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MORAL TALES

BY

M. MARMONTEL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFO

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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ORIGINAL PREFACE.

HAVING been engaged ſome time ſince in writing upon comedy, I ſearched alſo nature for the rules and means of the art. This ſtudy led me to examine if it were true, as has been ſaid, that all the great ſtrokes of ridicule had been ſeized by Moliere, and the poets who have followed him.

In running over the canvas of ſociety, I thought I perceived, that in the inexhauſtible combinations of follies and extravagancies of all conditions, a man of genius might ſtill find ſufficient employment. I had even collected ſome obſervations to propoſe to young poets, when my friend, M. de Boiſſi, deſired me to ſupply him with ſome pieces in proſe, to inſert in the Mercure. It came into my head to make uſe, in a tale, of one of the ſtrokes in my collection; and I choſe, by way of eſſay, the ridiculous pretenſion of being loved merely for one's ſelf. This tale had all the ſucceſs that ſuch a trifle could have. My friend preſſed me to give him a ſecond. I propoſed to myſelf to diſplay the folly of thoſe who uſe authority to bring a woman to reaſon; and I choſe for an example a ſultan and his ſlave, as being the two extremes of power and dependence. This freſh eſſay alſo ſucceeded; and, pleaſed with having hit the taſte of the public in a ſpecies of writing which they deigned to look upon as new, I continued to exerciſe myſelf in it.

I ſhall ſay little concerning the ſtyle: when it is I that ſpeak, I deliver myſelf up to the actual impreſſion of the ſentiment or image which I mean to preſent: my ſubject furniſhes me with the manner. When I make my characters ſpeak, all the art I employ is to fancy myſelf preſent at their converſation, and to write down what I imagine I hear. In general, the moſt ſimple imitation of nature, in the manners and lan-

guage, is what I have endeavoured in theſe tales; if they have not this merit, they have none.

I propoſed, ſome years ſince, under the article Dialogue, in the Encyclopedia, to baniſh the *ſaid he*, and *ſaid ſhe*, from lively and animated dialogue. I have made the experiment in theſe tales, and I think it has ſucceeded. This manner of rendering the narration more rapid is uncouth only at firſt; as ſoon as we are accuſtomed to it, it makes the talent of reading well appear with greater luſtre.

The ſucceſs which the ſtory of Soliman has had upon the ſtage, as treated by a gentleman who writes with much eaſe and elegance, permits me to hope that the ſame uſe will be made of ſome of theſe little pictures of human life; and for the future I ſhall employ myſelf (as I have done in the three new tales, The Good Huſband, The Connoiſſeur, and School of Fathers) in chuſing ſtories eaſy to be brought upon the ſtage, in order to give authors leſs trouble.

MORAL TALES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

Alcibiades, or Self.

NATURE and fortune seemed to have conspired towards the happiness of Alcibiades. Riches, talents, person, birth, the flower of youth, and of health; what titles for the possession of every foppery! Alcibiades had but one; he wanted to be loved for *himself* only. From the lightest coquette up to the greatest prude, he had seduced every female in Athens----but in loving him, was it really *himself* that they loved? This whimsical piece of delicacy seized him one morning as he was just come from paying his court to a prude: this is the moment for reflection. The thoughts of Alcibiades turned upon what is called the *sentimental*, the *metaphysics* of love. 'I am a pretty fool,' said he, 'to throw away my attention on a woman who perhaps loves me only for her own sake! I will know the truth of it, by all the gods! and if that be the case, she may look out among our prize-fighters for a lover to serve in my place.'

The charming prude, according to custom, still opposed some feeble resistance to the desires of Alcibiades. It was a dreadful affair! she could not even think of it without blushing! it was necessary to be smitten as deeply as she was, in order to come to such a resolution! She could have wished for all the world that he were less young and less pressing! Alcibiades took her at her word. 'I perceive, Madam,' said he one day, 'that these compliments cost you dear. Well, I am determined to give you a proof of the most perfect love. Yes, I consent, since you will have it so, that our *souls* only may be united, and I give you my word that I will ask nothing more.'

The prude commended this resolution with an air sufficient to have destroyed it. Alcibiades, however,

kept to the text. She was ſurpriſed and piqued; but was obliged to diſſemble.

The day following, every temptation which the moſt enchanting diſhabille could afford was made uſe of. The livelineſs of deſire ſparkled in her eyes; a voluptuous negligence in her air. The ſlighteſt covering, the moſt favourable diſorder, every thing about her invited Alcibiades to forget himſelf. He perceived the ſnare. 'What a victory,' ſaid he to her, 'Madam! what a victory have I now to gain over myſelf! I ſee plainly that Love is putting me to the trial, and I am glad of it. The delicacy of my ſentiments ſhall appear with greater luſtre. Theſe coverings, ſo thin and tranſparent; theſe couches of which Pleaſure herſelf ſeems to have formed her throne; your beauty; my deſires; how many enemies are theſe to ſubdue! Ulyſſes could not have eſcaped them; Hercules would have fallen before them. I will be wiſer than Ulyſſes, and leſs frail than Hercules. Yes, I will convince you, that the ſingle pleaſure of loving can take place of all other pleaſures.'---'You are a charming creature,' ſaid ſhe; 'and I may pride myſelf in having a very extraordinary lover! all I dread is, leſt your paſſion ſhould be weakened by its rigour.'--'On the contrary,' interrupted Alcibiades briſkly, 'it will only become more ardent.' ---'But, my dear child, you are young; there are moments when we are not maſters of ourſelves; and I ſhould think your fidelity in great danger, if I were to deliver you up to your deſires.'---'Be eaſy, Madam, I will be anſwerable for every thing. If I can conquer my deſires towards you, who is there towards whom I ſhall not be maſter of them?'---'You promiſe me at leaſt,' ſaid ſhe, 'that if they become too violent, you will fairly confeſs it? Do not let any miſtaken baſhfulneſs reſtrain you. Do not pique yourſelf on keeping your word with me: there is nothing I would ſooner pardon you, than an inſtance of infidelity.'---'Yes, Madam, I will confeſs my weakneſs to you with the greateſt ſincerity in the world, whenever I am ready to

yield

yield to it: but suffer me, at least, to try my own strength; I feel that it will yet go a great way, and I hope that love will give me new force.' The prude was now quite enraged; but, without giving herself the lye, she could not complain. She still checked herself, in hopes that on a new trial Alcibiades would give way. He received the day after, as soon as he awoke, a billet conceived in these terms---

"I HAVE passed a most cruel night; come to see me! I cannot live without you!"

He arrives at the prude's. Her window-curtains were but half open: a gentle day stole into the apartment on waves of purple. The prude was yet in a bed strewed with roses. 'Come,' said she to him, with a plaintive voice; 'come, and ease my inquietudes. A frightful dream has disturbed me all night. I thought I saw you at the feet of a rival. Oh! I shudder at it even yet; I have already told you, Alcibiades, that I cannot live under the apprehensions of your proving unfaithful; my misfortune would be the more cutting, as I should myself be the cause; and I would at least have nothing to reproach myself. It is in vain for you to promise me that you will subdue yourself; you are too young to be able to do so long. Do I not know you? I perceive that I have required too much of you; I am sensible that it is imprudent and cruel to impose such hard terms on you.' As she spoke these words with the most touching air in the world, Alcibiades threw himself at her feet. 'I am very unhappy, Madam,' said he, 'if you have not a sufficient esteem for me, to believe me capable of attaching myself to you by the ties of sentiment only! After all, of what have I deprived myself? Of that which is a dishonour to love. I blush to see that you set any value on such a sacrifice. But were it as great as you imagine it, I should but have the more glory.'---'No, my dear Alcibiades,' said the prude, giving him at the same time her hand, 'I wish not for a sacrifice

that

that coſts you ſo dear; I am too well aſſured and too much pleaſed, with the pure and delicate love you have ſo fully teſtified for me. Be happy; I conſent to it.'---'I am ſo, Madam,' cried he, 'in the pleaſure of living for you. Ceaſe to ſuſpect and complain of me; you ſee before you the moſt faithful, moſt tender, and moſt reſpectful of lovers.'---'And the fooliſheſt!' interrupted ſhe, drawing the curtains roughly, and calling to her ſlaves. Alcibiades ſallied out in a rage, to find that he had loved only like another man, and fully reſolved never more to ſee a woman who had taken him merely for her own pleaſure. 'It is not thus,' ſaid he, 'that we love in the age of innocence; and if the young Glycerium ſhould feel for me what her eyes ſeem to declare, I am very certain it muſt be love in its utmoſt purity.'

Glycerium, juſt fifteen years, began already to excite the wiſhes of the handſomeſt young men. Let us form to ourſelves the image of a roſe-bud juſt opening; ſuch were the freſhneſs and ſplendor of her beauty.

Alcibiades preſented himſelf, and his rivals diſappeared. It was not yet the cuſtom at Athens to marry, in order to hate and deſpiſe one another the next day; but they gave the young folks time, before wedlock, to ſee and converſe with each other with a becoming freedom: the young ladies did not commit the care of their virtue to their guardians; they were diſcreet of themſelves. Modeſty did not begin to make a feeble reſiſtance, till after it was robbed of the honours of victory. Glycerium's made the handſomeſt defence. Alcibiades omitted nothing to ſurpriſe or win her. He extolled the young Athenian lady for her talents, her graces, her beauty; he made her perceive in every thing ſhe ſaid, a refinement ſhe never meant to give it, and a delicacy of which ſhe had not ſo much as thought. What a pity, that with ſo many charms ſhe was not endowed with a ſenſible heart! 'I adore you;' ſaid he to her, 'and I am happy if you love me! Do not be afraid to tell me ſo; an ingenuous candour is the vir-

tue

tue peculiar to your age. It is in vain that they have given the name of prudence to diſſimulation: that beautiful mouth is not made to diſguiſe the ſentiments of your heart; let it rather be the organ of Love, ſince it was for himſelf that he formed it.'---'If you would have me be ſincere,' replied Glycerium, with a modeſty mingled with tenderneſs, 'contrive at leaſt that I may be ſo without bluſhing. I would not diſguiſe the ſentiments of my heart, neither would I violate my duty; and I ſhould betray either the one or the other, if I were to ſay more.' Glycerium wiſhed that their marriage ſhould be agreed upon before ſhe explained herſelf. Alcibiades wanted her to explain herſelf before they ſhould think of marriage. 'It will be a fine time, indeed,' ſaid he, 'to aſſure me of your love, when marriage ſhall have made it a duty, and I ſhall have reduced you to the neceſſity of counterfeiting: it is now that you are free, it would pleaſe me to hear from that mouth the diſintereſted confeſſion of a natural and pure ſentiment.'---'Well, then, be content, and reproach me not with wanting a ſenſible heart; it has at leaſt been ſo ſince I have ſeen you. I eſteem you ſufficiently to truſt you with the ſecret of my heart; but now it has eſcaped me, I aſk one favour of you: it is, not to requeſt any more private interviews, till you have adjuſted the affair with thoſe on whom I depend.' The confeſſion which Alcibiades had juſt obtained would have completed the happineſs of any other leſs difficult lover; but his whim ſtill poſſeſſed him. He wanted ſtill to ſee whether he was loved for *himſelf*. 'I will not conceal from you,' ſaid he, 'that the offer which I am going to make, may not be attended with ſucceſs. Your relations received me with a cold civility, which I ſhould have taken for a diſmiſſion, if the pleaſure which I have in ſeeing you had not overcome my delicacy; but if I oblige your father to explain himſelf, there will no longer be any room for diſſembling. He is a member of the Areopagus: Socrates, the moſt virtuous of men, is there ſuſpected

and

and odious; I am the friend and diſciple of Socrates, and I greatly fear that the hatred they have for him may extend to me. My apprehenſions, perhaps, carry me too far; but, at laſt, if your father ſacrifice us to his politics, if he refuſes to give me your hand, what do you determine to do?'---'To be unhappy,' replied Glycerium; 'and to ſubmit to my deſtiny.'---'You will ſee me then no more?'---'If they forbid me to ſee you, I muſt obey.'---'You will obey then, alſo, if they promiſe another huſband to you?'---'I ſhall become the victim of my duty.'---'And out of duty, likewiſe, you will love the huſband they ſhall chuſe for you?'---'I ſhall endeavour not to hate him. But what queſtions you put to me! What would you think of me yourſelf, if I entertained any other ſentiments?'---'That you loved me as you ought to love me.'---'It is too true that I do love you.'---'No, Glycerium! Love knows no law; he is above all obſtacles: but to do you juſtice, this ſentiment is too great for your age. It requires firm and courageous ſouls, whom difficulties animate, and ill-fortune does not ſhock. Such a paſſion, I confeſs, is rare. To wiſh for an eſtate, a name, and a fortune, at one's diſpoſal; to throw one's ſelf, in ſhort, into the arms of a huſband, to protect one againſt one's parents; this is what is now called love, but what I call a deſire of independence.'

'This is downright tyranny,' ſaid Glycerium, with tears in her eyes, 'to add injury to reproaches! I have ſaid nothing to you but what was tender and honeſt. Did I balance one moment to ſacrifice my lovers to you? Did I heſitate to confeſs to you your triumph? What is it you aſk farther of me!'---'I aſk of you,' ſaid he, 'to ſwear to me a conſtancy proof againſt every thing; to ſwear to me, that you will be mine, whatever happens; and that you will be only mine.'---'Indeed, Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'that is what I will never do.'---'Indeed, Madam, I ought to have expected this anſwer, and I bluſh that I have expoſed myſelf to it.' At theſe words he retired, tranſported with anger, and

ſaying

saying to himself---'I was well set to work to fall in love with a child, who has no soul, and whose heart disposes of itself only by the advice of her parents.'

There was in Athens a young widow who appeared incontolable for the loss of her husband. Alcibiades paid her, as all the world did, his first devoirs, with that grave air which decorum enjoins towards persons afflicted. The widow found a sensible consolation in the discourses of this disciple of Socrates, and Alcibiades an inexpressible charm in the tears of the widow. Their moral discourses, however, grew more lively every day. They joined in praises on the good qualities of the deceased, and agreed as to his bad ones. He was the honestest man in the world! but his understanding, strictly speaking, was but ordinary. He had a pretty good figure, but without elegance or grace: full of attention and care, but his assiduity was tiresome. In short, she was in despair for having lost so good a husband, but fully resolved not to take a second. 'What,' said Alcibiades, 'at your age renounce matrimony!'---'I confess to you,' said the widow, 'that as averse as I am to slavery, yet liberty frightens me as much. At my age, delivered up to my own guidance, and being quite independent, what will become of me!' Alcibiades failed not to insinuate, that between the bondage of matrimony and the abandoned state of widowhood, there was a middle path; and that with respect to decorums, nothing in the world was easier to be reconciled to them than a tender attachment. She was startled at the proposition; she had rather die! 'Die at the age of loves and graces!' It was easy to shew the ridiculousness of such a project, and the widow dreaded nothing so much as ridicule. It was resolved, therefore, that she should not die; it was decided, that she could not even live without being protected by somebody: as this somebody could be only a lover; and, without prejudice, she knew no man more worthy than Alcibiades to [illegible] her. He redoubled his assiduities: at first she complained of them; in

in a ſhort time ſhe accuſtomed herſelf to them; at length ſhe aſked the meaning of them; and to avoid all imprudence, they ſettled matters decently.

Alcibiades was now at the pinnacle of his deſires. It was neither the pleaſures of love, nor the advantages of matrimony, that were to be loved in him; it was he *himſelf*, at leaſt he imagined ſo. He triumphed over the grief, prudence and pride of a woman, who required nothing in return but ſecrecy and love. The widow, on her ſide, plumed herſelf on holding under her dominion the object of the jealouſy of all the beauties of Greece. But how few perſons know how to enjoy without a confidante! Alcibiades, while a lover in ſecret, was only a common lover like another man; and the greateſt triumph is no farther pleaſing, than in proportion as it is public. An author has ſaid, that it is not enough to be in a fine country, if we have no one whom we can ſay to---'What a fine country!' The widow found, in like manner, that it was not ſufficient to have Alcibiades for a lover, if ſhe could not tell any one---'I have Alcibiades for a lover.' She communicated it therefore in confidence to an intimate friend, who communicated it again to her lover, and he to all Greece. Alcibiades, aſtoniſhed that his adventure was become public, thought it his duty to acquaint the widow of it, who accuſed him of indiſcretion. 'If I were capable of any ſuch thing,' ſaid he, 'I ſhould ſuffer thoſe reports to prevail, which I had been deſirous of propagating; but I wiſh for nothing ſo much as to ſtifle them. Let us be upon our guard: let us avoid meeting in public; and whenever accident may happen to bring us together, be not offended at the ſtrange and careleſs air I ſhall affect towards you.' The widow received all this but very indifferently. 'I perceive, indeed,' ſaid ſhe, 'that you will be the more at eaſe for it: aſſiduities and attention confine you too much, and you aſk nothing better than the power of wandering. But for me, what ſort of a countenance would you have me put on? I know not how to act the

coquette

coquette: weary of every thing in your abſence, penſive and embarraſſed before you, I ſhall have the appearance of being trifled with; and, in fact, perhaps *ſhall* be ſo. If they are perſuaded that you poſſeſs me, there is no remedy: the world is not to be brought back. Where will be the good, then, of this pretended myſtery? We ſhall have the appearance, you of a diſengaged lover, I of a forſaken miſtreſs.' This anſwer from the widow ſurpriſed Alcibiades: her conduct compleated his aſtoniſhment. Day after day ſhe gave herſelf greater freedoms and liberty: at any public ſhow ſhe expected that he ſhould be ſeated behind her, and that he ſhould hand her to the temple, and be of the party in her walks and ſuppers. She affected above all things to have him among her rivals! and in the midſt of them it was her pleaſure that he ſhould ſee nobody but her: ſhe commanded him in an abſolute tone of voice, viewed him with an eye of myſtery, ſmiled at him with an air of meaning, and whiſpered him in the ear with that familiarity which betrays to the world the connexion there is between two perſons. He ſaw plainly that ſhe led him every where like a ſlave chained to her car. 'I have taken airs for ſentiments,' ſaid he with a ſigh; 'it is not myſelf that ſhe loves; it is the glory of having conquered me; ſhe would deſpiſe me if ſhe had no rivals. Let me teach her, that vanity is unworthy to fix love.'

The envy of the philoſophers could not forgive Socrates, that he taught nothing in public but truth and virtue: they preferred exciting [illegible] Areopagus the heavieſt complaints against this dangerous citizen. Socrates, employed in doing good, let them [illegible] the harm of him they thought proper; but Alcibiades, devoted to Socrates, oppoſed [illegible] enemies. He preſented himſelf before the magiſtrates; he reproached them with liſtening to [illegible] ſuggeſtions, and countenancing impoſtors; and ſpoke of [illegible] maſter as the [illegible] wiſeſt of mortals. Enthuſiaſtic [illegible] eloquence in the conferences which he had with one of the members of the

Areopagus, in presence of the wife of the judge, he spoke with so much sweetness and vehemence, with so much sense and reason, his beauty glowed with a fire so noble and affecting, that this virtuous woman was affected to the bottom of her soul. She took her perturbation for admiration. 'Socrates,' said she to her spouse, 'is really a divine man, if he makes such disciples. I am charmed with the eloquence of this young man: it is impossible to hear him without improvement.' The magistrate, who was far from doubting the prudence of his wife, informed Alcibiades of the praises she bestowed on him. Alcibiades was pleased with them, and asked the husband's permission to cultivate the esteem of his wife. The good man invited him to his house. 'My wife,' said he, 'is a philosopher too, and I should be very glad to see you disputing together.' Rhodope, (for that was the name of this respectable matron) prided herself, indeed, on her philosophy: and that of Socrates from the mouth of Alcibiades pleased her more and more. I forgot to mention that she was of that age in which women are past being *pretty*, but in which they may be still reckoned *handsome*; in which perhaps they are a little less lovely, but in which they know better how to love. Alcibiades paid his devoirs to her. She distrusted neither him nor herself. The study of wisdom filled up all their conversations: the lessons of Socrates passed from the soul of Alcibiades into that of Rhodope, and in their passage gathered new charms: it was a rivulet of pure water running over flowers. Rhodope became every day more changed: she accustomed herself to define, according to the principles of Socrates, wisdom and virtue, truth and justice. Friendship came in its turn; and, after examining its essence---'I should be glad,' said Rhodope, 'to know what difference Socrates makes between love and friendship?'---'Though Socrates is not one of those philosophers,' replied Alcibiades, 'who analyse every thing, yet he distinguishes three sorts of love: the one gross and base, which is common to us with

other

other animals; that is to say, the impulse of necessity, and the relish of pleasure. The other pure and celestial, by which we approach the gods; and this is the most ardent and tender friendship. Lastly, the third, which participates of the two first, preserves the medium between the gods and the brutes, and seems the most natural to man; this is the union of souls cemented by that of the senses.'

'Socrates gives the preference to the poor charm of Friendship: but as he thinks it no crime in nature to contain spirit united to matter, so he thinks it none in man to favour of this mixture in his inclinations and pleasures. Above all, when Nature has taken pains to unite a fine person with a fine soul, he would have us respect the work of Nature: for however ill-favoured Socrates may be himself, he does justice to beauty. If he knew for example, with whom I hold these discourses concerning philosophy, I make no doubt but he would reproach me for having so ill employed my lessons.'----'A truce with your gallantry,' interrupted Rhodope, 'I am talking to a sage; and young as he is, my wish is, that he would instruct, and not flatter me! Let us return to the principles of your master. He permits love, you say, but does he know its errors and excesses?'---'Yes, Madam, as he knows those of drunkenness, and nevertheless allows the use of wine.'---'The comparison is not just,' said Rhodope; 'we may chuse our wines, and moderate the use of them: have we the same liberty in love? It is without choice or measure.'---'Yes, without doubt,' rejoined Alcibiades, 'in a man without morals or principles; but Socrates begins by making men wise and virtuous, and it is to them only that he permits love. He well knows that they will love nothing but what is honest, and there we run no risque of loving to excess. The mutual inclination of two virtuous souls cannot but render them still more virtuous.' Every answer of Alcibiades removed some difficulty in the mind of Rhodope, and rendered her inclination for him more insinuating

and rapid. There remained now only conjugal fidelity, and there was the Gordian knot. Rhodope was not one of thoſe with whom one might cut it, there was a neceſſity for undoing it for her; Alcibiades ſounded her at a diſtance. As they were one day upon the ſubject of ſociety---'Neceſſity,' ſaid Alcibiades, 'was united mankind, common intereſt has regulated their duties, and the abuſes of them have produced laws. All this is ſacred; but all this is foreign to our ſoul. As men are connected but externally, the mutual duties which they impoſe upon each other paſs not beyond the ſurface. Nature alone is the legiſlatreſs of the heart: ſhe alone can inſpire with gratitude, friendſhip and love. Sentiment cannot be a duty by inſtitution. Thence comes it, for example, that in marriage we can neither promiſe nor require any more than corporal attachment.' Rhodope who had reliſhed the principle, was terrified at the conſequence. 'What,' ſaid ſhe, 'could I have promiſed my huſband only to behave as if I loved him!'---'What elſe was it in your power to promiſe him?' 'To love him in reality,' replied ſhe, in a very indeterminate tone of voice. 'He has promiſed you, then, in his turn, to be not only amiable, but of all men the moſt amiable in your eyes?'---'He has promiſed me to do all in his power towards it, and he keeps his word.'---'Very well, you alſo do all in your power to love him only: yet neither the one nor the other of you are ſure of ſucceſs.'---'This is frightful philoſophy!' cried Rhodope. 'Happily, Madam, it is not ſo frightful: there would be too many criminals, if conjugal love were an eſſential duty.'---'What, Sir! do you doubt it?'---'I doubt nothing, Madam, but my frankneſs may diſpleaſe you, and I do not ſee you diſpoſed to imitate it. I thought I was ſpeaking to a philoſopher, but I find I was ſpeaking only to a woman of a lively genius. I retire, confounded at my miſtake; but I would give you at parting an inſtance of ſincerity. I believe I have morals as pure, as honeſt, as the moſt virtuous woman; I know, too, as well

as ſhe, to what the honour and religion of an oath engages us; I know the laws of marriage, and the crime of violating them: however had I married a thouſand women, I ſhould not have reproached myſelf in the leaſt for thinking you alone handſomer, and a thouſand times more amiable, than theſe thouſand women put together. According to you, in order to be virtuous, we muſt have neither heart nor eyes; I congratulate you on being arrived at ſuch a degree of perfection!'

This diſcourſe pronounced with a tone of vexation and anger, left Rhodope in an aſtoniſhment from which ſhe had ſome difficulty to recover. From that time Alcibiades diſcontinued his viſits. She had diſcovered in his adieus a warmer intereſt than that occaſioned by the heat of the diſpute: ſhe perceived on her own ſide, that the loſs of his philoſophical conferences was not what ſhe regretted moſt. A diſlike of every thing, a diſguſt to herſelf, a ſecret repugnance to the attentions of her huſband; laſtly, the confuſion and bluſhes which the name alone of Alcibiades created. All theſe things made her dread the danger of ſeeing him again; and yet ſhe burned with the deſire of ſeeing him once more. Her huſband brought him back to her. As ſhe had given him to underſtand, that they had differed a little in a diſpute concerning words, the magiſtrate rallied Alcibiades on it, and obliged him to return. The interview was grave; the huſband amuſed himſelf with it ſome time; but his affairs ſoon called him away. 'I leave you,' ſaid he to them; 'and I hope, that after having quarrelled about words, you will come to a reconciliation upon things.' The good man meant no harm: but his wife could not help bluſhing for him.

After a pretty long ſilence Alcibiades began---'Our conferences, Rhodope, were once my delight; and with all the tenderneſs imaginable to diſſipation, you had taught me to relliſh and purſue the charms of ſolitude. I was no longer one of the world, I was no longer myſelf, I was wholly yours entirely yours. Think not that a baliſh hope of reducing and leading you

aſtray had ſtolen into my ſoul: virtue, much more than wit and beauty, had enſlaved me to your laws. But loving you with a paſſion as delicate as it was tender, I flattered myſelf that I ſhould have inſpired you with the like. This pure and virtuous love offends you, or rather is only troubleſome to you; for 'tis impoſſible that you ſhould condemn it in reality. All that I feel for you, Madam, you yourſelf feel for another, you have confeſſed it to me. I cannot reproach you on the account, nor complain of it; but allow, that I am not happy. There is perhaps but one woman in Athens who really has love for her huſband, and it is for this very woman that I am diſtracted.'---'Indeed, you are a great ſimpleton for the diſciple of a ſage,' ſaid Rhodope with a ſmile. He replied very gravely; ſhe anſwered again jeeringly. He took her by the hand, ſhe grew angry; he kiſſed her hand, ſhe would have withdrawn; he detained her, ſhe bluſhed; and the heads of both the philoſophers were turned topſy-turvy.

It is unneceſſary to ſay how much Rhodope was grieved, and how ſhe conſoled herſelf. All this is eaſily ſuppoſed in a virtuous and captivated woman.

She trembled above all for the honour and peace of her huſband. Alcibiades ſwore inviolable ſecreſy; but the malice of the public rendered any indiſcretion on his part abſolutely needleſs. It was well known that he was not the ſort of man to talk for ever about philoſophy to an amiable woman. His aſſiduities created ſuſpicions; ſuſpicions in the world always go as far as certainties. It was decided that Alcibiades *had* Rhodope. The report came to the ears of her huſband: he was far from giving credit to it; but his honour, and that of his wife, required that ſhe ſhould put herſelf above ſuſpicion. He ſpoke to her of the neceſſity of putting away Alcibiades, with ſo much good-humour, reaſon, and confidence, that ſhe had not the courage to reply. Nothing is more grievous to a ſoul naturally ſenſible and virtuous, than the receiving marks of eſteem which it no longer deſerves.

