them up who are less acquainted with their principles, which are more to be feared than their poverty."

they will make many suffer whenever they fail, and that they must sooner or later—nay, I dare say they are only now waiting to make a good stroke before they display the cloven foot. I shall allow them plenty of rope, as I have now no right to speak my real opinion of them; let others find them out as we have done—every one for themselves, and God for us all, has long been my maxim—I have only to guard against rendering myself liable to make good their deficiencies—what is your opinion, Mr. Harland?”

“That it is better to temporize with rascals, than to set them at defiance. I have just been doing so, and have found the benefit of it; but I should be very sorry to lead others into the same errors I have been guilty of.”

“You have done with business, my good sir—I have not yet closed my accounts—that makes the difference.”

Mr. Harland did not dispute the point, as he rather pitied than blamed the mistaken



taken notions Mr. Falkland had imbibed, which led him to extend prudence almost beyond the bounds of honesty, where his interest was concerned, and who yet seemed to dread expending a shilling of the very money he was still so eager to acquire.

As Mr. Rosenhagen was now anxious to return home, Mr. Falkland, who had felt obliged by Mr. Harland and our hero having waited his leisure, readily agreed to sail with them in the first packet; they therefore engaged with the captain next in turn, to sail the next day, between twelve and one, at which time the tide would serve, and they were requested to be on board by that hour.

Mr. Rosenhagen accompanied them to the port, and having reached the pier, they were in the very act of taking leave, just without the crowd assembled near the packet, when two men, bearing between them a very heavy package, which was to be conveyed on board, pushed between Mr. Harland and Mr. Falkland, who was standing

standing very near the water's edge, calling out "Take care!" but too late to prevent the poor old man from receiving so severe and unexpected a blow, that he staggered, and fell into the water, just above where the packet lay in moorings.

A general exclamation of terror ensued, but no one made the least attempt to save him, except our hero, who having in less than three seconds thrown off his coat and waistcoat, plunged after him, though by no means an expert or a professed swimmer. When he recovered the shock, he perceived the poor old man, who had risen probably for the last time, though he seemed to have some idea of buoying himself up in the water, when Edward caught hold of the collar of his coat, supporting himself meanwhile with his other hand, till the bystanders, among whom Mr. Harland and Rosenhagen were most anxious, threw them ropes, which enabled them to reach a sort of stairs or ladder, where they were safely landed.

Though



Though Mr. Falkland had nearly lost his strength, he retained all his faculties, and would not suffer Mr. Rosenhagen to move him from the spot, till he saw Edward jump upon the pier, whose hand he wrung in silence, being unable to give further utterance to his feelings, as his German friend assisted to support him to the inn they had so lately left, after telling the captain he should either see or hear from him in twenty minutes.

Meanwhile Edward declared himself all the better for his cold bath, readily accompanying Mr. Harland on board; and his trunk being soon produced, with the assistance of that gentleman's servant, he very soon exchanged his wet shirt and pantaloons—hoping Mr. Falkland would be no greater sufferer.

Mr. Rosenhagen had provided this eccentric being with a complete change of dress, in which he was just equipped when Mr. Harland and Edward returned to the hotel, to see if he was well enough to sail  
in

in this packet, meaning, should he have sustained any serious injury, to remain a few days longer at Ostend.

The captain declared he would wait for them to the very last minute; they were therefore very happy to find their old friend quite well, by his own account; and as he could not wait till his own clothes were dried, he made no difficulty of accepting the loan of Mr. Rosenhagen's, since he was very anxious not to disappoint the captain, who ought, he conceived, to be rewarded for his civility, as he was not to blame for his accident; and he was not a little pleased to hear that the two brutal porters who had occasioned his ducking had made a precipitate retreat the moment they had disposed of their load, for fear of being rather roughly handled by the English sailors then in port.



## CHAPTER XI.

AN hour having soon elapsed, and his spirits being recruited by some excellent mulled wine, of which our hero partook, Mr. Falkland stepped on board the packet, telling his Hamburg friend that he would take care of his clothes till he could restore them free of expence.

"Pray dispose of them to some poor person, as my tribute of gratitude towards Heaven for having, through the means of Mr. De Melfort, preserved your life."

"Thank you—thank you!" warmly reiterated the miser, shaking his hand for the last time; and every thing being ready, the vessel left the harbour under an easy press of sail.

Having now fully recovered his faculties, which had been rather bewildered till the

the present moment, Falkland caught hero's hand, saying—"I can never sufficiently grateful for your late heroic exertions; though I am half inclined to blame you for risking your life, which was so much more valuable, to save an old man upon the brink of eternity—thank God you have been no sufferer by your rashness!"

"Nay, my good sir—surely when your life was at stake, I merely did what any other person of my age, with equal presence of mind, would have done. I do not believe I ran any risk; and I hardly know whether I did not display my officiousness rather than my feelings, as I really believe you would have reached the stairs even without my assistance."

"Then you are very much mistaken, my kind friend; when your age, I could swim a little, but half-stunned as I was with the blow, and encumbered with my clothes, my little strength was quite exhausted when you caught hold of me; and



and had I sunk the third time, I am very confident I should never have risen again. Now many people that I know would say as I did, that you displayed your humanity to save a very useless—nay, they might add, worthless being; and as it is, as I have told you how I have, or rather mean to dispose of my property, you have merely been prolonging my life at the expence of the poor: can you reconcile your conscience to this view of the case? since should I alter my will, the sin will lie at your door; and we are such poor fickle mortals, that we hardly know one hour what we intend to do the next, and we do that to-day which we are all anxiety to alter to-morrow.”

“As I acted from the mere impulse of the moment, my good sir, I feel very indifferent<sup>e</sup> respecting the opinion of the world; the feeling part of mankind will give me credit for good intentions; and I feel assured, that if you fancy I was at all necessary to your preservation, you will  
return

return your thanks to where they are most due; as all good thoughts and inspirations come from heaven, my wish to save you must have been suggested by Him who can read all our hearts; therefore, like the worthy Mr. Rosenhagen, you will be the more eager to display your charity, in proportion to your gratitude towards that Providence who watched over you in the moment of danger."

"You are a deep and a good reasoner, De Melfort, so I will dry the clothes I wore when I fell into the water, that I may resume them when we land at Ramsgate, as I shall give those I have on to our porter, an honest industrious man, with a very large family; my friend's charitable intentions shall be fulfilled;" untying his bundle, and disposing of the articles it contained, which were certainly not in the highest state of preservation, to the best advantage, for the purpose of drying them.

Edward assisted his endeavours, while the



the captain observed they must all be rinsed out in soft water, ere they would receive any benefit by the air, not appearing to consider any of the articles worth the trouble they were taking.

"Sailors are proverbially careless," said Falkland, addressing Edward; "now as I wish you to benefit by my experience, I will let you into one of my prime secrets"—this was said in a very low tone—"I have never had a new coat since my father's death."

Our hero looked at him, as if incredulous.

"I have spoken the exact truth. London is the place of all others for a man to save or to squander money. As a young man, I always appeared respectably dressed, at a very little expence; so many smart bucks exchange their scarce worn suits with their tailors, that they may cut a dash, that I was never at a loss for second-hand clothes, and the Jews were always ready to purchase those I threw by; therefore,

fore, for five-and-fifty years, I can safely swear that it has not cost me ten pounds a-year in dress."

"Certainly yours was a very saving method, sir; but I am fearful I shall never adopt it, as I have an inherent dislike to succeeding others in their wearing apparel."

"Well, only do not suffer prejudice to render you extravagant;" and as Mr. Harland joined in the conversation, the subject was changed to the wind and weather, which rendered it probable they should reach Ramsgate by noon next day.

The captain proved a true prophet respecting the clothes, which were not thoroughly dry, when he proposed to the passengers breakfasting in the cabin, assuring them they would, if the breeze lasted, reach Ramsgate before one.

During their repast Mr. Falkland frequently raised his hand to the back of his head, which induced Mr. Harland to inquire whether he felt any inconvenience from



from the blow he had received, which in the first instance he had declared he had scarcely been aware of, alleging that his hat had saved his head; but he now agreed that he was sensible of a sort of dull pain, adding—"I am afraid my *pate* is softer than I supposed."

"Be that as it may, you had better have it rubbed with a little brandy and vinegar, or either, if both are not at hand."

The captain offered the former, but the prudent old man declined having recourse to it, conceiving he must make some return—"If necessary he would consult a medical man at Ramsgate," and thus the matter dropped.

When they came in view of that port, Falkland asked his late travelling companions whether they should proceed immediately to London, having understood they were going into Hampshire.

Mr. Harland told him they should spend that day and night at Ramsgate; adding—"We can start at our own hour

in the morning, since a postchaise will be quite as cheap as the stage, and we will set you down at your own door," expecting he would have snapped at what certainly seemed so economical a plan; but he was mistaken, as the old man thought his notions very extravagant, though he lamented he could not wait their leisure; but he was so anxious to be at home, that he should start by the first London coach, when he might either stop at Rochester, or proceed, as best suited his feelings, which would lead him, his auditor now conceived, to mount the roof or the dicky of a public conveyance; and if he was not starved to death, or exhausted with fatigue, he made no doubt of his travelling all night, not choosing to alter his own plans, nor to offer to free a man reputed to be so rich.

Mr. Harland merely regretted they were so soon to separate; and being addressed by another gentleman, left the eccentric being to lay plans to save a few shillings.



shillings, at the expence of his comfort, if not his health. The captain had declared they should be in port in less than a quarter of an hour, when Falkland, starting from a reverie, beckoned to our hero, who was pacing the deck, in admiration of the safe approach to this now-royal harbour; putting out his hand, he fervently grasped the one Edward had extended, and looking him full in the face, again expressed his gratitude for the risk he had run for his preservation.

Edward declared he merely put him to the blush.

"May be so; but I never before wished I had been a father—or rather that I had had such a son; you will think me in my dotage, and most truly it is said, once a man and twice a child; so now favour me with your direction, that I may make a memorandum of it, as I can no longer trust to my memory. Here," giving him a pencil and his pocketbook, "write it down for me."

"I suppose we shall proceed immediately to Smallbury Priory, in Hampshire; but as I am not sure, should you wish to address me, or to hear of me, Mr. Du Verney, of Great Winchester-street, will, I am sure, forward any letter to me, or give you my address."

"Very good; write it down, as I may feel inclined to let you know whether I reach home in safety, after so nearly escaping a watery grave at Ostend."

Thus terminated their conversation, as, with every sail set, and in the highest style, the packet proudly entered Ramsgate harbour.



## CHAPTER XII.

DURING colonel Murray's retreat into Hampshire with his new married bride, he thought it necessary to reveal to her who and what William Mansel really was—how he had been removed—and the reasons which had induced him and Mr. Hadland to connive at his being brought forward as the son of baron Villars.

She was very much shocked when informed that her elder daughter had married the usurper of her early favourite's rank and fortune; and as she could not find a single excuse for the earl, she declared herself most happy in the certainty that they should never meet again; agreeing that Edward De Melfort was much more likely to be happy as the son of baron Villars, than had he been fostered upon

a man who might, and certainly would, have had recourse to any means to avoid acknowledging their relationship; declaring that she had loved the dear boy from a child, and should sincerely rejoice if her darling Ellen still retained her predilection in his favour, though she doubted her recollecting him, as six years, and so spent, must have made a very material alteration, both in his person and manners.

The colonel told her why and when he had relieved Ellen's anxiety respecting her favourite, and every thing that had passed between them, acknowledging that his happiness would be complete, should they ever meet at the altar, as he and Mr. Harland had resolved to render Edward's fortune equal to the fair Ellen's; and as the colonel hoped and expected the travellers would land at Ramsgate, he hastened thither with his amiable wife, and took possession of a very excellent house, very near Mrs. Du Verney's, Ellen,



len, of course, becoming their inmate, and appearing to rejoice in being able to claim the protection of colonel Murray. Lady Exmore had merely written her once, and then boasted so much of her happiness, that Ellen declared she feared she had thought it necessary to say much more than was needful, to conceal the real barrenness of the subject.

They had been about a fortnight at Ramsgate, when colonel Murray received a letter from Mr. Harland, dated Ostend, and which having been first into Hampshire, led it to hope that he might hourly expect to see him. It had been agreed between him and Mrs. Murray not to mention Edward to Ellen Arlington, as they were both anxious to see whether she would recollect him, and still more anxious to see whether she would shrink from the former roughboy, or greet him as an old acquaintance; and as the colonel learned, during his morning walk, that there was an Ostend packet in sight, he

mentioned the circumstance to his wife, who, entering into his views, proposed a stroll to Ellen, as the morning was covered in, and the vessels they had seen and remarked in the offing would probably be coming into the harbour. The colonel promised to join them on the pier, where they arrived just as the packet which bore the travellers came to its moorings.

Mrs. Murray did not like to mix in the crowd which rushed forward, therefore retreated to the more open space, where Ellen amused herself by examining the passengers as they came forward, some in excellent spirits, rejoicing they were once more at home; others complaining of having been so ill, they should be obliged to remain a few days at Ramsgate to recruit their strength: at last our three gentlemen slowly approached, as Falkland, never very swift in his movements, declared he still felt the motion of the vessel, yet he trusted solely to his cane for support, having a dislike to taking even a friend's



friend's arm, when, before Mrs. Murray could even remark Mr. Harland, which would have completely identified his person, our hero, who instantaneously recognised the indulgent friend of his childhood, rushed forward, regardless of the dictates of prudence, which forbade his ever reverting to Broomfields, and catching her half-extended hand, exclaimed—"Am I so happy as to see Mrs. Arlington? But I am fearful you do not recollect the boy once so kindly patronized, and whose father is kindly excused?"

"Welcome to England, my dear young friend!" cried the delighted matron, kindly embracing the child of her affections, though in so public a place.—"Ellen, my love, your old playfellow."

Ellen, whose colour had just then come from the moment our hero had sprung forward, as her keener eyes had instantly distinguished the fascinating smile that so greatly embellished our hero's countenance, now, with the most enchanting

chanting *naïveté*, presented her willing hand to her former favourite, saying—  
 “Sanctioned as you now are by the *higher powers*, my dear friend, believe me you are truly welcome; indeed I think we shall both do wisely only to remember enough of the past to increase the enjoyments of the present moment.”

Edward was transported by this genuine welcome, and by the elegance of her address, as he now fancied that he beheld the softest virtues and the finest talents blended together, and clad in *his* frame.

While our unconscious lovers were looking unutterables, which their lips refused to disclose, Mrs. Murray addressed the scarcely-less interested Mr. Harland, requesting he would accompany them home, directing his eyes towards Albion Hill.

“I will follow you, my *madam*, as I first wish to see my fellow-traveller housed.”



This was said in a whisper, while looking at Falkland, who had been an attentive observer of the recent recognition; he was still speaking, when colonel Murray joined them. Mrs. Murray's look convinced him that their hopes were realized; he therefore eagerly met the greetings of his ward, and the kind inquiries of Mr. Harland, who introduced him to Falkland as a particular friend of Mr. Rosenhagen's. The colonel hoped he would accompany his friends to his abode; but he excused himself—the King's Head was a very good house, and he should go forward before they would have thought of dinner; therefore, at the foot of the hill they separated, Mr. Harland promising to see him again ere he started; and engrossed as our hero was by the object of his early predilection, he took a kind leave of the young old man, who seemed to fancy ought merely to be acquired to be

who had each taken an arm  
G 6 of

of their favourite, led the way, while the colonel and his friend brought up the rear, the latter explaining who Falkland was—where they had met, &c.; when, having reached the colonel's abode, and assembled in the drawing-room, that gentleman introduced Mrs. Murray, under her present title, to his brother and ward, and never were sincerer congratulations offered in return; Ellen gaily declaring, as she was now his adopted daughter, she should henceforth style his adopted son brother.

"You will do right, my dear girl; but now let us remember that we must banish all recollection of William Mansel, *Broomfields, former follies*, &c.; and you, Mrs. Murray, and my fair Ellen, must only know my boy as what he is, the son of baron Villars, and mine and Mr. Harland's ward."

"I think I shall be the greatest gain to my dear sir, by the proposed action," rejoined Ellen; "since I have merely acted in obedience."



not dispute, I have never perfectly forgiven myself for having addressed so unfeeling a letter to the now *nameless personage* you mention."

"Do you suppose, my dear *sister*, that I ever believed your heart was a party concerned in that epistle? Had not your dear mother sent me by the same conveyance three very precious lines, I should still have acquitted you of wishing so deeply to wound my feelings."

"I can only say I never suffered more severely from an act of forced obedience, since (excuse the *girlish* vanity of my confessions, and remember, I was *thirteen*) I really feared you had made away with your *self*."

"And had almost fretted herself ill, when the colonel removed her fears and recruited her spirits," rejoined her mother.

Edward declared they would render him too vain, and seemed, as he felt, most truly gratified by this kind explanation.

The conversation now turned upon lady Exmore,

Exmore, who was at Tenby, in  
Ellen, who had heard of the correction  
the viscount had received from Edward  
Melfort, at Geneva, from the colonel,  
without then knowing he was her former  
favourite, gravely hoped our hero would  
never find it necessary to repeat the lesson  
he had given him.

"I am afraid my presumption would be more fatally resented," was the reply. "And, as your brother-in-law, I may tolerate his lordship, who will soon be so great a man, that I may be fortunate enough to escape his ~~venge~~, since, according to ~~the~~ Beaumarchais's creed, great men do little folks a great favour when they are kind enough to overlook them."

Never had five people felt happier than this united party. Ellen hoped she should at some future period hear a little more respecting her favourite, not feeling quite satisfied with the very brief explanation she had received, but resolved to repress what must appear indiscreet curiosity; when



when having partaken of various refreshments, the travellers agreed it might be as well to go to the custom-house, to see that no one claimed any part of their baggage. Mr. Harland's servant not being so handy or so active as Martin, whom they understood was now a fixture in a pleasant abode contiguous to the colonel's seat, to whom he now acted as land steward and general agent, colonel Murray proposed accompanying them. The ladies remained at home; when Ellen gave free scope to her joy, declaring she had never seen a more handsome, elegant, or pleasing young man than the landward.—“How infinitely superior to lord Exmore, notwithstanding the early advantages he enjoyed! but, my best mamma, are we never to know why Mr. De Melfort was so strangely situated in his childhood?”