Rhodope

Rhodope from that moment resolved never more to see Alcibiades; and the more weakness she perceived in herself towards him, the more firmness she displayed in her resolution of breaking with him. In vain did he endeavour to subdue her by his eloquence. 'I have suffered myself to be persuaded,' said she to him, 'that the secret injuries we do a husband were nothing; but the very appearances of them become real injuries from the moment they attack his honour, or disturb his peace. I may be willing to believe that I am not obliged to love my husband; but to render him happy, as far as in me lies, is an indispensible duty.'---'So then, Madam, you prefer his happiness to mine?'---- 'I prefer,' said she to him, 'my engagements to my inclinations: this word, which has now escaped me, shall be my last weakness.'---'Alas! I thought myself beloved,' cried Alcibiades with displeasure. 'Farewel, madam; I see plainly that I owed my happiness only to the caprice of a moment. See! these are our virtuous women!' continued he. 'When they take to us, it is an excess of love; when they forsake us, it is an effort of virtue; and, at the bottom, this love and this virtue are nothing more than a mere phantasy, which seizes them at one time, and leaves them at another.' 'I have deserved this affront!' said Rhodope, bursting into tears. 'A woman who has not maintained a proper respect for herself, is not to expect it from others. It is very just that our weaknesses should bring us into contempt.'

Alcibiades, after so many proofs, was thoroughly convinced, that there was no longer any dependence upon women; but he had not confidence enough in himself to expose himself to new dangers; and fully resolved as he was not to love again, he yet perceived in a confused manner the necessity of loving.

In this secret inquietude, while he was walking one day on the sea-shore, he saw a woman advancing towards him, whose gait and beauty might have made him take her for a goddess, if he had not discovered

her to be the courtezan Erigone. He would have ſhunned her, but ſhe made up directly to him. 'Alcibiades,' ſaid ſhe, 'philoſophy will make a fool of you. Tell me, my dear boy, is it a time at your age, to bury one's ſelf alive in theſe chimerical and melancholy ideas? Take my advice, and be happy; we have always time enough to be wiſe.'---'I have no ambition to be wiſe,' ſaid he to her, 'but in order to be happy.'------'A pretty road indeed to happineſs! Do you think I wear myſelf out in the ſtudy of wiſdom? Not I. And yet is there any of your honeſt women more content with her condition? This Socrates has ſpoiled you: it is a pity! but yet there is a cure for you, if you will take ſome leſſons from me. I have had a deſign upon you for ſome time: I am young, handſome, and ſenſible; and I believe I may ſay, without vanity, of as much value as any long-bearded philoſopher of them all. They teach mortification! horrible ſcience! Come to my ſchool, and I will teach you the art of enjoyment.'---'I have learned it but too well to my coſt,' replied Alcibiades: 'oſtentation and pleaſure have ruined me. I am no longer that opulent and magnificent perſon whom his follies rendered ſo famous, and I have not at preſent even a ſupport, but at the expence of my creditors.'---'Very well; and is it that which chagrins you? Be comforted; I have gold and jewels in abundance, and the follies of others ſhall ſerve to repair thine.'---'You flatter me greatly replied Alcibiades, 'by theſe obliging offers; but I ſhall not make an ill uſe of them.'----'What do you mean by this delicacy? Does not love make all things common? Beſides, who will imagine that you owe any thing to me? You are not fool enough to boaſt of it, and I have too much pride to publiſh it myſelf.'---'You ſurpriſe me; for, to ſay the truth, you have the character of being avaricious.'---'Avaricious! Aye, to be ſure, with thoſe whom I do not love, in order to be laviſh to the man that I love. My diamonds are very dear to me, but you are ſtill dearer: if you want them,

them, ſay but the word; to-morrow I will ſacrifice them to you.'---'Your generoſity,' replied Alcibiades, 'confounds and penetrates me: I would give you the pleaſure of exerciſing it, if I were able at leaſt to ſhew my gratitude like a young fellow; but I ought not to diſſemble with you, that the immoderate uſe of pleaſures has not only ruined my fortune, but I have found out the ſecret of growing old before my time.'---'I believe ſo,' replied Erigone ſmiling; 'you have known ſo many virtuous women! But I am going to ſurpriſe you ſtill more: a lively and delicate ſentiment is all I expect from you; and if your heart, too, is not ruined, you have yet enough to ſatisfy me.'----'You rally,' ſaid Alcibiades. 'Not at all. If I took a Hercules for a lover, I ſhould wiſh him to prove himſelf a Hercules; but I would have Alcibiades love me only like Alcibiades, with all the delicacy of that tranquil pleaſure whoſe ſource is in the heart. If on the ſenſual ſide you intend me any ſupriſe, ſo much the better! I allow you every thing, and exact nothing.'---'Indeed,' ſaid Alcibiades, 'I am as much charmed as aſtoniſhed; and but for the uneaſineſs and jealouſy I ſhould feel on account of my rivals---' 'Rivals! you ſhall have none but unfortunate ones, I give you my word. Truſt me, my friend, women do not change but either through coquetry or curioſity; and with me, you know, both the one and the other are exhauſted. If I were unacquainted with mankind, the promiſe I now make you might be a little raſh; but in ſacrificing them to you, I know very well what I am doing. After all there is one certain way of making you eaſy: you have a farm at a good diſtance from Athens, where no impertinents will come to trouble us. Do you think yourſelf capable of ſupporting a *tête à tête* there with me? We will ſet out whenever you will.'---'No,' ſaid ſaid he to her, 'my engagements detain me for ſome time in town; but if we ſhould ſettle matters together, need we advertiſe ourſelves?'---'Juſt as you pleaſe: if you think proper to own me, I ſhall proclaim you; if

you chuſe ſecrecy, I will be more diſcreet and reſerved than a prude. As I am dependent on nobody, and love you merely for your own ſake, I neither fear nor deſire to attract the eyes of the public. Put no conſtraint on yourſelf; conſult your heart; and if I am agreeable to you, my ſupper is ready for us. Let us go and call the gods of joy and pleaſure to witneſs our vows!' Alcibiades ſeized Erigone by the hand, and kiſſed it with tranſport. 'At laſt,' ſaid he, 'I have found true love; and from this day my happineſs commences.'

They arrive at the courtezan's. The moſt delicate and exquiſite of every thing that taſte could invent to gratify all the ſenſes at once, ſeemed to have concurred in this ſupper to enchant Alcibiades. It was in ſuch an apartment that Venus received Adonis, when the Loves poured out nectar, and the Graces ſerved ambroſia. 'When I took,' ſaid Erigone, 'the name of one of the miſtreſſes of Bacchus, I did not flatter myſelf with poſſeſſing one day a mortal handſomer than the conqueror of India. What do I ſay? a mortal! It is Bacchus, Apollo, and the god of love himſelf, that I poſſeſs: and I am this moment the happy rival of Erigone, Calliope, and Pſyche. I crown you then, my young god, with the vine-leaf, the laurel, and the myrtle. May I be able to bring before your eyes all the attractions adored by thoſe immortals, whoſe charms are united in you!' Alcibiades, intoxicated with ſelf-love and deſire, diſplayed all thoſe enchanting talents which might have ſeduced wiſdom itſelf. He ſung his triumph on the lyre; he compared his happineſs to that of the gods; and he found himſelf happier than they, as he had before been found to be more amiable.

After ſupper he was conducted into a neighbouring apartment, but ſeparated from that of Erigone. 'Repoſe yourſelf, my dear Alcibiades,' ſaid ſhe, leaving him: 'may love poſſeſs you in your dreams of nothing but me! Vouchſafe at leaſt to make me believe ſo; and if any other object ſhould preſent itſelf to your imagination, ſpare my delicacy, and by a complaiſant [illegible]

repair

repair the involuntary wrong you have done me in your ſleep.'----' Ah, what,' replied Alcibiades tenderly, 'will you reduce me to the pleaſure of illuſion?'----'You ſhall never have with me,' ſaid ſhe, 'any other laws than your deſires.' At theſe words ſhe withdrew into her own apartment, humming a tune. Alcibiades cried out in a tranſport of joy----'O modeſty! O virtue! what then are ye, if in a heart where you reſide not there is found pure and chaſte love; love, ſuch as it deſcended from the ſkies to animate man while yet innocent, and to embelliſh human nature!' In this exceſs of joy and admiration he gets up, and goes to ſurpriſe Erigone.

Erigone received him with a ſmile. Inſpired with a ſenſibility tempered with delicacy, her heart ſeemed only to take fire from the deſires of Alcibiades. Two months glided away in this delicious union, without the courtezan's ever belying for one moment the character ſhe had aſſumed; but the fatal day now approached that was to diſſipate ſo flattering an illuſion.

The preparations for the Olympic Games engroſſed the converſation of all the youth of Athens. Erigone ſpoke of theſe games, and of the glory of bearing away the prize in them, with ſo much warmth, that ſhe made her lover form the deſign of entering into the courſe, and conceive a hope of triumphing. But he wanted to delight her by an agreeable ſurpriſe.

The day on which theſe games were to be celebrated, Alcibiades left her, in order to repair thither. 'If they ſhould ſee us together,' ſaid he, 'at theſe ſpectacles, they would not fail of drawing inferences; and we have agreed to avoid even ſuſpicion. Let us repair to the circus, each on different ſides. We will return here after the feaſt, and I expect you at ſupper.'

The people aſſemble, and ſeat themſelves. Erigone preſents herſelf, and attracts the eyes of all. The handſome women view her with envy, the ugly with indignation; the old men with regret, and the young with univerſal tranſport. However, the eyes of Erigone, wandering over the vaſt amphitheatre, looked

for nothing but Alcibiades. All on a ſudden ſhe ſaw appear before the barrier the courſers and the chariot of her lover. She durſt not believe her eyes; but ſoon after, a young man, more beautiful than the god of love, and more gallant than Mars, vaults into the glittering car. 'It is Alcibiades! It is he himſelf!' The name paſſes from mouth to mouth; ſhe hears no longer any thing around her but theſe words: 'It is Alcibiades, the glory and ornament of the Athenian youth!' Erigone turned pale with joy: he caſt a look at her which ſeemed to be the preſage of victory. The chariots range themſelves in a line, the barrier opens, the ſignal is given, the ground reſounds in cadence under the feet of the horſes, a cloud of duſt enfolds them. Erigone no longer breathes: all her ſoul is in her eyes, and her eyes purſue the chariot of her lover through the clouds of duſt. The chariots ſeparate; the ſwifteſt get the ſtart; that of Alcibiades is of the number. Erigone trembling puts up vows to Caſtor, to Pollux, to Hercules, to Apollo. At laſt ſhe perceives Alcibiades at the head, and having only one who kept pace with him. It was then that fear and hope held her ſoul ſuſpended. The wheels of the two chariots ſeemed to turn on the ſame axle, and the horſes guided by the ſame reins. Alcibiades redoubles his ardour, and the heart of Erigone begins to dilate; his rival increaſes his ſpeed, and the heart of Erigone ſhuts itſelf up again: every alternate revolution produces a ſudden change in her. The two chariots arrive at the goal; but Alcibiades's antagoniſt has outſtripped him by a ſingle ſhoot forwards. Immediately a thouſand cries make the air reſound with the name of Piſicrates of Samos. Alcibiades, confounded, retires in his chariot; his head hung down, and the reins floating looſely, avoiding that ſide of the circus, where Erigone, overwhelmed with confuſion, had hid her face beneath her veil. It appeared to her as if all eyes were fixed upon her, to reproach her for loving a man who had juſt been conquered. A general murmur, however, is heard, ro-

her; she looks up to see the cause; it is Pisicrates, who is bringing back his chariot on the side where she is placed. A new occasion of confusion and grief! But what is her surprise, when the chariot stopping at her feet, she sees the conqueror alight, and present her with the Olympic crown! 'I owe it to you, Madam,' said he, 'and I come to pay you the homage of it.' Let us conceive, if possible, all the emotions of the soul of Erigone at this speech; but love was predominant. 'You owe me nothing,' said she to Pisicrates, blushing; 'my wishes, pardon my frankness, my wishes were not for you.'---'The desire of conquering before you,' replied he, 'has not the less on that account acquired me this glory. If I have not been happy enough to interest you in the contention, let me be at least sufficiently so to interest you in the triumph.' He then pressed her anew, with the most affecting air, to receive his offering: all the people invited her to it by redoubled shouts of applause. Self love at length prevailed over her love for Alcibiades: she received the fatal laurel, to yield, she said, to the acclamations and instances of the people; but who could believe it? She received it with a smiling air; and Pisicrates remounted his chariot intoxicated with love and glory.

As soon as Alcibiades was recovered of his first dejection, 'You are very weak, and very vain,' said he to himself, 'to afflict yourself to this immoderate degree! and for what? because there is found in the world one man more dexterous, or more happy, than thyself. But I see what it is that torments you: you would have been transported to have conquered in the presence of Erigone; and you dread the thought of being loved less, after being vanquished. Do her more justice: Erigone is not like the ordinary run of women; she will be pleased with you for the ardour you have shewn to conquer; and as to your ill success, she will be the first to make you blush for your sensibility on so small a misfortune. Let me go and see her with confidence; I have even cause to rejoice at this moment

of adverſity: it is a new trial of her heart, and Love contrives me a triumph more pleaſing than that of the courſe.' Full of theſe conſoling ideas, he arrives at Erigone's, but finds the chariot of the conqueror at the door.

This was a clap of thunder to him. Shame, indignation, deſpair, ſeize his ſoul. Diſtracted and raging, his diſordered ſteps turn, as it were of themſelves, to the houſe of Socrates.

The good man, who had been preſent at the games, ran out to meet him. 'So!' ſaid he, 'you come to conſole yourſelf with me, becauſe you have been vanquiſhed. I dare ſay, young man, that I ſhould not have ſeen you, had you triumphed. I am not, however, the leſs thankful for the viſit. I love to have people come to me in adverſity. A ſoul intoxicated with its good fortune, vents itſelf wherever it can; the confidence of a ſoul in affliction is more flattering and affecting. Confeſs, however, that your horſes did miracles. Why, you miſſed of the prize only by one ſpring. You may boaſt, therefore, that, next to Piſicrates of Samos, you have the beſt courſers in all Greece; and indeed it is a moſt glorious thing for a man to have excellent horſes!' Alcibiades, confounded at his misfortune, did not even hear the raillery of Socrates. The philoſopher gueſſing at the trouble of his heart by the alteration of his countenance---'What, then,' ſaid he to him in a graver tone, 'does a trifle, a mere childiſh amuſement, affect you thus? If you had loſt an empire, I could ſcarce pardon your being in the ſtate of humiliation and dejection wherein I now ſee you.'----'Ah! my dear maſter,' cried Alcibiades, coming to himſelf, 'how unhappy are we in having ſenſibility! We ought to have a ſoul of marble to live in the age we do.'----'I confeſs,' replied Socrates, 'that ſenſibility coſts us dear ſometimes; but it is ſo good a quality, that we cannot pay too dear for it. Let us know, however, what has befallen you.

Alcibiades recounted to him his adventures with the prude, the young lady, the widow, the magiſtrate's wife.

wife, and the courtezan who at that very inſtant had juſt ſacrificed him to another. 'What is it that you bemoan yourſelf for?' ſaid Socrates, after hearing his complaint; 'it appears to me, that each of them loved you after her manner with the greateſt ſincerity in the world. The prude, for example, loved pleaſure; ſhe found it in you; you deprive her of it, ſhe diſmiſſes you; and ſo with the reſt. It was their own happineſs, never doubt it, that they ſought in their lover. The young lady ſaw in you a huſband whom ſhe could love with freedom and decency; the widow, a glorious triumph which did honour to her beauty; the magiſtrate's wife, an amiable and diſcreet man, with whom, without either danger or noiſe, her philoſophy and her virtue might take ſome relaxation; the courtezan, a man admired, applauded, and univerſally deſired, whom ſhe would have the ſecret pleaſure of poſſeſſing alone, while all the beauties of Greece ſhould vainly diſpute with each other the glory of captivating him.'---'You confeſs, then,' ſaid Alcibiades, 'that not one of them loved me for *myſelf*?'---'For *yourſelf*!' cried the philoſopher; 'ah, my dear child! who has put this ridiculous pretenſion into your head? None love but for themſelves. Friendſhip itſelf, purely ſentimental as it is, founds it's preferences only on perſonal intereſt; and if you demand that it ſhould be diſintereſted, you may begin by renouncing mine. I am amazed,' purſued he, 'to ſee how fooliſh ſelf love is, even in thoſe who have the beſt underſtanding. I ſhould be very glad to know, what is this SELF that you would have them love in you? Birth, fortune, glory, youth, talents, and beauty, are but *accidents*. Nothing of all this is *your*-SELF, and yet this is all that renders you amiable. The *ſelf*, which unites all theſe charms, is no more than the canvas of the tapeſtry: it is the embroidery that gives it value. In loving all theſe endowments in you, they confound them with you. Do not, I adviſe you, run into imaginary diſtinctions; and receive, as it is given you, the reſult of this mix-

ture: it is a coin of which the alloy forms the the consistence, but which loses it's value in the crucible. I am not sorry that your delicacy has detached you from the prude and the widow; nor that the resolution of Rhodope, and the vanity of Erigone, has restored you to liberty: but I regret the loss of Glycerium, and advise you to return to her.'---'You jest!' said Alcibiades; 'she is a mere child, who only wants to be married.'---'Very well, you shall marry her then.'---'Did I hear right? Socrates advise me to marriage!'---'Why not? If your wife be wise and reasonable, you will be a happy man; if she be a wanton or a coquette, you will become a philosopher; you cannot, therefore, do otherwise than gain by it.'

SOLIMAN II.

IT is pleasant to see grave historians racking their brains, in order to find out great causes for great events. Sylla's valet de chambre would perhaps have laught heartily to hear the politicians reason on the abdication of his master; but it is not of Sylla that I am now going to speak.

Soliman II. married his slave; in contempt of the laws of the sultans. It is natural at first to paint to ourselves this slave as an accomplished beauty, with an elevated soul, an uncommon genius, and a profound skill in politics. No such thing: the fact was as follows.

Soliman grew splenetic in the midst of his glory: the various, but ready pleasures of the seraglio, were become insipid to him. 'I am weary,' said he one day, 'of receiving here the caresses of mere machines. These slaves move my pity. Their soft docility has nothing poignant, nothing flattering. It is to hearts nourished in the bosom of liberty, that it would be delightful to make slavery agreeable.'

The whimsies of a sultan are laws to his ministers. Large sums were instantly promised to such as should bring European slaves to the seraglio. In a short time there arrived three, who, like the three Graces, seem-

to have divided among themſelves all the charms of beauty.

Features noble and modeſt, eyes tender and languiſhing, an ingenuous temper, and a ſenſible ſoul, diſtinguiſhed the touching Elmira. The entrance of the ſeraglio, the idea of ſervitude, had chilled her with a mortal terror: Soliman found her in a ſwoon in the arms of his women. He approaches; he recalls her to life; he encourages her; ſhe lifts towards him a pair of large blue eyes, bedewed with tears; he reaches forth his hand to her; he ſupports her himſelf; ſhe follows him with a tottering ſtep. The ſlaves retire; and as ſoon as he is alone with her---'It is not with fear, beautiful Elmira,' ſaid he to her, that I would inſpire you. Forget that you have a maſter; ſee in me only a lover.'----'The name of lover,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'is not leſs unknown to me than that of maſter: and both the one and the other make me tremble. They have told me (and I ſtill ſhudder at the thought) that I am deſtined to your pleaſures. Alas! what pleaſure can it be to tyrannize over weakneſs and innocence! Believe me, I am not capable of the compliances of ſervitude; and the only pleaſure poſſible for you to taſte with me, is that of being generous. Reſtore me to my parents, and my country; and in the reſpect you ſhew for my virtue, my youth, and my misfortunes, merit my gratitude, my eſteem, and my regret.'

This diſcourſe from a ſlave was new to Soliman: his great ſoul was moved by it. 'No,' ſaid he, 'my dear child, I will owe nothing to violence. You charm me! I will make it my happineſs to love and pleaſe you; and I will prefer the torment of never ſeeing you more to that of ſeeing you unhappy. However, before I reſtore you to liberty, give me leave to try, at leaſt, whether it be not poſſible for me to diſſipate that terror which the name of ſlave ſtrikes into you. I aſk only one month's trial; after which, if my love cannot move you, I will avenge myſelf no otherwiſe on your ingratitude, than by delivering you up to the inconſtancy

and perfidy of mankind.'------' Ah! my lord!' cried Elmira, with an emotion mixed with joy, 'how unjuſt are the prejudices of my country, and how little are your virtues known there! Continue ſuch as I now ſee you, and I no longer reckon this day unfortunate.'

Some moments after, ſhe ſaw ſlaves enter, carrying baſkets filled with ſtuffs and valuable trinkets. 'Chuſe,' ſaid the ſultan to her; 'theſe are cloaths, not ornaments, that are here preſented to you: nothing can adorn you.'---' Decide for me,' ſaid Elmira to him, running her eyes over the baſkets. 'Do not conſult me,' replied the ſultan; 'I hate without diſtinction, every thing that can rob me of your charms.' Elmira bluſhed, and the ſultan perceived ſhe preferred the colours moſt favourable to the character of her beauty. He conceiving a pleaſing hope from that circumſtance: for care to adorn one's ſelf is almoſt a deſire to pleaſe.

The month of trial paſſed away in timid gallantries on the part of the ſultan, and on Elmira's ſide in complaiſance and delicate attentions. Her confidence in him increaſed every day without her perceiving it. At firſt he was not permitted to ſee her, but after the buſineſs of the toilette, and on condition to depart when ſhe prepared to undreſs again; in a ſhort time he was admitted both to her toilette and diſhabille. It was there that the plan of their amuſements for that day and the next was formed. Whatever either propoſed was exactly what the other was going to propoſe. Their diſputes turned only on the ſtealing of thoughts. Elmira, in theſe diſputes, perceived not ſome ſmall ſlips which eſcaped her modeſty. A pin miſplaced, or a garter put on unthinkingly, &c. afforded the ſultan pleaſures which he was cautious not to teſtify. He knew (and it was much for a ſultan to know) that it was impolitic to advertiſe modeſty of the dangers to which it expoſes itſelf; that it is never fiercer than when alarmed; and that, in order to ſubdue it, one ſhould render them familiar. Nevertheleſs, the more he diſcovered of Elmira's charms, the more he perceived

his fears increaſe, on account of the approach of the day that might deprive him of them.

The fatal period arrives. Soliman cauſes cheſts to be prepared, filled with ſtuffs, precious ſtones, and perfumes. He repairs to Elmira, followed by theſe preſents. 'It is to-morrow,' ſaid he, 'that I have promiſed to reſtore you to liberty, if you ſtill regret the want of it. I now come to acquit myſelf of my promiſe, and to bid adieu to you for ever.'---'What!' ſaid Elmira trembling, 'is it to morrow? I had forgot it.'---'It is to-morrow,' reſumed the ſultan, 'that, delivered up to my deſpair, I am to become the moſt unhappy of men.'---'You are very cruel, then, to yourſelf, to put me in mind of it!'---'Alas! it depends only on you, Elmira, that I ſhould forget it for ever.'---'I confeſs,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'that your ſorrow touches me; that your proceedings have intereſted me in your happineſs; and if, to ſhew my gratitude, it were neceſſary only to prolong the time of my ſlavery---' 'No, Madam, I am but too much accuſtomed to the happineſs of poſſeſſing you. I perceive that the more I ſhall know of you, the more terrible it would be to me to loſe you: this ſacrifice will coſt me my life; but I ſhall only render it the more grievous by deferring it. May your country prove worthy of it! May the people whom you are going to pleaſe, deſerve you better than I do! I aſk but one favour of you, which is, that you would be pleaſed cordially to accept theſe preſents, as the feeble pledges of a love the moſt pure and tender, that yourſelf, yes, that yourſelf, are capable of inſpiring.'---'No, ſaid ſhe to him, with a voice almoſt ſmothered, 'I will not accept of your preſents. I go: you will have it ſo! But I ſhall carry away from you nothing but your image.' Soliman lifting up his eyes to Elmira, met her's bedewed with tears. 'Adieu, then, Elmira!'---'Adieu, Soliman!' They bid each other ſo many and ſuch tender adieus, that they concluded by ſwearing not to ſeparate for life. The avenues of pleaſure through which he had paſſed ſo rapidly with his ſlaves

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from Aſia, appeared to him ſo delicious with Elmira, that he found an inexpreſſible charm in going through them ſtep by ſtep: but arrived at the happineſs itſelf, his pleaſures had from that time the ſame defect as before; they became too eaſy of acceſs, and in a ſhort time after too languid. Their days ſo well filled up till then, began to hang heavy. In one of theſe moments, when complaiſance alone retained Soliman with Elmira----'Would it be agreeable to you,' ſaid he,' 'to hear a ſlave from your own country, whoſe voice has been greatly commended to me?' Elmira, at the propoſal, plainly perceived that ſhe was loſt: but to put any conſtraint on a lover who begins to grow tired, is to tire him ſtill more. 'I am for any thing,' ſaid ſhe, 'that you pleaſe;' and the ſlave was ordered to enter.

Delia (for that was the ſinger's name) had the figure of a goddeſs. Her hair exceeded the ebony in blackneſs, and her ſkin the whiteneſs of ivory. Two eye-brows, boldly arched, crowned her ſparkling eyes. As ſoon as ſhe began tuning, her lips, which were of the fineſt vermilion, diſplayed two rows of pearl ſet in coral. At firſt ſhe ſung the victories of Soliman, and the hero felt his ſoul elevated at the remembrance of his triumphs. His pride hitherto, more than his taſte, applauded the accents of that thrilling voice, which filled the whole ſaloon with its harmony and ſtrength.

Delia changed her manner, to ſing the charms of pleaſure. She then took the theorbo; an inſtrument favourable to the diſplay of a rounded arm, and to the movements of a delicate and light hand. Her voice, more flexible and tender, now reſounded none but the moſt touching ſounds. Her modulations, connected by imperceptible gradations, expreſſed the delirium of a ſoul intoxicated with pleaſure, or exhauſted with ſentiment. Her ſounds, ſometimes expiring on her lips, ſometimes ſwelled and ſunk with rapidity, expreſſed by turns the ſighs of modeſty and the vehemence of deſire;

while

while her eyes ſtill more than her voice animated theſe lively deſcriptions.

Soliman, quite tranſported, devoured her both with his ears and eyes. 'No,' ſaid he, 'never before did ſo beautiful a mouth utter ſuch pleaſing ſounds. With what delight muſt ſhe, who ſings ſo feelingly of pleaſure, inſpire and reliſh it! How charming to draw that harmonious breath, and to catch again in their paſſage thoſe ſounds animated by love!' The ſultan, loſt in theſe reflections, perceived not that all the while he kept beating time on the knee of the trembling Elmira. Her heart oppreſſed with jealouſy, ſhe was ſcarce able to breathe. 'How happy is Delia,' ſaid ſhe, in a low voice, to Soliman, 'to have ſo tuneable a voice! Alas! it ought to be the organ of my heart! every thing that ſhe expreſſes, you have taught me to feel.' So ſaid Elmira, but Soliman did not liſten to her.