“I can satisfy your curiosity, my dear girl; it was by the villany of his then nearest relatives, who wished to deprive him

him of his rank and fortune. His father discovered his retreat in time to rescue him, since it was in contemplation to send him to the West Indies in a low capacity, but not in time to defeat all the plots of these wretches, since he found it impossible, though assisted by the colonel and Mr. Harland's advice, to prove he was absolutely born in wedlock; but he is now amply provided for, and may be Mr. Harland's heir; so let us drop the subject, since, strange as it may seem, the colonel fears that were it ever known that the supposition *William Mansel* was living, it would enrage the snakes, who have only been scotched, not killed, to again rear their heads. Our young friend is a gentleman by birth, and his manners do not disgrace his rank in life; we will treat him as such, and as the son of colonel Murray."

Though not absolutely satisfied, Ellen said no more, but retired to dress, and bestowed more pains upon her toilet than she



she had done since her arrival at Rams-  
 feeling more anxious to appear to  
 age es of her early fa-  
 vourite than when preparing for a sete at  
 Delmont House.

### CHAPTER XIII.

NEITHER the colonel nor Mr. Harland  
 chose to ask their ward's opinion of the  
 fair Ellen, but he gave it, unrequired, in  
 2 ig colours, declaring he  
 own her again among ten  
 h she was so much im-  
 a point of figure and ad-  
 as he running on, his head  
 of his early favourite, when  
 each-offices upon the pier,  
 assembled, they caught  
 who was facing about,  
 1 you there are no such  
 things

things as guineas; I will give you a pound, and not a farthing more."

"There is our o. . . evic making a hard bargain," whispered our hero, addressing the colonel; and the next minute the old gentleman advanced towards them, exclaiming—"Here are a parcel of fellows as troublesome as the brokers in Moorfields, crying up their coaches, and wanting to drag people into their offices, whether they will or no."

"Opposition is the life of trade you know, my dear sir," replied Mr. Harland; "and the public are sure to be gainers when it extends to stage vol.

"True, wise men profit by tions of fools. Shall you pro don to-morrow?"

"I shall not part with the sir; we shall all leave Rainsg said colonel Murray, "and I ing another month here."

During this speech had been tormenting t



their coaches, &c., and attacking Falkland to increase his price.

"Not a farthing more than I offered will I give, and if you do not take my money, I will go up by water."

This declaration induced a clerk to come forward, with a pen behind his ear, saying—"Well, give me your pound, old gentleman, I will book you; we start at five. Where are you to be taken up?"

"At the King's Head," replied the now chuckling old man, who walked forward with the three gentlemen, telling them the landlord had put him up to their tricks; thirty shillings was the regular fare, but he had told him they would take him for a pound—"And let me alone for making a bargain: but now, Mr. De Melfort, where am I to direct to you at Ramsgate, as I may procure a frank perhaps? Our city members are very ready to oblige me; one good turn deserves another, hey, Mr. Harland? you understand trap; but though *Drag* is a shewy dog, *Holdfast* is a wiser."

Edward

Edward added his name to a card of colonel Murray's.

"That will do. That was a beautiful girl who greeted you so kindly; she is not your sister?"

"I am not so fortunate, sir; she is the younger daughter of the late Mr. Arlington of Bristol, and one of his concubines; her sister has very lately married the eldest son of earl Delmont."

"Then I would direct *her sister* to make a wiser choice, though, as ministers go, the earl is a clever man, and of course his son will be amply provided for. These great men can bestow more money with a stroke of their pen than we little ones can earn in twenty years; but I have nothing to say against the earl; he understands his *trade* better perhaps than I do mine; but this is not talking to the point. I have heard of *Bristol Arlington*, nay, have had dealings with him; he made a strange will if I remember; but I like his younger daughter,



"and I should like to bestow her upon my young friend."  
 "You have certainly convinced me that you are interested in my happiness, sir, but my fortune forbids my looking so high."

"He has enough for you both; how much as a farther inducement, I will bestow a silver pap-spoon upon your first child, if you will give me notice of the wedding."

"I think I may venture to promise you shall not remain in ignorance," was the gay reply; and as they had now reached the custom house, *dropped.*

Falkland had already cleared his own baggage, but he remained with them, nor did they again separate till they reached the King's Head; and as he civilly refused ascending the hill, as it wanted but a quarter to five, Edward stopped, which, all things considered, was paying him a great compliment, to see him off. The old man was flattered by his attention, and finally drove

drove off, desiring him not to form engagement.

The colonel and Mr. Harland had been amused by the old man's recommendation of Ellen to our hero's notice, and by his arrangements to reach home at the least possible expence, since as the cost would fall equally upon the firm, he was merely saving their money at the risk of his health, as he was certain that he would not put down a penny more than he spent.

"That is the more surprising," replied the colonel, "as such misers are seldom strictly honest; Mr. Falkland is therefore a *rara avis*."

Edward spoke highly in his praise, attributing his errors and singularities to his early habits, which might be said to have originated in necessity, since but for his great frugality, industry, and perseverance, he must have starved, or have descended to the most menial occupations.

Mr. Harland agreed there was great truth in these observations; and Ellen regretted



ed she had seen so little of this oddi-  
 nough she did not know what he had  
 respecting herself.

A week soon slipped away, during  
 which Edward and Ellen had insensibly  
 did into their former familiarity. The  
 als had been canvassed, and he re-  
 d to hear the Indian plant was still  
 rishing. He had now brought her  
 he Russian specimens, candidly acknow-  
 ging that she had been his stimulus to  
 anize; therefore Ramsgate, nay, we  
 ht say England, could not have pro-  
 a happier party. Before the expi-  
 a fortnight, Ellen was as much  
 with our hero's story as he was  
 had listened with the greatest  
 his description of his feelings  
 ing Broomfields—had learnt  
 ents Mr. Carter had made use  
 him to accede to his plans,  
 &c. &c. He looked forward  
 pleasure to renewing his ac-  
 with his first friend, now rec-  
 tor

tor of an excellent living near South ton. Of baron Villars he spoke as most indulgent of parents, and described the small castle of Melfort so accurately that she declared her entire approbation of the alterations he had made, and yet proposed to make; nor was his friend Mirvan forgotten, to whom he had dedicated his first leisure hour; he was at college, where he was to remain till he could add M. A. to his name. The colonel, Mrs. Murray, and Mr. Harland, with delight the increasing intimacy of the lovers, as they were assured that they could remove any objections Mr. Felton or Mr. Felton could make; indeed the former was only acting guardian, the latter, fallen into such bad health, he declined taking any part respecting the fulfilment of his deceased friend's most happy would earl Delbe had Mr. Du Vernay been supine, since he felt it ever



unpleasant to have his daughter-in-law's  
income paid through his hands, and her  
receipt alone to be considered as valid ;  
then his grandchildren, should he, as he  
hoped, have any, would be rendered whol-  
ly independent of their father's control ;  
in fact, he was now feelingly convinced  
that his son would derive but a compara-  
tive pecuniary advantage from his precipi-  
tate marriage with a woman of no family,  
and who was merely, like the countess,  
fitted to shine in a crowd. Her mother  
having married colonel Murray, rendered  
it a most unpleasant connexion ; and as he  
soon learned Mr. Harland's return, and by  
whom he was accompanied, he immedi-  
ately supposed that the brothers intended  
to marry Ellen Arlington to the young  
Swiss ; still he hoped her guardians would  
not come into the plan, unless the retired  
merchant was Quixote enough to come  
down very handsomely ; however, should  
the connexion take place, he resolved to

insist upon his son never noticing the plebeian set.

Lady Exmore was so imprudent, he'd not dare as yet write his opinion to her, since she would, by indiscreetly opposing the measure, probably hasten it forward, as she had lost the five hundred a-year, which Mrs. Murray had retained; and Du Verney, being a Swiss himself, might shew his countryman more favour than he would an Englishman.

Meanwhile lord and lady Exmore were shewing off at Tenby, where they cut a dash, and were much noticed, which was barely sufficient to prevent the haughty, and certainly well-informed viscountess, from repenting her precipitancy. How indignant would the great earl have felt, had he supposed she did not consider herself the most fortunate of women! but, alas! she soon discovered, that all her lord's merits centred in his title and expectations, as he was positive, though



weak; and, though it displayed itself in a different manner, he was almost as avacious as her late father.

The earl had been equally so, but he had seen the impolicy of petty savings, and he could conceal his pride, nay, even his ambition, without ever losing sight of either. Not so lord Exmore, he generally displayed both, and always *mal-à-propos*. The earl was artful—he was false; and he had inherited neither his father's insinuation, when it was his interest to please—nor his activity, as he was indolent to a degree, and even more of a coward than the minister, who, when he seriously reflected upon the past (and colonel Murray's recent marriage often reminded him of it), felt a degree of horror he was so unable to conceal, that his enemies declared, by the restlessness of his person, and his visible terror, at times, that he had signed a compact with the devil, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ON the Monday three weeks after his arrival at Ramsgate, our hero had a letter put into his hand by the servant, who had been to the post-office, franked by a city member. This the colonel observed, when he joined the party assembled round the breakfast-table.

"I dare say it is from Falkland," said Mr. Harland; "probably he could not sooner procure a frank, and it is not in his principles to put a friend to the expence of postage."

"Of course he arrived safe in town," replied our hero, breaking the seal.

"I am anxious to judge of the old gentleman's style," said Ellen. "I dare say he has favoured you with some wholesome advice, *brother Melfort*, as he was so anxious



ious to initiate you into the true frugal science of saving your money ; so if there are no secrets, read his maxims, *pro bono publico*."

"That I will do," continuing to unfold two very close written sheets. "What can he have to say to me, that induced him to devote so much time to his pen, since even the cover is full ! We had better breakfast before I enter upon my task, as I can have no secrets from the present company."

"I think he wishes to take you into partnership," gaily observed Mr. Harland, "that you may supply his place in the firm."

The colonel hazarded some other conjecture, when, breakfast being over, Edward thus began :

---

"MY DEAR PRESERVER,  
AND VERY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,  
"I am fearful you have, ere this, accused me of neglect ; and to acknowledge

knowledge the truth, I am ashamed of my delay, since through life it has been my pride to boast, that my word was my bond, still what I have to offer in extenuation will, I hope, exonerate me both in yours and Mr. Harland's opinion, since, I can safely declare, that my thoughts have oftener reverted to you than to that all-merciful and all-forgiving Being, before whose tribunal I shall so soon appear.

"I little thought, when I got into the coach at Ramsgate, that I was shaking hands with you, perhaps for the last time; but I will proceed methodically. I reached London in safety, about six o'clock the next morning, and found my partners, when we met in the counting-house, quite well, and delighted to see me, particularly Mr. Adderfield, who being very distantly connected with my original benefactor, affects to consider me as a friend; and often of late he has *kindly* blamed me for not paying more attention to my own comforts. Who have I to save for? But  
I shall



I shall not weary you with such mere common French plate, through which the copper, or rather the brass, is distinctly visible. I have not lived to seventy-five without having formed a pretty accurate judgment of those with whom I have been so closely associated.

“Johnson is a worthy, indolent, quiet being, whose whole thoughts centre in self, and who would not cross the threshold to his own inconvenience, to oblige the best friend he had in the world; while you, who could have no interested motive in view, risked your own life to save that of an old man, whom you hardly knew, and of whom you could not have formed a very favourable opinion, since I know you did not approve of many of my notions, and you frankly told me so; yet you were the only person who made even an attempt to succour me—and can I ever forget the obligation? Were I so ungrateful, I should deserve to be branded for a wretch, unworthy to hend with my  
 H 4 fellow

fellow men. But I must now inform you, that the blow which precipitated me into the water is likely to prove my death, from my not having taken the necessary precautions in time—for which I alone am to blame, as both you and Mr. Harland wished me to have rubbed the part affected with brandy and vinegar, or to call in the aid of a surgeon at Ramsgate.

“ You would, I fear, despise me, were I to give you my real reasons for not attending to your advice ; however, I have been perhaps only properly punished for my obstinacy, as I did not choose, when I reached home, to notice the continual dull pain, till it increased so much I was obliged to send for a surgeon, who blamed my delay, as leeches, in the first instance, or even *brandy and vinegar*, might have totally removed the inconvenience.

“ I thought he merely meant to make a parade of his skill, and hoped to derive great honour from performing the cure ; but I did not do him justice, since, though  
he



he could point out what could have done me good, in the first instance, he was unable to perform the cure, and even desired I would call in a greater man, sir W—— B——. I have done so, and as I am now convinced this skilful practitioner thinks there is danger to be apprehended, I did not require Mr. Adderfield's kind hints to set about arranging my worldly affairs.

“ Mr. Johnson has merely been profuse in his offers of service, and would, I dare say, have travelled express with this letter; indolent as he is, had he expected to be a gainer by his trouble. Both gentlemen having repeatedly heard me say, that I should bestow my savings upon some or other public charity, have been very anxious to convince me how much every establishment of that nature is abused, and how cautious people ought to be how they worded their wills, if they chose to be considered as benefactors to the ensuing generation.

“There I agreed with them; and as I needed no flapper to remind me of my precarious state, with such *screechovels* hovering about me, I have seriously set about arranging all my worldly affairs; and having nearly put the finishing stroke to every thing, I began this letter, which I know will be very long, and I shall find the occupation tedious; since, though I retain all my faculties, I cannot write for any length of time; but I have been assisted in my labours by two professional men of the first repute, both for skill and honesty, who have put my wishes into legal form, as, upon mature deliberation, I have suffered myself to be persuaded that I may make a wiser distribution of my property, than by devoting it to the support of charitable institutions; to you alone shall I enter into any explanation while I live. You may mention or read my letter to Mr. Harland, but do not extend your confidence.”



"Pause there," cried the fair Ellen, "and suffer me to retire."

Mrs. Murray did the same; but as the colonel was our hero's guardian, and really very curious, he agreed to remain, since of course he should consider all he now heard as sacred.

The anxious Edward proceeded, after regretting the poor old man had so wantonly trifled with his existence—

"I took a liking to you, I hardly know why, before you had sat beside me an hour. You listened with attention to my discourse, and seemed to wish to increase your fortune by going into trade. I had once decided to place you as my successor in this firm, but I have altered my plans. Ellen Arlington is a lovely girl, and I wish you to become her husband. She is now richer than you are; but I shall turn the scale in your favour, without requiring you to succeed me in business, which might prove your ruin, as you are too

H 6

young,

young, too generous, and too candid, to deal even with Johnson and Adderfield, who require an experienced man, like me, to keep a lynx-eye upon their proceedings, or they would launch into speculations, which would prove ruinous to the concern.

“ Mr. Arlington understood trade, and has left a handsome fortune, considering the style he lived in ; and as his eldest daughter has married lord Exmore for his title, &c. I wish the youngest to marry a richer man, to make amends for his want of rank.

“ I have told you how I began life, and you will find that small beginnings often wind up better than large ones ; many a rich merchant's son has brought his noble to a ninepence—while the porter in his father's house has risen to civic honours. So now to business—I have some freehold property in Middlesex, and eight larger estates in as many different counties, though I dare say no one, my agent ex-  
cepted,



cepted, knows to whom they really belong; Falkland is not an uncommon name, and he always reported me abroad during the elections, as I neither wished to meddle nor make with politics.

“ Now I had intended to leave all my landed property to the support of various charities, but I have now merely left my Middlesex estate for that purpose, that is, to build almshouses, upon a given plan, for a certain description of poor. When you come to inspect my papers, you will read my arrangements more in detail. You are of age, Mr. Harland told me, as you completed your one-and-twentieth year during our travels. I have made you and that gentleman my executors; and that you may have the benefit of the best legal advice, I have added the most honest solicitor in the kingdom to the trust.

“ To you I have bequeathed the eight estates already mentioned, as a small testimony of my gratitude for having saved  
my

my life, to which bequest are attached the following conditions:—first, it is my wish, but I have not tied you down to do so, that you should henceforth (that is, as soon as conveniently may be after my decease) assume the name of Falkland, and any armorial bearings the Herald's College may annex to the appellation. Secondly, I have saddled every one of these said estates with an annuity of twenty-five pounds, payable for ever, which is to be disposed of alternately to two men and two women in the said parishes, who have never received relief from the parish, and who are to be selected by the rector, or vicar, the churchwardens for the time being, &c.”

---

We shall not follow the eccentric old man into every minute detail respecting these charitable donations; suffice it to say, that his heir, as proprietor of the estates so taxed, was to have the casting vote, and to occasion the strictest inquiries

• rics



ries to be made respecting the candidates; he then proceeded as follows:—

---

“ These estates, after every deduction, and allowing for the fall of land, will, I should suppose, bring you in five thousand pounds a-year; but that would fall short of Ellen Arlington’s income by nearly one-half; therefore I have, by deed of gift, to save the legacy duty, and a variety of other heavy expences, made over to you my whole personal estate at my decease, upon certain conditions, specified in the deed, which you will not object to comply with: therefore let me see or hear from you by return of post, as I am very anxious to know whether you will transmit my name to posterity; and I wish to put all my papers, final instructions, valuables, &c. into your or Mr. Harland’s possession. I may not have made myself perfectly clear; but I hope you will understand that I have constituted you my  
sole

sole heir, and that I shall die quite easy, if certain that I have been enriching a Falkland;" and thus concluded this strange but certainly grateful old man.

## CHAPTER XV.

---

"How very wonderful!" exclaimed the astonished but gratified Mr. Harland; "sincerely do I congratulate you, my dear Edward, upon being thus rewarded for your humanity. Poor old man, at how trifling an expence might he have prolonged his life!"

The colonel, no less surprised and not less pleased, declared that it appeared to be the immediate work of Providence, adding—"This confirms the truth of my favourite maxim, *What shall be, shall be*. Of course you will not object to taking this



this vaunted name, which has been distinguished in the English annals, though not by our eccentric friend."

"I mean to be wholly guided by your and Mr. Harland's judgment, my dear sir. I can never be sufficiently grateful towards my generous benefactor, for enabling me to look up to Ellen Arlington."

"That you might have done, had there never existed a rich odd old man, who has, by a stroke of his pen, rendered you as rich as lord Exmore is ever likely to be," replied Mr. Harland, "since I expect the personal property will turn out of immense value; therefore I recommend your assuming the name and arms borne by your kind-hearted friend."

The colonel spoke to the same effect; and as even moments might be precious, it was decided that Mr. Harland and Edward should proceed immediately into Crutched-friars, since the latter could not do too much to evince his gratitude, he conceived, and the former wished to see

see the poor old man once more, and to receive his verbal as well as written instructions.

A postchaise was ordered; our hero had never yet chosen to have a personal attendant, but he now requested the colonel's valet to pack up his portmanteau, wishing to devote the short time he had to remain at Ramsgate to his long favourite and now beloved Ellen, who sincerely congratulated him upon his brilliant prospects, and did not affect to misunderstand him when he hoped she had no objection to the name of Falkland.

She expressed her entire approbation of the sound; and they had so much to say to each other, that they sincerely rejoiced at the colonel having altered the original plan, as he represented that an early dinner at Ramsgate would enable them to proceed, without stopping at Rochester; and they would, by starting early, reach London by ten o'clock the next morning, which would be much better than



than arriving late at night; and thus it was finally settled; therefore, by half past four they were upon the road, and arrived in town before eleven the next day; they had ordered the chaise into Crutched-friars, from whence Mr. Harland's valet was to proceed with their baggage to an hotel in Bridge-street, Blackfriars.

As they were turning into Fenchurch-street, Edward expressed a hope that they should find the old gentleman sensible, else it was possible some of his expectations might be crushed.

"Not they. Falkland is not a man to do business by halves; he has guarded against every accident. I should not be surprised to find our brother executor upon duty."

A carriage made way for the postchaise to draw up, and a porter presented himself the moment it stopped.

"How is Mr. Falkland, my friend?"

"He is alive, sir; and, I believe, retains

tains his senses. Am I speaking to Mr. Harland or Mr. Melfort?"

"To both. Can we be admitted?"

"Most certainly, sir. My master expected you to-day. Mr. Benjafield, the lawyer, is above, only waiting your arrival to leave the house."

Mr. Harland gave Edward a look, as much as to say—"I am right," and followed the porter through a broad passage, which had counting-houses on either side, into a large gloomy hall, and up a very wide though old-fashioned staircase, into a large room upon the first floor, the furniture of which seemed coeval with the mansion—heavy, lumbering French arm-chairs, draw-up curtains, spider-legged tables, and a carpet which did not cover half the room, and into which the gloomy, heavy-sashed windows scarcely admitted any light, as it looked into an inner paved court, surrounded by warehouses. A stout, pleasant-looking man, who was writing



writing at a table, rose at their entrance, and the porter introduced them to each other, saying—"Mr. Harland and Mr. Melfort; Mr. Benjafield, gentlemen."

The latter named eagerly advanced to meet the new comers.—"Most happy to see you, gentlemen. Our poor old friend is very bad; sir W—— B—— is now with him. Poor man, I am fearful he is dying a martyr to his ruling passion! but he has many excellent qualities, and does ample justice to Mr. De Melfort's heroism. He wrote you a very long letter, and I hold copies of every document; the original deeds are in his iron chest, and his private instructions, which are most voluminous, are under his pillow. This house is his; and he requested me (not seeming to consider expence, as he knows we professional men cannot afford to give away our time, which is our principal stock in trade) to remain in this room, and the one adjoining, till he either saw or heard from you gentlemen.—John," turning to the porter, who

who had remained within the door, "request sir W—— to step in here as he goes down."

The man retired.

"Mr. Falkland rambled very much during the night, the nurse told me; most happy am I that he had previously settled all his worldly affairs."

Mr. Harland declared himself no less pleased, acknowledging he little expected to have been summoned to attend the deathbed of so comparative a stranger.

Mr. Benjafield entered into various details, all tending to confirm what Mr. Falkland had written, adding—"Sir W—— did perform an operation last week, that promised relief in the first instance; but on Sunday he acknowledged that his hopes did not keep pace with his fears; the poor old man does not like to be reminded of his inattention, and yet to his dread of expending a little money may he place his death. Mr. Adderfield has been very anxious to watch by him, and feels



feels much offended at the old gentleman's flat refusal, and forces himself up stairs twice a-day, merely to hear the report current; the old housekeeper and the nurse have received strict orders never to admit him into the sick-room, therefore I am obliged to listen to his ill-feigned grief, and should be most happy to shut the door in his face."

At this moment, sir W—— B—— made his appearance; and in reply to Edward's eager and feeling inquiries, he declared it to be a lost case.—"I cannot suppose he will survive the week, if he does another day; the abscess is much enlarged, and I cannot even give him momentary ease. His faculties begin to fail him, as he did not even know me, inquiring whether my name was not Harland? He then muttered—'Melfort! where is he? He would save my life at any risk.'"

Mr. Harland explained in what his incoherence originated.

"Mr. Falkland mentioned his obligations

tions to this young gentleman the first time he called me in; and had he, as you both advised, merely bathed the bruise or tumour with brandy and vinegar, he might have felt no more ill effects from it than from his plunge into the sea; but if a man will risk endangering his life to save a shilling, what can be said of such mistaken economy, but that it brings its own punishment. I would not advise you, gentlemen, to see him yet—he may be more collected an hour hence. I am very glad he has settled all his worldly affairs; as though he may yet have lucid intervals, he is no longer competent to make a will.”

Sir W—— now took leave, and the housekeeper being summoned, she was desired to tell the nurse to seize the first favourable opportunity to mention the travellers’ arrival, to whom she was all politeness, requesting they would order their own dinner—beds had been prepared, and well aired against their arrival.

They left every thing to her, and Mr.  
Benjafield



Benjafield was hoping the old gentleman would consent to his leaving the house, now his brother executors were arrived, when the nurse came to summon them into the sick room, as he had hardly allowed her to mention their names ere he became all anxiety to see them.

Mr. Benjafield proposed waiting their return in the drawing-room, while they hastened to attend the invalid, who had raised himself from his pillow to receive them; and as a proof that he was perfectly sensible, he extended a hand to each, eagerly regarding our hero, whose countenance evinced his sincere concern, while he expressed his regret to see him such a sufferer.

"My pain will soon cease," he replied. "Will you accede to my request? Is the name of Falkland to be handed down to posterity? I know you will do it honour."

"I will endeavour not to disgrace it, my generous friend, and to conform, in every respect, to your wishes and desires."

He pressed our hero's hand with all his remaining strength, sliding down in his bed, and when his head again pressed his pillow, he said, while a smile of delight brightened his pallid countenance—"Now I can safely say, God's will be done! your kind consent to perhaps a weak and vain wish, has proved a real cordial. All will be found right, and in perfect order—sir W—— B—— was one of the witnesses to my will. Nobody dare dispute it; my letter to you would, without all these precautions, be proof positive that I was perfectly in my senses when I settled my affairs; every minutia and form of law has been strictly attended to."

Here his voice faltered, and Mr. Harland requested he would not exhaust himself.

"It may be as well; so leave me to commune with my Maker; but do not leave the house, which is mine—my partners pay me rent for the lower part. Mr. Benjafield may go—home he has been very indulgent



indulgent to my whims, and I have not forgotten him; but let him come again in the evening, as I may have something for him to do; he must sleep here; let him fight your battles with Adderfield and Johnson—he knows how to manage them; and you, as a mercantile man, Mr. Harland, will acknowledge that I have dealt liberally by them. Give your own orders to Marshall, my housekeeper.”

He had not let go our hero's hand, and now made him a sign to lower his head to his pillow, when he kissed his cheek, dropped his hand, and then waved him off, appearing too much agitated to give speech to his feelings.

Edward, whose tears were fast chasing each other down his cheeks, was equally incapable of speaking, and was, with the scarcely-less affected Mr. Harland, slowly and silently leaving the room, when the nurse recalled them; her master had made a sign, as if he had something more to

say.

say. Edward was in an instant again at his bedside.

The invalid pointed to his pillow. Nurse explained—"There is a parcel under master's head, sir, which he wishes you to take."

Edward did as she desired, which seemed to gratify the almost-speechless old man, who would not receive it, but pushed it back, pointing to the direction, which ran as follows:—"This is to be given into the hands of Mr. Harland, should I depart this life before his arrival, and he is only to open it in the presence of my heir, Edward De Melfort, and of my solicitor, Mr. Benjafield."

They were now suffered to retire; and having repeated all that had passed to the lawyer, he gladly availed himself of his leave of absence, promising to return by eight in the evening to tea.

Mr. Harland and his ward dressed and dined, making frequent inquiries respecting



ing the invalid, whose faculties seemed to have failed him the moment no farther exertion was required, as he merely rambled at intervals, generally appearing in a doze.

Neither Mr. Johnson nor Mr. Adderfield made their appearance above stairs, having heard who were, it might be said, in possession, though with due regard to etiquette, they were not sparing of their inquiries after the poor sufferer; the latter had requested to see Mr. Benjafield in his private counting-house, when he returned, of whom he inquired—"Who were those people, who had so strangely forced themselves into the poor dying man's house?"

"As they came by Mr. Falkland's particular desire, their visit was no intrusion, and they remained his guests at his particular request—the elder one is the great Russian merchant, Harland, who has very lately retired from business—the other is his ward, Mr. De Melfort, who saved Mr. Falkland's life at the risk of his own—

they all travelled together from Bremen."

"Harland! yes, I have often heard of him—his father failed, but this man is reported to be very rich; what need had he to court the poor old miser? the boy might find it to his interest."

"I believe I may safely say that they neither of them courted Mr. Falkland. Mr. Harland is a most liberal-spirited man, says the invalid, and Mr. De Melfort openly condemned many of his proceedings; when they parted at Ramsgate, I dare say they as little expected to be summoned to attend his deathbed, as I do to be called upon to make the king's will."

"Poor man! he has long been in a state of dotage; he was very unequal to settling the business which took him abroad; but Mr. Johnson is too easy, and I am the sufferer."

Mr. Benjafield so easily confuted this assertion, that the merchant was very glad  
to



to explain away his words; when the lawyer, more than ever convinced that the old man could not have been too cautious, took his leave, and amused the gentlemen with Mr. Adderfield's want of policy.

"Had he been heir-at-law," observed Mr. Harland, "his impertinent questions would be natural, but as he never could have any hopes of inheriting any part of our poor friend's property, they are downright rude. I was, as you very justly told him, very much surprised at the summons, not so much so at his disposal of his property—such characters seldom benefit those who seek their favours. Falkland had an excellent understanding, and was not Addison's dupe, who had not the sense to conceal his views. How many people defeat their own ends, by grasping at too much! what might have been obtained by a steady adherence to honour and honesty, is frequently lost by some deceitful manœuvre, or by such gross flattery as must disgust every honest mind."

The solicitor was quite of his opinion; and as he found the gentlemen much too delicate to touch upon Mr. Falkland's affairs, they merely conversed upon general subjects.

Before he retired for the night, our hero paid his benevolent friend another visit. He was lying in a state of perfect stupor, and ere they rose in the morning he had departed this life for a better, having certainly endeavoured to render his immense property beneficial to the succeeding generation, by selecting such an heir, and by his charitable donations.



CHAPTER XVI.  
\*\*\*\*\*

THOUGH really shocked to think that Mr. Falkland's mistaken avarice had shortened his existence, it cannot be supposed that either Mr. Harland or our hero felt more than pity for his failings, or more than regret for his decease. Mr. Benjafield thought, all things considered, it was a happy release; and, by the other executors' desire, gave his partners the meeting below, to impart the intelligence, and to request that they would be present during the reading of the will, as their connexion with the deceased rendered it necessary that they should immediately know how he had disposed of his property, money in business, &c.

They were most willing to accept the invitation, hinting that the least the old  
I 5 gentle-

gentleman could have done was to leave them joint-heirs to his share in the business. The solicitor made no reply, merely appointing one o'clock for reading the will.

The partners promised to be punctual, and he returned up stairs, as Mr. Harland wished to read over the private instructions of the deceased, which were extremely clear; each estate was mentioned, and the average income arising from each very nicely calculated; then followed a schedule of every deed or security for money in his possession, which, with the title-deeds of the estates, were deposited in his large iron chest, which was fixed in the chimney of his bedroom; the key was enclosed in the instructions; the deed of gift, which made over all his personal property to our hero, was also there—they were required to read that with the will to his partners; next followed the most clear and exact account of the money he had in the business; in short, every minutia had been so strictly attended to, that

Mr.



Mr. Harland was at once as perfectly *au fait* of every thing, as if he had been a partner in the firm; while the astonished Edward could hardly credit either his eyes or his ears, when he found that, independent of the landed property, and his share of the business, he was heir to at least three hundred and sixty thousand pounds; and yet this amazing rich man had began the world with twenty pounds!

The lawyer assured him, that when it was considered how Mr. Falkland had lived from the time he became a partner in the firm, it was by no means surprising his having accumulated such a sum. He spent nothing, and was making interest and compound interest of both principal and income for so many years, that probably, had he been more inclined to speculate, he might have died worth a million. Mr. Harland also mentioned several instances of men equally careful of the main chance having died immensely rich, and warmly congratulated his ward upon hav-

ing been selected to render this large sum rather more beneficial to the world in general.

The hour having struck, Mr. Johnson and Adderfield made their appearance, and were by Mr. Benjafield introduced to Mr. Harland and De Melfort. The solicitor next produced the will, which, after the usual preamble, and naming the executors, constituted Edward De Melfort sole heir to all his landed property, his Middlesex estate excepted, which he was to hold in trust, with his other executors, for the charitable purposes detailed at length; then came his request that his said heir would assume his name, &c.; and, finally, he left him, as residuary legatee, &c. &c. his share in the mercantile concern now carried on under the name and firm of Johnson, Adderfield, and Falkland, and thus went on—"As I do not suppose my before-mentioned and constituted heir, Edward De Melfort, wishes to increase his fortune by trade, I desire he will, con-  
jointly



jointly with my other executors, offer my share to Messrs. Johnson and Adderfield, upon these fair and equitable terms—I know; to within a fraction, what money I have in the concern, and have left the exact calculation for the use and benefit of my executors—it amounts to between seventy and eighty thousand pounds; so making every—nay, the most liberal allowance to my partners, for unforeseen losses, failures, &c. if they will give my heir and executors immediate and proper securities for sixty thousand pounds, to be made payable by six instalments, during the ensuing three years, the same bearing no interest, I desire such payment may be considered as a final discharge, &c. &c.; but should my said partners not comply with these handsome terms within eight days after hearing the contents of this my last will, then I request Mr. Harland, as most competent, would withdraw the whole sum from the concern, as if dealing with total strangers, indebted to my estate; but  
if

if they comply with my proposal, I do desire this house in Crutched-friars, and the large premises thereunto annexed, may be included in the sixty thousand pounds above mentioned, else I request it may be sold by auction, for the benefit of my heir." Concluding by mentioning his housekeeper, the porter, &c. and with directions for his funeral.

The partners had very properly remained silent while Mr. Benjafield was reading, who, when he ceased, said—"By this deed of gift, properly witnessed and attested, Mr. Falkland has made over all his personal property, amounting to a considerable sum, to this young gentleman: as this merely concerns himself, I only mention it to account to you for how he has disposed of that part of his money."

"As you very justly observe, sir, that cannot concern us," replied Mr. Johnson; "but I cannot fancy either myself or Mr. Adderfield to be at all handsomely treated; no indifferent person would give the  
sum



sum the deceased mentions for his share of the business; and I consider him very ungenerous to wish to enrich a total stranger at our expence."

Mr. Adderfield expressed himself in still stronger terms, hinting Mr. Falkland "had never been in his right senses since he received the blow" which had occasioned his death."

But we shall not detail these ebullitions of spleen and vexation, which were merely deserving of contempt, as they were obliged to acknowledge that Mr. Falkland's statements and calculations were accurately correct; and as they dared not assert he had ever led them to believe they would be his heirs, they merely inveighed against his parsimony, which had more than once prevented their making three hundred per cent. by various calculations; but he was not a man of business—a mere plodding mechanical calculator, who starved himself to enrich a stranger; Mr. Adderfield observing—"But for a relation of mine,

mine, he would never have risen above a clerk—he little supposed how ungrateful he would prove to his descendants.”

Mr. Harland very coolly requested they would consider their own interest, and not oblige him to act up to the spirit of the will, pointing out the liberality of his offers, and adding—“As a brother trader, I assure you I consider Mr. Falkland to have put it in your power to realize thirty thousand pounds, if you close with his proposals.”

Mr. Johnson found it would be more to his interest to keep friends with the executors, therefore promised they should have his final answer within the week.

Mr. Adderfield was more disappointed, therefore, though he did not object to his partner's proposal, declared he thought they were very hardly treated, not that he blamed the gentlemen present; but he must say that Mr. Falkland ought to have shewn them more favour; he agreed Mr. De Melfort, from having saved his  
life,



life, was entitled to the bulk of his property; but his share in the business ought to have been his partners."

As no one replied to his complaints, since Mr. Harland was re-perusing the will, and Edward did not choose to meddle in the discourse, Mr. Benjafield at last said — "We propose the funeral should take place this day week, gentlemen, when it rests entirely with yourselves to receive possession of this house, or to see it put up to auction; do not let us quarrel, if we can avoid it, as you must be losers, and Mr. De Melfort does not want to benefit by your folly."

Mr. Harland hoped all would be amicably settled; and as the partners had learnt all they wished to know, and wanted time for consideration, they withdrew with more politeness than the gentlemen present expected.

We shall not detail how Mr. Harland and his nephew spent their time during this week, merely observing that they both  
wrote

wrote daily to Ramsgate, as Edward was soon not only the declared, but the accepted lover of Ellen Arlington, who returned him very gay answers, declaring he was not half so elated with having become so rich a man as might have been expected, adding — “ I have written to lady Exmore, and told her *how very humble* my prospects are, when compared to hers. Should she look down upon such untitled bodies, we will only pity her, my dear Edward ; and should it ever be in our power to convince her that such *insignificant people* possess feeling, generosity, and kindness, we will force her to acknowledge that virtue and goodness flourish even in a plebeian soil.



## CHAPTER XVII.

LORD and lady Exmore, who had removed from Tenby to Cheltenham, there received Ellen's letter, announcing her engagement to Edward De Melfort, and detailing his recent increase of fortune, and consequent change of name. The viscount, who had cherished a rooted dislike to the spirited youth who had occasioned his removal from Lausanne, declared, "he would never visit such a low fellow—the bastard son of a sort of bastard Swiss noble, whom an old miser, in a fit of dotage, had chosen to make his heir—not that he supposed he had come into half the money Ellen mentioned; at all events he should never notice him."