Delia changed her tone a ſecond time to inconſtancy. All that the changeful variety of nature contains, either intereſting or amiable, was recapitulated in her ſong. It ſeemed like the fluttering of the butterfly over roſes, or like the zephyrs loſing themſelves among the flowers. 'Liſten to the turtle,' ſaid Delia, 'ſhe is faithful but melancholy. See the inconſtant ſparrow: pleaſure moves his wings; his warbling voice is exerted merely to return thanks to love. Water freezes only in ſtagnation; a heart never languiſhes but in conſtancy. There is but one mortal on earth, whom it is poſſible to love always. Let him change, let him enjoy the advantage of making a thouſand hearts happy; all prevent his wiſhes, or purſue him. They adore him in their own arms; they love him even in the arms of another. Let him give himſelf up to our deſires, or withdraw himſelf from them, ſtill he will find love wherever he goes, wherever he goes will leave the print of love on his footſteps.

Elmira was no longer able to diſſemble her diſpleaſure and grief. She gets up and retires: the ſultan does not recal her; and while ſhe is overwhelming herſelf with

with tears, repeating a thouſand times---'Ah, the ungrateful! ah, the perfidious man!' Soliman charmed with his divine ſongſtreſs, prepares to realize with her ſome of thoſe pictures which ſhe had drawn ſo much to the life. The next morning the unhappy Elmira writ a billet filled with reproach and tenderneſs, in which ſhe puts him in mind of the promiſe he had made her. 'That is true,' ſaid the ſultan; 'let us ſend her back to her country, laden with marks of my favour. This poor girl loves me dearly, and I am to blame on her account.'

The firſt moments of his love for Delia were no more than an intoxication; but as ſoon as he had time for reflection, he perceived that ſhe was more petulant than ſenſible, more greedy of pleaſure than flattered in adminiſtering it; in a word, fitter than himſelf to have a ſeraglio at command. To feed his illuſion, he ſometimes invited Delia, that he might hear that voice which had enchanted him; but that voice was no longer the ſame. The impreſſion made by it became every day weaker and weaker by habitude; and it was now no more than a ſlight emotion, when an unforeſeen circumſtance diſſipated it for ever.

The chief officer of the ſeraglio came to inform the ſultan, that it was impoſſible to manage the untractable vivacity of one of the European ſlaves; that ſhe made a jeſt of his prohibitions and menaces; and that ſhe anſwered him only by cutting railleries and immoderate burſts of laughter. Soliman, who was too great a prince to make a ſtate affair of what merely regarded the regulation of his pleaſures, entertained a curioſity of ſeeing this young madcap. He repaired to her, followed by the eunuch. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw Soliman, 'Heaven be praiſed!' ſaid ſhe, 'here comes a human figure! You are without doubt the ſublime ſultan, whoſe ſlave I have the honour to be? Do me the favour to drive away this old knave, who ſhocks my very eſight.' The ſultan had a great deal of difficulty to refrain from laughing at this beginning. 'Roxalana,

ſaid

ſaid he to her, for ſo ſhe was called, 'ſhew ſome reſpect, if you pleaſe, to the miniſter of my pleaſures: you are yet a ſtranger to the manners of the ſeraglio; till they can inſtruct you in them, contain yourſelf and obey.'— 'A fine compliment!' ſaid Roxalana. '*Obey!* Is that your Turkiſh gallantry? Sure you muſt be mightily beloved, if it is in this ſtrain you begin your addreſſes to the ladies! *Reſpect the miniſter of my pleaſures!* You have your pleaſures, then? and, good Heaven! what pleaſures, if they reſemble their miniſter! an old amphibious monſter, who keeps us here, penned in, like ſheep in a fold, and who prowls round with his frightful eyes always ready to devour us! See here the confidante of your pleaſures, and the guardian of our prudence! Give him his due, if you pay him to make yourſelf hated, he does not cheat you of any of his wages. We cannot take a ſtep but he growls. He forbids us even to walk, and to receive or pay viſits. In a ſhort time, I ſuppoſe, he will weigh out the air to us, and give us light by the yard. If you had ſeen him rave laſt night, becauſe he found me in theſe ſolitary gardens! Did you order him to forbid our going into them? Are you afraid that it ſhould rain men? and if there ſhould fall a few from the clouds, what a misfortune! Heaven owes us this miracle.'

While Roxalana ſpoke thus, the ſultan examined, with ſurprize, the fire of her looks, and the play of her countenance. 'By Mahomet!' ſaid he to himſelf, 'here is the prettieſt-looking romp in all Aſia. Such faces as theſe are made only in Europe. Roxalana had nothing fine, nothing regular in her features; but, taken all together, they had that ſmart ſingularity which touches more than beauty. A ſpeaking look, a mouth freſh and roſy, an arch ſmile, a noſe ſomewhat turned up, a neat and well-made ſhape; all theſe circumſtances gave her giddineſs a charm which diſconcerted the gravity of Soliman. But the great, in his ſituation, have the reſource of ſilence; and Soliman, not knowing how to

anſwer her, fairly walked off, concealing his embarraſſment under an air of majeſty.

The eunuch aſked him what orders he would be pleaſed to give with reſpect to this ſaucy ſlave. 'She is a mere child,' replied the ſultan; 'you muſt paſs over ſome things in her.'

The air, the tone, the figure, the diſpoſition of Roxalana, had excited in the ſoul of Soliman an anxiety and emotion which ſleep was not able to diſpel. As ſoon as he awoke he ordered the chief of the eunuchs to come to him. 'You ſeem to me,' ſaid he, 'to be but little in Roxalana's good graces; in order to make your peace, go and tell her I will come and drink tea with her.' On the arrival of the officer, Roxalana's women haſtened to wake her. 'What does the ape want with me!' cried ſhe, rubbing her eyes. 'I come,' replied the eunuch, 'from the emperor, to kiſs the duſt of your feet, and to inform you that he will come and drink tea with the delight of his ſoul.'----'Get away with your ſtrange ſpeeches! My feet have no duſt, and I do not drink tea ſo early.'

The eunuch retired without replying, and gave an account of his embaſſy. 'She is in the right,' ſaid the ſultan; 'why did you wake her? You do every thing wrong.' As ſoon as it was broad day with Roxalana he went thither. 'You are angry with me?' ſaid he; 'they have diſturbed your ſleep, and I am the innocent cauſe of it. Come, let us make peace; imitate me: you ſee that I forget all that you ſaid to me yeſterday.'----'You forget it! ſo much the worſe: I ſaid ſome good things to you. My frankneſs diſpleaſes you, I ſee plainly: but you will ſoon grow accuſtomed to it. And are you not too happy to find a friend in a ſlave? Yes, a friend, who intereſts herſelf in your welfare; and who would teach you to love. Why have not you made a voyage to my country? It is there that they know love; it is there that it is lively and tender; and why? Becauſe it is free. Sentiment is involuntary, and does not come by force. The yoke of mar-

marriage amongſt us is much lighter than that of ſlavery; and yet a huſband that is beloved is a prodigy. Every thing under the name of duty ſuddens the ſoul, blaſts the imagination, cools deſire, and takes off that edge of ſelf-love which gives all the reliſh and ſeaſoning to affection. Now, if it be ſo difficult to love a huſband, how much harder is it to love a maſter, eſpecially if he has not the addreſs to conceal the fetters he puts upon us!'---'And I,' replied the ſultan; 'I will forget nothing to ſoften your ſervitude; but you ought in your turn---'------'I *ought!* nothing but what one *ought!* Leave off, I pr'ythee, now, theſe humiliating phraſes. They come with a very ill grace from the mouth of a man of gallantry, who has the honour of talking to a pretty woman.'---'But, Roxalana, do you forget who I am, and who you are?'---'*Who you are, and who I am!* You are powerful, I am pretty; and ſo we are even.'---'May be ſo,' replied the ſultan haughtily, 'in your country; but here, Roxalana, I am maſter, and you a ſlave.'----'Yes, I know you have purchaſed me; but the robber who ſold me could transfer to you only thoſe rights over me which he had himſelf, the rights of rapine and violence; in one word, the rights of a robber; and you are too honeſt a man to think of abuſing them. After all, you are my maſter, becauſe my life is in your hands; but I am no longer your ſlave, if I know how to deſpiſe life; and truly the life one leads here is not worth the fear of loſing it.'----'What a frightful notion!' cried the ſultan: 'do you take me for a barbarian? No, my dear Roxalana, I would make uſe of my power only to render this life delightful to yourſelf and me.'----'Upon my word,' ſaid Roxalana, 'the proſpect is not very promiſing. Theſe guards, for inſtance, ſo black, ſo diſguſting, ſo ugly, are they the ſmiles and ſports which here accompany love?'---'Theſe guards are not ſet upon you alone. I have five hundred women, whom our manners and laws oblige me to keep watched.'----'And why five hundred women?' ſaid ſhe to him, with

an air of confidence. 'It is a kind of ſtate which the dignity of ſultan impoſes upon me.'---'But what do you do with them, pray? for you lend them to nobody.'---'Inconſtancy,' replied the ſultan, 'has introduced this cuſtom. A heart void of love ſtands in need of variety. Lovers only are conſtant, and I never was a lover till I ſaw you. Let not the number of theſe women give you the ſhadow of uneaſineſs; they ſhall ſerve only to grace your triumph: you ſhall ſee them all eager to pleaſe you, and you ſhall ſee me attentive to no one but yourſelf.'

'Indeed,' ſaid Roxalana, with an air of compaſſion, 'you deſerve better luck. It is pity you are not a plain private gentleman in my country; I ſhould then be weak enough to entertain ſome ſort of kindneſs for you: for, at the bottom, it is not yourſelf that I hate, it is that which ſurrounds you. You are much better than ordinary for a Turk: you have even ſomething of the Frenchman about you; and, without flattery, I have loved ſome who were not ſo deſerving as yourſelf.'---'You have loved!' cried Soliman, with horror.---'Oh, not at all! I took care of that. But do you expect one to have kept one's virtue all one's life time, in order to ſurrender it to you? Indeed, theſe Turks are pleaſant people!'---'And you have not been virtuous? O Heavens, what do I hear! I am betrayed! I am loſt! Deſtruction ſeize the traitors who meant to impoſe upon me!'---'Forgive them,' ſaid Roxalana; 'the poor creatures are not to blame. The moſt knowing are often deceived. And then, the misfortune is not very great. Why do not you reſtore me to my liberty if you think me unworthy of the honours of ſlavery?'---'Yes, yes, I will reſtore you to that liberty, of which you have made ſo good uſe.' At theſe words the ſultan retired in a rage, ſaying to himſelf, 'I plainly foreſaw that this little turned-up noſe had made a ſlip.'

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the confuſion into which this imprudent avowal of Roxalana's had thrown him. ſometimes he had a mind to have ſent her away, ſometimes

times that they ſhould ſhut her up, next that they ſhould bring her to him, and then again, that ſhe ſhould have been ſent away. The great Soliman no longer knows what he ſays. 'My lord,' remonſtrated the eunuch, 'can you fall into deſpair for a trifle? One girl more or leſs; is there any thing ſo uncommon in her? Beſides, who knows whether the confeſſion ſhe has made be not an artifice to get herſelf ſent back to her own country?'---'What ſay you? How! can it be poſſible? It is the very thing! He opens my eyes. Women are not uſed to make ſuch confeſſions. It is a trick! a ſtratagem! Ah, the perfidious huſſy! Let me diſſemble in my turn: I will drive her to the laſt extremity. Hark ye! go and tell her that I invite her to ſup with me this evening. But, no; order the ſongſtreſs to come here: it is better to ſend her.'

Delia was charged to employ all her art to engage the confidence of Roxalana. As ſoon as the latter had heard all that ſhe had got to ſay, 'What!' ſaid ſhe, 'young and handſome as you are, does he charge you with his meſſages, and have you the weakneſs to obey him? Get you gone; you are not worthy to be my country-woman. Ah! I ſee plainly that they ſpoil him, and that I alone muſt take upon me to teach this Turk how to live. I will ſend him word that I keep you to ſup with me; I muſt have him make ſome atonement for his impertinence.'---'But, Madam, he will take it ill.'---'He! I ſhould be glad to ſee him take any thing ill of me.'---'But he ſeemed deſirous of ſeeing you alone.'---'Alone, ah! it is not come to that yet; and I ſhall make him go over a good deal of ground, before we have any thing particular to ſay to each other.'

The ſultan was as much ſurpriſed as piqued to learn that they ſhould have a third perſon. However, he repaired early to Roxalana's. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw him coming, ſhe ran to meet him with as eaſy an air as if they had been upon the beſt footing in the world together. 'There,' ſaid ſhe, 'is a handſome man come to ſup with us! Do you like him, Madam? Confeſs, So-

liman, that I am a good friend. Come, draw near, ſalute the Lady. There! very well. Now, thank me. Softly; I do not like to have people dwell too long on their acknowledgements. Wonderful! I aſſure you he ſurprizes me. He has had but two leſſons, and ſee how he is improved! I do not deſpair of making him one day or other, an abſolute Frenchman.'

Do but imagine the aſtoniſhment of a ſultan; a ſultan! the conqueror of Aſia! to ſee himſelf treated like a ſchool-boy by a ſlave of eighteen. During ſupper, her gaiety and extravagance were inconceivable. The ſultan was beſide himſelf with tranſport. He queſtioned her concerning the manners of Europe. One picture followed another. Our prejudices, our follies, our humours, were all laid hold of, all repreſented. Soliman thought himſelf in Paris. 'The witty rogue!' cried he; 'witty rogue!' From Europe ſhe fell upon Aſia. This was much worſe: the haughtineſs of the men, the weakneſs of the women, the dulneſs of their ſociety, the filthy gravity of their amours, nothing eſcaped her, though ſhe had ſeen nothing but curſorily. The ſeraglio had its turn; and Roxalana began by felicitating the ſultan on having been the firſt to imagine that he could enſure the virtue of the women by the abſolute impotence of the blacks.

She was preparing to enlarge upon the honour that this circumſtance of his reign would do him in hiſtory; but he begged her to ſpare him. 'Well,' ſaid ſhe, 'I perceive that I take up thoſe moments which Delia could fill up much better. Throw yourſelf at her feet, to obtain from her one of thoſe airs which they ſay ſhe ſings with ſo much taſte and ſpirit.' Delia did not ſuffer herſelf to be entreated. Roxalana appeared charmed: ſhe aſked Soliman, in a low voice, for a handkerchief; he gave her one, without the leaſt ſuſpicion of her deſign. 'Madam,' ſaid ſhe to Delia, preſenting it to her, 'I am deſired by the ſultan to give you the handkerchief; you have well deſerved it.'---' 'Oh, to be ſure!'

ſure! ſaid Soliman, tranſported with anger; and preſenting his hand to the ſongſtreſs, retired along with her.

As ſoon as they were alone, 'I confeſs,' ſaid he to her, 'that this giddy girl confounds me. You ſee the ſtyle in which ſhe treats me. I have not the courage to be angry with her. In ſhort I am mad, and I do not know what method to take to bring her to reaſon.'---'My lord, ſaid Delia,' 'I believe I have diſcovered her temper. Authority can do nothing. You have nothing for it but extreme coldneſs or extreme gallantry. Coldneſs may pique her; but I am afraid we are too far gone for that. She knows that you love her. She will enjoy the pain that this will coſt you; and you will come too ſooner than ſhe. This method, beſides, is diſagreeable and painful; and if one moment's weakneſs ſhould eſcape you, you will have all to begin again.'---'Well then,' ſaid the ſultan, 'let us try gallantry.'

From that time there was in the ſeraglio every day a new feſtival, of which Roxalana was the object; but ſhe received all this as an homage due to her, without concern or pleaſure, but with a cool complaiſance. The ſultan ſometimes aſked her, 'How did you like thoſe ſports, thoſe concerts, thoſe ſpectacles?'---'Well enough,' ſaid ſhe, but there was ſomething wanting.' And what?'---'Men and liberty.'

Soliman was in deſpair; he had recourſe to Delia. 'Upon my word,' ſaid the ſongſtreſs, 'I know nothing elſe that can touch her? at leaſt, unleſs glory have a ſhare in it. You receive to-morrow the ambaſſadors of your allies; cannot I bring her to ſee this ceremony behind a curtain, which may conceal us from the eyes of your court?'----'And do you think,' ſaid the ſultan, 'that this would make any impreſſion on her?'---'I hope ſo,' ſaid Delia, 'the women of her country love glory.'-----'You charm me!' cried Soliman. 'Yes, my dear Delia, I ſhall owe my happineſs to you.'

At his return from this ceremony, which he took care to render as pompous as poſſible, he repaired to Roxalana. 'Get you gone,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'out of my ſight, and never ſee me more.' The ſultan remained motionleſs and dumb with aſtoniſhment. 'Is this, then,' purſued ſhe, 'your art of love? Glory and grandeur, the only good things worthy to touch the ſoul, are reſerved for you alone; ſhame and oblivion, the moſt inſupportable of all evils, are my portion; and you would have me love you! I hate you worſe than death!' The ſultan would fain have turned this reproach into raillery. 'Nay, but I am ſerious,' reſumed ſhe; 'if my lover had but a hut, I would ſhare his hut with him, and be content. He has a throne; I will ſhare his throne, or he is no lover of mine. If you think me unworthy to reign over the Turks, ſend me back to my own country, where all the handſome women are ſovereigns, and much more abſolute than I ſhould be here; for they reign over hearts.'---'The ſovereignty of mine then is not ſufficient for you?' ſaid Suliman, with the moſt tender air in the world. 'No, I deſire no heart which has pleaſures that I have not. Talk to me no more of your feaſts, all mere paſtimes for children! I muſt have embaſſies.'---'But Roxalana, you are either mad or you dream?'---'And what do you find, then, ſo extravagant, in deſiring to reign with you? Am I formed to diſgrace a throne? and do you think that I ſhould have diſplayed leſs greatneſs and dignity than yourſelf in aſſuring our ſubjects and allies of our protection?'---'I think,' ſaid the ſultan, 'that you would do every thing with grace; but it is not in my power to ſatisfy your ambition, and I beſeech you to think no more of it.---'Think no more of it; Oh! I promiſe you I ſhall think of nothing elſe: and I will from henceforward dream of nothing but a ſceptre, a crown, an embaſſy.' She kept her word. The next morning ſhe had already contrived the deſign of her diadem, and had already ſettled every thing, except the colour of a ribband which was to tie it. She ordered

dered rich ſtuffs to be brought her for her habits of ceremony; and as ſoon as the ſultan appeared, ſhe aſked his opinion on the choice. He exerted all his endeavours to divert her from this idea; but contradiction plunged her into the deepeſt melancholy; and to draw her out of it again, he was obliged to flatter her illuſion. Then ſhe diſplayed the moſt brilliant gaiety. He ſeized theſe moments to talk to her of love; but, without liſtening, ſhe talked to him of politics. All her anſwers to the harangues of the deputies, on her acceſſion to the crown, were already prepared. She had even formed projects of regulations for the territories of the grand ſignior. She would make them plant vines and build opera-houſes; ſuppreſs the eunuchs, becauſe they were good for nothing; ſhut up the jealous, becauſe they diſturbed ſociety; and baniſh all ſelf-intereſted perſons, becauſe ſooner or later they become rogues. The ſultan amuſed himſelf for ſome time with theſe follies: nevertheleſs, he ſtill burned with the moſt violent love, without any hope of being happy. On the leaſt ſuſpicion of violence ſhe became furious, and was ready to kill herſelf. On the other hand Soliman found not the ambition of Roxalana ſo very fooliſh: 'For, in ſhort,' ſaid he, 'is it not cruel to be alone deprived of the happineſs of aſſociating to my fortune a woman whom I eſteem and love? All my ſubjects may have a lawful wife; an abſurd law forbids marriage to me alone.' Thus ſpoke love, but policy put him to ſilence. He took the reſolution of confiding to Roxalana the reaſons which reſtrained him. 'I would make it,' ſaid he, 'my happineſs to leave nothing wanting to yours: but our manners----' 'Idle ſtories!'---'Our laws---' 'Old ſongs!'---'The prieſts'---'What care they!'---'The people and the ſoldiery'---'What is it to them? Will they be more wretched when you ſhall have me for your comfort? You have very little love, if you have ſo little courage!' She prevailed ſo far, that Soliman was aſhamed of being ſo fearful. He orders the mufti, the vizier, the camaican, the aga of the ſea,

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and the aga of the janiſſaries, to come to him; and he ſays to them, 'I have carried, as far as I was able, the glory of the creſcent; I have eſtabliſhed the power and peace of my empire; and I deſire nothing, by way of recompence for my labours, but to enjoy, with the good-will of my ſubjects, a bleſſing which they all enjoy. I know not what law, but it is one that is not derived down to us from the prophet, forbids the ſultans the ſweets of the marriage-bed: thence I perceive myſelf reduced to the condition of ſlaves, whom I deſpiſe; and I have reſolved to marry a woman whom I adore. Prepare my people, then, for this marriage. If they approve of it, I receive their approbation as a mark of their gratitude; but if they dare to murmur at it, tell them that I will have it ſo.' The aſſembly received the ſultan's orders with a reſpectful ſilence, and the people followed their example.

Soliman tranſported with joy and love, went to fetch Roxalana, in order to lead her to the moſque; and ſaid to himſelf in a low voice, as he was conducting her thither, 'Is it poſſible that a little turned-up noſe ſhould overturn the laws of an empire?'

The Scruple; or, Love diſſatisfied with itſelf.

HEAVEN be praiſed,' ſaid Beliſa, on going out of mourning for her huſband, 'I have now fulfilled a grievous and painful piece of duty! It was time it ſhould be over. To ſee one's ſelf delivered up at the age of ſixteen to a man whom we know nothing of; to paſs the beſt days of one's life in dulneſs, diſſimulation, and ſervitude; to be the ſlave and victim of a love we inſpire, but of which we cannot partake; what a trial for virtue! I have undergone it, and am now diſcharged. I have nothing to reproach myſelf with; for though I did not love my huſband, I pretended to love him, and that is much more heroic. I was faithful to him, notwithſtanding his jealouſy: in ſhort, I have mourned for him. This, I think, is carrying goodneſs of heart as far as it can go. At length reſtored to myſelf, I

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depend on nothing but my own will, and it is only from to-day that I begin to live. Ah! how my heart would take fire, if any one ſhould ſucceed ſo far as to pleaſe me! But let me conſider well before I engage this heart of mine; and let me not, if poſſible, run the riſk either of ceaſing to love, or of ceaſing to be loved. ---Ceaſe to be loved! That, I believe, is a difficult matter,' returned ſhe, conſulting at the ſame time her looking-glaſs; 'but to ceaſe to love is ſtill worſe. How could one for any conſiderable time feign a paſſion one did not feel? I ſhould never be able to do it. To leave a man after we have taken to him, is a piece of effrontery beyond me; and then complaints, deſpair, the noiſe of a rupture, all that is frightful! Let me love, ſince Heaven has given me a ſenſible heart; but let me love my whole life long, and not flatter myſelf with thoſe tranſient likings, thoſe caprices, which are ſo often taken for love. I have time to chuſe and try myſelf; the only thing to be done to avoid all ſurpriſe is to form a diſtinct and exact notion of love. I have read that love is a paſſion, which of two ſouls makes but one; which pierces them at the ſame time, and fills them one with the other; which detaches them from every thing, ſupplies the want of every thing, and makes their mutual happineſs their only care and deſire. Such, without doubt, is love; and according to this idea of it, it will be very eaſy for me to diſtinguiſh in myſelf, and in others, the illuſion from the reality.'

Her firſt experiment was made on a young magiſtrate, with whom the diſpoſition of her late huſband's effects gave her ſome connection. The preſident de S-------, with an agreeable figure, a cultivated underſtanding, a ſweet and ſenſible temper, was ſimple in his dreſs, eaſy in his manner, and modeſt in his converſation. He valued himſelf neither on being a connoiſſeur in equipages nor fineries. He talked not of his horſes to the women, nor of his intrigues to the men. He had all the talents becoming his place without oſtentation,

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and all the agreeable qualities of a man of the world without being a coxcomb. He was the fame at court and in company; not that he paſſed decrees at an entertainment, or rallied when he heard cauſes; but as he had not the leaſt affectation, he was always without diſguiſe.

Beliſa was touched with ſuch uncommon merit. He had gained her confidence; he obtained her friendſhip, and under that name the heart goes a great way. The affairs of Beliſa's huſband being ſettled, 'May I be permitted,' ſaid the preſident one day to the widow, 'to aſk you one queſtion in confidence? Do you propoſe to remain free, or ſhall the ſacrifice of your liberty make one man more happy?'---'No, Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'I have too much delicacy to make it any man's duty to live only for me.'---'That duty would be a very pleaſing one,' replied the gallant magiſtrate; 'and I greatly fear, that without your conſent more than one lover will impoſe it upon himſelf.'---'So much the better,' ſaid Beliſa; 'let them love me without being obliged to it: it is the moſt pleaſing of all homages.'---'Yet, Madam, I cannot ſuſpect you of being a coquette.'---'Oh! you would do me a great injuſtice if you did; for I abominate coquettry.'---'But to deſire to be loved without loving again!'---'And who, Sir, has told you that I ſhall not love? Such reſolutions are not taken at my age. I would neither conſtrain, nor be conſtrained; that is all.'---'Very well: you deſire then, that the engagement ſhould ceaſe with inclination?'---'I deſire that both the one and the other ſhould be eternal, and for that reaſon I would avoid even the ſhadow of conſtraint. I feel myſelf capable of loving all my life long in liberty; but, to tell you the truth, I would not promiſe to love two days in ſlavery.'

The preſident ſaw plainly that he muſt humour her delicacy, and content himſelf with being on the footing of a friend. He had the modeſty to bring himſelf to that; and from thenceforward every little tenderneſs of love was practiſed in order to touch her. He ſucceeded.

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I ſhall not mention the degrees by which Beliſa's ſenſibility was every day more and more affected; let it ſuffice, that ſhe was now come to that paſs, when prudence, in equipoiſe with love, waits only one ſlight effort to turn the ſcale. They were at this point, and were *tête à tête*. The preſident's eyes, enflamed with love, devoured the charms of Beliſa; he preſſed her hand tenderly. Beliſa, trembling, hardly breathed. The preſident ſolicited her with the impaſſioned eloquence of deſire. 'Ah! preſident,' ſaid ſhe to him at laſt, 'could you be capable of deceiving me?' At theſe words the laſt ſigh of modeſty ſeemed to have eſcaped her lips. 'No, Madam,' ſaid he, 'it is my heart, it is Love himſelf who has juſt ſpoken by my mouth, and may I die at your feet, if---' As he fell at Beliſa's feet, his knee came upon one of the paws of *Shock*, the young widow's favourite lap-dog. *Shock* ſet up an howl. 'Lord, Sir, how aukward you are!' cried Beliſa with anger. The preſident coloured, and was diſconcerted. He took *Shock* to his boſom, kiſſed the injured paw, aſked his pardon a thouſand times, and entreated him to ſolicit his forgiveneſs. *Shock* recovered of his pain, returned the preſident's careſſes. 'You ſee, Madam, he has good nature; he forgives me; it is a fine example for you.' Beliſa made no reply. She was fallen into a profound reverie, and a cold gravity. He wanted at firſt to interpret her gravity as a little pouting, and threw himſelf again at Beliſa's feet in order to appeaſe her. 'Pray, Sir, get up,' ſaid ſhe to him; 'theſe freedoms diſpleaſe me, and I do not know that I have given you any room for them.'