The ever haughty and not less ambitious Anne, declared, "she was surprised  
at

at her mother's folly, in suffering a silly romantic girl thus to throw herself away; as to the *trading* guardians, they thought money an equivalent for rank, connexions, or any thing;" she therefore wrote her sister very candidly, that if she did marry so beneath herself, she must not expect that she should either notice or visit her; the future countess of Delmont could not associate with a foreigner of doubtful extraction—his recent acquisition would only render the meanness of his origin more conspicuous; and she could only regret that her mother's weak indulgence induced her to sanction her absurd—nay, degrading choice. She had better have married her early favourite, *William Mansel*, of *turning and gardening notoriety*—she might have rendered him useful, while this upstart would always remain like Mahomet's coffin, suspended between the fashionable and the little world; he might, as he was rich, be admitted into the first, but he would soon sink to his proper level; desiring El-  
len



len to remember that she would fall with him; therefore she was more inclined to condole with her than to congratulate her upon her approaching nuptials, though she did hope, as she did possess a little common sense, that she would, after reading her letter, break off the match, since they could never meet again, except in public, if she persevered in her folly.

Ellen was much more amused than provoked by these absurd threats. Mrs. Murray was very much hurt, well aware that this insulted youth could have hurled lord Exmore from his high station; but was delighted to find these gross invectives rather increased Ellen's regard, who observed, were not Edward a most excellent character, she knew neither the colonel nor Mr. Harland would have allowed her to accept him; and as both Mr. Du Verney and Mr. Felton thought it would prove an excellent match, she trusted she should be more happy as the wife of an amiable,

amiable, well-informed, private gentleman, than had she married an earl.

The colonel, like her, laughed at lady Exmore's display of spleen, pronouncing her to be merely envious of his favourite's future prospects; and Ellen wrote so droll an account of her sister's *horror* at her proposed marriage with a *plebeian*, that Edward was more amused than mortified, well aware that but for his title and connexions, no woman in her senses would have chosen lord Exmore.

Earl Delmont had learnt from the papers, and from the more particular inquiries of his *jackal*, Mr. Chance, that the Swiss youth, the avowed *protégé* of Mr. Harland and colonel Murray, had, in consequence of an act of heroic humanity, come into an immense fortune, and was paying his court to Ellen Arlington; and this was the very young fellow to whom he had been obliged to apologize for his heir's insolence, who would now, by marriage,



riage, become connected with him. He certainly could have wished he had remained abroad, but as matters had turned out, it would be but right to be upon good terms with him, since, independent of his present immense fortune, he would very probably, or at least his wife would, inherit colonel Murray's property, if not Mr. Harland's; he therefore wrote his son a letter of very proper advice, pointing out the policy—nay, necessity of being upon excellent terms with this favourite of fortune, who would doubtless soon be in the House, and would, of course, be a great acquisition to ministry; congratulating his *fair daughter*, as he styled lady Exmore when he wished to render her subservient to his will, upon her sister's bright prospects.

His letter and advice were any thing but welcome to either the viscount or his lady; the first swore he would never associate with the impudent low-born fellow, and the second declaring “she should not retract

retract what she had written her sister; what was Mr. Melfort's or Falkland's money to her? it would not increase her luxuries; why did not the earl make lord Exmore a better allowance, and then they might look down upon this Swiss, and his unambitious wife?" and certainly neither her letter to the countess, nor the viscount's to the earl, met their approbation. Lady Delmont did not relish her daughter-in-law's hints that she was maintaining her husband, nor of her request, almost amounting to a command, that she would desire a villa near town to be engaged for their residence, as she detested Mortlake, though she should, till her lord came of age, content herself with being an inmate of the earl's town house.

Contrary to her general maxim, her ladyship shewed her letter to the minister, who coolly observed, she might thank herself for all the disagreeables attendant upon a match of her own making; he had foreseen the merchant's daughter would  
soon



soon display her real character; he had fathomed her depth of understanding ere he had been an hour in her company; she had merely answered his expectations. Had she possessed common sense, or a grain of feeling, she would have kept in with her mother, and not have so weakly espoused his dislike to captain Murray; and now, because this fortunate and highly-gifted young Melfort very properly corrected Exmore, she must espouse his quarrel, and throw her sister off because she has encouraged his addresses; adding, "I shall write her pretty freely, and if she is not more grateful for my notice, and more aware of the honour and favour we do her, by permitting her to participate in the luxuries and elegancies of Delmont House, she may select another habitation; and as she does not like Mortlake, which we politely offered them, let her hire another villa. I shall not assist their plans; and I desire you would equally remain neuter. Am I to be dictated to by the daughter

of a mean trader, to whom my son has foolishly given rank and consequence? she shall soon find her mistake, and shall crouch at my foot ere I again receive her into favour—her sister has twice her sense; however, I have you to thank, lady Delmont, for these and many other bitter mortifications.”

The countess dared not defend herself, and was not sorry the earl chose to address lord and lady Exmore, which he did in such severe, sarcastic terms, and so much to the purpose, that the young couple had a serious quarrel, and were obliged to request his forgiveness, and the continuance of his protection, &c.

Having thus completely humbled them, the earl resolved to oblige lady Exmore to visit her sister as soon as she was married, as he had determined to seek an intimacy with De Melfort, who might prove an able supporter of government measures.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

As Mr. Benjafield had foreseen, Messrs. Johnson and Adderfield wisely came into the deceased's plans, since Edward would have been a considerable gainer, had they not understood their own interest. Mr. Du Verney had been early apprized of Mr. Falkland's death, and of his having made our hero his heir, who requested Mr. Harland to ask his consent to his addressing Ellen Arlington.

Mrs. Murray had already obtained it; and what he approved, Mr. Felton, who was no longer an acting trustee, was not likely to object to; indeed, this worthy merchant thought it very fortunate his young favourite had selected so amiable a young man, who wished to have settled some part of his late acquisitions upon his

beloved Ellen, in addition to the large income she derived from her father's will; but Mr. Du Verney would not hear of it.

—"She will not be entitled to more than a thousand a-year till she becomes of age, and she is not yet turned of twenty, therefore make her what allowance you please during that period, and settle one half of her own income upon her as pinmoney when she is able to receive it—more I will not allow you to do; nor would I require that, but for your recent windfall."

Mr. Benjafield was employed to draw up the proper settlements; but as there was yet much business to be done, and Edward could not, as he hoped, return to Ramsgate, the colonel, who found that place grow cold and bleak, now the long evenings announced the approach of winter, proposed to Mrs. Murray and Ellen to spend a fortnight or three weeks in Saville-row, previous to their returning into Hampshire, where they meant to spend their Christmas, as this would enable them

to



to enjoy the society of Mr. Harland and Edward, who could devote their evenings to them, and it would enable the lovers to look about for a proper habitation, and to make the other preparations for their approaching union.

Mrs. Murray was pleased with the proposal; and Ellen, who did not know the meaning of the word affectation, candidly declared he could not have obliged her more; orders were therefore sent to the London household, and Edward felt his regard and respect increase for the colonel, for thus contributing to his happiness.

On the Sunday previous to their leaving Ramsgate, Mr. Harland (who had, in conjunction with the colonel, resolved to purchase a villa for Edward and Ellen, which they meant to furnish and fit up in the most modern style) proposed their dining in the country; Mr. Du Verney had often pressed them to take a bed at his house at Roehampton, and thus it was settled. The day passed very pleasantly,

they were an united and an elegant family, and their style of living was appropriate to their rank.

The next morning, after breakfast, the merchant took the uncle and unconscious nephew to see a most beautiful modern cottage, which means a superb mansion, fitted up in the most expensive style, which was for sale, and Edward declared that he could not have supposed that such a thatched roof and simple elevation could have concealed all that lavish expenditure could collect for the gratification of luxury or the indulgence of ease. The view from every window was truly delightful; the grounds were really beautiful, and the hothouses, &c. were proofs that no expence had been spared by the late owner, who had unfortunately recently appeared in the Gazette, in consequence of his folly.

As it exactly met our hero's wishes, Mr. Harland requested his friend to make the purchase, and to continue the servants now employed to keep the house and grounds



grounds in order; as should Ellen object to its situation, or lowly appearance, he could live there himself.

Edward had no fear of her disliking it, but agreed she ought to be consulted; and perhaps a happier family party never assembled round a dinner-table than the Murrays, their sincere friend and brother Harland, and the youthful lovers; the Delmonts were neither thought of nor mentioned; and Ellen quieted all her Edward's fears of having occasioned a breach between the sisters, by observing—"I should never have married to please her, and we will not forget our relationship when she descends from her ambitious *stilts*. I shall not seek her—but I will never shun her; and the colonel is sure we shall not have been married a month ere we shall be received and visited by every member of the Delmont family."

Three weeks soon glided away. Mr. Harland and Edward had removed to a hotel near colonel Murray's house, where

they spent every hour they could spare, as there was still much to be done, in consequence of Edward's increase of fortune, and many forms and ceremonies to be observed, before he could assume the name of the deceased. As he hoped and expected, Ellen was in raptures with the villa; its vicinity to the Du Verneys was very agreeable; therefore the purchase was completed, and Mr. Harland resolved it should be fitted up in a superior style to any he had ever yet seen, as it was now his sole pride to see his nephew enjoying greater luxuries than his *worthless* father had ever done.

The colonel resolved to present his daughter, as he styled Ellen, with a town house, since, while he and Mr. Harland lived, they did not now mean to increase the income of their now *rich protégé*, who saw this excellent man, Mrs. Murray, and his adored Ellen, depart for Hampshire with a heavy heart; but as he hoped very soon to follow them, and had a great deal  
of



of business still upon his hands, he acknowledged he ought not to repine, particularly as doctor Welford, and his early friend Mirvan, were in London, and had taken up their abode in the same hotel; their intimacy with colonel Murray had led to their being frequent visitors in Saville-row. Edward had written a long and droll account of his unexpected good fortune to Mirvan, and had also dwelled upon his happy prospects with respect to Ellen. Possibly the doctor, who, like lord Delmont, was something of a courtier, had thought it necessary that his grandson should offer his congratulations in person; be that as it may, he gratified the friends by planning their meeting. The old gentleman had come to town for medical advice; and as he soon became intimate with the ladies, and was, as we have said, a most pleasant companion, he gaily offered his services to the lovers, assuring them that he was a fortunate man, having generally found that happiness had suc-

ceeded his nuptial benedictions; and he would very willingly travel into Hampshire, if his health permitted, upon so joyful an occasion; at all events, his grandson should attend the bridegroom. The colonel therefore invited them to Smallbury Priory, hoping they would not make it later than the first week in December, though an early friend of Edward would feel himself slighted, if he did not perform the ceremony; then the doctor would content himself with looking on, he said, as both our hero and Ellen wished to be married by Mr. Carter, with whom our hero was now in a regular habit of correspondence, this worthy divine having never, even to his wife, mentioned where their acquaintance began, merely giving her to suppose chance had led to his intimacy with baron Villars abroad, and to his undertaking the tuition of his son.



CHAPTER XIX.  
~~~~~

Dr. Welford determined to return into Kent ere he visited Hampshire, as he wished to see and converse with his daughter previous to his undertaking that journey; but to oblige the young men, he suffered his grandson to continue with his early friend, having reasons of no small magnitude for wishing to conciliate the regard of Mr. Harland, who had proposed his doing so, aware how much it would gratify his nephew. Mr. Du Verney gave them such frequent invitations to both his town and country house, and Mr. Harland was so well known and so highly respected in the mercantile world, that every leisure moment was devoted to renewing his acquaintance among his city friends, who were no less eager to display
K 6 their

their politeness to the rich Falkland's heir and his particular friend.

A most intimate friend of Mr. Du Verney's had been elected to fill the office of lord mayor, and he hardly needed his suggestions to invite the *Russian* Harland, Mr. Melfort, and his friend, to the dinner and ball; and as earl Delmont was to be present, and several other ministers, Edward was rejoiced at being thus enabled to see his former correspondent, observing, "that as he had so highly offended lord Exmore, by venturing to select his wife's sister, he should probably never, except in public, have an opportunity of seeing this great statesman."

Mr. Harland agreed it was very possible, not sorry at thus having an opportunity of observing whether the earl would remark the, in his opinion, very strong likeness he bore both to his lordship and to his late wife; in point of figure he was the counterpart of what his father had been at the same age; equally graceful,

ful, no less animated, and, like him, was now the life and soul of every company he joined; in countenance he more resembled his late mother; her captivating smile rendered him handsomer than ever the earl had been, and his excellent disposition was legible in every line of his face.

Mirvan, who had lived a still more retired life than his friend, was delighted at the idea of this civic feast; and they both agreed Guildhall was a noble building, and that the dinner was suitable to the occasion. They had long seen and remarked earl Delmont seated near the chief magistrate, and looking superior to all around him; but he had been too much engrossed by those around him to remove his eyes from his own immediate circle, till the ladies having withdrawn, he glanced his eyes towards those who were seated below him, and meeting those of our hero full upon him, he gave an involuntary start, while his countenance displayed the extreme of surprise; but too much accustomed

“accustomed to command his feelings, he instantly turned to the gentleman next him, addressing him upon a subject very foreign to his present thoughts, merely from time to time furtively glancing at our hero, whom he remarked was deep in conversation with Mr. Harland, next whom he was seated.

Whether the chief magistrate remarked the direction of his lordship's eyes, or whether he merely wished to display his intimate knowledge of those at his own table, he said, looking towards Edward—“The young gentleman who has so lately come into the immense fortune of the eccentric Falkland; he is a very fine young fellow, extremely well informed, and will, I make no doubt, do honour to the old miser's penetration. If I mistake not, your lordship's son married the sister of Miss Arlington, who he is very soon to lead to the altar.”

The earl was politely attentive, asked various questions, and concluded by telling

ing "this lord by courtesy," that he must introduce him to this fortunate youth.

The chief magistrate promised to do so; and as this was neither the time nor place for reflection, the earl endeavoured to banish the past from his memory; still, spite of repeated bumper-toasts, whenever he looked towards our hero, his countenance, like Banquo's ghost, conjured up the most serious reflections, which he vainly endeavoured to shake off, by persuading himself that such resemblances were not uncommon; and to suppose that Mr. Harland, the avowed protector of this youth, would rest satisfied with his assuming the name of Falkland, if he could claim any right to that of Mirvan, was absurd. Having therefore shaken off the strange feeling which had first assailed him, he seized the earliest opportunity, the confusion attendant upon part of the company's adjourning to the ball-room, to approach Mr. Harland, addressing him with even more than his habitual suavity, "regretting

ting he had never seen him at Delmont House, as he must ever rank him among his esteemed friends; though various untoward circumstances had put a check to their intimacy," and requesting to be introduced to his companions.

Mr. Harland, who expected this effusion of friendship, made a polite reply, and presented Edward as the future Mr. Falkland, gaily adding—"Had he chosen to tread in the late Mr. Falkland's steps, I think he might have hoped to have presided upon a similar occasion ere he had been forty. Mr. Mirvan, the grandson of doctor Welford."

To the latter the earl merely bowed in silence; but eagerly seizing our hero's hand, he declared they must be better acquainted, reminding him of the letter he had written him, and assuring him that he should ever consider himself as indebted to him for having corrected the childish arrogance of lord Exmore—"By the way," he continued, "you will soon, I understand,

stand, be brothers by marriage; I trust your excellent advice and example will render him all I can wish; he is very young, and has, from circumstances, been exposed to great temptations; but I hope we shall among us render him an honour to his family."

"I am fearful the viscount is not so inclined to overlook my plebeian extraction as your lordship kindly appears, since I understand he deems it great presumption my aspiring to the hand of Miss Arlington, and is not inclined to renew our very slight former acquaintance."

"Then I will make him sensible of his folly; Mr. De Melfort; and you must kindly overlook the petulance of a silly boy, who has been so spoiled by his as silly mother, that I make greater allowances than I otherwise should do for many of his follies. You have selected the pride of the Arlington family; I need not say more."

At that moment one of the earl's colleagues

leagues approached; and having something to communicate, drew him away, after he had hoped he should see Mr. Harland and his young friends in Piccadilly.

They bowed in silence; and his lordship soon retired to brood over the events of the evening. The face and figure of this young Swiss were perfectly familiar to him; he was a glass that reflected his own image at the same age; his voice was that of an old acquaintance—yet that he could be the long-lost Marcus Mirvan seemed absolutely impossible; at all events, if by some strange and wonderful chance baron Villars had adopted *William Mansel*, or had been led to suppose him his son, Mr. Harland had no suspicion that this youth was his nephew; and if he had not been struck by the resemblance he fancied he bore his family, it could merely exist in his own sombre imagination; indeed, to suppose that a youth, apparently very highly talented, would content himself

with

with sitting down in comparative obscurity, if he had the slightest hopes of claiming the title of Delmont, was truly absurd; nay, he really believed his eyes had played him false upon this memorable evening, since he had even fancied there was a family resemblance discernible in the countenance of young Mirvan; now that he could much more easily have accounted for in his own mind; he therefore retired, more perplexed than he had ever felt himself, and his dreams were not of a soothing nature.

Mr. Harland, who had perceived the earl's surprise, was not sorry when he was once more alone with his young companions, who did not stay late upon his account; and while taking some warm negus, previous to their retiring, he asked their opinion of the great man.

"He perfectly answered my expectations," replied Edward; "his manners are very prepossessing; but when he called his darling son a *silly boy*, I know he expected

pected that I should contradict him. I have too much regard to truth, not to perfectly agree with him. The earl may patch up a lip-deep reconciliation between me and the viscount; and, for Ellen's sake, I shall be very civil to the young savage; but as for our ever assimilating, that is absolutely impossible."

"That I am sure it is," rejoined Mr. Mirvan; "and, I must say, I was disappointed in the great man; he seemed confused, perplexed, and puzzled what to say."

Mr. Harland desired he would remember that the earl had made very free with the bottle, therefore was not likely to shine in conversation with strangers; adding—"As he seems inclined to be upon speaking terms with you, Edward, I would have you follow his lead; the connexion that will subsist between your family and his will render it more pleasant."

Little of moment occurred during the ensuing fortnight. Our hero took the
name

name and heraldic bearings of Falkland, purchased several carriages, &c. and highly approved of a noble mansion in Portland-place, which colonel Murray had selected for his favourite Ellen, and which France and Banting were fitting up in the most superb style.

Mr. Da Verney, who was as anxious as Mr. Harland and the colonel to see his favourite ward outshine her titled sister, had, in conjunction with Mr. Felton, who acceded to all his wishes, resolved to allow her her whole income, from the day of her marriage; indeed, as she married with the full consent of her mother and guardians, the will, upon a further inspection, allowed them to do so; but, to prevent their rendering themselves at all liable to any demands of the viscountess, in case Ellen died before she became of age, Mr. Harland and the colonel became answerable for his advances being repaid; and, with such an income, the young couple

couple might begin life in the first style of luxury and fashion.

As the proposal gratified his Ellen, our hero did not object to Mr. Du Verney's intentions, who promised to give her away upon the joyful occasion; and, on the third of December, doctor Welford having joined them in town, the four gentlemen set out for Smallbury Priory, where their presence greatly increased the happiness of the small party assembled.

Martin, who was now well married, and the most grateful of mankind, was delighted to renew his acquaintance with Edward, who was sorry to find his early friend and tutor, Mr. Carter, confined with the rheumatic gout; he paid him an early visit, and gave him some very solid proofs of his gratitude, for those instructions which had enabled him to derive the greater benefit from his after education. To Ellen he related when and where he had met earl Delmont. She was pleased to hear that he

he was inclined to be upon good terms with them.

The colonel had been much amused by Mr. Harland's description of his lordship's meeting with his son, supposing he must have been gloriously perplexed by the likeness, &c. and giving him credit for no small share of policy.

Mrs. Murray, who had the greatest dislike to him, hoped the sight of Edward would always give a fillip to his conscience, which would be a sort of mental punishment, the most galling to his feelings.

So we will leave this gay party, to hasten the preparations for the wedding, and return once more to the great man, who was perpetually reverting to the lord mayor's ball—now dwelling upon every feature of Edward's face—then blaming himself for indulging in such romantic reveries. He could not be his son—that his having taken the name of Falkland placed beyond a doubt. Sometimes he resolved to send Chance into Switzerland; but what

what could he learn? no one seemed to doubt the youth was baron Villars's son; then he would think no more upon the subject, but prepare to visit his seat in the North, where he always spent his Christmas holidays, when he was very bountiful to the poor and needy.

Lord and lady Exmore had been at Bath, for the last month, and they were summoned to join the family in town, preparatory to their northern journey.

CHAPTER XX.

ACCUSTOMED, as lady Exmore had been, to govern her father, or, rather, to pay no attention to his commands, and who had scarcely been restrained in any bounds by her excellent mother, after his death, therefore most galling did she feel it, to bend to the will of the haughty lord Delmont;

mont; yet, till her husband came of age, she had no alternative; since, large as her own income was, she did not relish the idea of maintaining her husband out of it, and that she was well aware she must do, were she to break with the earl, who now made his son a most liberal allowance, and would, when he became of age, render him perfectly independent—admitting, meanwhile, both him and the viscountess conformed to his will—that was to be their sole guide; and, out of the spirit of contradiction to his wife, and in obedience to his mother's advice, the viscount chose to display his filial duty at the expence of her feelings; therefore, on the first summons, they left Bath for London, from whence they were immediately to proceed into the North.

Lady Exmore complained to the countess of the earl's harshness, who seemed to consider her as a mere puppet, at his command.

Her ladyship, whose regard for her had not increased, desired her to remember,

that lord Delmont wished his son's wife to be generally respected; she could not be so good a judge of the etiquette attached to her rank, as his lordship; and, till she was more *au fait* in that respect, she had better conform to his wishes.

The earl was much hurt at her want of policy in her behaviour towards her sister, whose husband elect was very likely to be raised to the peerage, and who was, his lordship had told her, a most elegant, pleasing young man. She (lady Delmont) therefore intended to visit them, as soon as they were settled, mentioning the villa which had been purchased for them at Roehampton, as well as a noble house in Portland-place.

Never had the haughty, envious Anne been more mortified; but she had the prudence to conceal her displeasure, though she now sorely repented having married a *titled boy*, who might grow grey ere he was an earl, and whose temper and disposition too nearly resembled her own, to
render

render it likely they would ever be very happy.

A wish to see this boasted villa at Roehampton induced the mortified viscountess to ask her husband to drive her, the next morning, in his curriele, to Mr. Du Verney's country house; the earl wished her to keep up the connexion, and she owed the females a visit.

Knowing that his wife's money was in the charge of this worthy merchant, the viscount, who thought it might answer his purpose to conciliate his regard, agreed to the proposal, and away they went.

The family were not in the country; the ladies were gone into Hampshire—Mr. Du Verney was in London.

"How provoking!" exclaimed the disappointed lady Exmore, who wished to inquire where the cottage *ornée* was situated she was come to criticise; but her lord was in haste to return to town, and the more eager she became to see this sweet abode, the more bent he was upon disap-

pointing her. They were therefore neither of them in a very dulcet humour, when they set out upon their return, and they were all but quarrelling when they reached the Marsh-gate turnpike, leading to Westminster-bridge, where, unfortunately, there was a stoppage, which prevented the viscount from dashing through, having been thoroughly provoked by various taunting speeches of his wife. He peremptorily desired the assembled crowd to break the way, particularly addressing two gentlemen in a gig; who, not attending to his insolent order, he drove his spirited horses so furiously against them, that he upset their carriage, to the great risk of their lives, and of the standers-by; and as he could not, as he hoped, get through the gate for some minutes, the mob, rendered furious by the young savage's conduct, seized the whip belonging to the first sufferers, and another from a coachman in the crowd, with which they laid on upon the viscount with heart and good will, declaring

claring he had purposely overturned the gentlemen, who were said to be very much hurt, and would not have minded killing or maiming any one who stood in his way.

Vain were lady Exmore's screams, or the groom's declaration of who his lordship was, since his being the son of lord Delmont did not tend to soften the rage of the mob; till, out of compassion to the terrified viscountess, they were at last suffered to move forwards; and as she declared she should faint, and the viscount could hardly manage his horses, they drew up to a stand of coaches, when, hastily getting into one, his lordship desired the groom to follow with the curricie, while they proceeded to Delmont House, where they did not arrive till the family were seated at table; not having been aware, when they left home, that the earl had ordered dinner two hours earlier than usual, on account of a cabinet council, which was to be held in the evening; and it was not in his lordship's principles to wait for any

member of his family, upon these occasions.

The enraged viscount and his weeping lady, understanding from the porter that the second course was going in, merely desired the earl and countess might be informed they had been unexpectedly delayed, and should not dine with the family.

The man sent the message to the earl, who merely said—"Very well;" while the countess inquired whether lord and lady Exmore had met with any accident.

The servant who brought in the report could not say—my lord seemed to have had a fall, and her ladyship was in tears.

"I must go and see what has occurred," said lady Delmont; and as the earl was himself rather anxious respecting this only son, he made no objection.

Of course little passed between the father and daughters during her ladyship's absence, who certainly did not spare the *radical* mob who had insulted and assaulted her darling son, when she returned into
the

the eating-parlour. The viscount's face was cut in several places; the viscountess was in strong hysterics, and she hoped his lordship would take proper measures to bring the rascals to condign punishment.

"I will hear George's story first," coolly replied the earl, "as I very much fear that he brought the assault upon himself."

The countess entered warmly upon his defence; but having taken as much wine as he chose, his lordship went to his son's dressing-room. The family surgeon was in attendance; he had bled lady Exmore, he told the earl, and as she was not in the family way, he made no doubt of her being perfectly recovered on the morrow. The viscount had received some severe contusions, but no dangerous consequences were to be apprehended. The lower classes no longer stood in the same awe of their superiors—he was sorry to observe such an increasing spirit of insubordination; but as it appeared to spread, he thought it was

better

L 4

better to conciliate such people than to threaten them; taking his leave, promising to call again in the evening; when the earl required an explanation of his now sulky son, who made himself out as the injured person. He had merely requested a mob of vulgar beings to allow him to pass, when they had set upon him in the most furious manner with whips and other missiles, and were rendered more savage when they learnt who he was; it was only wonderful either he or lady Exmore had escaped with their lives, the wretches were so violent.

"And you neither said nor did any thing to provoke their wrath?"

"I have told you facts, sir, and I hope you will offer a reward for the ringleaders of the tumult."

"Who was with you?"

"Joel, my groom. We left him to drive the curricule home, and returned in a coach."

"Very

"Very well, I shall hear his account of this strange occurrence, and then I shall know better how to proceed."

Joel did state real facts, acknowledging that the viscount had occasioned the overturn which had led to his subsequent chastisement; and when closely questioned, he could not but say—"that my lord had called the people rascals; he was provoked, and not aware of the consequences, and when they heard who he was, they were more abusive than ever."

"That I can suppose. Who were the gentlemen who were overturned?"

"A Mr. Fitzmaurice, a silversmith in the Strand, my lord, and his next door neighbour, a chemist—I did not hear his name."

"What did they say? were they serious sufferers?"

"So it was said, my lord; they vowed they would bring an action against his lordship. Their horse plunged so violently that he broke the gig all to pieces. I did

not remain behind his lordship, for I never was more frightened, the mob were so furious; it was a mercy neither the curricule was damaged nor the horses injured; I had much ado to bring them safe home, they were so put upon their mettle."

The earl had fortunately not attended to Joel's praises of his own dexterity, or probably he would have received a severe reproof; as it was, he dismissed him; and returning to lord Exmore, with whom the countess was condoling, he coolly assured him that he was now perfectly convinced, though Joel fancied he was not at all to blame, that he had richly deserved the rough treatment he had met with.—"The mob, as they generally do, sided with the injured party, they therefore horsewhipped you, and the gentlemen whom you so wantonly overturned will doubtless bring an action against you; a pretty figure you will cut in a court of justice! I should have supposed, lady Exmore being with you, would have kept you

you within some bounds; but when the slightest obstacle impedes your progress or your wishes, you lose all command of your temper, and display the vileness of your disposition."

The viscount defended his conduct; he could not help the accident; the *fellows* ought to have broken the way; he should discharge Joel, for daring to misrepresent his actions.

"Then I shall retain him; he did not misrepresent your folly, he softened it as much as he could. I only wish the gentlemen you so insolently assaulted had, like the mob, taken the law into their own hands; as it is, you may rely upon their proceeding against you, as they are men of consequence in their line, and very heavy damages will be awarded them, and my character will suffer as well as yours."

The viscount chose, as he often did, to turn sullen; therefore the earl left him, after inquiring after his wife of the coun-

tess, who hoped she would be no great sufferer by her terror. Never had the earl been more thoroughly provoked with his hopeful heir; his own power was rather upon the decline, and so was his popularity; of this the treatment the viscount had just experienced was proof positive. His own temper, owing to the disappointments he daily experienced in his domestic circle, was daily growing worse; his son by no means answered his expectations, and his early and hasty marriage was not likely to improve either his manners or his disposition, as he could not, like himself, "smile and smile, and be a villain;" he openly displayed the infirmities of his temper; no sense of honour or of policy, nor even of interest, could induce him to court the opinion of the world. What could have become of the son he had so cruelly exposed to every hardship, ere he could express either his wants or wishes? Was it possible that he was the noble youth who had acquired
a for-

a fortune by his heroism? he could not seriously believe so; then what had become of William Mansel? that had never transpired; and he now knew no one who could identify his person, and admitting they could, he had put it out of his power to acknowledge him. He would banish the subject entirely from his mind, and while attending the council, he did abstract his ideas from his own concerns.

Mr. Chance, his now sole confident, was, in obedience to his summons, waiting his return, and he was desired to make particular inquiries, first, at the Marshgate, then at Mr. Fitzmaurice's, and the chemist's, that his lordship might shape his proceedings by his report.

The attorney returned before the earl had retired, and though very averse to wounding his patron's feelings, was obliged to own the turnpike-men considered the viscount as highly to blame; and terrified as his lady appeared, she had joined him in threatening the enraged populace;
in

in short, these men thought they had merely met with their deserts. Mr. Fitzmaurice had been severely bruised, and had sprained his elbow. The chemist had been less hurt; but as the chaise and horse belonged to him, and both had been much injured, he was the most angry.

The earl was satisfied with his agent's diligence, and resolved, if possible, to hush up the business; in consequence, as soon as he had breakfasted, he waited upon Mr. Fitzmaurice, whose head was bound up, and whose arm was in a sling; but as the earl declared he came to apologize for his son's unpardonable impetuosity and youthful heedlessness, and appeared so truly grieved at the consequences of his folly, the silversmith readily accepted his excuses, feeling much gratified by his lordship's condescension, promising not to prosecute the viscount; and as the earl declared his readiness to replace both horse and gig, or to pay any money the chemist might consider adequate to the damage

image those belonging to him had received, the unpleasant business was amicably settled; his lordship making several expensive purchases of Mr. Fitzmaurice, to both whom and his friend he sent various appropriate and costly presents; and thus, at a considerable expence, he prevented his son's name from being brought into a court of justice. He did not see the viscount, or his lady, till they met at dinner, when he behaved to them with perfect politeness, but maintained the most pointed reserve, till the servants having withdrawn, he calmly told them, that at the expence of more than five hundred pounds, he had satisfied the people he, the viscount, had injured, adding—"When next you go out with George, lady Exmore, pray remember the decency belonging to your sex, and do not join him in abusing your inferiors;" and without waiting her reply he withdrew.

The next morning, this noble, but certainly not happy family, proceeded into the

the North, where his lordship was still much admired; and as his pride induced him to display his charity, his arrival at his seat was always hailed by the neighbouring peasantry with every demonstration of joy.

CHAPTER XXI.

EVERY necessary preparation being made, Mrs. Murray having attended to every minutia respecting the bride's costume for the day, and even ensuing six months, while Mr. Harland had sent the faithful Martin to superintend the fitting-up of the beautiful cottage where they were to spend the honeymoon, to the conservatory of which all Ellen's favourite plants from Fir Grove were removed—Martin was sent to hasten the fitting-up of the house in Portland-place; in short, he had had

carte

carte blanche given him by both gentlemen, and only returned into Hampshire on Christmas eve, to assure his employers that every thing was prepared for the reception of the happy couple.

Ellen had fixed the first day of the new year for her nuptials, when Mr. Carter continuing indisposed, Dr. Welford married her to the man of her early choice. Mr. Du Verney gave her away, his daughters acted as bridesmaids, Mr. Mirvan, and another friend of our hero, as bridesmen; and after an elegant morning repast, Mr. and Mrs. Falkland left Smallbury Priory for their beautiful retreat at Roehampton, as completely happy as any two people ever were, who had entered the holy pale from feelings of real love and esteem: nor were the party they had left behind less satisfied. The colonel and Mr. Harland felt that they had strictly fulfilled their duty towards the child of their adoption; he would be their joint heir, and bid fair to be both a happier and a better character,

as

as the untitled but rich Edward Falkland, than could they have reinstated him in all the rights which his birth had given him. The earl was severely punished for his villainy, as they were well aware that lord Exmore would ever prove such a *noli me tangere* in his flesh, he would need no other stimulus to remind him of his behaviour to his much-wronged eldest son.

Doctor Welford had often mentioned the earl in very severe terms, and had been highly amused by lord Exmore's drubbing at the Marsh-gate, which had, of course, been related in all the papers of the day, with various comments, in unison with the editor's politics. The colonel was merely sorry that so near a relation of his wife had married the petted young savage; while Mr. Harland, like the doctor, rather gloried in this proof of the young gentleman's folly.

The doctor had agreed to return to town with the colonel and Mrs. Murray, the
first

first week in February; he should write his daughter to meet him there, as he meant to take a ready-furnished house, as he was anxious to be near various medical men of whom he had a very high opinion; Mr. Harland had purchased a comfortable house, in the immediate vicinity of the colonel, where he could retire and be as *sulky* as he pleased, he observed. During the summer, he meant to look out for a country residence, near his beloved Edward, who had commissioned his fast friend, Mr. Benjafield, now the agent to his various estates, to bestow various sums upon the poor in every parish with which he had any connexion, and to make all his tenants participate in his happiness; therefore never were sincerer good wishes offered up to the Throne of Mercy for any two people than Ellen and Edward Falkland, who wrote very frequently to the family in Hampshire, the former declaring that their sweet abode realized all her ideas of moral elegance and comfort, hoping

ing to have the colonel and her dear mother, not forgetting the good Mr. Harland, very often for their guests.

Edward, who was still more grateful towards his three best friends, displayed the goodness of his heart in his letters, declaring that in giving him Ellen Arlington, they had ensured his future happiness.

The marriage was known in Yorkshire the moment it found its way into the public prints, and Mr. Benjafield took care that our hero's generosity to his tenants and the poorer classes should not pass unnoticed.

The earl was really surprised when he learnt that his first private tutor, doctor Welford, had married the happy pair—presumed it was owing to the intimacy subsisting between the bridegroom and his grandson; this he said in reply to a remark of lady Exmore, who wondered whether this young man was related to the Delmont family.

"I really can't resolve your question, madam," replied the haughty earl, who now treated her ladyship with an invincible politeness, that denoted extreme and unconquerable contempt, adding—"I hope you are now aware of the necessity of being upon good terms with your sister, who seems to have made a most excellent choice."

"To use your own words, my lord, I cannot think she has either increased her consequence or her connexions by her marriage."

"I alluded to my *son*, lady Exmore, when I made that speech."

The viscountess was completely silenced; and as the countess no longer endeavoured either to soften or conceal the earl's harshness, she found herself reduced to a mere cipher in the family, and found that she must be satisfied if she was not treated with downright rudeness by the elder branches, or was not exposed to the caprices and ill-humours of her savage lord.

The

The ladies Georgina and Charlotte Mirvan pitied, though they did not like her; and to them alone was she indebted for the little comfort she experienced during her stay in the North. How little did she enjoy the few sumptuous dinners the earl gave his country neighbours! as she was merely considered as an inferior satellite in his train; and though treated with respectful civility, she found herself a mere secondary object, to whom no one appealed, and whom very few addressed, as most people had sufficient tact to feel that she was no favourite of the great man, who, to his male friends, deeply regretted his son's infatuation, in having chosen such a woman, whose fortune, had it not been so absurdly locked up, would have been no object to him, and whose talents were no equivalent for her bad temper, and want of usage of the world.

Having spent the usual time in the North, the earl issued his orders for the return of the family to town, telling the countess—

countess—"As London is still rather empty, you may spend a fortnight at Mortlake, where I will dine and sleep when I can make it convenient, and from thence you can easily pay the bridal visit to Mr. and Mrs. Falkland."

The viscount declared "he would not renew his acquaintance with such a low-born plebeian; he would be civil to the fellow when they met in public, or elsewhere, but he would not honour him with a visit; lady Exmore might do as she pleased; he had no objection to her sister—she was a pleasant good-tempered young woman; but he disliked Mr. Falkland, and was resolved never to seek his intimacy."

"You may follow the bent of your own inclinations, lord Exmore," coolly replied the earl; "you now know my will, and you also know that I am in the habit of being obeyed. I hold out no threats; but if you do not conform to my wishes, you must blame yourself for what may be the
consequence."

consequence of your obstinacy. Of course you can have no objection, lady Exmore, to accompany the countess to Roehampton—you must wish to congratulate your sister upon her naptials."

The viscountess, who was now studying the art of tormenting under her rather more experienced husband, though she had been allowed to excel in that science at home, declared, "it was her particular wish to be upon friendly terms with her sister; she made no doubt Mr. Falkland, if not a titled man, was a very amiable character, and she should be most happy to rank among his friends."

The earl saw through her meaning, but affected satisfaction, secretly resolving to punish her for her implied sarcasm, since, clear-sighted as he was to the failings of his heir, he did not approve of other people, and she, in particular, remarking them.

The journey took place when expected, and the ladies proceeded to Mortlake, lord Exmore, at every risk, choosing to visit
a col-

a college friend, instead of accompanying them thither. The earl kept his temper; he knew how to make him feel his error, therefore did not make a remark upon his folly.

Meanwhile the happy couple were daily expecting the colonel and Mrs. Murray in London; but doctor Welford had caught so severe a cold, that they were detained by his necessary confinement in Hampshire; and Mr. Harland, though very anxious to see our hero, would not leave them. The Du Verneys had more than once visited the cottage; and all the neighbouring families had, as soon as etiquette permitted, hastened to pay their respects to the new-married pair, who were overwhelmed with civilities and invitations, as every one who visited them left them much prejudiced in their favour; when, to their no great surprise, as they had expected to see or hear from that quarter, the countess of Delmont, lady Exmore, and the ladies Mirvan, drove up to the

principal entrance, in the countess's barouche and four, and were, of course, instantly admitted into the elegant and tasteful saloon of this truly rural habitation.

Never did the countess acquit herself more gracefully; her compliments were well chosen, and her manners very pleasant. Lady Exmore, who was much more curious to see this vaunted abode than its owners, was rather embarrassed, till Ellen embraced her with real sisterly affection, and welcomed her to Ivy Cottage: the ladies Mirvan were partial to Ellen, and she liked them, therefore they were gratified by their reception.

Edward instantly reminded the countess of what his father was, when she had thought him the handsomest of men; the likeness surprised her, but it never entered her head that he was the real *Simon Pure*, and his unaffected yet pleasing manners met her entire approbation; she excused the earl and viscount's absence in terms calculated to gratify her hosts, and was,

as

as she declared herself, delighted with their *thatched cottage*, as every article of furniture, though of the most expensive kind, was exactly suited to the appearance of the building; the conservatory she thought superb; while the ever-envious viscountess, having espied the Indian plant, kindly asked Edward, "if he knew to whom her sister was indebted for that favourite shrub, which she had often watered with her tears in former times?"

"I have heard its history," was the gay reply, "and consider it a memento of my dear Ellen's excellent heart."

"Or of her spirit of romance; however, if you are acquainted with her folly, I have done;" feeling angry at not having done any mischief.

The elegant morning repast which awaited their return in the saloon, was a convincing proof to the countess that either Ellen or her housekeeper were perfectly *au fait* at decorating the table; the young bride did the honours with pleasing hos-

pitality, while lady Exmore could only remark the sumptuous accessories displayed upon the occasion, such as gilt plate, china, glass, &c. and felt half choked when required to drink health and happiness to the bride and bridegroom.

The countess, who was all suavity and admiration, hoped the happy pair would name an early day for dining with them at Mortlake—should she say Wednesday—it was a leisure day with the earl, who would make a point of giving them the meeting, and the viscount was expected in town on Saturday?

Connected as they now were with the family, Edward and Ellen could not refuse the invitation, though they both resolved to keep upon as distant terms as was consistent with politeness with these great folks; and were not sorry when, after an amazing long visit, the four ladies departed.

Edward handed them into their carriage; and when he returned to his lovely wife,

wife, declared he breathed more free, now they were once more *tête-à-tête*.

Ellen thought the countess exactly calculated to shine in her own sphere—acknowledged a feeling of regard for the ladies Mirvan, and wished her sister would allow her even to deceive herself into a belief that she loved her, “but that unfortunate remark respecting her favourite plant had seriously hurt her feelings.”

“While it highly gratified mine,” replied the gay Edward. “She little knew how much she increased my regard for you, my dear Ellen, by her intended unkindness; her malice wholly recoiled upon herself; so let us forget and forgive her envy of our happiness, and let us write an account of this visit to our *father* and *mother*, and kind *uncle*, as Mr. Harland courteously styles himself.”

They did so during the evening, Edward requesting his *uncle* would favour him with some hints for his behaviour at the earl's, as this dinner visit might be

deemed his *entrée* into the great world. Ellen wrote at even greater length to her mother, merely observing—"Anne could not pass over my beloved shrub in silence. I only wish she may ever be half so happy as I am, which will, I think, ensure her a very competent share of felicity."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE earl chose to sleep at Mortlake on the evening of the day fixed upon to pay the visit to Roehampton; the countess was loud and sincere in her encomiums upon the bride and bridegroom, who bid fair she thought to be a very happy couple. Though surrounded by every luxury that money could purchase, while real taste and elegance was displayed in every decoration of their house, they were perfectly free from pretensions, seemed hardly to know

know the meaning of the word pride, and yet perfectly to feel what was due to themselves and to their visitors of superior rank. Mr. Falkland was a most pleasant captivating young man, and did the honours of his beautiful cottage with real ease and elegance.—“He certainly is a very superior character; nature has been most bountiful to him, and he does the greatest honour to his education.”

Lady Exmore could merely dwell upon beautiful chintz, and sweet muslin draperies, and other elegancies which had excited her envy at Roehampton.

Lord Exmore returned on the expected day; and as he understood the bridal visit was paid, he did condescend to go to Mortlake on the Sunday morning, his father's cool treatment of him having induced him to prefer the society there to his; and he was very happy to hear, that Mr. and Mrs. Falkland had returned the visit on the Saturday morning, when the family was from home. He supposed, he

told his wife, he must give them the meeting on Wednesday, else the earl would revenge himself for his absence, some way or other; he had stopped the five hundred pounds out of his last quarterly allowance, declaring, that it was misery in the extreme to be dependent upon so proud, so tyrannical a man.

Lady Exmore was quite of the same opinion; but this self-willed, capricious youth did not approve of her daring to criticise his father. He did not wonder at his increasing ill-humour, as he had so greatly disappointed his hopes, since had he married any other woman, he should ere now have been completely his own master; but her fortune being so tied up, rendered him a mere cipher; and she who ought to pay the utmost deference to his parents, was the first to blame their not allowing her to rule their household.

“Had I not married you, madam, I should never have been required to visit this
purse.

purse-proud Falkland; but, pray remember, I do not do it to oblige you."

As lady Exmore was very skilful at retorting, a serious quarrel ensued, much to the annoyance of the countess and her daughters, whose comfort was much abridged by these domestic feuds.

Meanwhile the earl, who had been assisting to compose the royal speech, had the mortification to hear it greatly criticised at the Cockpit on Monday; and when it was delivered, a most violent debate ensued in the Commons, which lasted till a very late hour, and then the division in favour of ministers almost amounted to a defeat; nor was it more favourably received by the Lords. The haughty ambitious earl with infinite difficulty concealed his rage and dismay; to be thus foiled and browbeaten was little short of madness; yet he did command his temper while in public, but in private even his son never shewed himself more savage, since the

bare idea of retiring from the ministry rendered him all but furious, and very personal in his attack upon his opponents.

At last the day arrived for our hero and heroine to make their *début* in the great world. The colonel and Mr. Harland had gaily answered Edward's letters, by assurances that he required no Mentor; it was not likely any questions could be asked him respecting his early years; at all events, he must carefully avoid the names of Mansel and Broomfields, though they had no objection to his acknowledging that his infancy had been passed in Great Britain, or to his avowing that his mother was an Englishwoman, leaving him wholly to his own discretion, of which both gentlemen had a very high opinion.

They could not fix the day of their departure for London, doctor Welford continued so weak and low. Mrs. Mirvan had joined them at the Priory, and appeared a pleasant well-informed woman. Mrs. Murray wrote a long letter to her Ellen, strictly

ly cautioning her against ever suffering her sister to suppose, that Edward Falkland and William Mansel were the same, sincerely rejoicing that she had retained so little recollection of him. The happy pair were no less pleased, as they had feared she might have been more quick-sighted; they did not expect to derive much pleasure from this ceremonious visit, but not to appear deficient in proper respect, they were among the first guests who arrived at Mortlake.

Fortunately, Edward was too young when removed from thence to remember either the house or grounds, though a piece of water in front of the mansion brought some very confused and imperfect recollections to his mind, having once fallen into it, and been with difficulty saved; he did not however mention what he considered as mere phantoms of his brain to his fair bride, who was, as well as himself, most graciously received by the great man and the countess.

Lord Exmore made an effort to be polite, and lady Exmore was most graciously condescending; four other gentlemen and three ladies completed the party. The gentlemen ranked high in the political world—the females had rank and fashion to recommend them, and were very courteous towards the lovely Ellen; while the gentlemen perceived, with surprise, the likeness between their host and the new married man, secretly thinking he would have done much more honour to the title than the indolent though not inelegant lord Exmore; but the majesty of Edward's open brow, the searching glance and soul of his dark eye, and the slight curl of his mouth, indicating the superior discernment of his mind, were the counterpart of his father; while the smiling ingenuousness of youth visible upon his glowing cheek, and mantling through the brilliant tints of his complexion, always reminded the colonel and Mr. Harland of his mother; and as no trace of either care

or

or thought yet appeared in his countenance, it greatly diminished his likeness to the earl.

The dinner resembled the general routine of splendid repasts; no expence, and of course no luxury, had been spared. Edward, who had been early taught prudence, drank very sparingly during the repast, and was resolved to be very much upon his guard after the ladies retired, though he joined in the usual loyal toasts; the rest of the company, the earl excepted, had not thought it necessary to be equally cautious; indeed lord Exmore had made rather free during dinner.

The minister soon turned the conversation upon Switzerland. Edward spoke with raptures of this romantic country, declaring his intention of revisiting it the ensuing summer.

"You have an estate there, I have been informed," said the earl.

"A mere box, my lord, when compared to my English cottage; but the situation of
of

of Melfort is most picturesque and beautiful."

Fain would his lordship have asked various other questions, but politeness was a check to his curiosity. Our hero reasoned very ably upon the Swiss form of government, which was next discussed; and when required, gave his real opinion of St. Petersburg and the Hans Towns, with a degree of truth and propriety which strongly recommended him to the earl, who wished much to win him to his party; and those present regretted lord Exmore had not made equal good use of his time; and never had the minister been more fully aware of his deficiencies, as the viscount sat with his eyes half shut, seldom speaking, except in opposition to any thing our hero advanced, who so easily refuted his shallow reasoning, that his father, more than once, desired he would not touch upon subjects upon which he seemed to be so ignorant.

Our hero's proficiency in English was
next

next remarked—"He was born in England, and had spent his early years in that happy country—his mother was an Englishwoman." No more could be said, and all those present presumed she was a relative of the late Mr. Falkland.

"Where is your grave friend Mirvan?" stammered lord Exmore.

"He is in Hampshire with his grandfather, who is in a very declining way."

"Are you at all acquainted with his family, Mr. Falkland?" asked the earl.

"I merely know, my lord, that his mother married a gentleman of the name of Mirvan somewhere abroad, who died before his son was two years old, who was, by his grandfather's desire, brought up and educated in Switzerland, probably through motives of economy."

"I dare say I could give another reading of the story, my young friend," replied the earl. "Doctor Welford was my first tutor, and went abroad with my brother; therefore, in my opinion, the less he says about

about his daughter and grandson, the better: the doctor is a prudent and a worldly man, and ere he dies, it would not surprise me he should apply to me in behalf of this young man; I will not disappoint his hopes if he does—I know my late father had his suspicions.”

Situated as our hero was, and so little *au fait* of his friend's family history, he could merely listen in silence, as he perfectly understood the earl's allusions, and could not refute them.

“Mirvan was always supposed to be a natural child at Geneva,” burst forth lord Exmore, hiccoughing between every three words; “and he was not the only one at Mr. Chaumette's.”

Edward's rising colour warned the earl to stop the conversation.—“Let me tell you, lord Exmore, I have known many fathers who have derived greater honour and comfort from their natural sons than I ever hope to do from you. Let me re-commend

commend you to retire and sleep off your excess."

The mortified viscount staggered out of the room, muttering unintelligible threats of withdrawing himself from his father's control. The earl did not appear to heed him, and soon gave the conversation so pleasant and so different a turn, that even Edward was inclined to forgive the son, for the sake of his, in appearance, amiable father; but was not sorry when his lordship proposed joining the ladies.

Ellen's eyes sparkled with delight when her husband approached her, while lady Exmore inquired for the viscount. The earl made a slight excuse for him, and never had our hero felt more happy than when his carriage was announced; nor was Ellen less tired with her visit; the earl handed her to the vehicle, shook hands most cordially with his unknown son, and sighed as they drove off, to think that the natural son of a Swiss baron should so far surpass his heir,

Ellen

Ellen declared, as soon as they were upon the move, that the ladies Mirvan expected, "And of course my sister," she continued, "I do not care if I never see any of the party again."

Edward could now laugh at lord Exmore's rude allusion; but agreed that it would be too severe a penance to cultivate an intimacy with the family: they would continue upon speaking terms, but would henceforth decline all dinner invitations—feeling most truly happy that they need neither seek the courteous earl, nor endure the rudeness of his son, to oblige any of those to whom they wished to shew every mark of deference.

CHAPTER XXIII.
~~~~~