Imagine the preſident's aſtoniſhment. He was confounded for two whole minutes, without being able to bring out a word, 'What, Madam,' ſaid he to her at laſt, 'can it be poſſible that ſo trivial an accident has drawn your anger upon me?'---'Not at all, Sir; but I may, without anger, take it ill that any one ſhould throw himſelf at my feet: it is a ſituation that ſuits only happy lovers, and I eſteem you too much to ſuſ-

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pect your having dared to form any ſuch pretenſions.' 'I do not ſee Madam,' replied the preſident with emotion, 'why a hope founded on love ſhould render me leſs worthy of eſteem: but may I preſume to aſk you, ſince love is a crime in your eyes, what is the nature of the ſentiment you have expreſſed towards me?'---'Friendſhip, Sir, friendſhip; and I deſire you very ſeriouſly to keep to that.'---'I aſk your pardon, Madam: I ſhould have ſworn that it had been ſomewhat elſe; I ſee plainly that I was miſtaken.'---'That may be, Sir; many others are miſtaken as well as yourſelf.' The preſident could no longer ſuſtain the ſhock of ſo ſtrange an inſtance of caprice. He went away in deſpair, and was not recalled.

As ſoon as Beliſa found herſelf alone, 'Was not I going to be guilty of a fine piece of folly?' ſaid ſhe with indignation. 'I have ſeen the moment when my weakneſs was going to yield to a man whom I did not love. They may well ſay that we know nothing leſs than ourſelves, I could have ſworn that I adored him; that there was nothing which I was not diſpoſed to ſacrifice to him: no ſuch thing; he happens, without intending it, to hurt my little dog, and this violent love immediately gives place to anger. A dog touches me more than he, and without a moment's heſitation I take the part of this little animal againſt the man in the world whom I thought I loved beſt. A very lively paſſion indeed, mighty ſolid, and tender! See how we take ideas for ſentiments! The brain is heated, and we fancy the heart inflamed; we proceed to all manner of follies; the illuſion ceaſes, and diſguſt ſucceeds; we muſt tire ourſelves with conſtancy without love, or be inconſtant with indecency. O, my dear *Shock*, what, do I not owe you! It is you that have undeceived me. But for you, I ſhould perhaps have been at this moment overwhelmed with confuſion, and torn with remorſe.'

Whether Beliſa did or did not love the preſident, (for queſtions of this nature turn merely on the equivoca-

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tion of terms) it is certain, that on the ſtrength of ſaying to herſelf that ſhe did not love him, ſhe ſucceeded ſo far as to convince herſelf of it; and a young officer ſoon confirmed her in her opinion.

Lindor, from being one of the pages had juſt obtained a company of horſe. Freſhneſs of youth, impatience of deſire, giddineſs, and levity, which are graces at ſixteen, and follies at thirty, rendered agreeable in the eyes of Beliſa this young man of quality, who had the honour of belonging to her huſband's family. Lindor was extremely fond of himſelf, and not without reaſon; he knew that he was well made, and of a charming figure. He ſaid ſo ſometimes; but he laughed ſo heartily after he had ſaid it, he diſcovered in laughing ſo freſh a mouth and ſuch fine teeth, that theſe ſimplicities were pardoned at his age. He mingled beſides ſuch lofty and noble ſentiments with the puerilities of ſelf-love, that all this together was very engaging. He was deſirous of having a handſome miſtreſs, and a good war-horſe; he would view himſelf in the glaſs as he went through the Pruſſian exerciſes. He would beg Beliſa to lend him the Sopha*, and aſked her if ſhe had read Folard's Polybius. He thought it long till ſpring, that he might have an elegant ſuit, in caſe of a peace, or make a campaign if it ſhould be war. This mixture of frivolouſneſs and heroiſm is perhaps the moſt ſeducing of any thing in the eyes of a woman. A confuſed preſage that this pretty little creature, who trifles at the toilet, who careſſes his dear ſelf, who admires his own ſweet perſon, will, perhaps, in two months time, throw himſelf in the face of a battery, upon a ſquadron of the enemy, or climb like a grenadier up a mined breach; this preſage gives to the gentilities of a fine gentleman an air of the marvellous, which creates admiration and tenderneſs: but this foppery ſits well on none but young gentlemen of the army. A piece of advice, by the way, to pretty fellows of every condition.

* The Title of a looſe Novel.

Beliſa was affected by the ſimple and airy graces of Lindor. He had conceived a paſſion for her from the firſt viſit. A young page is in haſte to be in love. 'My beautiful couſin,' ſaid he to her one day, for ſo he called her on account of their alliance, 'I aſk of Heaven but two things; to make my firſt campaign againſt the Engliſh, and with you.'----'You are a giddy creature,' ſaid ſhe, 'and I adviſe you, to deſire neither one nor the other: one will happen but too ſoon, and the other will never happen at all.'---'Never happen at all! That is very ſtrange, my ſweet couſin. But I expected this anſwer, ſo it does not diſcourage me. Come, I will lay you a wager that before my ſecond campaign you will ceaſe to be cruel. Now that I have nothing to plead for me but my age and figure you treat me like a child; but when you ſhall have heard it ſaid, "He was in ſuch an action, his regiment charged on ſuch an occaſion, he diſtinguiſhed himſelf, he took a poſt, he has run a thouſand riſks;" then your little heart will go pit-a-pat with fear and pleaſure, and perhaps with love; who knows? If I were wounded for example! Oh, that is very moving! For my part, if I were a woman, I ſhould wiſh that my lover had been wounded in the wars. I would kiſs his ſcars, I ſhould have infinite pleaſure in counting them. My beautiful couſin, I ſhall ſhew you mine. You will never be able to hold it.'---'Go, you young fool, do your duty like a gallant man, and do not ſhock me with preſages that make me tremble.'---'See, now, if I have not ſpoke truth? I make you tremble beforehand. Ah! if the idea alone affects you, what will the reality? Courage, my pretty couſin, you may truſt yourſelf to me: will not you give me ſomething in advance upon account of the laurels that I am going to gather?'

Such fooleries paſſed between them every day. Beliſa, who pretended to laugh at them, was not the leſs ſenſibly touched; but that vivacity which made ſo great an impreſſion upon her heart, prevented Lindor from perceiving it. He was neither knowing enough,

nor

nor attentive enough, to obſerve the gradations of ſentiment, and to draw his advantages from them. Not but he was as enterpriſing as politeneſs requires, but a look intimidated him, and the fear of diſpleaſing influenced him as much as his impatience to be happy. Thus two months paſſed away in ſlight attempts, without any deciſive ſucceſs. However their mutual paſſion grew more and more animated; and feeble as Beliſa's reſiſtance was, ſhe was tired of it herſelf, when the ſignal for war gave the alarm to their loves.

At this terrible ſignal all engagements are ſuſpended; one flies away without waiting an anſwer to a moſt gallant billet, another fails in an aſſignation that would have crowned all his wiſhes: a total revolution in the whole empire of pleaſures!

Lindor had ſcarce time to take leave of Beliſa. She had now reproached herſelf a hundred times for her imaginary cruelties. 'This poor youth,' ſaid ſhe, 'loves me with all his ſoul: nothing can be more natural or tender than the expreſſion of his ſentiments. His figure is a model for a painter or ſtatuary. He is beautiful as the day; giddy, indeed; but who is not ſo at his age? And he has an excellent heart. He has nothing to do but to amuſe himſelf; he would find few cruel; yet he ſees only me, he breathes only for me, and I treat him with diſdain. I wonder how he bears it. I confeſs, that if I were in his place, I ſhould ſoon leave this rigid Beliſa to go and ſtupify herſelf with her virtue; for, in ſhort, though prudery is well enough ſometimes, yet to be always acting the prudiſh part---' As ſhe was making theſe reflections, the news arrived that the negociations for peace were broken off, and that the officers had orders to rejoin their corps without a moment's delay. At this news all her blood froze in her veins. 'He is going,' cried ſhe, her heart ſtruck and penetrated---'He is going to fight; going to die, perhaps; and I ſhall never ſee him more!' Lindor arrives in his uniform. 'I am come to bid you adieu, my ſweet couſin: I am going; going to face

the enemy. Half of my wish is fulfilled; and I hope that at my return you will fulfil the other half. I love you dearly, my sweet cousin! Do you sometimes remember your little cousin: he will return your faithful servant, he gives you his word. If he is slain indeed, he will not return; but in that case his ring and watch shall be sent you. You see here this little dog in enamel. In it you will retrace my image, my fidelity, my tenderness, and you will sometimes kiss it.' In pronouncing these last words, he smiled tenderly, and his eyes were bedewed with tears. Belisa, who was no longer able to restrain her own, said to him with the most sorrowful air in the world, 'You quit me very gaily, Lindor: you say you love me; are these the adieus of a lover? I thought it had been dreadful to banish one's self from what one loves. But it is not now the time to reproach you; come, embrace me.' Lindor, transported, made use of this permission even to licentiousness, and Belisa was not offended. 'And when are you to depart?' said she. 'Immediately.'---'Immediately!-what! do not you sup with me!'---'Impossible.'---'I had a thousand things to say to you.'---'Say them quickly, then; my horses wait.'---'You are very cruel to refuse me one evening!'---'Ah! my pretty cousin, I would give you my life; but my honour is at stake: my hours are numbered, I must be there to a minute. Think, if there should be an action and I not there, I should be undone: your little cousin would be unworthy of you. Suffer me to deserve you.'

Belisa embraced him anew, bathing him at the same time with her tears. 'Go,' said she; 'I should be distracted if I drew the least reproach on you; your honour is as dear to me as my own. Be wise, expose yourself only just as much as duty requires, and return such as I now see you. You do not give me time to say more; but we will write to each other. Adieu.'---'Adieu, my sweet cousin.'---'Adieu, adieu, my dear boy.'

It is thus that among us gallantry is the ſoul of honour, as honour is the ſoul of our armies. Our ladies have no occaſion to meet our warriors more than half-way, in order to make them fight; but the contempt with which they treat a poltroon, and the favour they ſhew to men of courage, render their lovers intrepid.

Beliſa paſſed the night in the moſt profound ſorrow, and bathed her bed with her tears. The day following ſhe wrote to Lindor: all that a tender and delicate ſoul could inſpire of the moſt touching nature was expreſſed in her letter. O ye, who are ſo ill educated! who is it that teaches you to write ſo well? Does nature take pleaſure to humble us by giving you your revenge?

Lindor, in his anſwer, which was full of fire and irregularity, expreſſed by turns the two paſſions of his ſoul, military ardour and love. Beliſa's impatience diſturbed her reſt till ſhe received this anſwer. Their correſpondence was eſtabliſhed, and continued without interruption for half the campaign; and the laſt they wrote was always the warmeſt; the laſt that was expected always the moſt deſired. Lindor, to his misfortune, had a ſuſpicious confident. 'You are bewitched,' ſaid this boſom friend to him, 'with this woman's being ſo fond of you. Ah, if you did but know the bottom of all this! I know women. Will you make one proof of your miſtreſs? Write her word that you have loſt an eye; I will lay a wager ſhe will adviſe you to take patience and forget her.' Lindor, quite certain of his triumph conſented to make the trial: and as he knew not how to lye, his friend dictated the letter. Beliſa was diſtracted: the image of Lindor preſented itſelf to her imagination, but with one eye wanting. That large black patch made it impoſſible to know him. 'What pity!' ſaid ſhe ſighing. 'His two eyes were ſo brilliant! Mine met them with ſo much pleaſure! Love had painted himſelf there with ſo many charms! Yet he is only the more intereſting to my heart on this account, and I ought to love him the

more. He must be disconsolate; and dreads nothing so much as appearing less amiable to me. Let me write to him, to encourage, to comfort him, if it be possible.' This was the first time that Belisa was ever obliged to say to herself, *Let me write to him!* Her letter was cold, in spite of herself: she perceived it, tore it, and writ it over anew. The expressions were strong enough; but the turn of them was forced, and the style laboured. That black patch, instead of a fine eye, clouded her imagination, and chilled her conceptions. 'Ah! let me flatter myself no longer,' said she, tearing her letter a second time: 'this poor youth is no longer beloved; an eye lost turns my soul topsy-turvy. I wanted to play the heroine; and I am but a weak woman; let me not affect sentiments above my character. Lindor does not deserve to be deceived: he reckons upon a generous and sensible soul; but if I cannot love him, I ought at least to undeceive him; his lying under a mistake will give me pain. "I am disconsolate," writ she to him, "and am much more to be lamented than yourself: you have lost only a charm, but I am going to lose your esteem, as I have already lost my own. I thought myself worthy to love you, and to be beloved by you; I am no longer so: my heart flattered itself with being superior to events; a single accident has changed me. Console yourself, Sir! you will always please any reasonable woman; and after the humiliating confession I have now made you, you have no longer any occasion to regret me."

Lindor was distracted on reading this billet. The *Sir* especially appeared to him an atrocious injury. '*Sir!*' cried he. 'Ah! the perfidious woman! Her little cousin, *Sir!* This, *Sir*, is for the man with one eye.' He went to find out his friend. 'I told you so,' said the confidant. Now is the time to take your revenge; unless you had rather wait the end of the campaign, in order to give your heroine the pleasure of a surprize.'—'No, I will put her to confusion this very day,' replied the unfortunate Lindor. He then

wrote

wrote to her that he was quite tranſported that he had tried her; that *Sir* had got his two eyes, but that thoſe eyes ſhould never view her more but as the moſt ungrateful of women. Beliſa was confounded, and from that inſtant reſolved to renounce the world, and bury herſelf in the country. 'Let me go and vegetate,' ſaid ſhe, 'I am fit for nothing elſe.'

In her country neighbourhood was a kind of philoſopher in the flower of his age, who, after having enjoyed every thing for ſix months of the year in town, was come for the other ſix months to enjoy himſelf in voluptuous ſolitude. He paid his compliments to Beliſa. 'You have,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'the reputation of wiſdom; what is your plan of life?'---'Plan! Madam; I never had any,' replied the Count de P. 'I do every thing that can amuſe me, I ſeek after every thing that I love, and carefully avoid every thing that makes me dull, or diſpleaſes me.'---'Do you live alone? or do you ſee company?'—'I ſee our ſhepherds, ſometimes, whom I teach morality; I converſe with huſbandmen, who are better inſtructed than all our *literati*; I give a ball to ſome of the prettieſt young villagers in the world; I make lotteries for them of laces and ribbands, and I marry off the moſt amorous.'---'What!' ſaid Beliſa with aſtoniſhment, 'do theſe folks know what love is?'----'Better than we do, Madam; a hundred times better than we do. They love like turtles: they give me an appetite for it.'---'You will confeſs, however that they love without delicacy.'---'Alas, Madam; delicacy is a refinement of art; they have inſtinct from Nature, and that inſtinct renders them happy. They talk of love in town, but it is practiſed only in the country. They have in ſentiment what we have in imagination. I have tried, like other people, to love and to be loved in the world; caprice and convenience order and diſorder every thing. A connection is nothing more than a rencounter; here inclination makes the choice: you will ſee in the ſports that I give them, how their ſimple and tender hearts ſeek each other

other without knowing it, and attract each other by turns.'----'You give me,' ſaid Beliſa, 'a picture beyond expectation. They ſay theſe people are ſo much to be lamented!'-----'They were ſo, Madam, ſome years ago; but I have found out the ſecret of rendering their condition more agreeable.'---'O, you ſhall tell me your ſecret,' interrupted Beliſa briſkly, 'I want to make uſe of it.'---'It is your own fault if you do not. It is this: I have an income of forty thouſand livres a year; of this I ſpend ten or twelve at Paris in the two ſeaſons that I paſs there; eight or ten at my houſe in the country; and by this management I have twenty thouſand livres to throw away on exchanges.'---'What exchanges?'---'I have lands well cultivated, meadows well watered, orchards well fenced and well planted.'----'What then?'----'What then! Lucas, Blaiſe, Nicholas, my neighbours and my good friends, have grounds lying fallow or poor; they have not wherewith to cultivate them; I ſwap mine with them for theirs; and the ſame extent of land, which hardly maintained them after two crops, makes them rich. The ground which was barren under their hands, becomes fertile in mine. I chuſe the ſeed for it, the plant, the manure, the huſbandry that ſuits it, and as ſoon as it is in good condition, I bethink me of ſome new exchange. Theſe are my amuſements.'---'Charming!' cried Beliſa, 'you underſtand agriculture then?'---'A little, Madam, and I inſtruct myſelf in it; I oppoſe the theory of the learned to the experience of farmers; I endeavour to correct what I ſee defective in the ſpeculations of the one, and in the practice of the other: and the ſtudy is amuſing.'---'Oh! I believe it, and I would fain give into it. Why? You ought to be adored in theſe parts; theſe poor labourers ought to conſider you as their father.'----'Yes, Madam, we have a great affection for each other.'---'I am very happy my lord, that chance has given me ſuch a neighbour! Let us ſee each other often, I entreat of you: I want to purſue your labours, to follow your method, and become

your

your rival in the hearts of these good people.'---' You cannot have, Madam, any rivals of either sex where it ever is your desire to please, and even where it is not.'

Such was their first interview; and from this moment see Belisa a villager, entirely taken up with agriculture, conversing with farmers, and reading nothing but the *Complete System of Agriculture*. The count invited her to one of his holiday-feasts, and presented her to the peasants as a new benefactress, or rather as their sovereign. She was a witness of the love and respect they had for him. Sentiments of this kind are catching: they are so natural and so tender! it is the highest of all encomiums, and Belisa was touched with them even to jealousy; but how distant was this jealousy from hatred! 'It must be confessed,' said she, 'that they have great reason to love him. Exclusive of his good actions, nobody in the world is more amiable.'

From this time the most intimate, and in appearance the most philosophical connection was established between them. Their conversation turned only on natural studies, on the means of renovating this old mother earth, who exhausts herself for the sake of her children. Botany pointed out to them the plants salutary to the flocks and herds, and those that were hurtful; mechanics afforded them the powers to raise water at a small expence to the top of dry hills, and to soften the fatigues of animals destined to labour; natural history taught them how to calculate the œconomical inconveniences and advantages in the choice of these animals; practice confirmed or corrected their observations; and they made their experiments in small, in order to render them less expensive. The holiday came round, and their sports suspended their studies.

Belisa and the philosopher mingled in the dances of the villagers. Belisa perceived with surprize that not one of them was taken up in admiring her. 'You will now,' said she to her friend, 'suspect me of a very strange piece of coquetry: but I will not dissemble with you. I have been told a hundred times that I was handsome;

handſome; I have likewiſe, much beyond theſe peaſants, the advantage of dreſs; yet I do not ſee, in the eyes of the young country-fellows, any traces of emotion at the ſight of me. They think only of their companions; they have no ſouls but for them.'---'Nothing is more natural, Madam,' ſaid the count. 'Deſire never comes without ſome ray of hope; and theſe poor people find you no otherwiſe beautiful, than as they do the ſtars and the flowers.'---'You ſurpriſe me,' ſaid Beliſa; 'is it hope that renders us ſenſible?'---'No; but it directs our ſenſibility.'---'We never love then, but with the hope of pleaſing?'---'No, to be ſure, Madam; or elſe who could help loving you?'---'A philoſopher, then, has gallantry?' replied Beliſa, with a ſmile. 'I ſpeak the truth, Madam, though no philoſopher; but if I deſerved that name, I ſhould only have the more ſenſibility. A true philoſopher is a man, and glories in being ſo. Wiſdom never contradicts nature, but when nature is in the wrong.' Beliſa bluſhed, the count was confounded, and they ſat ſome time with their eyes fixed on the ground, without daring to break ſilence. The count endeavoured to renew the converſation on the beauties of the country; but their diſcourſe was confuſed, broken, and without continuation: they no longer knew what they ſaid, and ſtill leſs what they were going to ſay. They parted at laſt, ſhe thoughtful and he loſt; and both afraid that they had ſaid too much.

The youth of the neighbouring villages aſſembled the next day, in order to give them a feaſt: its ſprightlineſs compoſed all its ornament. Beliſa was tranſported at it; but the cataſtrophe ſurprized her. The maſter of the feaſt had made ſongs in praiſe of her and the count, and the couplets cloſed with ſaying, that Beliſa was the elm, and the count the ivy. The count knew not whether he ſhould ſilence them, or take the matter in jeſt; but Beliſa was offended at it. 'Pardon them, Madam,' ſaid the count to her, as he reconducted her home; 'theſe good people ſpeak what they

they think, and know no better. I ſhould have put them to ſilence, but that I had not the courage to make them unhappy.' Beliſa made him no anſwer, and he retired overwhelmed with ſorrow for the impreſſion this innocent ſport had made on her.

'How unhappy am I!' ſaid Beliſa, after the departure of the count. 'See, here again is a man I am going to love. It is ſo clear, that even theſe peaſants perceive it: it will be with him as with all others, a ſlight flame, a ſpark. No; I will ſee him no more: it is ſhameful to be deſirous of inſpiring a paſſion, when we are not ſuſceptible of it ourſelves. The count would deliver himſelf up to me without reſerve, and with the greateſt confidence. I ſhould make a very reſpectable man unhappy if I were to break with him.' The next day he ſent to know if ſhe was to be ſeen. 'What ſhall I do? If I refuſe him to-day, I muſt ſee him to-morrow; if I perſiſt in not ſeeing him more, what will he think of this change? What has he done that can have diſpleaſed me? Shall I leave him to think that I miſtruſt him or myſelf? After all, what if he ſhould aſſure me that he loves me? And if he ſhould love am I obliged to love him? I will bring him to reaſon; I will give him a ſketch of my character; he will eſteem me the more for it: I muſt ſee him.' The count comes.

'I am going to ſurpriſe you,' ſaid ſhe to him; 'I have been on the point of breaking with you.'---'With me, Madam! why? What is my crime?'----'Being amiable and dangerous. I declare to you that I came here in queſt of repoſe; that I fear nothing ſo much as love; that I am not formed for a ſolid engagement; that I have the lighteſt, the moſt inconſtant ſoul in the world; that I deſpiſe tranſitory likings; and that I have not a ſufficient fund of ſenſibility to entertain a durable paſſion. This is my character: I give you warning. I can anſwer for myſelf with reſpect to friendſhip; but as to love, you muſt not depend on me; and that I may have no cauſe to reproach myſelf, I would

neither

neither inſpire it, nor be inſpired with it myſelf.'—'Your ſincerity encourages mine,' replied the count; 'you are now going to know me in my turn. I have conceived for you, without the leaſt ſuſpicion or intention, a love the moſt tender and violent: it is the happieſt thing that could have happened to me, and I reſign myſelf up to it with all my heart. Say what you please to me. You think yourſelf light and inconſtant; I think I know the character of your ſoul better than yourſelf.'—'No, Sir, I have tried myſelf, and now you ſhall judge.' She told him the ſtory of the preſident and that of the young page. 'You loved them, Madam! you loved them! you diſcourage yourſelf without cauſe. Your anger againſt the preſident was without conſequence. The firſt emotion is always for the dog, but the ſecond for the lover: ſo nature has ordered it. As to the cooling of your love towards the page, that would not have been more durable. An eye loſt always produces this effect: but by degrees we become accuſtomed to it. As to the duration of a paſſion I muſt be ingenuous with you. What a madman is he who requires impoſſibilities! I ardently deſire to pleaſe you; I ſhall make it the happineſs of my life: but if your inclination ſhould happen to grow faint, it would be a misfortune, but no crime. What! becauſe there is no pleaſure in life without its alloy, muſt we deprive ourſelves of every thing, renounce every thing? No, Madam, we muſt make choice of what is good! and pardon both in ourſelves, and others, what is not quite ſo well, or what is really evil. We lead an eaſy, quiet life here; nothing but love is wanting to embelliſh it; let us make the experiment. If love ſhould vaniſh, friendſhip ſtill remains, and as vanity has no ſhare in it, the friendſhip that ſurvives love is the ſweeter, the more intimate, the more tender.'—'Really, Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'this is ſtrange philoſophy.' 'Simple and natural, Madam! I could make romances as well as another; but life is not a romance: our principles, as well as ſentiments, ought to be founded

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in nature. Nothing is eaſier than to imagine prodigies of love; but all thoſe heroes exiſt only in the brains of authors; they ſay what they pleaſe; let us do what we can. It is a misfortune, without doubt, to ceaſe to pleaſe; it is a greater to ceaſe to love; but the height of miſery is to paſs one's life in fear and ſelf-conſtraint. Confide in yourſelf, Madam, and deign to confide in me. It is cruel enough not to be able to love always, without dooming one's ſelf never to love at all. Let us imitate our villagers; they do not examine whether they ſhall love long; it is ſufficient for them to feel that they love. I ſurprize you! You have been brought up in the region of chimeras. Believe me, you have a good diſpoſition: return to truth; ſuffer yourſelf to be guided by Nature; ſhe will conduct you much better than Art, which loſes itſelf in the void, and reduces ſentiment to nothing by means of analyſing it.'

If Beliſa was not perſuaded, ſhe was much leſs confirmed in her firſt reſolution; and from the moment that reaſon wavers, it is eaſy to overturn it. Beliſa ſubmitted without difficulty, and never did mutual love render two hearts more happy! Reſigned with the utmoſt freedom one to the other, they forgot the world, they forgot themſelves. All the faculties of their ſouls united in one, formed a mere vortex of fire, of which love was the centre, and pleaſure the fuel.

This firſt ardour abated, and Beliſa was alarmed; but the count confirmed her. They return to their rural amuſements. Beliſa found that nature was embelliſhed; that the heavens were more ſerene, and the country more delightful; the ſports of the villagers pleaſed her more than before: they recalled a delicious remembrance. Their labours became more intereſting. 'My lover,' ſaid ſhe to herſelf, 'is the god who encourages them: his humanity, his generoſity, are the rivulets which fertilize theſe fields.' She loved to converſe with the huſbandmen on the benefits ſhowered upon them by this mortal, whom they called their father,

Love brought home to herſelf all the good they ſaid him. Thus ſhe paſſed the whole ſummer in loving, in admiring him, in ſeeing him make others happy, and in making herſelf happy alſo.

Beliſa had propoſed to the count to paſs the winter out of town, and he had anſwered her with a ſmile, 'With all my heart.' But as ſoon as the country began to grow bare; that walking was impracticable; that the days became rainy, the mornings cold, and the evenings long; Beliſa perceived with bitterneſs, that wearineſs took poſſeſſion of her ſoul, and that ſhe wanted to reviſit Paris. She confeſſed it with her uſual frankneſs. 'I told you ſo before hand; you would not believe me: the event but too well juſtifies the ill opinion I had of myſelf.'---'What event?'---'Ah, my dear count! ſince I muſt tell you, I grow tired: I love you no longer.'---'You grow tired! that is very poſſible,' replied the count, with a ſmile; 'but you do not love me the leſs: it is the country that you love no longer.'---'Alas! Sir, why do you flatter me? All places, all ſeaſons, are agreeable with thoſe we love.'---'Yes, in romances, I have told you ſo already, but not in nature.'---'It is in vain for you to ſay ſo,' inſiſted Beliſa; 'I know full well, that two months ago I could have been happy with you in a deſart.'---'Without doubt, Madam, ſuch is the intoxication of a growing paſſion; but this firſt flame laſts only for a time. Love, when made happy, grows calm and moderate. The ſoul, from that inſtant, leſs agitated, begins to become ſenſible to impreſſions from without; we are no longer alone in the world; we begin to feel the neceſſity of diſſipation and amuſement.'---'Ah, Sir! to what do you reduce love?'---'To truth, my dear Beliſa.'---'To nothing, my dear count, to nothing! You ceaſe to be my only happineſs, I have therefore ceaſed to love you.'---'No, my ſoul's idol, no! I have not loſt your heart, and I ſhall be always dear to you.'---'Always dear! yes, to be ſure; but how?'---'As I would with to be.'---'Alas! I perceive my own injuſtice

too

so clearly to conceal it from myself.'---'No, Madam, you are not unjuſt, you love me ſufficiently: I am content, and would not be loved more. Will you be more difficult than I?'---'Yes, Sir, I ſhall never forgive myſelf the having been able to grow tired of the moſt amiable man in the world.'---'And I, Madam, and I, who have nothing to boaſt of, am tired alſo at times of the moſt adorable of all women, and I forgive myſelf for it.'---'What, Sir! are you ever tired of me?'---'Even of you. Nevertheleſs, I love you more than my life. Are you ſatisfied now?'----'Come, Sir, let us return to Paris!'----'Yes, Madam, with all my heart; but remember, that the month of May ſhall find us in the country again.'---'I don't believe it.'---'I aſſure you it will, and more fond than ever.'