DOCTOR Welford declined so rapidly, that the colonel began to fear he would not live to return to London. Mrs. Mirvan seldom left him, and his grandson was no less attentive. Mrs. Murray assisted the former to nurse the invalid, who was not suffered to apologize for the trouble he occasioned.

Mr. Harland did not like to leave the Priory while his friends were unpleasantly situated, which he wrote to our hero the day after he arrived at Mortlake, though he was very anxious to see him and Ellen; regretting, as matters had turned out, that they had pressed the divine to visit Hampshire, desiring to hear daily from Edward, as his letters contributed to the general amusement.

On

On the very evening he had dispatched his epistle, Mr. Mirvan, who had spent the afternoon in the sick-room, came to request the colonel and Mr. Harland would attend his grandfather, who had something of consequence to communicate to them. They instantly obeyed the summons, and found him supported in bed by pillows, and evidently much altered since the morning. Mrs. Mirvan withdrew upon their entrance, as did the assistant nurse. He appeared rather agitated, but in perfect possession of his faculties. Thanking them for so instantly complying with his wishes, he thus continued—"To you, gentlemen, I must now open my heart, since I feel assured my time will be very short. Should I not be spared to enter into every necessary detail requisite to confirm the strange story I am going to relate, you will find every necessary proof and document to substantiate my grandson's claims in this packet, addressed to you both. It contains my will, and I  
 . have



have taken the liberty to make you my executors, as you did not object to the hope I once expressed, that you would take that trouble. Had I been taken off suddenly, my daughter must have related what I now mean to do. I am fearful you will condemn the line of conduct I have pursued. I can only say my meaning was good, though I may not have followed the golden rule; but I will not tire your patience, as moments are precious, and I have greatly excited your curiosity.—You are both so well acquainted with earl Delmont, that you need not be told self has ever been his idol, and that he would, almost from a child, go any lengths to obtain any end he had in view. I was chosen by his father to prepare his elder brother and himself for Eton. I was then a young man, and had just become a widower, therefore readily accepted the situation, having placed my only daughter under the care of my mother:

ther: lord Exmore was an amiable gentle youth, whose milder virtues were totally eclipsed by the splendid talents of his brother.

“When they were sent to Eton, the earl presented me to my Kentish living, as a small return for the real pains I had bestowed upon his sons, and made me such liberal promises of future preferment, that I agreed to accompany the youths to Eton for a short time, till I could turn them over to one of the masters of that seminary. Though I was much attached to the viscount, I was more proud of my younger pupil, who I foresaw would do me the greatest honour, little supposing that, like Macbeth, ambition would lead him to commit any crime, likely to promote his own advancement. Truly may he be said, under the appearance of an angel of light, to have concealed the heart and feelings of a demon; since while torturing the victims of his criminal intentions,



tions, he has hitherto managed to be considered either the injured person, or the most benevolent of mortals.

"Having settled them at Eton, I proceeded to my parsonage-house in Kent, whither I conveyed my mother and daughter, and where I spent much of my time, till the earl requested me to accompany his sons to college, presenting me with a second and more valuable living, as a remuneration for my time and trouble. I now saw much more of Mr. Mirvan, and though I admired his talents and genius, his principles did not meet my approbation, and his behaviour to his excellent but meek brother, excited all my angry passions. He was, however, callous to all my representations; and most seriously did I rejoice when he was removed from college to commence his diplomatic career.

"Lord Exmore, whose mild virtues were totally overlooked by his father, and held in contempt by his more daring brother,

ther, was very happy to withdraw himself from their society. He therefore spent the next long vacation at my Kentish rectory, with the earl's full permission. There he became acquainted with my daughter; and the following year, unknown to either me or his father, they were married in Scotland, my poor mother having, by taking my girl with her to Moffat, under pretence of visiting an old friend, facilitated their schemes and views: perhaps I was more than wilfully blind myself to their growing attachment. I do not wish to palliate my ambition, but I was really ignorant of their having sanctified their vows, as they had resolved to keep the marriage secret till lord Exmore became of age, when he was to go upon his travels, the earl wishing him to join him in raising some money upon the family estates.

“ I had half resolved not to accompany the viscount abroad, that I might thus break off what I considered as a most imprudent



prudent attachment on both sides: indeed, I was aware that my character would suffer greatly, should it ever be discovered that I had run the risk of suffering my pupil to form so ineligible an alliance; it might prevent my rising in the church, and ambition was my besetting sin.