Beliſa, on her return to town, began to give herſelf up to all the amuſements which the winter occaſions, with an avidity which ſhe thought inſatiable. The count, on his ſide, abandoned himſelf to the torrent of the world, but with leſs eagerneſs. By degrees Beliſa's ardour abated. The ſuppers appeared long to her: ſhe grew tired at the play. The count took care to ſee her ſeldom; his viſits were ſhort, and he choſe thoſe hours when ſhe was ſurrounded by a multitude of adorers: ſhe aſked him one day in a very low voice, 'What do you think of Paris?'---'Every thing amuſes, nothing attaches me.'---'Why do not you come and ſup with me?'---'You have ſeen me ſo often, Madam! I am diſcreet; the world has its turn, and I ſhall have mine'---'You are ſtill perſuaded, then, that I love you?'---'I never talk of love in town. What think you, Madam, of the new opera?' purſued he aloud, and the converſation became general.

Beliſa was always comparing the count with every thing that appeared beſt, and the compariſon always turned out in his favour. 'Nobody,' ſaid ſhe, 'has that candour, that ſimplicity, that evenneſs of character; nobody has that goodneſs of ſoul and elevation of ſentiment. When I recollect our converſation, all our

young people seem nothing more than well taught parrots. He may well doubt that one can cease to love him after having known him! but, no; it is not the good opinion he has of himself, it is the good opinion he has of me, that gives him this confidence. How happy should I be were it well founded!'

Such were Belisa's reflections; and the more she perceived her inclination for him revive, the more she was at ease with herself. In short, the desire of seeing him again became so strong, that she could not resist writing to him. He repaired to her; and accosting her with a smile, 'What, Madam,' said he, 'a *tête à tête!* I shall create a thousand jealousies.'---'Nobody, Sir,' said Belisa, 'has a right to be so; and you know that I have only friends: but you, are not you afraid of disturbing some new conquest?'---'I never made but one in my life,' replied the count; 'she expects me in the country, and I shall go this spring to see her.'---'She would be to be pitied if she were in town: you are so taken up here that she would run the hazard of being neglected.'---'She would amuse herself, Madam, and think nothing of me.'---'No more of this beating about the bush,' resumed she; 'why do I see you so seldom, and for so short a time?'

'To let you enjoy at full liberty all the pleasures of your youth.'---'You can never give me too much of your company, Sir; my house is yours; look upon it as such, it will flatter me: I request it, and I have acquired a right to exact it.'---'No, Madam, exact nothing: I should despair if I displeased you: but permit me not to see you again till the summer.' This obstinacy piqued her. 'Go, Sir,' said she to him, with anger, 'go seek pleasures in which I have no part. I have merited your inconstancy.' From that day she had not a moment's ease: she informed herself of all his proceedings; she sought and followed him with her eyes in the public walks and at the theatres; the women whom he saw became odious to her; she never ceased questioning his friends. The winter appeared

peared intolerably long. Though it was but the beginning of March, ſome fine days happening, 'I muſt,' ſaid ſhe, 'confound him, and juſtify myſelf. I have been wrong hitherto, he has that advantage over me; but to-morrow he ſhall have it no longer.' She ſent to requeſt him to come to her; every thing was ready for their departure. The count arrives. 'Your hand,' ſaid Beliſa, 'to help me into my coach.' 'Where are we going then?' ſaid he. 'To grow tired of ourſelves in the country.' The count was tranſported with joy at theſe words. Beliſa, at the movement of the hand that ſupported her, perceived the extaſy and emotion herſelf had given birth to. 'O my dear count!' ſaid ſhe to him, preſſing that hand which trembled beneath her's, 'what do I not owe you? You have taught me to love; you have convinced me that I was capable of it; and in clearing up my doubts, with reſpect to my own ſentiments, you have done me the moſt pleaſing violence: you have forced me to think well of myſelf, and to believe myſelf worthy of you. My love is ſatisfied. I have no longer any SCRUPLE, and I am happy.'

THE FOUR PHIALS;

or, The Adventures of Alcidonis of Megara.

I REGRET the loſs of faryiſm. It was to lively imaginations a ſource of innocent pleaſures, and the handſomeſt way in the world of forming agreeable dreams. The climates of the eaſt were formerly peopled with genii and fairies. The Greeks conſidered them as mediating beings between men and gods: witneſs the familiar dæmon of Socrates; witneſs the fairy which protected Alcidonis, as I am going to relate.

The fairy Galante had taken Alcidonis under her protection, even before his coming into the world. She preſided at his birth, and endowed him with the gift of pleaſing without any determined inclination to love. His youth was but the unfolding of thoſe talents and graces which he had received as his lot. He

He had paſſed his fifteenth year, when his father, one of the richeſt and moſt honourable citizens of Megara, on his ſending him to Athens to perform his exerciſes, embraced him, and ſaid thus: 'My dear ſon, you are going to mix in the world among a number of giddy young fellows, who launch out into the moſt outrageous abuſe of women. Never believe them. Thoſe fellows affect to deſpiſe them, only becauſe they have not been able to render them deſpicable. For my own part to begin with your mother, my virtuous wife, I have found in the fair-ſex that delicacy of ſentiment, candour, and truth, of which few men are capable. Do as I have done; chuſe an honeſt wife, of an even temper, ſolid character, and a ſociable, and not auſtere virtue. There are women of this ſtamp every where. My conſent ſhall follow your choice: I am a tender father, and deſire nothing but your happineſs.' Alcidonis full of theſe leſſons, arrives at Athens. His firſt viſit was to Seliana, to whom he had recommendations. Seliana in her youth had been handſome and agreeable: ſhe was ſtill agreeable, but began to be no longer handſome. After the firſt compliments, 'What is your buſineſs here?' ſaid an old captain to him, who was huſband to Seliana, and an old friend of his father. 'A fine thing indeed, at your age, to bury one's ſelf among the women! The Circus, the Piræeus, theſe are the ſchools for you, and not that trifling circle which they call the *beau monde*. I am mad when I ſee a young fellow come to Athens! they ought to go to Sparta.'

Alcidonis was diſconcerted by ſo warm an apoſtrophe; but Seliana took his part warmly. 'That is ſo like you,' ſaid ſhe to her huſband; 'Sparta, the Circus, the Piræeus! well, and pr'ythee, now, what do they learn in theſe famous ſchools?'---'To get money and fight,' replied the huſband, roughly.' 'To get money! very noble indeed! To fight! very agreeable! The firſt is unworthy the ambition of a gallant man, and the ſecond is learned but too ſoon.'---'Not ſo ſoon, Madam, not

so very soon as you imagine. I am afraid that after passing his youth at the toilette, a man would make neither a good officer, nor a good soldier.'---'Well! for my part, there is nothing more hideous and disagreeable in my eyes, than a man who has never learned any thing but to fight. One would imagine, that you came into the world only to cut one another's throats. Peace has its talents and virtues, as well as war. Men are not always at the head of a troop.'---'So much the worse by all the gods, so much the worse! I wish it were forbid, even in time of peace to quit the colours on pain of death.'---'How, Sir! would not you allow us so much as one man!'-----'You should have men enough, Madam: you should have all the refuse. There are numbers quite useless to the state!'---'Very fine, indeed! you would reduce us then to the refuse of the common wealth. The ladies are infinitely obliged to you!'---'I acquit them of all obligations.'---'No, Sir, we are citizens, and we generously give up to the state all those figures that displease us, all faces that fright one, all those fierce characters that delight in nothing but murder, and are good for nothing else.'---'And you reserve to yourselves the handsome men who love to live; is it not so?'---'Certainly.'---'That is right; and the Areopagus, to be sure, will take care to pass it into a decree to please you. Pardon me, Sir, my wife is a fool. I leave you; for I can stand it no longer. Oh, Hercules! Madam, must I be your husband! These things happen to nobody but myself.' At these words he went out stamping with his feet, and clapped the door roughly after him.

'Here is a strange family!' said Alcidonis. 'Pray Madam, have you often scenes of this kind?'---'Why, yes,' replied she coldly, 'always when I have company.'---'And, when you are alone?'---'He grumbles still, but not quite so loud.'---'And how came you to marry him?'---'As all the world marry, for convenience and interest. As to any thing else, he is the best man in the world. When I am weary of him, I contradict

tradict him; he grows impatient and walks off: then I do what I please. I advise you to shew him respect. His friendship is not to be neglected, and may be of use to you. Do you bring recommendations to many people here?'---'To my father's particular friends, but the number is not great.'---'So much the better, we shall see each other the oftener. I wish it for your own sake; for, on entering into a new world, the wisest have need of a guide.'---'Will you, Madam, condescend to be mine?'---'Either I or my husband; you shall take your choice.'---'My choice is made, Madam.' Thus passed their first interview.

When the husband returned, 'You are a strange man,' said Seliana to him; your behaviour has frighted away this young man.'---'Whom you wanted to render familiar?'---'I understand you, Sir; henceforth I shall order my door to be shut against him.'---'How! no, Madam! I am not jealous. It would be beginning a little too late. I was not jealous in the bloom of your youth, and I shall hardly be so now you are grown older.'---'How extremely gallant! but I am used to it. Remember, however, that you owe a visit to this son of your old friend.'---'I shall see him, Madam: I know life, and you may trust to my behaviour.

The day after, at his entering into Alcidonis's lodging, he resumed the conversation of the night before. 'Well,' said he to him, 'are you going to give into the effeminate manners of the Athenian youth? My wife has disposed you for it no doubt. Take care; not of her; for her time is past, thank Heaven; but take care of the rest of her sex. They are most dangerous syrens. No safety in any dealings with them. They take you, deceive you, and quit you, without shame. One would think, on seing them amusing themselves with the men, that we were made only for their play things.'---'If so,' said Alcidonis, 'the women of Athens are not like those of Megara!'---'At Megara it is the very same as here. You are like your old father. The good man would swear only by his chaste

chaſte better half. It was out of complaiſance to him, that ſhe dreſſed and ſaw company; out of piety, that ſhe ſhut herſelf up with a young prieſt of Minerva; by way of retirement, that ſhe went to paſs her evenings at a little houſe which he had fitted up for himſelf: he relied upon her virtue with the moſt abſolute confidence in the world.'---'He had reaſon no doubt; and I beg you, Sir, to reſpect my mother's memory.'---'Your mother! your mother was a woman. Would you have had ſome being made on purpoſe; I have ſeen enough of them, but I know none but my termagant that is truly faithful; and what is ſtill more it is I that made her ſo. I rendered her virtuous in ſpite of her teeth; but I have not been able to root out thoſe ſeeds of coquetry which nature or example plants in them almoſt at their birth. I would lay a wager that ſhe is even capable of attempting to ſeduce you, for the ſake of the pleaſure of laughing at you. You would not be the firſt whom ſhe has reduced to deſpair. She uſed to amuſe herſelf formerly at this pretty little diverſion, and then ſhe has given me acounts of it, at which ſhe laughed as if ſhe had been mad. By good luck ſhe grows older, and the danger is no longer ſo great.

Alcidonis's thoughts was taken up a conſiderable part of the night with what he had heard. 'The women, here,' ſaid he, 'are very terrible then!' And he went to ſleep with a reſolution of avoiding them.

The fairy Galante appeared to him in a dream, and ſaid, 'Nothing is ſo much like man as woman. All the good, all the evil that is ſaid of them, is true in particular, but falſe in general. One ſhould neither truſt in every one, nor diſtruſt every one. Live with the women, but reſign yourſelf to them only at times. I have not given you a determined character, that you may be flexible to theirs. A preciſe man is an unſociable man. You will be charming if they cry, *We do whatever we pleaſe with him.* But it is not enough to pleaſe; one muſt know likewiſe how to love; and to love neither too much nor too little. There are three

ſorts

ſorts of love; paſſion, liking, and fancy. All the art of being happy conſiſts in the proper diſpoſition of these three ſhades. For this purpoſe, here are four phials, which you alone ſhall uſe. They are as different in their virtues as colours. You are to drink out of the purple phial, in order to be in love to diſtraction; out of the roſe coloured one, to ſkim the ſurface of ſentiment and pleaſure; out of the blue one, to taſte of it without uneaſineſs and intoxication; and out of the white one, to come to yourſelf again.' At theſe words the fairy vaniſhed like a vapour.

'Alcidonis awakes quite raviſhed with ſo charming a dream. But what was his ſurprize, at finding in reality the four phials at his elbow! 'As for the trial,' ſaid he, 'I ſhall make it at my leiſure.' He gets up full of gratitude to the fairy, and the ſame day viſits Seliana. She was alone. 'You have ſeen my huſband?' ſays ſhe. 'Has not he been declaiming againſt gallantry?'---'Violently.'---'He has told you a thouſand frightful ſtories of women?'---'He has.'---'I hope he excepted me.'---'Only in the article of fidelity.'---'Poor man!'---'He is perſuaded that you are faithful to him; but he ſays that you are only the more dangerous on that account, and that you divert yourſelf moſt cruelly with thoſe who have the misfortune to fall in love with you.'---'Ah! how he abuſes me? He would richly deſerve . . . . But hold, I muſt have ſome reſpect to myſelf.'---'Your virtue, he ſays, is of his own forming; and it is he that has made you honeſt.'---'He!'---'Yes, he; and in ſpite of your teeth.'---'In ſpite of my teeth! upon my word! See whether he can make me virtuous in ſpite of my teeth.'---'I muſt own that in your place . . . . . And I ſhould be glad, too, to revenge his inſult to my mother.'---'Your mother!'---'Yes; he dared to tell me that my father was a fool, and that there is no man in the world but himſelf who is not ſo.'---'Poor man! he has great reaſon to brag, truly!----But, once more, I muſt reſpect myſelf. No, Sir, I am no coquette;

quette; and ſince he obliges me to juſtify myſelf, I have a heart as tender, and more tender than another.' ---' And what uſe do you make of that heart?'---' Alas! no uſe at all; but you may eaſily believe that it is not for his ſweet looks that I keep it. I am prudent for my own ſake, that I may not expoſe myſelf to the caprice, inconſtancy, and ingratitude of men. I feel that if I loved I ſhould love paſſionately, and I ſhould wiſh to be paſſionately beloved.'---' Ah! and ſo you ſhall.'---' I dare not flatter myſelf with that: nothing is weaker, vainer, and more inconſtant, than the love of your ſex. They have their likings, their fancies; but the paſſion of love, that intoxication which is the greateſt charm, and its only excuſe, they are quite unacquainted with.'---' For my part, Madam, I know very well how to acquire that love which you deſerve; and were I ſure of a return, I ſhould take a good doſe of it!' Seliana ſmiled at Alcidonis's ſimplicity, (for the fairy had given him that unaffected air, that ingenuous manner, which coquettes are ſo fond of.) ' No,' ſaid ſhe, ' people are not inflamed all at once! and how can we poſſibly be in love? We do not know each other yet.'---' At your own time, Madam; I am in no hurry. To-morrow we ſhall know each other better.'---' I ſhall ſee you to-morrow, then!'---' Yes, Madam.'---' After dinner; do you hear? For I would ſpare you the diſagreeable circumſtance of finding my huſband at home. We ſhall be alone, and at liberty, and I ſhall talk reaſon to you.'

Alcidonis repaired to the appointment, with his phials in his pocket. Seliana received him in the moſt tempting diſhabille. ' See there,' ſaid Alcidonis on ſeeing her, ' the privilege of beauty: the leſs ornament, the more charms.' Seliana affected to bluſh. ' Do you know,' ſaid ſhe, ' that this pretended ſimplicity of yours makes you dangerous? One might be taken by it and be deceived.'---' I deceive you, Madam! I never deceived any body!'---' And you would begin with me?'---' No, I ſwear---'---' Why then this

flat-

flattering diſcourſe, thoſe tender looks?'—'You are handſome; I have eyes; I ſpeak what I ſee; there is no flattery in that.'—'Why, indeed, your tranquillity makes it evident that you have no deſign to ſeduce me.'—'Nay, nay, if you would but have it ſo, that tranquility ſhould ſoon vaniſh.'—'Oh to be ſure, and to be all on fire you only wait for my conſent; is it not ſo?' 'Nothing elſe; you need only ſay the word.'—'Indeed you are very fine, with that air of yours ſo cold and ſo determined.'—'It is becauſe I am certain of what I do.'—'What if I ſhould oblige you to ſhew ſome deſire of being loved?'—'You may do it to any degree you pleaſe, I aſſure you.'—'I ſee, Alcidonis, that you don't know what you promiſe, and what I might demand.'—'Demand, Madam! demand! my heart defies you. I will love you as much you pleaſe.' 'You will love me then, if I pleaſe, to diſtraction!'—'To diſtraction? It is all the ſame to me.'—'His ſimplicity charms me. Very well, then, I would have you vaſtly in love with me.'—'Paſſionately?'—'Paſſionately.'—'And you will love me in like manner?'—'I believe ſo.'—'That is not enough.'—'Well I am ſure of it.'—'That is ſufficient; now you ſhall ſee fine ſport.'—'Where are you going?'—'Yours; allow me but one minute.'

The credulous Alcidonis, having retired into a corner, drank up the elixir in the purple phial, to the very laſt drop. He appears again, his eyes inflamed, his heart beating, and his voice almoſt extinct. The more fooleſy, the more gallantry: his language was rapid, broken, full of matter and warmth. Words were not ſufficient to declare his ſentiments. Inarticulate accents ſupplied the place of ſpeech! a vehement geſture, an impetuous action, redoubled their energy. This pathetic eloquence put Seliana quite beſide herſelf. She is moved, agitated, loſt: ſhe hardly knows him again, and can ſcarce conceive ſo wonderful a change. She would ſeem to doubt, to fear, to heſitate ſtill: vain efforts! Her heart relents, her eyes brighten, her rea-

ſon fails; and one would have thought the very moment after, that ſhe had alſo drank of the ſame phial.

Two months paſſed away in tranſports which they found it difficult to confine within any bounds. The huſband was perpetually rallying Alcidonis on his aſſiduities to his wife. 'Poor dupe,' ſaid he to him, 'you would not believe me. You are caught; I am glad of it. Throw yourſelf away in dangling after her: you have a fine time of it!' Alcidonis took the beſt revenge he could for this inſulting irony. But his paſſion was no longer ſeconded: Seliana's grew every day weaker and weaker. Seliana ſufficed him; but he was no longer able to ſuffice Seliana. She wanted diſſipation, diverſion, and to return to the world, which ſhe had forgot. Alcidonis was hurt, and ſaw with concern that ſhe amuſed herſelf with every thing, while he was taken up with nothing but her. He became penſive, uneaſy, and jealous; and went ſo far that ſhe was offended and reſolved to diſmiſs him.

'It is true,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'I have loved you; I was mad. I am now come to my ſenſes again; do you do ſo too. We are no way enjoined to carry on love, even to decay. Every thing has an end, even love itſelf. Mine is enfeebled; you have chid me for it. It is become extinct; you diſtract yourſelf about it. So much the worſe for you: but I cannot help it.'—'How! perfidious! ungrateful! perjured woman!'—'Go on; vent your reproaches, if that will comfort you.'—'Ah, juſt Heaven, how am I treated!'—'Like a child, in whom we pardon every thing.'—'Are theſe, perfidious woman! the oaths that you have ſworn a hundred times, to love me to the laſt gaſp?'—'Raſh oaths, which bind us to nothing; mad, whoever makes them; mad whoever truſts them. Would you believe any one who, on ſitting down to table, ſhould ſwear by all the gods that he would always have the ſame ſtomach?'—'The ſame ſtomach! what an image! Is this your boaſted delicacy?'—'Another piece of folly. We diſavow the empire of the ſenſes, at the

very inſtant we are their ſlaves. I am a woman, I love like a woman, and you ought not to have expected that Nature ſhould work a miracle in your favour.' Alcidonis, at theſe words, tore his hair with deſpair. 'Very fine,' purſued ſhe; 'what is that for? Will you be more amiable, or better beloved, when you are bald? Hark ye, Alcidonis! I have ſtill a compaſſionate friendſhip for you.'—'Ah, cruel woman! is it friendſhip or compaſſion that I require of you?'—'You muſt really bring yourſelf to that; I feel nothing more for you. Which of the two is to blame, the party who ceaſes to love, or that which ceaſes to be agreeable? The queſtion is not yet, nor will ſoon be determined. In the mean time, be adviſed, and take your reſolution with courage.'—'It is taken, ungrateful woman; it is taken,' ſaid he, withdrawing to drink; and I need not ſay, that he had recourſe to the white phial.

On a ſudden his ſenſes were all calm and his reaſon returned. 'Indeed,' ſaid he, returning to Seliana with an eaſy and ſedate air, 'I was a fool to make myſelf uneaſy. We have been lovers; now we are friends. All this muſt happen in life. Paſſion is a fever: when it is over, there is an end of the matter. We are not obliged to ſee one another any longer than is agreeable, nothing is more natural than to change when we are tired. You loved me as long as you were able. It would have been ridiculous to pique yourſelf on a conſtancy that was painful! Enjoy, Madam, the right your beauty gives you of multiplying your conquests. I am too happy in having been of the number. Every man in his turn, and I wiſh you much entertainment.

Seliana was as much ſurprized as piqued at this coldneſs. She wiſhed, indeed, that he ſhould conſole himſelf, but neither ſo ſoon, nor ſo eaſily. So ſudden a change was inconceivable. On reflection ſhe was perſuaded, that this apparent tranquillity was only a pretended diſguiſe, and ſhe failed not to tell ſome of her ſhe-friends, that the poor boy was mad with deſpair,

that

that he had put her into a terrible fright, and that she had all the difficulty in the world to prevent him from committing violence on himself. The day following, Alcidonis went to sup at the voluptuous Alcipe's, with some of the youngest and handsomest women in Athens. 'All one to me,' said he to himself, 'the purple phial is dry; and it would be to no purpose for the fairy to replenish it, for may I die if I would taste a single drop of it.' As soon as he saw all those beauties, 'Ah! now let us trifle for once: this is the moment for whim and frolick.' He drinks of the rose-coloured phial, and immediately his eyes and desires wander without fixing.

Chance seated him at a table next to a fair beauty, with languishing looks, and an extreme modesty and timidity, with which he was sensibly touched; but he had on the other side a *brunette*, dazzling the beholders with her freshness and vivacity. He had a great mind to the latter, yet was deeply smitten with the former; and on further consideration would have preferred the fair beauty, had it not been for a certain *je-ne-sçai-quoi* which inclined him to the brown. This *je-ne-sçai quoi* determined his choice. He shewed her all the assiduities of a warm gallantry; which she received with an air of inattention, as an homage that was due to her. Alcidonis was piqued at it. Whim, as well as passion, is irritated by obstacles. Excited by the desire of pleasing, he formed all the delight of the entertainment. Corinna, his charming brunette, saw that the ladies envied her her conquest. She at length perceived the value of it, and some looks of complacency infused hope into the heart of her new lover.

The hour of parting now arrived. Corinna rises, he follows. 'You will attend me then;' said she to him, receiving the offer of his hand; 'I am sensible of all the sacrifices you make me.' He swore that he made her none. 'Pardon me: I carry you away from the handsomest woman in Athens; and that is no mean triumph.'—'I did but just look at them: but they

appeared to me pretty well.'---'Pretty well! Your commendations are very sparing, indeed! Will you only call Cleonida *pretty well?* Those large eyes, and regular features, that majestic figure ..... one would take her for a goddess.'---'True, the stately Juno.'---'You wicked devil! and Amate, what do you think of her? That air of voluptuousness, that attracting negligence, which seems to invite pleasure?'---'Right; the picture of opportunity neglected!'---'Neglected; a cruel phrase, I will not repeat it; it would pass into a proverb. I hope, at least, that you will show some favour to the ingenuous and timid air of Cephisa; that lively complexion, that tender look, that mouth which is afraid to smile, and yet when it smiles is so beautiful: what say you to her?'---'That she wants nothing but a soul.'---'And you would be glad to give her yours?'---'I confess that if it had not been for yourself, she should have had the apple.'---'Alas! and what would she have done with it? Nothing is more cold, more indolent, more insensible, than Cephisa.'---'And therefore she had only my first glance.'-----'Yet I caught you, when supper was almost over, with your eyes fixed upon her.'---'True, I admired her as I would a fine model in wax.'---'Right, a fine model, if you please; but the general opinion is, that this model stands in great need of drapery.'

While they thus run over the objects of Corinna's jealousy, they arrived at her house. 'Will you walk up for a moment?' said she to Alcidonis; 'it is early; we will have a little chat.' Alcidonis was transported. The fairy, who had made him so censorious with Corinna, knew what she was doing. The most flattering compliment to a handsome woman, is the abuse of her rivals; and this she had taken well at his hands.

'I long,' pursued Corinna, 'to know, in my turn, the good and ill you think of me.'---'The ill, alas! if you have any, have you given me time, or occasion to find it out? You are surrounded with illusion. That lustre, that sparkling vivacity, would conceal de-

formity

formity itself; I should have taken it for beauty. I see you, I am dazzled, intoxicated, transported! this is my case. It is an infatuation, a madness, whatever you please; but nothing in the world is truer; and you can make me, by a single word, the happiest or most miserable of men.'---'Madness indeed,' cried she, seeing him at her knees; 'you see me by chance; you love me, if one may believe it, and dare confess it to me—Do you know whether I merit this? Do you know whether I can make any return to it?'---'No, Madam, I know nothing. You are, perhaps, the most cruel of women, the most inconstant, the most perfidious. That fine person, those charming features, may conceal an insensible soul. I fear it, yet I will run the hazard of it; and though the danger were as great again, it is not in my power to avoid it.'----- 'Ah! I perceive plainly by these strokes the truth of your general character. You, Alcidonis, who are the most dangerous of men, and the person whom of all mankind I should most dread to love---'—'Why so? what have you heard of me?'----'That you are one who love passionately; and a man who loves passionately is insupportable;—that you abandon yourself distractedly; that you love like a madman, and want to be loved in the same manner. If we do not love as passionately as yourself, then come nothing but complaints and reproaches. You become sulky, uneasy, and jealous. There is no knowing how to quit you, and no possibility of keeping you.'---'It is true, Madam, that I have given into these absurdities; but I am now thoroughly cured. You may take me with safety; and I will sign my discharge beforehand.'---'Do not imagine, Sir, that I am jesting with you: what but liberty forms the charms of love! Without these a lover becomes a husband, and indeed it would be no misfortune to become a widow'----'I understand reason, my beautiful Corinna, and you may depend upon me.'----'You would give your word of honour, then, to a woman who should entertain a weakness for you,

to retire without making any buſtle, as ſoon as ſhe ſhould have told you as a friend, I have loved you, but now I love you no longer?'---'To be ſure: I have learned to live, and you need only try me.'---'Well, I will then; but remember, that I engage myſelf to love you no longer than you ſhall be agreeable.'

'I ſee plainly,' ſaid Alcidonis within himſelf, 'that here the white phial will be of great ſervice to me.' He was miſtaken; he had no occaſion for it: the impreſſion of the roſe coloured one very ſoon vaniſhed of itſelf. He was yet at Corinna's, and yet the idea of the other beauties he had ſeen at Alcipe's preſented itſelf to his imagination. 'Such a one is lively,' ſays he, 'but that is all; no ſentiment, no delicacy. That other changes her lovers as ſhe does her clothes. To-morrow I ſhould be diſmiſſed, if to-morrow any other amuſes her. I ſhould have a fine time of it, to throw away my ſighs on her! I ſhould have done much better to have beſtowed them on that languiſhing *fair* beauty, whoſe eyes were raiſed towards me in ſo tender, ſo affecting a manner. Corinna ſpeaks ill of Cephiſa, and therefore Cephiſa muſt have merit. She is not very animated; but what a pleaſure it would be to animate her! A woman naturally lively is ſo to all the world; but ſuch a one would be ſo to me alone. Come, let me go and ſee her: beſides I ſhould not care to be diſmiſſed. Corinna ſhall find that I am not one of thoſe who are to be dropped as ſhe pleaſes, and that I know how to give a diſmiſſion full as well as herſelf.'

He repeats to Cephiſa the ſame things that he ſaid to Corinna, but with more diſcretion. 'Is it poſſible!' cried ſhe, without any emotion. 'What! you would be unhappy if I were not to love you?'---'More unhappy than I can expreſs.'---'I am ſorry for it, for I do not know how to love.'---'Oh! my beautiful Cephiſa, with that enchanting ſmile, that tender look, that voice which goes to the very ſoul, you do not know how to love!'---'No, indeed!'---'But if I ſhould teach you how?'---'You would do me great pleaſure, for I am

very curious. But so many have attempted it, and not one has succeeded. My husband himself would lose all his labour.'---' Your husband; I believe it; but have you had lovers?'----' Many, and those some of the handsomest and most tender.'—' And did you make them happy?'----' No; for they all complained that I did not love them. It was not my fault; I did all in my power. Only think! I used now and then to take four at a time, in order to endeavour, among the number, to love at least one or two: yet all to no purpose.'

' This,' said Alcidonis, ' is a very rare instance of ingenuity; but let us not be discouraged, my dear; you will love me.'—' Do you think so?'—' I do think so: you have sensibility?'—' Yes, at times, here and there; but it passes away in a moment.'—' This is certainly a disease. Have you, in order for your cure, offered up any sacrifices to Venus?'—' My husband has offered up a great many; but he always found me the same at his return from the temple.'—' And why did he not carry you there?'—' He took care not to do that: the priest was young, and wanted to initiate me.'—' Initiate you! And do you know what that means?'—' Alas! not I; I know nothing of it.'—' Shall I shew you?' returned Alcidonis, taking some liberties with her. ' Softly Sir,' cried she, ' you act as if I loved you; I am not in love with you yet.'—' How should you know that, unless we make some experiments?'—' I have made a thousand; but all that proves nothing. At first I think I love, and then I think I do not. It is better to wait till it comes; and if it comes, I will tell you.'

Alcidonis, from day to day, made some new progress on the indolent sensibility of Cephisa; but she was not yet come to the pitch that he wanted to bring her to. In order to heat her imagination, he proposed to meet her at a feast which was to be celebrated in honour of Venus. She consented, on condition that she should not be initiated. The day after, each of them, out of decency, repaired separately to their quarter.

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The girls and the boys, arrayed like the Graces and the Loves, ſung hymns in honour of the goddeſs, and danced to the ſound of the lyre, beneath the ſhade of a ſacred grove which ſurrounded the temple.

Cephiſa got there firſt. 'Ah!' ſaid ſhe to Alcidonis, 'I was looking for you; I have good news to tell you. The goddeſs has anticipated our vows: I think I now begin to love you in good earneſt. This very night I have ſeen you in my ſleep. You was preſſing; I was animated.'---'Well!'---'Well! I will tell you the reſt at ſupper.'---'At ſupper!' replied Alcidonis, with an indifferent air, and his eyes fixed on the feaſt.---'At ſupper let it be, with all my heart. What a beautiful dancing girl is there! how charmingly that woman ſings!'---'We ſhall be alone, do you hear?'---'Alone! very well. I ſhould be glad to know who that handſome dancer is?'---'Alcidonis, you do not hear me!'---'Pardon me, I do hear you; but I am looking out for ſomebody who may tell me.....Oh, 'Pamphilus! one word. Tell me who is that beautiful dancer?'---'It is Chloe,' ſays Pamphilus.---'I am to ſup with her.'---'This evening?'---'This very evening.'---'I ſhould be glad to make one.'---'That cannot be.'---'I beſeech you, my dear Pamphilus, by our friendſhip.' 'You do not conſider, Alcidonis,' whiſpered the diſordered Cephiſa, 'you are to ſup with me; I told you ſo.'---'True, I intended it; but I have promiſed my friend Pamphilus. My word is ſacred, and I cannot break it.

He ſaw Chloe, found her adorable, as it is called, for a quarter of an hour, and inſipid the moment after. He ſaw Phillira, the ſinger; he was ſmitten with her for an evening, and the next day tired of her. 'Alas, how fatiguing are whimſies!' ſays he; 'every inſtant new deſires, without ſatisfaction. It is the torment of the Danaides. Away with theſe tranſitory beams of ſentiment which revives ſo faſt, and leave me no repoſe: let me drink oblivion to my follies!' He ſaid, and emptied the white phial. He had now none left

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but the blue; and his happineſs depended on the uſe he ſhould make of it.

Alcidonis ſtudied philoſophy under Ariſtus the academician. Ariſtus dying, left behind him a young widow, one of the moſt virtuous and beautiful women in the world. The diſciple of Ariſtus thought it his duty to give the widow all the conſolation and aſſiſtance of friendſhip. Glycerium refuſed his offers with a modeſty mingled with ſweetneſs and pride. 'I have little wealth!' ſays ſhe, 'and leſs deſires. My huſband has left me a moſt valuable inheritance, a reliſh for the golden mean, and the habit of living upon little.' So much prudence united to ſo much beauty deſerved a delicate and laſting attachment. 'It is time?' ſays Alcidonis, 'that I ſhould drink out of the blue phial.'

A ſoft and lively warmth diffuſes itſelf through all his veins; not the reſtleſſneſs of whim; not the tranſport of paſſion; but a delightful emotion, the preſage of happineſs. He burns to belong to Glycerium; he burns to have henceforth but one fortune with her, one life, and one ſoul; and giving way to his impatience, he propoſes marriage to her. Glycerium was not inſenſible to this mark of love and eſteem. 'You are generous enough,' ſaid ſhe, 'to offer me your hand. I will deſerve it by refuſing it. I ſhould be unworthy of it, if I accepted it.' It was in vain that he urged his father's conſent, that he made it a crime in her to refuſe him, that he menaced her with the reproaches ſhe would throw out againſt herſelf, for having made him unhappy; ſhe appeared immoveable.

Glycerium, however, in her retirement, wept without ceaſing. The only ſlave ſhe had left ſaw the grief that conſumed her, but was not able to penetrate the cauſe. Should he attribute it to the death of her huſband? What! lament, without ceaſing, a philoſophical huſband! That was not natural. His miſtreſs often writ to a citizen of Argos; and the anſwers he returned her forced deep ſighs from her. Curioſity or

zeal

zeal induced the slave to open one of Glycerium's letters. It was conceived in these terms.

'If you have not a heart of brass, you will be touched, my Lord, with the despair of an unfortunate woman, who would give her life for the liberty of her father. Aristus, my husband, to whom I was ashamed to confess that I was born of a slave, spared no pains to restore my father to my wishes. He caused him to be sought after in vain. I learn at last that he is in your power, and I learn it in indigence. I have made an estimate of every thing that I have left; but alas! I am far from being able to raise what you demand: so that the only resource now left me, is to offer myself in exchange for my father. It is not just that I should be free, while my father is a slave. I am young; he is borne down by years. You may derive more advantage from my servitude than from his. My hands will inure themselves to labour; my heart is prepared for patience. Were I inclined to avail myself of the easy means which those of my age have in their power to seduce and interest the men, I should not be reduced to this cruel extremity; but slavery is less shameful than vice, and I make my choice without hesitation.'

The slave, struck with admiration and pity, carried this letter to Alcidonis. 'Ah!' cried he, his heart overcome, and his eyes swimming with tears? 'here then is the cause of her refusal! she was born a slave! What signifies that? Virtue is the empress of the whole world. Fortune only should be ashamed. What piety! what tenderness! You, Glycerium, you in slavery! Why have I not a throne to offer you! I conjure thee, by the gods, said he to the slave, 'keep this a secret. I will go. The tears of thy mistress shall soon be wiped away, and thy zeal shall have its reward.'

Alcidonis repairs to Argos, and Glycerium's father is set free. The unknown stranger who procured him his liberty, gives him wherewith to defray his expences to Athens, and says to him at parting, 'You are

are now going to see Glycerium; you owe your liberty to her tenderness and virtue. It is in her power to be happy, and to render you so: and if the service I have just now done you be dear to you, promise me to engage this virtuous daughter of your's to conceal her birth and your misfortunes from the eyes of the man who demands her in marriage. I know his respect for her is so great, that it would shock him to see her blush. Wherefore if your benefactor ever appears before you, suppress your gratitude; for he would be known by you alone.'---'What!' said the old man melting into tears! 'shall my daughter never know the hand that has broken my chains?'---'No, replied Alcidonis? 'overwhelm not Glycerium with this load of humiliation. It is one of those duties that debase the soul. Leave to her's, I conjure you, its nobleness and freedom.' The old man promised his deliverer to comply.

On his arrival at Athens, his daughter faints away at the sight of him. 'Oh! my father! said she to him! 'what god grants you to my tears? Has then your master's avarice at length relented?' 'Yes, my daughter,' replied the old man? 'I know that I owe to your tenderness my life, and the happiness of coming to die in your arms.'

Alcidonis, at his return came to press Glycerium by all the tenderness of love to consent to their marriage. The old man had not been wanting to exhort his daughter to silence on the humbleness of their former condition. 'No,' replied she to him with spirit, 'it is less humiliating to confess, than to be silent: they whom it shall concern to know me, shall learn from myself who I am.'

'You choose then,' said she to Alcidonis, 'that I should open my soul to you? While I was unhappy, I concealed my grief; but you deserve to partake of my joy. Know not that my destiny decreed me to be born in servitude. I was emancipated; but my father still groaned under it. Some propitious deity restored

him

him to me; he is free; he is here; you shall see him. However, the blot of our servitude is not to be effaced; and to confess to you who we are, is to declare irrevocably, that neither your honour, nor my gratitude, will permit me to listen to your offers.'

'You do me injustice, Glycerium,' said Alcidonis, with an air of tenderness mingled with reproach. 'Do you think me less a philosopher, or less generous, than Aristus? Did you conceal from him the misfortune of your birth? No, certainly. Did not he despise the injustice of fortune and opinion? I am his disciple: his precepts are engraved in my heart. Is it reproachful to follow his example? Or do you imagine that I have not virtue enough to imitate him?'---'It is not virtue,' said she to him, smiling; 'but prudence, that you want. Aristus had had time to try himself. You are not, for him, of an age at which we can answer for ourselves; and I would save you the bitterness of repentance.'

Alcidonis, grieved at her invincible constancy, fell at Glycerium's feet, in order to move her by pity. In that moment appears the old man, whom he had delivered from slavery. 'What do I see? Ah! daughter!' cried he, 'it is he . . .' and then all of a sudden calling to mind Alcidonis's prohibition, he stopped short, and remained with his eyes fixed on his deliverer, as if were inadvertently letting fall tears. 'What! my father,' said Glycerium astonished, 'you know him then? It is he, you say! make an end. What has he done? Where have you known him? Alcidonis, you look down! you blush! My father views you with the most melting tenderness!-----Ah! I understand you both. My father, it is he who redeemed you; it is to him that I owe my father.'---'Yes, my daughter, there is my benefactor.'----'Is this, said Alcidonis embracing the old man, who threw himself at his feet, 'is this what you promised me?'---'Pardon me,' said the old man, 'my heart was touched; my daughter has guessed my secret; it is not my fault.'---'Well then, since she knows all, oblige this cruel daughter

not

not to drive me to despair. It is her hand, her heart, that I ask as the price of the happiness I restore to her.' The old man, struck to the heart, warmly reproached his daughter for a piece of ingratitude of which she was not guilty; and taking her trembling hand, put it into that of his deliverer. 'It is to your father that I owe it—that I owe this hand which you refuse me,' said Alcidonis to her tenderly, and kissing her hands.—'Console yourself,' replied Glycerium, with a smile, 'you owe him only my hand; my heart surrendered of itself."

Alcidonis, transported, employed the remainder of the day in preparing to set out on the morrow for Megara. That night, while he enjoyed a gentle slumber, the fairy Galante appeared to him again, and said, 'Be happy, Alcidonis; love without uneasiness; possess without disgust: desire in order to enjoy: make others jealous, but never be so yourself. It is not advice that I now give you; it is your destiny that I unfold. You have drank of the spring of perfect happiness. I distribute with a lavish hand the purple and rose-coloured phials; but the blue bottle is a gift which I reserve for my favourites.'

LAUSUS AND LYDIA.

Lausus Equûm Dormitor, Debellatorque Ferarum.

VIRG. Æn. vii.

THE character of Mezentius, king of Tyrrhene, is well known. A bad prince and a good father, cruel and tender by turns. He had nothing of the tyrant, nothing that shewed violence, as long as his desires knew no obstacle; but the calm of this haughty soul was the repose of a lion.

Mezentius had a son named Lausus, whose valour and beauty rendered him famous among the young heroes of Italy. Lausus had attended Mezentius in the war against the king of Præneste. His father, at the very summit of joy, saw him, covered with blood,

fighting and vanquishing by his side. The king of Praeneste, driven out of his territories, and seeking safety in flight, had left in the hands of the conqueror a treasure more precious than his crown, a princess, at that age wherein the heart has only the virtues of nature, and nature has all the charms of innocence and beauty. Every thing that the Graces in tears possess, either noble or affecting, was painted in Lydia's countenance. In her grief, courage, and dignity, one might discover the daughter of kings amidst the crowd of slaves. She received the first compliments of her enemies without haughtiness, without acknowledgement, as an homage due to her rank, the noble sentiments of which were not weakened by ill fortune.

She heard her father named, and at the name lifted up to Heaven her fine eyes filled with tears. All hearts were moved. Mezentius himself, astonished, forgot his pride and age. Prosperity which hardens weak souls, softens proud hearts, and nothing can be gentler than an hero after a victory.

If the savage heart of old Mezentius was not able to resist the charms of his captive, what was the impression on the virtuous soul of young Lausus! He mourned over his exploits; he reproached himself with his victory: it cost Lydia tears. 'Let her avenge herself,' said he; 'let her hate me as much as I love her; I have deserved it but too much!' But an idea still more distressful presents itself to his imagination: he sees Mezentius, astonished, softened, pass on a sudden from rage to clemency. He judged rightly, that humanity alone had not effected this revolution; and the fear of having his father for a rival compleated his confusion.

At the age of Mezentius jealousy follows closely upon love. The tyrant observed the eyes of Lausus with an uneasy attention; he saw extinguished in them all at once, that joy and ardour which had lighted up the face of the young hero on his first victory. He saw him disturbed; he caught some looks which it

was

was but too eaſy to underſtand. From that inſtant he conſidered himſelf as betrayed; but nature interpoſed, and ſuſpended his rage. A tyrant even in his fury conſtrains himſelf to think that he is juſt; and before he condemned his ſon, Mezentius laboured to convict him.

He began by diſſembling his own paſſion with ſo much art, that the prince looked on his former fears as vain, and conſidered the attentions of love as nothing more than the effects of clemency. At firſt he affected to allow Lydia all the appearance of liberty: but the tyrant's court was full of ſpies and informers, the uſual retinue of men of power; who, not being able to make themſelves beloved, place their greatneſs in being feared.

His ſon was no longer afraid of paying Lydia a reſpectful homage. He mingled with his ſentiments an intereſt ſo delicate and tender, that Lydia very ſoon began to reproach herſelf for the hatred which ſhe thought ſhe entertained for the blood of her enemy; while Lauſus lamented that he had contributed to Lydia's misfortunes. He called the gods to witneſs that he would do all in his power to repair them. 'The king my father,' ſays he, 'is as generous after victory, as untractable before battle: ſatisfied with victory, he is incapable of oppreſſion. It is eaſier than ever for the King of Prænеſte to engage him to a peace that ſhall be glorious to both. That peace will dry up your tears, beautiful Lydia; but will it efface the remembrance of their crime who cauſed you to ſhed them? Why did I not ſee all my blood flow rather than thoſe tears?'

Lydia's replies, which were full of modeſty and greatneſs, betrayed to Lauſus no warmer emotion than that of gratitude; though at the bottom of her heart ſhe was but too ſenſible of the care he took to conſole her. She ſometimes bluſhed for having liſtened to him with complaiſance; but her father's intereſts made it a law to her to avail herſelf of ſuch a ſupport.

In the mean time their conferences growing more frequent, became alſo more animated, more intereſting, more intimate; and love made its way inſenſibly through reſpect and gratitude, as a flower, which, in order to blow, opens the ſlight texture in which it is enfolded.

Deceived more and more by the feigned tranquility of Mezentius, the credulous Lauſus flattered himſelf, that he ſhould very ſoon ſee his duty accord with his inclination: and nothing in the world, in his opinion, was eaſier, than to reconcile them. The treaty of peace which he had meditated, was reduced to two articles; to reſtore to the King of Prænеſte his crown and his territories; and to make his marriage with the princeſs the band of union between the two powers. He communicated this project to Lydia. The confidence he placed in it, the advantages he ſaw accruing from it, the tranſports of joy which the idea alone inſpired him with, ſurprized the lovely captive into a ſmile, mingled with tears. 'Generous prince,' ſays ſhe to him, 'may Heaven fulfil the wiſhes you put out for my father! I ſhall not be ſorry that I am made the pledge of peace, and the token of gratitude.' This touching reply was accompanied with a look ſtill more touching. The tyrant was informed of all. His firſt tranſport would have hurried him to ſacrifice his rival; but this ſon was the only ſupport of his crown, the only barrier between the people and him: the ſame ſtroke would have rendered him completely odious to his ſubjects, and have taken from him the only defender, whom he could oppoſe to the public hatred. Fear is the ruling paſſion of tyrants. Mezentius reſolves to diſſemble. He orders his ſon into his preſence, talks to him good-humour, and bids him prepare to ſet out the next day for the frontiers of his territories, where he had left his army. The prince endeavoured to conceal the grief which wrung his ſoul, and ſet out without having time to take leave of Lydia.

The very day of Lauſus's departure, Mezentius had

caused honourable conditions of peace to be proposed to the King of Praeneste; the first article of which was his marriage with the daughter of the vanquished monarch. That unfortunate monarch hesitated not to consent, and the same ambassador that offered him peace brought back his agreement for an answer.

Lausus had in the court a friend, who had been attached to him from his infancy. A remarkable resemblance to the young prince had been the means of making the fortune of this young man, who was called Phanor; but they resembled each other still more in their dispositions than their figure; the same inclinations, the same virtues. Lausus and Phanor seemed to have but one soul. Lausus, at parting, had confided to Phanor his passion and his despair. The latter was therefore inconsolable on hearing of the marriage of Lydia with Mezentius; he thought it his duty to acquaint the prince with it. The situation of the lover at this news cannot be described; his heart is troubled, his reason forsakes him; and, in the distraction of a blind sorrow, he writes to Lydia the warmest and most imprudent letter that love ever dictated. Phanor was charged with the delivery of it. He went to her at the hazard of his life, if he should be discovered. He was so. Mezentius, enraged, orders him to be laden with irons, and dragged to a frightful prison.

However, every thing was prepared for the celebration of this unhappy marriage. We may justly conclude that the feast was suitable to the character of Mezentius. Wrestling, the cestus, gladiators, combats between men and animals bred up to carnage, every thing that barbarity has invented for its amusements, was to have graced the pomp: nothing was wanting to this bloody spectacle, but persons to fight against the wild beasts; for it was customary to expose to these fights none but criminals condemned to die; and Mezentius, who on any suspicion was always eager to put the innocent to death, retarded still less the punishment of the guilty. There remained in the

prisons none but the faithful friend of Lausus. 'Let him be exposed,' said Mezentius; 'let him fall a prey to the devouring lions: the traitor deserves a more cruel death; but this best suits his crime and my vengeance, and his punishment is a feast worthy of injured love.'

Lausus having in vain expected the answer of his friend, impatiently gave way to affright. 'Should we be discovered!' says he; 'should I have lost my friend by my fatal imprudence! Lydia herself---Ah! I tremble. No, I cannot live any longer in this dreadful uncertainty.' He sets out; he disguises himself carefully; he arrives; he hears the report spread among the people; he learns that his friend is in chains, and that the next day is to unite Lydia with Mezentius. He learns that they are preparing the feast which is to precede the marriage festival, and that, by way of shew at this festival, they are to see the unhappy Phanor a prey to wild beasts. He shrinks at this recital; a deadly chillness spreads through all his veins; he comes again to himself; but lost in distraction, he falls on his knees, and cries out, 'Great gods, restrain my hand; my despair terrifies me! Let me die to save my friend; but let me die with virtue!' Resolved to deliver his dear Phanor, though he should perish in his stead, he flies to the gates of the prison; but how is he to enter there? He addresses himself to the slave whose office was to carry food to the prisoners. 'Open your eyes,' said he, 'and know me: I am Lausus; I am the son of the king. I expect an important service from you. Phanor is confined here: I will see him: I will. I have but one way to come at him: give me your cloaths; fly! There are the pledges of my acknowledgement; withdraw yourself from the vengeance of my father. If you betray me, you rush on your ruin; if you assist me in my undertaking, my favour shall find you in the very heart of the deserts.'

The weak and timorous slave yields to his promises and threats. He assists the prince in disguising himself,

ſelf, and diſappears, after having told him the hour at which he was to preſent himſelf, and the conduct he was to obſerve in order to deceive the vigilance of the guards. Night approaches, the moment arrives, Lauſus preſents himſelf: he aſſumes the name of the ſlave; the bolts of the dungeon open with a diſmal ſound. By the feeble glimmering of a torch, he penetrates into this manſion of horror; he advances, he liſtens: the accents of a moaning voice ſtrike his ear; he knows it to be the voice of his friend; he ſees him lying down in the corner of a cell, covered with rags, conſumed with weakneſs, the paleneſs of death on his countenance, and the fire of deſpair in his eyes. 'Leave me,' ſaid Phanor to him, taking him for the ſlave; 'away with theſe odious nouriſhments; ſuffer me to die. Alas!' added he, ſending forth cries interrupted by ſighs; 'alas! my dear Lauſus is ſtill more unhappy than I. O, ye gods! if he knows the ſtate to which he has reduced his friend!'---'Yes,' cried Lauſus, throwing himſelf on his boſom; 'yes, my dear Phanor, he does know it, and he partakes of it,'---'What do I ſee?' cried Phanor, tranſported: 'Ah, Lauſus! ah, my prince?' At theſe words both of them loſe the uſe of their ſenſes, their arms are locked in each other, their hearts meet, their ſighs are intermingled. They remain for a long time mute and immoveable, ſtretched out on the floor of the dungeon; grief ſtifles their voice, and they anſwer each other only by embracing more cloſely, and bathing one another with their tears. Lauſus at laſt coming to himſelf, 'Let us not loſe time,' ſaid he to his friend; 'take theſe cloaths, get hence, and leave me here.'---'What, I! great gods; can I be ſo vile? Ah, Lauſus, could you believe it! Ought you to propoſe it to me!'---'I know you well,' ſaid the prince; 'but you ſhould alſo know me. The ſentence is pronounced, your puniſhment is prepared, you muſt die or fly.'---'Fly!'---'Hear me; my father is violent, but he is not without ſenſibility; Nature aſſerts her right over his heart: if I deliver you from death,

death, I have only to melt him to compaſſion for myſelf; and his arm, when lifted up againſt a ſon, will be eaſily diſarmed.'---'He would ſtrike,' ſaid Phanor, 'and your death would be my crime; I cannot abandon you.'---'Well, then,' ſaid Lauſus, 'remain here; but at your death you ſhall ſee mine alſo. Depend upon my father's clemency; it would be in vain for him to pardon me; think not that I pardon myſelf. This hand, which wrote the fatal billet that condemns you; this hand, which, even after its crime, is ſtill the hand of your friend, ſhall re-unite us in your own deſpite.' In vain would Phanor have inſiſted. 'Let us argue no longer,' interrupted Lauſus; 'you can ſay nothing to me that can equal the ſhame of ſurviving my friend, after I have deſtroyed him. Your preſſing earneſtneſs makes me bluſh, and your prayers are an affront. I will anſwer for my own ſafety, if you will fly. I ſwear to die, if you will ſtay and periſh; chuſe: the moments now are precious.'

Phanor knew his friend too well to pretend to ſhake his reſolution. 'I conſent,' ſays he, 'to let you try the only means of ſafety that is left us; but live, if you would have me live: your ſcaffold ſhall be mine.' 'I readily believe it,' ſaid Lauſus, 'and your friend eſteems you too much to deſire you to ſurvive him.' At theſe words they embraced; and Phanor went out of the dungeon in the habit of the ſlave, which Lauſus had juſt thrown off.

What a night! what a dreadful night for Lydia! Alas! how ſhall we paint the emotions that ariſe in her ſoul; that divide, that tear it, between love and virtue. She adores Lauſus, ſhe deteſts Mezentius; ſhe ſacrifices herſelf to her father's intereſts, ſhe delivers herſelf up to the object of her hatred, ſhe tears herſelf for ever from the wiſhes of an adored lover. They lead her to the altar as it were to puniſhment. Barbarous Mezentius! thou art content to reign over the heart by violence and fear! it ſuffices thee that thy

conſort trembles before thee, as a ſlave before his maſter. Such is love in the heart of a tyrant.

Yet, alas! it is for him alone that ſhe is hereafter to live: it is to him that ſhe is going to be united. If ſhe reſiſts, ſhe muſt betray her lover and her father: a refuſal will diſcover the ſecret of her ſoul; and if Lauſus is ſuſpected to be dear to her, he is undone.

It was in this cruel agitation that Lydia waited the day. The terrible day arrives. Lydia, diſmayed and trembling, ſees herſelf decked out, not as a bride to be preſented at the altars of Love and Hymen, but as one of thoſe innocent victims which a barbarous piety crowned with flowers before it ſacrified them.

They lead her to the place where the ſpectacle is to be exhibited; the people aſſemble there in multitudes; the ſports begin. I ſhall not ſtop to deſcribe the engagements at the ceſtus, at wreſtling, at the ſword; a more dreadful object engages our attention.