“No sooner was the viscount of age than he secretly re-married my daughter: they were asked in church in London, and their union was thus rendered perfectly legal; and I believe, but for my daughter's serious entreaties, the young man would now have made it public. As he had displeased his father by not acceding to his wish to raise money, by way of punishing him, the earl resolved to send him immediately abroad, upon a very slender allowance; and according to our agreement, as the earl had fulfilled all his promises to me, I stood pledged to accompany lord Exmore at my own expence, for at least twelve months; and as

my livings brought me in a noble income, for which I was solely indebted to his lordship's patronage, I could not excuse myself, without appearing the most ungrateful of men.

"The young couple, who could not brook the idea of the expected separation, formed the desperate idea of putting me into their confidence, as my daughter was now in the family way, and it was necessary, to secure the family honours for any son she might have, to make me acquainted with their marriage.

"I was thunderstruck when I learned the extent of their imprudence; my own character was so absolutely at stake, that in the first moment my rage knew no bounds; however, repentance and the conviction of my folly came too late; I could only endeavour to screen myself from the obloquy which must fall to my share, should the marriage be made public, as I really feared my livings might be sequestered, and many other minor evils

appeared



appeared so very obvious, as I too well knew how eagerly Mr. Mirvan would spirit up his father to revenge himself, for what must appear to every one as an unpardonable breach of confidence; I therefore made the unfortunate couple take a most solemn oath never to reveal their union, till they had my free permission, as I had much rather, such was my sinful dread of Mr. Mirvan's malice, that my daughter should be supposed to be my pupil's mistress, than be known to be his wife.

I will not tire you, gentlemen, or myself, by dwelling upon particulars, as I found it was talking to the winds to propose their separation. I at last agreed that my mother and daughter should accompany us abroad, under pretence of benefiting the poor old lady's health; and as I was, from not receiving any remuneration from the earl, a sort of free agent, our plans were easily arranged, and I hoped I had taken every precaution, as I had re-

solved we should not live together, and made many other wise arrangements preparatory to our departure.

“Whether Mr. Mirvan entertained any suspicions of his brother’s attachment to my daughter I cannot say—I feared he did; as, though he generally treated him with apparent kindness, there was at times such ironical contempt in his manner towards him, that I could hardly brook his impertinent inuendos, which all tended to impress me with an idea that he was aware of the viscount’s imprudence. I am convinced he thought him very much in his way, and God forgive me if I judge him wrongfully, but I have never been able to divest myself of the idea that he hastened his death.

“The evening previous to our departure, I excused myself from supping at the earl’s, where I was to sleep, as we were to start at an early hour. I had resolved that my mother and daughter should precede us to Dover. They were

to



to go from my Kentish parsonage, as least likely to excite any comments, though I made no secret of their being to travel under my protection to the South of France; but I had much business to arrange previous to my departure, since it behoved me, should I die abroad, to facilitate the discovery of my daughter's marriage, by leaving the proper documents in the hands of a man of business. They are now, with various other necessary papers, in the packet I have given you, gentlemen. I therefore did not reach the earl's till the family were separating for the night. The earl and countess took a very polite leave of me. Mr. Mirvan was no less attentive: he should not see us in the morning, as there was nothing he disliked so much as the word adieu; so he would only say to his brother

*Au revoir.*

“Having many things to communicate to him, I accompanied the viscount to his apartment, who immediately dismissed

his attendant; but we had scarcely exchanged three words, ere his lordship said — ‘I feel very queer; something I have eaten does not agree with me.’ I wished to ring the bell, but he prevented me, saying, it would only disturb the family, and in another second a violent fit of sickness perfectly relieved him; and as I knew he had been very uneasy of late, I attributed what appeared to be the effect of indigestion to mental irritation, as he declared himself quite well when we separated, and did not appear the worse for what had occurred when we set out for Dover, where we met my mother and daughter, who accompanied us to Paris. There I remarked the viscount began to droop, he lost his colour, and his appetite failed him; in short, he never absolutely recovered his health, though he lingered on for two years; but when I first called in medical aid to his assistance, the French physician, a man of very great skill, told me, at the expiration of a fortnight, that he



he feared his patient had, unknowingly, taken something of a poisonous nature, asking me various questions, which led to my mentioning the sickness he had endured the evening before he left London.

‘That saved his life,’ he exclaimed; ‘still I fear whatever he then took has irreparably injured his constitution.’

‘Need I tell you what passed in my mind at that moment? yet who could I suspect? Not the earl and countess—nor did I venture even to breathe to myself the name of Marcus Mirvan. I did, however, as if by chance, ask the viscount to what he attributed the indigestion he had complained of?—‘To you, my dear father, for such you have proved yourself, I dare say any thing—I can depend upon your discretion. The last glass of wine I drank in my father’s house was handed to me by my brother; he gave me his glass, and took mine—not openly, since it was by mere chance I observed the circumstance, as I was in earnest discourse with

the earl. He tossed his off at one gulp, saying — “Here is the rector’s pretty daughter, Edwin; I am sure you will pledge me.” He spoke in his general ironical tone. I was not pleased, but drank his toast, and I fancied the wine had a strange taste. You know he dislikes me — but here let the matter rest, and never let us revive the subject. I have never hinted my suspicions to my wife.’

“I promised to conceal my own, and till this moment I have sacredly kept my word, as I have long had ample revenge in my power, since I could at any period have hurled the *fratricide* from his proud elevation, by proclaiming my grandson’s rights, who was born in Paris; every certificate, and necessary proof of his birth, are in the packet. As to you, gentlemen, I now delegate the task of reinstating Edwin Welford Mirvan in all his rights. You have been sufferers from the usurper’s villainy, but you are superior to revenge, and I only require you to see my grandson



grandson has justice done him. He has had every advantage that an excellent education could afford him, to prepare him to succeed to the Delmont family honours. Had he early known his rank, he might not have been so easily controlled; but I can now safely aver, that he is a very fine scholar, and as good a young man as your favourite Edward Falkland. Can I say more in his praise?

"In that packet is a long letter to his base, avaricious, and ambitious uncle, which, if his feelings are not wholly deadened, must probe them to the quick. Remember, neither my daughter nor my son are aware of the exchange of glasses; Catherine has patiently conformed to all my wishes, and remained an exile from her native land, where she might have shone a viscountess, and seen her son an earl; but she approved of my plans, as, like me, she seriously dreaded both the late and the present earl of Delmont, though ignorant of what I

consider as his greatest crime; but she knew enough of his disposition to dread either me or her son having to cope with his power; and both she and me suspected, when his child was so strangely removed, that he and *cousin Jane*, as he used to call the worthless relation who married your brother, Mr. Harland, were concerned in his disappearance, as the wanton female had long been his mistress; she was therefore very thankful that I had, by dooming his youth to obscurity, preserved her son from his machinations.

"You may now guess, colonel, why I questioned you concerning the lost child, as I had my doubts whether you, should he ever be forthcoming, might not fancy that my grandson's claims clashed with his; you set my mind at ease—*pay*, I am now convinced that you would never suffer your private feelings to prevent your doing ample justice to every one; and I have the same high opinion of your principles, Mr. Harland; selfish considerations  
are



are very secondary in your estimation. I need not relate when and where my son-in-law died; the English ambassador at Vienna had taken him under his protection, and proved himself a second father to him. Probably when he wrote the news of his death to the earl, he might mention his suspicions that he was privately connected with some female, by whom he had a son, if he did not suppose him married. I was not privy to the contents of his letter; but, from that moment, I became an object of dislike to the ambitious Mr. Mirvan, then lord Exmore; he prevented my obtaining a mitre, and he was not aware when the bishop of —— preferred me to a prebendal stall in his cathedral, or he would have prevented my obtaining that advantage, though it might have been his interest to have conciliated my regard.

“ When I am no more, you must read the longer narrative in that packet to my grandson, and shew him all the docu-

ments it contains. My will is also there; and I have only to add, to all the trouble I have, and shall continue to give you, a request that my remains may be conveyed to my Kentish churchyard, as there I wish to lie. I am now too much fatigued to enter into any farther details; to-morrow I may be better; if not, the packet will suffice. Keep Mirvan in ignorance of every thing till I am no more, and so God bless you both; may every good attend you that this world can bestow, and may we meet, when it pleases Heaven to recall you, purified by our communion with angels from every worldly thought!"



## CHAPTER XXIV.

THE astonished Mr. Harland, and certainly no less surprised colonel Murray, were not sorry when Dr. Welford suffered them to retire; they retreated to the library, where they both returned their thanks where they were most due, for having been permitted to shield their beloved Edward from his wicked father's malignity, since, had they enforced his claims, what might have been his fate! Probably he would have been favoured with a similar dose to the one which had destroyed lord Exmore; or, had he been suffered to live, he must now have been deprived of the expected honours and estates; therefore how much happier and respectable was he as the rich and independent Edward Falkland!

“ You

"You must now subscribe to my maxim, Harland," said the colonel, "that *What shall be, shall be*. We can only rejoice that we have, by the suggestions of an overruling Providence, adopted the surest methods for securing our adopted son's happiness; since, had we been able to reinstate him in his supposed rights, how soon would he have been stripped of his gaudy plumage, as we should both of us have been equally anxious to do Mr. Mirvan, or rather, the real earl Delmont, justice. What must be the secret feelings of his base uncle! the torments of his conscience must have rendered his apparently brilliant career a hell upon earth."

Mr. Harland was even more grateful for their having been led to adopt the plans they had followed respecting Edward; when, having had a long conversation, and determined to shew the wretched fratricide no mercy, they joined Mrs. Murray. Mrs. Mirvan and her son were with the doctor, she told them; inquiring



ing how they had found the old gentleman.

"Very ill," the colonel said; and then, as he had long resolved never to have any secrets from her, he briefly related the heads of what he had told them.

She was lost in amaze, though she agreed that she had long believed the earl capable of any crime; deeply regretting her eldest daughter's near connexion with so unprincipled a man.

"Anne has certainly been unfortunate in her choice," said the colonel; "but as her insolent, unfeeling behaviour to you admits of no excuse, I think she will only be properly punished, when she finds herself plain Mrs. Mirvan. She has money enough to render a reasonable couple very happy, and if she appears sorry for the past, she shall always find me her friend; and I am sure our dear Ellen will prove herself a very kind sister when she requires consolation."

Mrs. Murray acknowledged she had  
very

very little to say in her defence; still she must remember she was her daughter; and she should overlook her failure in duty, should she ever require her assistance.

The doctor's confession, if so it might be called, afforded this trio ample food for conversation during the evening. Neither Mrs. Mirvan nor her son joined them at supper, and they were not surprised to learn in the morning, that the invalid had not survived the night. The worthy Martin and his grandson had sat up with him, and the former had seen all that was proper done ere the family were stirring.

Mr. Mirvan carried the intelligence to his mother, who, though very much shocked, had been so long prepared for the old gentleman's death, that she bore the news with tolerable composure. He breakfasted with her, and then left her with Mrs. Murray, who requested to be admitted; and who told her she came in the colonel and Mr. Harland's names, to request she and her son would immediately accompany



pany them to London, where Mr. Benjafield, their joint friend, and an excellent solicitor, should be summoned, to read the doctor's will, and the other papers which ought now to be communicated to her son. That gentleman would advise them how they ought to proceed in so important a business, and the sooner Mr. Mirvan was made acquainted with his real rank in life, the better. Mr. Martin would give every necessary order respecting the funeral, and would accompany the body into Kent, where the executors, and probably Mr. Mirvan, would choose to join him, previous to the funeral; adding—"So anxious am I to see justice done your amiable son, I can hardly regret that he will deprive my daughter, and perhaps grandchildren, of the Delmont title."

Mrs. Mirvan was truly grateful, and perfectly acquiescent, merely stipulating that she should accompany her son into Kent, having left many things there she should wish to remove when required to

vacate

vacate the rectory. Therefore, by twelve o'clock, the family and their guests were on the road to London, where they arrived between eight and nine, when Mr. Harland dispatched an express to Rochester, requesting Edward and Ellen would join them in Saville-row to a late breakfast the next morning, entering into no details, merely informing them Dr. Welford was no more, and that his friend Mirvan wished him to be present during the reading of the will.

Of course the happy couple complied with the wishes of those they both considered as their joint parents, as their perfect independence merely rendered them more anxious to conform in every respect to their wishes. They were therefore in Saville-row by ten o'clock, meaning to be guided by circumstances respecting their stay in London, though they thought it probable they should sleep in Portland-place, which they had done several times since their marriage, and where they kept  
 a suf.



a sufficient suite to minister to their comforts.

Mrs. Mirvan was not come down, having requested leave to breakfast in her dressing-room; but Mrs. Murray gave her Ellen a warm embrace, and a most cordial welcome, telling her she should soon be her guest at Roehampton; nor was she less kindly affected towards her dear son, as she styled Edward. The colonel was rejoiced to see his *children*, and Mr. Harland insisted upon an uncle's privilege to salute the lovely Ellen. Mirvan, though grieving for his grandfather, was very happy to see his friend; when breakfast being over, and Mr. Benjafield arrived, Mrs. Murray and her daughter retired, and the lawyer proceeded to break open the packet, and by the executors' desire he first read doctor Welford's relation of his daughter's marriage, birth of his grandson, &c., who seemed lost in amaze, as he proceeded, scarcely appearing to credit his ears, or to believe he was in his right senses.

senses. Even the late Mr. Falkland had not been more methodical in his instructions than the doctor had shewn himself in those he left for the benefit of his grandson and his executors: every document was registered; in short, every precaution that human foresight could suggest, had been attended to, since the original certificates of the first and second marriage of his daughter, and those of her son's birth, &c., were full and sufficient proof of his being earl of Delmont, and heir to all the estates annexed to that title.

The three gentlemen, with whom our hero cordially joined, sincerely congratulated the bewildered youth upon his brilliant prospects, assuring him that they did not expect to meet with any difficulty in fully establishing his rights, since the present earl must be insane were he to dispute them.

Mr. Benjafield next read the doctor's will, which constituted his daughter and grandson joint heirs to about two thousand  
a-year



a-year personal property, and a small estate in Kent, which he had purchased for Mrs. Mirvan's future residence, who was to enjoy the whole income for her life, as soon as his grandson was reinstated in his birthright. To his executors he merely left a handsome sum for rings, &c., declaring that he died assured that they would take the most active measures to enable Edwin Welford Mirvan to assume the title of his family. The very amiable and unambitious youth, to establish whose rights he appeared so anxious, was much less elated than might have been expected, as he foresaw that his grandfather would be severely blamed for many parts of his conduct, and for none more than for having suffered the present earl to suppose himself lawfully entitled to the title and estates he had suffered him to usurp; and though he did not like lord Exmore, he did not enjoy the idea of hurling him from his supposed place in society. This he candidly told his friends, who agreed they

did

did not exactly approve of the late doctor Welford's conduct; still, as he could not be blamed, he must agree to the necessity of enforcing his claims. We shall not dwell upon the long conversation that ensued, nor anticipate Mr. Benjafield's plans; suffice it to say, that it was finally agreed that no steps should be taken till after the funeral; and that on the Monday (this was Saturday) Mr. Mirvan and his mother should proceed into Kent, whither Mr. Harland and the colonel were to follow them on the Thursday.

Mrs. Murray proposed spending the time they would be absent at Roehampton, telling Ellen, who was of course made acquainted with the wonderful discovery which had just taken place, that she feared Anne would sooner stand in need of their friendship and consolation than she had ever expected. She had married solely for a title, and deprived of that advantage, lord Exmore would sink very low in her esteem.



"If she loves him, my dear mother, they may still be very happy; but he appears to me such a savage sot, that I fear she has made a wreck of her felicity."

"So thought Edward, who agreed with his wife to remain in Portland-place till Mrs. Murray could return with them to their villa.

## CHAPTER XXV.

ON the very Saturday morning when Mr. and Mrs. Falkland had left their villa at an early hour for London, lord Exmore, by way of making his peace with his offended father, at the suggestions of his mother, proposed to his lady to drive her to Roehampton; and as the viscountess was very proud of the coronet displayed upon her lord's curriele, and chose to be attended by two grooms, she very readily agreed

agreed to his proposal, and they amused themselves during their drive with laying plans for quizzing the rich commoner and his wife; her ladyship declaring she would find fault with every thing, and turn all their boasted luxuries into ridicule. The viscount was very ready to join in the sport: they were therefore really mortified when told Mr. and Mrs. Falkland were gone to town, by the porter at the lodge.

"Then we are spared a very disagreeable visit," cried the polite viscount, loud enough to be heard by several men in the grounds.

"Add I never saw a more odious place," rejoined the viscountess, still more envious than her lord: "a mere baby-house, built for shew!"

As they had refused to proceed to this said baby-house, the man did not open the gates; and his lordship having excited even the contempt of his own servants, turned his horses round, and pursued his way back to Mortlake. They had just entered



entered that village, when one of his horses made a slip, it being a sharp frosty morning, and some water having been imprudently thrown into the road, the viscount, ever savage, made very free use of his whip, till the high-mettled animals began to plunge most violently, and finally, one of them did slip down, owing to their not being frost-shod. To be thus unfortunate in sight of his father's house, as he was very anxious to display his dexterity to his mother and sisters, as well as to the inhabitants of the village, rendered him furious; he lashed the prostrate animals, till—"Shame! shame!" resounded from every quarter; her ladyship screaming most dreadfully, caught his arm to arrest the strokes, at the moment the animal recovered its feet, and plunged forward with the greatest violence. The gardener at the villa, who had seen what had occurred, threw the gates wide open; but as the enraged viscount had lost all command of the now furious horses, they dashed the

wheel with such force against one of the gate-posts, that the carriage was overturned with a dreadful crash, and her ladyship was thrown to several yards distance; her head struck against the lodge, or gardener's house, and she was taken up senseless and conveyed in that state into the house. Lord Exmore had been thrown upon the horses, and escaped with only a few bruises. The curriele was rendered useless; but the grooms having got before the horses the moment the accident happened, no farther mischief ensued, as the frightened and enraged animals were obedient to their voice.