An enormous lion advances. At firſt, with a calm pride, he traverſes the arena, throwing his dreadful looks around the amphitheatre that environs him: a confuſed murmur announces the terror that he inſpires. In a ſhort time the ſound of the clarions animate him; he replies by his roarings; his ſhaggy mane is erected around his monſtrous head; he laſhes his loins with his tail, and the fire begins to iſſue from his ſparkling eye-balls. The affrighted populace with and dread to ſee the wretch appear, who is to be delivered up to the rage of this monſter. Terror and pity ſeize on every breaſt.

The combatant, whom Mezentius's guards themſelves had taken for Phanor, preſents himſelf. Lydia could not diſtinguiſh him. The horror with which ſhe is ſeized had obliged her to turn away her eyes from this ſpectacle, which ſhocks the ſenſibility of her tender ſoul. Alas! what would ſhe feel, if ſhe knew that Phanor, that the dear friend of Lauſus, is the criminal whom they have devoted; if ſhe knew that Lauſus,

himſelf

himself had taken his friend's place, and that it is he who is going to fight!

Half naked, his hair dishevelled, he walks with an intrepid air; a poniard for the attack, a buckler for defence, are the only arms by which he is protected. Mezentius, prepossessed, sees in him only the guilty Phanor. His own blood is dumb, Nature is blind; it is his own son whom he delivers up to death, and his bowels are not moved; resentment and revenge fill every other sentiment. He sees with a barbarous joy the fury of the lion rising by degrees. Lausus impatient, provokes the monster, and urges him to the combat. He advances towards him; the lion springs forward. Lausus avoids him. Thrice the enraged animal makes towards him with his foaming jaws, and thrice Lausus escapes his murderous fangs.

In the mean time Phanor learns what is doing. He runs up, and bears down the multitude before him, while his piercing cries make the amphitheatre resound. 'Stop, Mezentius! save your son: it is he; it is Lausus who is engaged.' Mezentius looks and knows Phanor, who hastens towards him: 'O, ye gods, what do I see! My people assist me; throw yourselves on the arena, ravish my son from the jaws of death!' At the name of Lausus, Lydia falls down dead on the steps of the amphitheatre; her heart is chilled, her eyes are covered with darkness. Mezentius sees only his son, who is now in inevitable danger: a thousand hands arm in vain for his defence: the monster pursues him, and would have devoured him, before they could have arrived to his assistance. But, O incredible wonder! O unlooked-for happiness! Lausus, while he eludes the bounds of the furious animal, strikes him a mortal blow; and the sword, with which he is armed, is drawn reeking from the lion's heart. He falls, and swims in seas of blood, vomited through his foaming jaws. The universal alarm now changes into triumph, and the people reply to Mezentius's doleful cries only by shouts of admiration and joy.

These

These shouts recal Lydia to life; she opens her eyes, and sees Lausus at Mezentius's feet, holding in one hand the bloody dagger, and in the other his dear and faithful Phanor. 'It is I,' said he to his father, 'it is I alone who am culpable. Phanor's crime was mine: it was my duty to expiate it. I forced him to resign his place; and was about to kill myself if he refused. I live, I owe that life to him; and if your son be still dear to you, you owe your son to him; but if your vengeance is not appeased, our days are in your hands: strike; we will perish together; our hearts have sworn it.' Lydia trembling at this discourse, viewed Mezentius with suppliant eyes, overflowing with tears. The tyrant's cruelty could not withstand this trial. The cries of nature, and the voice of remorse, put to silence jealousy and revenge. He remains for a long time immoveable, and dumb, rolling by turns, on the subjects that surround him, looks of trouble and confusion, in which love, hatred, indignation, and pity, combat and succeed each other. All tremble around the tyrant. Lausus, Phanor, Lydia, a multitude innumerable, wait with terror the first words that he is to pronounce. He submits at last, in spite of himself, to that virtue whose ascendancy overpowers him; and passing of a sudden, with impetuous violence, from rage to tenderness, he throws himself into his son's arms. 'Yes,' says he, 'I pardon thee, and I pardon also thy friend. Live, love one another: but there remains one sacrifice more for me to make thee, and thou hast just now rendered thyself worthy of it. Receive it then,' said he with a new effort; 'receive his hand, the gift of which is dearer to thee than life, it is thy valour which has forced it from me; it is that alone could have obtained it.'

BY GOOD LUCK.

'NO, Madam,' ſaid the Abbé de Chateauneuf to the old Marchioneſs of Liſban, 'I cannot believe that what is called virtue in a woman, is ſo rare as is ſaid; and I would lay a wager, without going farther, that you yourſelf have never been guilty of one indiſcretion.'---'Upon my word, my dear abbé, I could almoſt ſay like Agnes, *do not lay*.'---'Should I loſe?'---'No, you would win; but by ſo little—ſo very little, that to ſay the truth it is not worth boaſting of.'---'That is to ſay, your prudence has run ſome riſks.'---'Alas! yes: I have ſeen it more than once on the point of being ſhip-wrecked. *By good luck* you behold it in port.'---'Ah, Madam, truſt me with the recital of your adventures.'---'With all my heart. We are arrived at an age wherein we have no longer any thing to diſſemble, and my youth is now ſo long paſt, that I may ſpeak of it as a gay dream.

'If you recollect the Marquis of Liſban, he was one of thoſe inſipid fine figures, which ſay to you, *Here am I!* He was one of thoſe awkward pieces of vanity which always miſs their aim. He valued himſelf on every thing, and was good at nothing: he took the lead in converſation, demanded ſilence, ſuſpended the attention, and then brought out the flatteſt ſpeech in the world. He laughed before he told a ſtory, but no one elſe laughed at his ſtories; he often aimed at being refined, and gave ſuch fine turns to what he ſaid, that at laſt he did not know what he was ſaying: when he had given ladies the vapours, he thought he had made them penſive: when they were diverting themſelves with his follies, he took it for coquetry.'---'Ah, Madam, what a happy temper!'---'Our firſt interviews were filled with the recital of his intrigues. I began by liſtening to him with impatience; I ended by hearing him with diſguſt: I even took the liberty of declaring to my parents that the creature tired me to death. They replied that I was a ſimpleton, for that

a huſband

a husband was formed to do so. I married him. They made me promise to love him alone: my mouth said, *Yes*; my heart said, *No*; and my heart kept its promise. The Count of Palmene presented himself before me with all the graces of mind and figure. My husband, who introduced him, did the honours of my modesty: he replied to the handsome things the count said on his happiness with an air of superiority that made me mad. If you would believe him, I loved him to distraction; and this declaration was succeeded by all that indiscreet disclosure of secrets, no less shocking to truth than decorum, while vanity abuses the silence of modesty. I was not able to contain myself; I quitted the room, and Palmene could perceive by my disgust, that the marquis imposed upon him. "The impertinent creature!" said I to myself, "he goes on boasting of his triumphs, because he is persuaded I shall not have the courage to contradict him. They will believe him, they will suppose me tasteless enough to love the silliest and vainest man in the world. If he had spoken of an honest attachment to my duty, I could have borne it; but to talk of love! of a weakness for him! this is enough to bring a disgrace on me. No, I would not have it said in the world, that I am fond of my husband: it is of the highest consequence that I should undeceive Palmene; and with him I ought to begin."

'My husband, who congratulated himself on having put me out of countenance, did not discover, any better than myself, the true cause of my confusion and anger. He valued himself too much, and loved me too little, to condescend to be jealous. "You have behaved like a child," said he to me when the count was gone: "I can tell you, however, that he thinks you charming. Yet do not listen too much to him; he is a dangerous man." I felt it much better than he could tell me.

'Next day the Count de Palmene came to see me; he found me alone. "Do you forgive me, Madam,"

ſaid he, "for the confuſion I ſaw in you yeſterday? I was the innocent cauſe of it, but I could freely have diſpenſed with the marquis's making me his confident."——"I know not," ſaid I to him, looking down, "why he takes ſo much pleaſure in relating what it gives me ſo much pain to hear."——"When we are ſo happy, Madam, we are very pardonable in being indiſcreet."——"If he is happy, I congratulate him; but indeed he has no reaſon."——"What! can he be otherwiſe," replied the count with a ſigh, "when he poſſeſſes the moſt beautiful woman in the world?"——"Suppoſe, Sir, ſuppoſe for once that I am ſo; where is the glory, the merit, the happineſs of poſſeſſing me? Did I diſpoſe of myſelf?"—"No, Madam; but, if I may believe him, you ſoon applauded the choice they had made for you."—"What! Sir! will the men never conſider that they train us up to diſſimulation from our infancy; that we loſe our frankneſs with our liberty; and that is no longer the time to require of us to be ſincere, when they have impoſed it as a duty on us to be otherwiſe?" Here I was a little too much ſo myſelf, and perceived it too late: hope had now inſinuated itſelf into the count's ſoul. To confeſs that one does not love one's huſband, is almoſt to confeſs that we love another; and the perſon who is made the confident of ſuch a confeſſion, is very often the object of it.

'Theſe ideas had plunged the count into a pleaſing reverie. "You have diſſembled then mighty well," ſaid he, after a long ſilence, "for the marquis has told me aſtoniſhing things of your mutual love."—"Very well, Sir; let himſelf flatter him as much as he pleaſes: I ſhall not try to undeceive him."—"But for yourſelf, Madam, ought you to be unhappy?"——"I do my duty, I ſubmit to my deſtiny: queſtion me no more about it; and, above all, make no ill uſe of the ſecrets which the imprudence of my huſband, my own natural ſincerity, and my impatience have forced from me."—"I! Madam; may I die ſooner than be

unworthy

unworthy your confidence. But I would enjoy it alone, and without reserve: look upon me as a friend who shares all your disquiets, and in whose breast you may safely deposit them."

'This name of *friend* infused into my heart a perfidious tranquility: I no longer mistrusted either myself or him. A friend of twenty-four hours, of the count's age and figure, appeared to me the most reasonable, as well as the most decent thing in the world; and a husband, such as mine, the thing of all the world the most ridiculous and most afflicting.

'The latter obtained no longer, from the duty I owed him, any more than a few cold civilities; of which, however, he had still the folly to pride himself, and was always mentioning them in confidence to Palmene, and at the same exaggerating their value. The count knew not what to think of it. "Why deceive me?" said he sometimes. "Why disown a commendable sensibility? Are you ashamed to contradict yourself?"—"Alas! no, Sir; I could glory in it; but I am not happy enough to have occasion to retract."

'At these words my eyes were filled with tears. Palmene was melted by them. What did he not say to me to soften my sorrows! What pleasure did I take in hearing him! O, my dear abbé! the dangerous comforter: he assumed from that moment an absolute empire over my soul; and, of all my thoughts, my love for him was the only one I concealed from him. He had never spoke to me of his own passion but under the title of friendship; but making an ill use at last of the ascendance he had over me, he writ to me as follows:

"I have deceived myself, and imposed upon you: that friendship, so calm and so sweet, to which I resigned myself without fear, is become love, the most violent, the most passionate, that ever existed. I shall see you this evening, to devote my life to you, or to bid you an eternal farewell.

'I shall not explain to you, my dear abbé, the different emotions that arose in my soul: all I know is, that virtue, love, and fear, strove there together; but I remember, too, that joy had its part. I endeavoured, however, to prepare myself for making a good defence. First, I thought I would not be alone---"and I will go and tell them to let in all the world." Secondly, I resolved I would look at him but very slightly, without giving his eyes an opportunity to fix themselves for one moment on mine. "This effort will cost me dear; but virtue is not virtue for nothing. In short I will avoid giving him an opportunity of speaking to me in particular: and, if he should dare to attempt it; I will answer him in a tone, in such a tone as shall deceive him."

'My resolution being taken, I sat down to my toilette; and without intending it, dressed myself that day with more grace and elegance than ever. In the evening, a prodigious deal of company came to see me, and this company put me out of humour. My husband also, more earnest and assiduous than usual, as if he had done it on purpose, harrassed me almost to death. At length they announced Palmene. He blushed, he paid his respects to me: I received him with a profound curtsey, without deigning to raise my eyes towards him, and said to myself, "Well, this is very fine!" 'The conversation at first was general: Palmene let drop some words, which, to the rest of the company, carried very little meaning, but signified a great deal to me. I pretended not to understand them, and applauded myself in my own mind for so well supported a rigour. Palmene had not the courage to approach me; my husband forced him to it by his familiar pleasantries. The count's respect and timidity softened me. "The poor wretch," said I, "is more to be pitied than blamed; if he dared, he would ask pardon of me; but he will never have the courage. I will chear him by a look."---"I have been guilty of an indiscretion, Madam," said he to me, "do you

pardon

pardon me for it?"----"No, Sir." This *No*, pronounced I know not how, appeared to me very great. Palmene got up, as it were to go: my husband retained him by force. Word was brought that supper was on table. "Come, my dear count, be gallant; give my wife your hand: she seems to me to be rather in ill-humour; but we shall contrive to drive it away."

'Palmene in despair, squeezed my hand; I looked at him, and thought I saw in his eyes the image of love and grief. I was touched with it, my dear abbé; and by a movement, which proceeded from my heart, my hand replied to his. I cannot describe to you the change which appeared all of a sudden on his countenance. It sparkled with joy, and that joy diffused itself into the souls of all the company. Love, and the desire of pleasing, seemed to animate them all, as well himself.

'The discourse turned upon gallantry. My husband, who thought himself an Ovid in the art of love, delivered a thousand impertinencies on the subject. The count, in his answers, endeavoured to soften them with a delicacy and ingenuity that quite charmed me. *By good luck*, a young fop, who had seated himself by me, took it into his head to say handsome things to me. *By good luck* also I paid some attention to him, and answered him with an air of satisfaction. The amiable Palmene now changed of a sudden both his language and temper. The conversation had passed from love to coquetry. The count inveighed against that general desire of pleasing, with a warmth and gravity that astonished me. "I forgive," said he, "a woman for changing her lover; I can even pardon her for having several; all this is natural: it is not her fault if they cannot fix her; at least, if she seeks to captivate only those she loves, and whom she makes happy; and if she contributes at one time to the happiness of two or three, it is only a blessing multiplied. But a coquette is a tyrant who wants to enslave, merely for the pleasure of having slaves. Idolatress of herself, she cares for no-

body elſe: her pride makes a ſport of our weakneſs, and a triumph of our torments; her looks are falſe, her mouth deceitful, her language and her behaviour are only a ſeries of ſnares, her graces ſo many ſyrens, her charms ſo many poiſons."

'This declamation aſtoniſhed all preſent. "What! Sir," ſaid the young gentleman to him, who had talked to me, do you prefer a woman of gallantry to a coquette!"---"Yes, without doubt do I, and it is beyond all diſpute."---"Such a one is more convenient!" ſaid I to him ironically. "And more eſtimable, Madam," replied he, with an air of chagrin; "more eſtimable a thouſand times." I confeſs that I was piqued at this inſult. "Come, Sir," replied I with diſdain, it is to no purpoſe that you reproach us, as with a crime, of one of the moſt innocent and moſt natural pleaſures in the world; your opinion will not be a law. The coquettes, you ſay, are tyrants: you are a much greater tyrant yourſelf, for wanting to deprive us of the only advantage that nature has given us. If we muſt give up the deſire of pleaſing, what have we left in ſociety? Talents, genius, the ſtriking virtues, all theſe you have, or think you have; it is permitted a woman only to attempt to be amiable; and yet you moſt cruelly condemn her never to wiſh to be ſo, except to one man. This is to bury her alive amidſt the living; this is to render the whole world nothing to her."---"Ah, Madam!" ſaid the count to me in a pet, "you are in the way of the world! Indeed I could not have believed it."---"You are wrong, my dear," replied my huſband, "you are wrong: my wife would pleaſe every body, but deſires to make none happy but me. That is cruel, I confeſs, and I have told her ſo a hundred times; but it is her foible: ſo much the worſe for the dupes. Beſides, why take ſo ſeriouſly what is but a jeſt? If ſhe takes a pleaſure in hearing herſelf called handſome, muſt ſhe for that reaſon reply in the ſame ſtrain? She loves me, that is plain; but you, and as many others as amuſe her, ye have no

pretenſions

pretenſions to her heart. She keeps that for me; and I defy any body to rob me of it."—"You ſhut my mouth," ſaid Palmene, "the moment you cite your lady for an example, and I have nothing to ſay in reply." At theſe words they went out from table.

'I conceived from that inſtant, I will not ſay an averſion for the count, but a dread which almoſt comes up to it. "What a ſtrange man!" ſaid I to myſelf! "what an imperious diſpoſition! He would make a woman miſerable." After ſupper he fell into a ſullen ſilence, from which nothing could rouze him. At laſt, finding me for a moment alone, "Do you really think as you ſpoke?" demanded he with the air of a ſevere judge. "Certainly."----"Enough: you ſhall never ſee me more as long as I live."

'*By good luck* he kept his word with me, and I perceived by the chagrin which this rupture gave me, all the danger I had run.'-----'See,' ſaid the abbé, moralizing very gravely, 'what one moment of ill-humour produces. A trifle becomes a ſerious affair: we are exaſperated, humbled; love is terrified, and flies.'

'The character of the Chevalier de Luzel,' reſumed the marchioneſs, 'was quite the reverſe of that of the Count de Palmene.'---'This gentleman, madam, was, without doubt, the perſon who was ſo ſweet upon you during ſupper?'----'Yes, my dear abbé, the ſame. He was beautiful as Narciſſus, and he loved himſelf no leſs: he had vivacity, and a gentility in his underſtanding, but not the ſhadow of common ſenſe.

"Ah! marchioneſs," ſaid he to me, "this Palmene of yours is a melancholy creature! What do you do with the man? He talks, he moralizes, he overwhelms us with his arguments. For my own part, I know but two things; to amuſe myſelf, and to be amuſeing to others: I know the world I live in, I ſee what paſſes there; I ſee that the greateſt of evils that afflict mankind is dullneſs. Now this dullneſs proceeds from an evenneſs in the temper, a conſtancy in our connec-

tions,

tions, a ſolidity in our taſtes, a monotony, in ſhort, which gives a ſleepineſs even to pleaſure itſelf; while levity, caprice, coquetry, keep it awake. Beſides, I love coquettes to diſtraction: coquetry is the charm of ſociety. Beſides, ſenſible women are tireſome in the long-run. It is a good thing to have ſomebody with whom you may unbend."—"With me," ſaid I to him, ſmiling, "you may unbend as much as you pleaſe."—"And that now is what I want, what I ſeek in a coquette; to oppoſe, to reſiſt, to defend herſelf, if poſſible. Yes, Madam, I would fly you, if I thought you capable of a ſerious attachment."—'Madam,' replied the abbé gravely, 'this young fop was a dangerous perſon.'—'I aſſure you, my good friend, he was; and I was not long before I perceived it. I treated him at firſt as a child, and this aſcendancy of my underſtanding over his could not but be very flattering at my time of life, but he might be taken from me by ſomebody. I began to grow uneaſy at it. His abſence put me out of humour; his connections raiſed my jealouſy. I demanded ſacrifices, and wanted to impoſe laws.

"Well now," ſaid he to me one day when I was reproaching him for his diſſipation, "would you work a little miracle; make me diſcreet at once: I aſk nothing better." I underſtood very well, that to make him diſcreet, there was a neceſſity for ceaſing to be ſo myſelf. I aſked him, however, on what this little miracle depended. "On a trifle," ſaid he: "we ſeem to me to love one another already; the reſt is eaſily imagined."—"If we loved one another, as you ſay, but which I do not believe, the miracle would be already performed: love alone would have rendered you diſcreet."—"O, no, Madam, we muſt be juſt: I willingly abandon all other hearts for yours, win or loſe; it is the chance or the game, and I wiſh to run the hazard of it; but yet there is an exchange to make, and you cannot in conſcience deſire that I ſhould renounce all pleaſure for nothing."—'Madam, interrupted

rupted the abbé, 'the chevalier was not so void of sense as you say, and here he reasoned pretty well.—'I was astonished,' said the marchioness; 'but the more I perceived he was in the right, the more I endeavoured to persuade him that he was wrong. I even told him, as far as I can remember, some of the finest things in the world on honour, duty, and conjugal fidelity: but he paid no regard to them; he pretended that honour was only a decorum, marriage a ceremony, and the oath of fidelity a compliment, a piece of politeness, which in reality bound us to nothing. So much was said on one side and the other, that we began to lose ourselves in our ideas, when on a sudden my husband arrived.'

'*By good luck*, Madam!'——'Oh! by great good luck, I confess: never did husband come more opportunely. We were confused; my blushes would have betrayed me; and, for want of time to recollect myself, I said to the chevalier, "Hide yourself." He retired into the closet of my dressing-room.'—'A dangerous retreat, Madam!'—'It was so; but this closet had a back-door, and I was easy about the chevalier's escape.'—'Madam,' said the abbé, with his air of reflection, 'I would lay a wager that the chevalier is still in the closet.'—'Patience,' replied the marchioness, 'we are not come to the unravelling of the plot. My husband accosted me with that air of self-content which appeared always on his countenance; and I, in order to conceal my embarrassment from him, ran up hastily to embrace him with an exclamation of surprise and joy.'—"So, you little fool," said he to me, "there now, I suppose you are pleased! You see me again. I am very good, to come and pass the evening with this poor thing. You are not ashamed, then, to love your husband? But do you know that it is ridiculous, and that they say that they must bury us together, or that I must be banished from you; that you are good for nothing, ever since you have been my wife; that you drive all your lovers into despair, and that you ought to be punished

nished for it?"—"I, Sir! I drive nobody into despair. Do not you know me; I am one of the best-natured women in the world."—"What an air of simplicity! one would believe it. Thus, for example, Palmene ought to take it for granted that you have not played the coquette with him: the chevalier ought to be content that you prefer your husband to him; and what a husband too! A dull insipid fellow, who has not even common sense: is it not so? What a contrast to an elegant chevalier!"—"Indeed I form no comparison between you."—"The chevalier has wit, vivacity, and grace. How do I know but he has the gift of tears also? Has he never wept at your knees? You blush! That is almost a confession. Out with it; tell me?"—"Have done," said I to him, "or I will leave the room."—"What! do not you see that I am joking?"——"Such joking would deserve——" "How now! what, angry! You threaten me too! You may, but I shall not be at all alarmed."—"You take advantage of my virtue."—"Of your virtue? Oh, not at all! I depend only on my own planet, which will not suffer me to be made a fool of!"—— "And you trust to your planet?"——"I trust so strongly in it, I depend so thoroughly upon it, that I defy you to counteract it. Hark ye, child, I have known women without number; and not one, whatever I did, could bring herself to be untrue to me. Ah! I may say without vanity, that when they love me, they love me heartily. Not that I am better than any other: I do not flatter myself so far as that; but there is a certain *je-ne-sçai-quoi*, as Moliere says, which cannot be explained." At these words, surveying himself with his eyes, he walked before a glass. "You see too," continued he, "how little restraint I put upon you. For example, to-night have you any appointment, any *tête-à-tête*, I take my leave. It is merely on a supposition that you are disengaged, that I come to pass the evening with you."—"However that be," said I to him, "you had better stay."—"For the

greater

greater surety, is it not so?"—"Perhaps so."—"I thank you: I see I must sup with you."—'Sup then quickly,' interrupted the abbé; 'the marquis makes me impatient: I am in pain till you get up from table; till you are retired into your own apartment, and your husband leaves you there.'—'Well, my dear abbé, behold me there, in the most cruel anxiety I ever experienced in my life. My soul struggling (I blush at it yet) between fear and desire. I advance with a trembling pace towards the closet of my dressing-room, to see at last if my fears have any foundation: I perceive nobody there, I think him gone, this perfidious chevalier! but *by good luck*, I hear somebody speaking in a low voice in the next room; I draw near, I listen: it was Luzel himself, with the youngest of my women. "It is true," said he, "I came here with a design upon the marchioness, but chance uses me better than love. What a comparison! and how unjust is fortune! Your mistress is well enough; but has she that shape, that air of neatness, that bloom, that gentility? You are, by nature, a woman of quality. A woman must either be very modest, or very vain, to have an attendant of your age and figure! Faith, Lucy, if the Graces are made like you, Venus cannot shine much at her toilette."—"Keep your gallantries, Sir, for my lady; and remember that she will be here presently."——"Oh, no, she is with her husband; they are the best in the world together. I even think, God forgive me! that I hear them saying tender things to each other. It would be pleasant if he should come to pass the night with her. But however that be, she does not know that I am here, and from this moment, I am no longer for her."—"But, Sir, you do not consider; what will become of me if they should know it?"—"Take courage; I have provided for every thing: if to-morrow they should see me go out, it is easy to give it a proper turn."—"But, Sir, my lady's honour——""Stuff: your lady's honour is mightily concerned in it! And after all, if they should give her such a man

as myself, so much the better, that would bring her into fashion."—'Oh, the wretch!' cried the abbé. 'Judge my friend,' resumed the marchioness, 'my indignation at this discourse. I was on the point of bursting out upon them; but such a burst of passion would have ruined me: neither my people nor my husband would have been able to persuade themselves that the chevalier came there on Lucy's account. I resolved to dissemble: I rang; Lucy appeared; I had never seen her look so handsome before; for jealousy embellishes its object, when it cannot make it ugly. "Was that one of your master's servants," said I to her, "whom I just now heard talking with you?"—"Yes, Madam," replied she with confusion. "Let him withdraw this instant, and do not come back till he is gone." I said no more; but whether Lucy saw through me, or fear determined her to send away the chevalier, he retired that instant, and got out undiscovered. You may easily judge, my dear abbé, that my door was ever after shut against him; and that Lucy the next day dressed my head ill, did every thing wrong, was good for nothing, put me quite out of patience, and was discharged.'

'You had reason, Madam,' cried the abbé, 'to say that your virtue has run some risks.'—'This is not all,' continued she,' 'I shall now entertain you with another adventure. We passed the summer every year at our country-house at Corbéil, where we had a celebrated painter for our neighbour, which inspired the marquis with the gallant notion of having my portrait and his own. You know that it was his foible to believe himself beloved by me. He would have us represented in the same piece, chained together by Hymen with wreaths of flowers. The painter took the hint; but being accustomed to draw after nature, he desired to have a model for the figure of Hymen. In the same village was at that time a young abbé, who now and then came to see us. His fine eyes, his rosy mouth, his complexion scarce yet shaded with the

down

down of youth, his hair of a bright flaxen colour flowing in small ringlets on a neck whither than ivory, the tender vivacity of his looks, the delicacy and regularity of his features, every thing about him seemed so formed for the purpose, that the marquis prevailed on the abbé to consent to serve as a model to the painter.'

At this beginning, the Abbé de Chateauneuf redoubled his attention; but contained himself till the end, in order to hear the conclusion of the story.