The countess and her daughters hastened into the breakfast-parlour, whither lady Exmore had been conveyed, and in conjunction with their female attendants, were employing every means to restore her to her senses, merely supposing she was stunned, when the nearest surgeon having been instantly summoned, arrived: he shook his head, but proceeded to open a vein; no blood followed the lancet; and he,



he, in as gentle terms as the case admitted, acknowledged that life was extinct. The horror of the ladies may be imagined. Lord Exmore, who had been more anxious to ascertain the injury he himself had sustained, than to aid in his wife's recovery, entered the room just as the medical man had declared her ladyship to be no more. He flatly contradicted him—she was only stunned—till the deathlike hue of her countenance proclaimed her to be indeed a corpse; and his unfeeling lordship did experience a greater shock than might have been expected: possibly, had he merely lost the wife, but not her fortune, he might have displayed more fortitude; as it was, he accused the now senseless clay of having occasioned the accident, declaring, she had seized his arm, and thus prevented his guiding the horses. No one could contradict him; and before the body was removed to another apartment, or the broken curriole was removed from

where the accident had happened, the earl arrived, at an earlier hour than usual, it being Saturday, to dress, dine, and sleep at his villa, being really in need of quiet and repose, he had been so harassed of late, by the increasing divisions among his colleagues. The moment he caught sight of the broken vehicle, which the grooms were hastily drawing on one side, as he drove into the court, he presumed some accident had occurred.—“What has happened?” he inquired, as the steps of his carriage were being let down.

“The curricie horses proved unmanageable as they were coming home, my lord,” replied the footman in attendance, while the groom of the chambers stepping forward, threw open the door of the saloon, requesting the earl would walk in there.

The man looked so frightened, that his lordship hastily inquired—“Has that rash, violent boy met with any serious accident, Baronneau?”

“His



"His lordship has escaped with only a few bruises, but the viscountess is, alas!

"What! was she with him? Speak! do not keep me in suspense."

The man related the truth. The earl struck his forehead in silence, while he threw himself into the nearest chair, and remained lost in no very pleasant thoughts, to judge from his countenance, for more than ten minutes, when, starting up, he began to pace the room with long and hasty strides. The servant hardly knew whether to retire or to wait his further commands, when he broke forth—"I shall never enjoy another moment's peace! Oh that boy! that wretched boy! tell me, this moment how the accident happened!"

Baronneau related all that he had heard or seen, sparing the viscount as much as the case admitted.

The earl listened in silence, and then signed for him to leave the room. The

man bowed and retired : as he was closing the door, his lordship called out—" Let no one disturb me!" and as an effectual mode of keeping out any intruders, he locked and bolted the door after the servant, beginning once more to pace the room, talking to himself, sometimes in a very loud voice, and then in a half whisper.

Baronneau, who did not know that by way of drowning reflection he had made very free with some excellent Madeira when he took his luncheon, was seriously alarmed, and really afraid to move from the door, never having seen the earl in such a state of agitation—trying to recollect whether there were any firearms, or any weapons of any sort in the room, as he really thought his lordship in a frame of mind to commit suicide : he might have a knife about him, else the saloon was not a likely place to deposit any weapons with which he could do himself a mischief ; still, curiosity and dread induced him



him frequently to put his ear to the key-hole, and thus he caught a few disjointed sentences.

“That child might have done me honour—that worthless Jane Harland has led to all my subsequent misery; but she is gone to answer for her share of our mutual guilt. Who can that young fellow really be!—Can Harland be the dupe I endeavoured to make him!—The boy may be his son.—Ah, Welford dead!” A horrid laugh followed this exclamation. “What could he hope by suffering his grandson to assume the family name! Chance told me Harland and Murray were come to town.—I must and will see Harland before I sleep! Where are all my puppets—gone to hell!” Again he laughed.

Baronneau could glean no intelligence from these unconnected speeches; they merely shocked without affording him any clue to guess their meaning; he was therefore much relieved when he heard his lord ring the bell most violently, and then

unfasten the door. The groom of the chambers entered the room after a proper delay.

"I am now quite composed, Baronneau," said the earl, having really, with a most wonderful effort, succeeded in assuming the semblance of such a state of mind.—  
"The viscountess is, I suppose, dead—had she immediate and proper medical advice?"

The man entered into every necessary detail, even repeating what lord Exmore had said as to her having occasioned the accident.

"I never knew him acknowledge that he could be to blame; I shall not see him, or any of my family, who will wait my further orders here. I shall return to town immediately."

"Dinner is ready, my lord. When and where would you choose to dine?"

"No where—I cannot eat; this shocking intelligence has quite unhinged me. I feel thirsty, and the night is very cold; I shall



I shall take some warm brandy and water while the carriage is getting ready; let the countess's chariot be ordered—I shall leave mine for her use; but she cannot go out, so that is of little consequence. I will mix my liquor to my taste."

Baronneau bowed and retreated, soon returning with the brandy, warm water, biscuits, sugar, &c.

"That will do. Let the countess know I mean to return to town—she shall see me to-morrow—I can see no one to-night."

The message was carried to her ladyship, who had retired to her boudoir with her daughters.

The viscount was gone to bed, more to avoid seeing his father, than from any feeling of necessity; and as the countess (her income apart) was really, after the first shock, not sorry for the viscountess's death, she ordered various dishes, which she selected, to be served in her boudoir, as she was faint for want of sustenance, not sorry  
 0 5 that

that she should be spared an altercation with her lord respecting their son; nor were his daughters less pleased, when informed that he meant to return to town, as they dreaded much more than loved their stern father.

The chariot was soon at the door, and the earl set out for London; while the butler, who came to remove the brandy, &c. remarked to Baronneau, that though his lordship had not even tasted a biscuit, he had drank near three quarters of a pint of brandy.

The person he addressed declared, he thought his lordship was beside himself; he would have gone without Lester (his valet), if he had not been more thoughtful; and ten to one but the servants in Piccadilly would be all out.

The household next wondered whether the coroner must sit upon the viscountess; but supposed not, as she was so great a lady; nor did any of them feel inclined to  
spare



spare the viscount, who, they declared, had occasioned the accident by his savage disposition.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

THE family party in Saville-row were just finishing their tea, when earl Delmont's valet knocked at the door, and requested to see Mr. Harland, who immediately joined him in the eating-room. Lester, in obedience to the orders he had received, delivered a very polite message from the earl, who wished to see Mr. Harland immediately upon business of the utmost importance. He would have written, had he not been too much agitated to hold a pen.

Very much surprised by this very unexpected summons, the worthy man pro-

mised to wait upon his lordship in less than half an hour.

The valet departed; while Mr. Harland sent for colonel Murray, who was, like him, very much amazed when he learnt where Harland was going; though, after a short time given to reflection, they both supposed the earl had heard of doctor Welford's death, and might have some reason to suspect what might prove the consequence to himself and family; therefore as so favourable an opportunity was afforded him of broaching the unpleasant subject, Mr. Harland took with him a duplicate copy of the doctor's narrative, or statement of facts, and his letter to the earl, which could not be too soon delivered. Edward's carriage being at the door, to convey him and Ellen into Portland-place, as she had complained of a headach, for which her mother had prescribed repose and quiet, he requested the use of it to convey him to the great man's, promising



mising to send it back immediately for the young couple; he was therefore within the promised time at Delmont House.

The porter admitted him, and the valet (the rest of the household being, as might be expected, making holiday) ushered him into his lordship's private study, which the earl was pacing in the greatest agitation; his eyes appeared inflamed, and when he addressed him, Mr. Harland suspected that he had been making very free at dinner.

Making every effort to resume his composure, the earl pointed to a chair near the fire, while throwing himself into another, Lester retired, and his lordship, in a hurried, agitated manner, inquired—"Are you at all aware why I sent for you, Mr. Harland? But Mr. Falkland is in town, I recollect—I am strangely confused."

"Does your lordship allude to doctor Welford's death? I should have written you to-morrow, and enclosed this letter  
and

and narrative, had you not sent for me this evening."

"Oh, I perfectly guess their contents; the proud old fellow has humbled himself at last; but I did not send for you to discuss his communications, but to inform you that a most unfortunate accident, owing to a pair of vile unruly horses, has terminated the existence of lady Exmore."

Mr. Harland looked, as he felt, dreadfully shocked, while he faltered out—"Do I understand your lordship—is lady Exmore indeed no more?"

"I left her a corpse at Mortlake; you must take upon you to give the information to her mother and sister: the latter may console herself more easily, as, according to the tenour of that old miser Arlington's will, she is the viscountess's heir; had I been aware of that circumstance, Exmore should never have formed such a plebeian connexion."

"That may be, my lord; but as I cannot



not suppose such an accession of fortune will prove a source of consolation to Mrs. Falkland, pray, as you wish me to convey the melancholy intelligence, inform me when, how, and where, lady Exmore died?"

The earl, in scarcely intelligible terms, related all that he had learnt respecting the accident, certainly not sparing his son, who was born, he said, to be his bane. Then, in a voice of real feeling, and with every appearance of heartfelt remorse, he deeply regretted the death of his elder son; when again relapsing into the sort of frenzy which had seized him at Mortlake, he started from his chair, and began to pace the room, as if to drive away his bitter recollections. Stopping opposite the table, he took up doctor Welford's packet—"What can this old man have written me! I suppose you know or suspect, Mr. Harland, that his grandson is a natural son of my brother's?"

Mr. Harland remained silent, fearing to increase the agitation of the wretched man  
before

before him, and half regretting he had brought the letter and papers.

The earl had meanwhile broken the seal of the cover containing the narrative; one glance sufficed to apprise him of what it was meant to enforce—"His daughter married to my brother! 'tis false—false as hell! Dare you believe this wretched time-serving, drivelling old man? Speak, sir! are you in a league to deprive me of my inheritance?—can you suppose I will tamely resign the title and estates he wishes to wrest from my grasp?"

"This is no time to discuss such matters, my lord; no one wishes to wrong you; nay, I even blame the doctor for having so long concealed his daughter's marriage."

The earl was breathless with surprise and rage, and shook to such a degree, that had not Mr. Harland caught hold of him, he must have measured his length on the floor; till rousing himself, he caught that gentleman by the collar with both hands, exclaiming—



exclaiming—"Marriage! his daughter's marriage! explain yourself, sir! What is it you mean—do you hope to frighten me?"

"Certainly not, my lord," replied the really alarmed Mr. Harland. "I will enter into every explanation, if you will resume your composure and sit down."

The earl did as he desired, making an effort to recover his equanimity—"There, sir, you can have nothing to fear; so let me know what that old villain has dared to assert?"

Situated as he was, Mr. Harland thought it most prudent to relate, in as few words as possible, what the doctor had extended into a long narrative, concluding thus—"Your lordship shall see all the documents in mine and colonel Murray's hands to-morrow, as early as you please."

"Very well, sir, I shall expect to do so, since I neither require nor expect any favour at your hands," ringing the bell most furiously.

Mr

Mr. Harland instantly rose, expecting, as the least evil, to be turned out, if nothing worse befell him, as the earl was evidently hardly in his senses; but before Lester made his appearance, he apologized for his vehemence, declaring—"That his troubles came so fast upon him, he feared he should lose his reason."

Mr. Harland thought it by no means improbable, dreading the effect the doctor's letter would have upon him in such a frame of mind; he could only hope he would not read it that evening, as to resume it was impossible; he therefore wished his lordship a very good night, promising to attend to his earliest summons in the morning.

The earl bowed, and Mr. Harland felt happy when he was once more in the hall. Mr. Falkland's chariot was in waiting; the coachman had returned, by his master's orders, after setting him and Mrs. Falkland down at home; but before he left the house, he told Lester—"Not be-  
ing



ing aware of the earl's state of mind, I gave him a letter, which I fear, should he read it, will increase his irritation; if you could contrive to remove it till to-morrow, it might be more prudent; at all events, keep a strict watch over him."

"I certainly shall, sir; his lordship to me appears insane. I have sent for Mr. Chance."

"You did right—let me see you as early as you can in the morning, as I shall be very anxious to hear your report;" making Lester a suitable present to enforce his wishes.

Mrs. Murray, who supposed her husband and Mr. Harland would have many things to talk over, had, under the plea of fatigue, retired for the night, and the colonel and Mr. Mirvan were therefore waiting supper for him. He was very happy neither the mother nor sister of the deceased viscountess were present, when he related why he had been summoned to Delmont House.

The colonel promised to break the matter to his wife, who had been so ill treated by her eldest daughter, and who would have been so wretched had she lived, that she would have many motives for feeling consoled for her untimely death.

As to earl Delmont, he was only paying the deserved penalty of his numerous errors—he forbore to say crimes, because of Mr. Mirvan's presence, who soon retired, to leave the friends at liberty to converse upon the late strange and melancholy events; when both gentlemen agreed, that the wretched object of their continued dislike was almost sufficiently punished for his abominable behaviour towards his wife and son.

“Should he read the doctor's letter to-night,” added the colonel, “I should not be at all surprised to hear to-morrow he is raving mad, or that he has committed suicide; but do you write a brief account of poor ambitious Anne's death to Edward, and tell him to take his wife down to Roehampton,



hampton, as soon as they have breakfasted.

"You can suggest proper motives of consolation to the dear girl; and tell them I will join them, with their mother, at dinner, as you will do the honours of my house to Mrs. Mirvan and her son; and come to us as soon as they set out for Kent."

We shall not dwell upon Mrs. Murray's very natural grief; though she readily agreed Anne had been spared much misery; and as they should probably never have met again, at least in comfort, she ought to feel consoled for her loss.

She did not join the gentlemen at breakfast, but received a very affectionate note from Edward, assuring her Ellen had displayed as much fortitude as feeling, and that they both hoped to see her at dinner, at Ivy Cottage. He had also written to the same effect to Mr. Harland and the colonel, acknowledging that, all things considered, Anne's death ought to be considered as a happy release, since her future life

life must have been miserable in the extreme.

They had not done breakfast when Lester was announced. The colonel desired he might be shewn in.

"How is the earl this morning?" inquired Mr. Harland; "does he require my presence?"

"Oh no, sir. I came in consequence of your wish to hear how his lordship did. Before Mr. Chance arrived, the earl ran for me, and desired I would bring him some brandy and water, declaring that his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth. As his lordship had taken no dinner, I ventured to recommend his taking some soup. No, he could only touch a spongy biscuit—telling me he would mix the brandy and water for himself. I knew it was in vain to say more; nor did I dare carry up a smaller quantity of brandy than usual—I only took care there should be plenty of water.

"During my very short absence, he has seized



seized the letter you were so anxious about, sir; and when I returned, he was reading it—appearing in a state of the greatest agitation. I set down what I had brought, and waited for farther orders, wishing, as you had recommended, to have an eye upon him; when, having concluded, regardless of my presence, he tore the letter into a thousand scraps, threw them on the floor, and stamped upon them with frenzied fury; when, chancing to remark me, he said—‘Begone! what business have you here?’

“I really dared not trust myself alone with him, but withdrew into the library, where Mr. Chance joined me; and we heard him walking, talking, or rather raving, for more than two hours. I will not shock you, gentlemen, by repeating what he said, nor the curses he imprecated upon himself and others. Soon after midnight he was tolerably quiet, and we concluded he must be nearly, if not quite exhausted; I therefore ventured into the room, Mr.

Chance

Chance remaining in the background, hoping he would allow me to assist him to bed.

“He was lying all his length upon the sofa, and I fancied he was asleep, till he made me a sign to leave the room. I did as he desired, but not before I had remarked that the brandy was all gone; the biscuits had evidently been steeped in a tumbler, and were all eaten.

“Mr. Chance and I remained in the next room; and he was very quiet for another hour, when I again ventured into the room, and found him speechless, and starting as if in convulsions, which I attributed to inebriety; but having consulted with Mr. Chance and the housekeeper, we agreed to send for doctor —, since, though we might be blamed, we should only appear to have been too cautious. And most happy we were that we had not waited for farther orders, since, when doctor — arrived, and saw the state of his patient, and had heard my story, he declared



clared it to be his opinion, that the earl could not live many hours; indeed, if he ever did awake from the lethargic stupor which had deadened his faculties, it would only be in a state of frenzy that would equally destroy him.

“An express was sent off immediately to Mortlake. The countess and lord Exmore merely returned orders for further advice to be called in, and that they should be in town at an early hour, to enforce their wishes. The family were just arrived when I left the house; and as neither doctor — nor three other physicians have any hopes, I do not expect to find his lordship living when I return. I was sent for Mr. —, the surgeon, so seized the opportunity to bring you this account.”

Mr. Harland declared himself obliged by his attention, making him another present. The man departed. And though the three gentlemen could not regret the death of such a man, they were shocked at his being taken off so suddenly.

The colonel and Mr. Harland both resolved never again to mention his name with reproach; their bringing forward Mr. Mirvan's claims would not affect his character, since, with regard to him, he might be termed an innocent usurper; indeed they could only lament, that a man, blessed with such transcendant talents, should have merely rendered them subservient to his ungovernable passions, and who could now merely be said to "point a moral or adorn a tale."

Having conversed for some time upon this melancholy subject, it was finally settled, that the colonel and Mrs. Murray should proceed to Roehampton. Mrs. Mirvan and her son were to start very early for Kent, therefore Mr. Harland hoped to breakfast at Ivy Cottage, when he and the colonel could send for Mr. Chance, who must prepare the supposed lord Exmore and his mother for Mr. Mirvan's claims, as it would be cruel to let the young fellow assume the title, he might



might suppose he had inherited from his father, who, they were informed by a messenger from Lester, had departed this life between eleven and twelve.

Mrs. Murray and her beloved Ellen shed a few tears, when they met, to the memory of the haughty Anne; yet could not grieve she had been spared so many bitter mortifications as were in store for her.

Neither the countess or her son were at first inclined to listen to Mr. Chance's narrative; but as he called Mr. Benjafield to his aid, they at last agreed to resign what they found they should not be able to retain; and, as the long secluded earl of Delmont behaved in the most liberal manner towards them, they were unanimous in his praise.

The late earl had left little or no ready money, as his unquitting plans obliged him to keep so many people in pay, that he was often distressed, though supposed to be very rich. The countess's marriage settle-

settlement ensured a maintenance to his daughters; and George Mirvan, esquire, by disposing of the Surrey estate, came into some ready money, and was, in return for his father's long-tried services, gratified with a pension, which enabled him to keep up his fashionable connexions.

Most truly did Mr. Harland, and the colonel, and Mrs. Murray, rejoice that they had not been permitted to assert our hero's rights, who, as a private and independent gentleman, was now the happiest of men; blessed with a most amiable wife, and looking up to colonel and Mrs. Murray as the most indulgent father and mother; while he considered his uncle as his best friend. He thought his lot most enviable, and often told his Ellen, who perfectly agreed with him, that he should have felt it a drawback to his felicity, had he, like his friend Edwin, been required to assume a title, and to enter into all the bustle of public life.

FINIS.