'The expression to be given to the countenances,' continued the marchioness, 'produced excellent scenes between the painter and the marquis. The more my husband endeavoured to put on an air of sensibility, the more simple he looked. The painter copied faithfully, and the marquis was enraged at seeing himself painted to the life. For my part, I had something of mockery in my countenance, which the painter imitated as well. The marquis swore, the artist retouched without ceasing; but he still found on the canvas the air of a fly baggage and a fool. At last a dullness seized me; the marquis took it for a soft langour; on his side he gave himself a foolish laugh, which he called a tender smile, and the painter came off for drawing him as he saw him. We were to proceed next to the figure of Hymen. "Come, Sir," said the painter to the abbé, "now for the Graces and voluptuousness! Look tenderly on the lady; still more tenderly."——"Take her hand," added my husband, "and imagine that you are saying to her, Fear not, my dear; these bands are made of flowers; strong, but light. Animate yourself, then, my dear abbé; your countenance has no expression in it: you have the air of a Hymen benumbed." The young man profited wonderfully by the instructions of the painter and the marquis. His timidity vanished by degrees, his mouth wore an amorous smile, his complexion was heightened with a livelier red, his eyes sparkled with a gentler flame, and his hand pressed mine with a tremor which myself only could perceive. I must tell you all, the emotion of his soul passed into mine,

and I viewed the god with much more tenderneſs than I had done my ſpouſe. "There! the very thing," ſaid the marquis: "go on, abbé; admirable---Is not it?" ſaid he to the painter. "We ſhall make ſomething of this little model.-----Come, wife, do not let us be caſt down: I knew very well that it would be a fine piece. There! you are now juſt as I wanted.----- Courage, abbé.----Go on, Madam: I leave you both in the right attitude; do not change it till I return." As ſoon as the marquis was gone, my little abbé became quite heavenly; my eyes devoured his, and yet I could not be ſatisfied. The ſittings were long, and ſeemed to us to laſt only for a moment. "What a pity!" ſaid the painter, "that I did not take my lady at ſuch a juncture as this! There is the expreſſion I wiſhed for! quite another countenance. Ah, Sir! what a pleaſure it is to copy you? You do not flag at all: your features become more and more animated.----No inattention, Madam; fix your eyes on his: my Hymen will be a capital figure." When the head of the Hymen was finiſhed, "I want, Madam," ſaid he to me one day in my huſband's abſence, "I want to retouch your portrait. Change places abbé, and take that of the marquis."---"Why ſo, Sir?" ſaid I, bluſhing. "Oh, Heavens, Madam! let me alone. I know beſt what will ſet you off to advantage." I underſtood him, and the abbé bluſhed at it as well as myſelf. The artifice of the painter had a wonderful effect. The languor gave place to the moſt touching expreſſion of timid voluptuouſneſs. The marquis, at his return, could not ceaſe admiring this change, which he could not comprehend. "This is very ſtrange!" ſaid he; it looks as if the picture had animated itſelf."-----"It is the effect of my colours," replied the painter, coldly, "to diſplay themſelves thus in proportion as they take place. You will ſee it quite a different thing in a ſhort time from what it is now!"---"But my head," reſumed the marquis, to me does not ſeem to improve ſo."---"That is eaſily accounted for," replied the artiſt: "the

" the lineaments are ſtronger, and the colours leſs delicate. But do not be impatient: it will become, in time, one of the fineſt huſband's heads that ever was ſeen."

' When the picture was finiſhed, the abbé and myſelf fell into a profound melancholy. Thoſe ſoft moments in which our ſouls ſpoke through our eyes, and ſhot themſelves into one another, were now no more. His timidity and my modeſty laid us under a cruel reſtraint. He no longer dared to viſit us ſo often, and I no longer dared to invite him.

' In ſhort, one day, when he happened to be at our houſe, I found him alone motionleſs and penſive, before the picture. " You are well employed, Sir," ſaid I to him"..." Yes, Madam," replied he briſkly, " I am enjoying the only pleaſure that will henceforth be permitted me: I am admiring yourſelf in your picture."—" You are admiring me! That is very gallant!"—" Ah! I would ſay more if I durſt."—" Indeed? You are content?"—" Content, Madam! I am enchanted. Alas? why are you not ſtill ſuch as I ſee you in this picture!"—" It is pretty-well," interrupted I, pretending not to underſtand him; " But yours appears to me to be better."—" Better, Madam, mine is as cold as ice."—" You joke about your coldneſs; nothing in the world can be more warm."—" Ah, Madam! had I but been at liberty to ſuffer that emotion to diſplay itſelf in my countenance, which paſſed in my heart, you ſhould have ſeen quite another thing. But how could I expreſs what I felt in thoſe moments? The painter, if not the marquis, had his eyes continually upon me. I was obliged to aſſume a tranquil air. Would you ſee," added he, " how I ſhould have viewed you, if we had been without witneſſes? Give me once more that hand which I preſſed not without trembling, and let us reſume the ſame attitude."—" Would you believe it, my friend, I had the curioſity, the complaiſance, and if you pleaſe, the weakneſs, to let my hand drop into his. I muſt confeſs, I never ſaw any thing ſo tender, ſo paſ-

ſionate, ſo touching as the figure of my little abbé, at this dangerous conference. Voluptuouſneſs ſmiled on his lips, deſire ſparkled in his eyes, and all the flowers of the ſpring ſeemed to blow on his beautiful cheeks. He preſſed my hand againſt his heart, and I felt it beat with a vivacity that communicated itſelf to mine."—"Yes," ſaid I, endeavouring to diſſemble my confuſion, "that would be more expreſſive, I confeſs, but it would no longer be the figure of Hymen."—"No Madam, no; it would be that of Love: but Hymen at your feet ought to be no other than Love himſelf." At theſe words he ſeemed to forget himſelf, and thought himſelf in reality the god whoſe image he repreſented.

'*By good luck* I had ſtill ſtrength enough left to be in a paſſion: the poor creature, ſhocked and confounded, took my emotion for anger, and loſt, in aſking my pardon, the moſt favourable moment to offend me with impunity.'—'Ah, Madam!' cried the Abbé de Chateauneuf, 'is it poſſible that I have been ſuch a fool!'—'How now?' reſumed the Marchioneſs. 'Alas! this little fool was I!'—'You! impoſſible!'—'It was I, I myſelf, nothing more certain. You recal my own ſtory to my remembrance. Cruel woman! had I known but what I know now'—'My old friend, you would have had too great an advantage; and this prudence which you now extol ſo highly would have made but a feeble reſiſtance.'—'I am confounded' cried the abbé, 'I ſhall never forgive myſelf as long as I live.'—'Conſole yourſelf, for it is time,' replied the marchioneſs, ſmiling; 'but confeſs that there is a great deal of *good luck* in virtue itſelf, and that thoſe ladies who have the moſt, ought to judge leſs ſeverely of them who have not had enough.

THE TWO UNFORTUNATE LADIES.

IN the convent of the viſitation of Cl.... had for ſome ſhort time retired the Marchioneſs of Clarence. The calm and ſerenity which ſhe ſaw reign in this ſolitude, did but render more lively and bitter the grief

that

that consumed her. 'How happy,' said she, 'are those innocent doves, which have taken their flight towards heaven! Life is to them a cloudless day; they know neither the sorrows nor pleasures of the world.'

Amidst these pious maidens, whose happiness she envied, one only, named Lucilia, seemed to her to be pensive and pining. Lucilia, still in the bloom of her youth, had that style of beauty which is the image of a sensible heart; but sorrow and tears had taken off its freshness, like a rose which the sun has withered, but which leaves us still capable of judging, in its languishing state, of all the beauty it had in the morning. There seems to be a dumb language between tender souls. The marchioness read in the eyes of this afflicted fair-one what nobody had discovered there before. So natural is it to the unhappy to complain, and love their partners in affliction! She took a liking to Lucilia. Friendship, which in the world is hardly a sentiment, in the cloister is a passion. Their connection in a short time became very intimate, but on both sides a concealed sorrow poisoned its sweetness. They were sometimes a whole hour sighing together, without presuming to ask each other the secret of their griefs. The marchioness at last broke the silence.

'A mutual confession,' said she, 'would spare us perhaps a great deal of uneasiness: we stifle our sighs on both sides; ought friendship to keep any thing a secret from the breast where a mutual friendship is found?' At these words a modest blush animated the features of Lucilia, and the veil of her eye lids dropped over her fine eyes. 'Ah! why,' replied the Marchioness, 'why this blush? Is it the effect of shame? Is it thus that the thought of happiness ought to colour beauty. Speak my Lucilia, pour out your heart into the bosom of a friend more, without doubt, to be lamented than yourself, but who would console herself for her own happiness, if she could but soften yours.'—'What is it you ask of me, Madam, I share all your sorrows, but I have none of my own to confide to you. The alteration of my health

is the only cauſe of that languor into which you ſee me plunged. I am decaying inſenſibly; and, thanks to Heaven, my end approaches.' She ſpoke theſe laſt words with a ſmile, at which the marchioneſs was greatly affected. 'Is that, then,' ſaid ſhe, 'your only conſolation? yet, though impatient to die, you will not confeſs to me what it is that renders life odious to you. How long have you been here?'—Five years, Madam.'—'Was you brought hither by compulſion?'—'No, Madam, by reaſon, by Heaven, which was pleaſed to attract my heart entirely to itſelf.'—'That heart, then, was attached to the world?'—'Alas! yes, for its own puniſhment.'—'Finiſh.'—'I have told you all.'—'Were you in love Lucilia, and had the fortitude to bury yourſelf alive? Was it ſome perfidious wretch whom you have abandoned?'—'The moſt virtuous, moſt tender, and moſt valuable of mankind. Ah, no more: you ſee the guilty tears that ſteal from my eyes; all the wounds of my heart open afreſh at the thought.'—'No, my dear Lucilia, it is not a time for us now to keep any thing a ſecret. I would penetrate into the inmoſt receſſes of your heart, in order to pour conſolation into it; believe me, the poiſon of grief exhales not but by complaints; ſhut up in ſilence, it only becomes the more violent.'—'You will have it, Madam? Weep then over the unfortunate Lucilia; weep over her life, and ſhortly over her death.

'Scarce had I appeared in the world, when this fatal beauty attracted the eyes of a fickle and imprudent youth, whoſe homage could not dazzle me. One man alone, yet in the age of innocence and candour, taught me that I was ſenſible of love. The equality of our years, birth, fortune; the connection alſo between our families; and above all, a mutual inclination had united us to each other. My lover lived only for me: he ſaw with pity this immenſe void of the world, where pleaſure is only a ſhadow, where love is but a gleam; our hearts full of themſelves ..... But I loſe myſelf. Ah, Madam, what do you now oblige me to call

to

to mind!'---' What, my dear, do you reproach yourſelf for having been juſt? When Heaven has formed two virtuous and ſenſible hearts, does it make it criminal in them to ſeek each other, to attract, to captivate reciprocally? If ſo, why has it made them?'----' It formed, no doubt, with pleaſure that heart in which mine loſt itſelf; where virtue took place of reaſon, and where I ſaw nothing that was a reproach to nature. Oh, Madam, who was ever loved like me! Would you believe that I was obliged to ſpare my lover's delicacy even the confeſſion of thoſe tender inquietudes which ſometimes afflict love? He would have deprived himſelf of life, if Lucilia had been jealous of it. When he perceived in my eyes any mark of ſorrow, it was to him as if all nature had been eclipſed: he ſuppoſed himſelf always the cauſe, and reproached himſelf for all my faults.

' It is but too eaſy to judge to what exceſs the moſt amiable of men muſt have been loved. Intereſt, which diſſolves all ties except thoſe of love, intereſt diſunited our families: a fatal law-ſuit, commenced againſt my mother, was to us the æra and ſource of our misfortunes. The mutual hatred of our friends raiſed itſelf as an eternal barrier between us: we were obliged to give over ſeeing each other. The letter which he wrote to me will never be effaced out of my memory.

" Every thing is loſt to me, my dear Lucilia: they tear from me my only happineſs. I am juſt come from throwing myſelf at my father's feet, I am juſt come from conjuring him, bathing him at the ſame time with my tears, to give over this fatal law-ſuit. He received me as a child. I proteſted to him that your fortune was ſacred to me, that my own would become odious. He has treated my diſintereſtedneſs as a folly. Mankind conceive not that there is ſomething above riches: and yet what ſhould I do with wealth if I loſe you? They ſay that one day I ſhall be glad they did not liſten to me. If I believed that age, or what they call reaſon, could ſo far debaſe my ſoul, I ſhould ceaſe to live from

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this moment, terrified at what was to come. No, my dear Lucilia, no; all I have or ask is yours. The laws would in vain give me a part of your inheritance; my laws are in my heart, and my father there ſtands condemned. A thouſand pardons for the uneaſineſſes he occaſions you! Pray God that I offer up no criminal wiſhes; I could cut off from my own days to add to my father's; but, if ever I am maſter of thoſe riches he is now accumulating, and with which he would overload me, in ſpite of myſelf, ample reparation ſhall be made for all. But yet I am deprived of you. They will diſpoſe, perhaps, of the heart which you have given me. Ah! beware of ever conſenting to it: think that my life is at ſtake, think that our oaths are written in heaven. But can you withſtand the imperious will of a mother? I ſhudder at the thought; ſpeak comfort to me, in the name of the moſt tender love."

'You anſwered him, without doubt.'---'Yes, Madam; but in a very few words.

"I upbraid you with nothing. I am unhappy, but I know how to be ſo: learn from me to ſuffer."

'The law-ſuit, however, was begun, and carried on with heat. One day, alas! one terrible day; while my mother was reading with indignation a memorial publiſhed againſt her, ſomebody aſked to ſpeak with me. "Who is it?" ſaid ſhe; "let them come in." 'The ſervant, confounded, heſitates for ſome time, ſtammers in his anſwers, and concludes by confeſſing that he was charged with a billet to me. "For my daughter! from whom?" I was preſent; judge of my ſituation; judge of the indignation of my mother when ſhe heard the name of the ſon of the perſon whom ſhe called her perſecutor. If ſhe had vouchſafed to read the billet, which ſhe ſent back without opening, perhaps ſhe had been moved by it. She would have ſeen, at leaſt, the extreme purity of our ſentiments: but whether the vexation into which this law-ſuit had plunged her, required only an opportunity to vent itſelf, or that a ſecret correſpondence between her daugh-

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ter and her enemies was in her eyes a real crime, there are no reproaches with which I was not loaded. I fell down confounded at my mother's feet, and submitted to the humiliation of her upbraidings, as if I had deserved them. It was determined on the spot that I should go and conceal in a cloister what she called my shame and her own. Being brought here the day after, orders were given not to suffer me to see any body; and I was here three whole months, as if my family and the world had been entirely annihilated to me. The first and only visit I received was my mother's: I presaged from her embraces the sentence she was going to pronounce. "I am ruined," said she to me, as soon we were alone: iniquity has prevailed; "I have lost my law-suit, and with it all means of establishing you in the world. Scarce enough remains for my son to support himself according to his birth. As to you, my daughter, God has called you here; here you must live and die: to-morrow you take the veil." At these words, which were strengthened by the cold and absolute tone in which they were pronounced, my heart was struck, and my tongue frozen; my knees gave way beneath me, and I fell senseless on the ground. My mother called for assistance, and laid hold of that opportunity to withdraw herself from my tears. When I was come to myself again, I found myself surrounded with those pious damsels, whose companion I was to be, and who invited me to partake with them the sweet tranquility of their condition. But that state, so fortunate for an innocent and disengaged soul, presented to my eyes nothing but struggles, perjuries, and remorse. A dreadful abyss was going to be opened betwixt my lover and me; I found my better part torn from me; I saw no longer any thing around me but silence and vacuity; and in this immense solitude, in this renunciation of all nature, I found myself in the presence of Heaven, with my heart full of the lovely object, which it was necessary I should forget for its sake. Those holy damsels told me, with the strongest conviction,

conviction, all that they knew of the vanities of the world: but it was not to the world that I was attached; the moſt horrible deſart would have ſeemed a raviſhing abode with the man whom I had left in that world which to me was nothing.

'I deſired to ſee my mother again: ſhe pretended at firſt to have taken my ſwooning for a natural accident. "No, Madam, it is the effect of the violent ſituation into which you have thrown me; for it is no longer time to feign. You have given me life, you may take it from me; but, Madam, have you conceived me only as a victim devoted to the torment of a lingering death? and to whom is it you ſacrifice me? Not to God. I feel that he rejects me: the Almighty demands only pure victims, voluntary ſacrifices; he is jealous of the offerings made him, and the heart which preſents itſelf to him ought thenceforward to be his alone. If violence drags me to the altar, perjury and ſacrilege attend me there."---"What ſay you, wretched girl?"---"A terrible truth, which deſpair forces from me. Yes, Madam, my heart has given itſelf away without your conſent; innocent or culpable, it is no longer mine; God only can break the band by which it is tied."---"Go, unworthy daughter, go and ruin yourſelf: I will never acknowledge you more."---"Dear mother, by your own blood, abandon me not; ſee my tears, my deſpair; ſee hell open at my feet!"---"Is it in this light, then, that a fatal paſſion makes thee view the aſylum of honour, the tranquil port of innocence? What, is there then but the world in thy eyes? Know, however, that this world has but one idol, intereſt. All our homages are for the ſucceſsful: oblivion, deſertion, and contempt, are the portion of the unfortunate."

"Ah, Madam! ſeparate from that corrupt multitude the man---" "Whom you love, is it not ſo? I know all that he can have ſaid to you. He is no accomplice in the iniquity of his father; he diſclaims it, he complains to you of it; he will repair the injury done you! Vain promiſes; the fine ſpeeches of a young man, which

will

will be forgot to-morrow. But were he conſtant in his paſſion, and faithful in his promiſes, his father is young, he will grow old, for the wicked grow old; and in the mean time love becomes extinct, ambition prompts, duty commands; rank, alliance, fortune, preſent themſelves to him, and the credulous, beguiled maid, becomes the public talk. Such is the lot that awaited you: your mother has preſerved you from it. I now coſt you ſome tears, but you will one day bleſs me for it. I leave you, my daughter: prepare yourſelf for the ſacrifice which God requires of you. The more painful this ſacrifice, the more worthy will it be of Him."

'In a word, Madam, I was obliged to reſolve. I took this veil, this bandage; I entered the path of penitence; and, during the time of probation, in which we are yet free, I flattered myſelf with the hopes of ſubduing myſelf, and attributed my irreſolution and weakneſs ſolely to the fatal liberty of having it in my power to return. I thought the time long till I could bind myſelf by an irrevocable oath. I took that oath; I renounced the world; an eaſy matter. But, alas; I renounced alſo my lover, and that was more than renouncing my life. On pronouncing thoſe vows, my ſoul fluttered on my lips, as if ready to leave me. Scarce had I ſtrength enough to drag me to the foot of the altar; whence they were obliged to carry me away as dead. My mother came to me tranſported with a cruel joy.—Pardon me, my God: I reſpect, I love her ſtill; I will love her to my laſt gaſp.' Theſe words of Lucilia were interrupted by ſighs, and two rivulets of tears overflowed her face.

'The ſacrifice was now compleated,' reſumed ſhe after a long ſilence: 'I was the Almighty's, I was no longer my own. All ſenſual ties were now to be broken: I was become dead to the earth; I preſumed to believe it. But what was my terror, on ſearching into the abyſs of my own ſoul! I there ſtill found love, but a frantic and criminal love; love covered with

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ſhame and deſpair; love rebelling againſt Heaven, againſt nature, againſt myſelf; love conſumed by regret, torn with remorſe, and transformed into rage. "What have I done!" cried I to myſelf a thouſand times; "what have I done! This adored man, whom I muſt ſee no more, preſents himſelf to my imagination in all his charms." The happy knot which was to have made us one, all the moments of a delicious life, all the emotions of two hearts which death alone would have ſeparated, preſented themſelves to my diſtracted ſoul. Ah, Madam, how grievous was the image! There is nothing which I have not done in order to blot it from my memory. For theſe five years paſt have I by turns baniſhed it from my ſight, and ſeen it recur without ceaſing. In vain do I ſink myſelf in ſleep, which only revives it in my mind; in vain do I abſtract myſelf in ſolitude, where it awaits me: I find it at the foot of the altar, I bear it into the boſom of God himſelf. Meantime that God, who is the father of mercies, has at length taken pity on me. Time, reaſon, penance, have weakened the firſt ſhocks of this criminal paſſion, but a painful langour has ſucceeded. I feel myſelf dying every moment, and the thought that I am drawing near to my grave is my ſole conſolation.'

'Oh, my dear Lucilia!' cried the marchioneſs, after hearing her, 'which of us is moſt to be pitied! Love has been the cauſe both of your misfortunes and mine: but you loved the tendereſt, the moſt faithful, the moſt grateful of men; and I the moſt perfidious, the moſt ungrateful, the moſt cruel. You devoted yourſelf to Heaven, I delivered up myſelf to a villain; your retreat was a triumph, mine is a reproach: people lament you, love you, and reſpect you; but me they revile and traduce.

'Of all lovers, the moſt paſſionate before marriage was the Marquis of Clarence. Young, amiable, inducing to the higheſt degree, he promiſed a moſt happy diſpoſition. He ſeemed to poſſeſs all the virtues, as he really did all the graces. The docile caſe of his temper

temper received in so lively a manner the impression of virtuous sentiments, that they seemed as if they could never have been effaced. It was too easy for him, alas! to inspire me with the passion which he had himself, or at least thought he had for me. All the conveniences, which make great matches, conspired with this mutual inclination; and my parents, who had seen it rising in my bosom, consented to crown it. Two years passed in the tenderest union. O, Paris! O theatre of vices! O dreadful rock of love, innocence, and virtue! My husband, who till then had been but little conversant with those of his own age, and that merely to amuse himself, as he said, with their irregularities and follies, imbibed insensibly the poison of their example. The noisy preparation for their insipid meetings; the mysterious confidence of their adventures, the proud recitals of their empty pleasures, the commendations lavished on their worthless conquests, all excited his curiosity. The sweetness of an innocent and peaceful union had no longer the same charms for him. I had myself no other talents than those which a virtuous education bestows; I perceived that he required more in me. "I am undone," said I to myself, "my heart is no longer a sufficient return for his." Indeed his attentions from that time were nothing more than complaisance; he no longer preferred those conversations, those private interviews, so delicious to me, to the ebb and flow of a tumultuous society. He himself persuaded me to abandon myself to dissipation, only in order to authorise him to be abandoned. I became more pressing, and restrained him. I took the resolution of leaving him at liberty, that he might wish for me, and see me again with pleasure, after a comparison which I thought must be to my advantage: but young corrupters seized that soul, unfortunately too flexible; and from the instant he had steeped his lips in the poisoned cup, his intoxication was without remedy, and his wandering without return. I wanted to recal him; but it was too late.

"You deſtroy yourſelf, my dear," ſaid I to him; "and though it be dreadful to me to ſee a huſband torn from me who formed all my delight, yet it is more for your ſake than my own that I lament your error. You ſeek happineſs where it is moſt aſſuredly not to be found. Falſe delights, ſhameful pleaſures, will never ſatisfy your ſoul. The art of ſeducing and deceiving is the whole of that worldly art that now charms you; your wife knows it not, and you know it no better than ſhe: that infamous ſchool is not formed for our hearts; yours ſuffers itſelf to be loſt in it's intoxication; but it will laſt only for a time; the illuſion will vaniſh like a dream; you will return to me, and find me ſtill the ſame; an indulgent and faithful love waits your return, and all will be forgotten. You will have neither reproach nor complaint to fear from me: happy if I can conſole you, for all the chagrins which you may have occaſioned me! But you, who know the value of virtue, and have taſted of her charms; you, whom vice ſhall have plunged from one abyſs into another; you, whom it ſhall diſmiſs perhaps with contempt, to conceal at home with your wife the languiſhing days of a premature old age, your ſoul a prey to cruel remorſe, how will you reconcile yourſelf to yourſelf? how will you be able ſtill to relish the pure pleaſure of being beloved by me; Alas! my love itſelf will be your puniſhment. The more lively alſo and tender that love will be, the more humiliating will it be for you. It is this, my dear marquis, it is this that grieves and overpowers me. Ceaſe to love me, if you pleaſe; I can forgive you, ſince I have ceaſed to be agreeable: but never render yourſelf unworthy of my tenderneſs, and contrive at leaſt not to be obliged to bluſh before me." Would you believe it, my dear Lucilia? a piece of raillery was all his anſwer. He told me that I talked like an angel, and that what I had ſaid deſerved to be committed to writing. But ſeeing my eyes brimful of tears, "Nay, do not play the child! ſaid he to me: "I love you; you know it;

ſuffer

ſuffer me to amuſe myſelf, and be aſſured that nothing attaches me."

'However, ſome officious friends failed not to inform me of every thing that could grieve and confound me. Alas! my huſband himſelf in a ſhort time deſiſted from keeping himſelf under my reſtraint, and even from flattering me.

'I ſhall not tell you, my dear Lucilia, the many marks of humiliation and diſguſt that I endured. Your griefs in compariſon of mine would even appear light to you. Imagine, if poſſible, the ſituation of a virtuous and feeling ſoul, lively and delicate to exceſs, receiving every day new outrages from the only object of its affection; ſtill living for him alone, when he lives no longer for her, when he is not aſhamed to live for objects devoted to contempt. I ſpare your delicacy the moſt horrible part of this picture. Rejected, abandoned, ſacrificed by my huſband, I devoured my grief in ſilence: and if I afforded ſome profligate companies a topic of ridicule, a more juſt and compaſſionate public conſoled me with its pity; and I enjoyed the ſole good which his vice could not take from me, a ſpotleſs character. I have ſince loſt that, my dear Lucilia. The wickedneſs of the women, whom my example humbled, could not bear to ſee me irreproachable. They interpreted, according to their wiſhes, my ſolitude and apparent tranquility: they aſcribed to me as a lover, the firſt man who had the impudence to conceive that he was well received by me. My huſband, to whom my preſence was a continual reproach, and who found himſelf not yet ſufficiently at liberty, in order to rid himſelf of my importunate grief, took the firſt pretext that was preſented to him, and baniſhed me to one of his country-ſeats. Unknown to the world, far from the ſight of my misfortunes, I at leaſt enjoyed in ſolitude the liberty of indulging my grief; but the cruel man cauſed it to be notified to me, that I might chuſe a convent; that his ſeat of Florival was ſold, and that I muſt retire from thence.'---'Florival! interrupted Lu-

cilia, in a violent emotion. 'That was the place of my exile,' refumed the marchioneſs. 'Ah, Madam! what name have you pronounced!'---'The name of my huſband before he acquired the marquiſate of Clarence.'---'What do I hear! Oh, Heaven! oh, juſt Heaven! is it poſſible?' cried Lucilia, throwing herſelf upon the boſom of her friend. 'What is the matter! what troubles you! what ſudden revolution! Lucilia, recover your ſenſes.'---'How, Madam! is Florival then the perfidious wretch, the villain, who betrays and diſhonours you!'---'Do you know him?'---'It is the man, Madam, whom I adored, whom I have mourned for theſe five years paſt; the man who would have had my laſt ſighs!'---'What ſay you?'---'It is he, Madam! Alas, what had been my lot!' At theſe words Lucilia, bowing her face to the ground, 'Oh, my God!' ſaid ſhe, 'oh, my God! it was thou who ſtretched'ſt out thine hand towards me.' The marchioneſs was confounded, and unable to recover from her aſtoniſhment. 'Doubt it not,' ſaid ſhe to Lucilia; 'the deſigns of Heaven are viſibly manifeſted upon us: it brings us together, inſpires us with a mutual confidence, and opens our hearts to each other, as two ſources of light and conſolation. Well, my worthy and tender friend, let us endeavour to forget at once both our misfortunes, and the perſon who occaſioned them.'

From this time the tenderneſs and intimacy of their friendſhip encreaſed to the higheſt degree: their ſolitude had pleaſures known only to the unfortunate. But, in a little time, this calm was interrupted by the news of the danger which threatened the marquis. His diſſipations coſt him his life. At the point of death he aſked for his virtuous wife. She tears herſelf from the arms of her forlorn companion; haſtens to him; arrives; and finds him expiring. 'Oh you, whom I have ſo greatly and ſo cruelly injured,' ſaid he to her on recollecting her, 'ſee the fruit of my irregularities; ſee the dreadful ſtroke which the hand of God hath inflicted

flicted upon me. If I am yet worthy of your pity, raise up to Heaven your innocent voice, and lay my remorse before it.' The distracted wife would have thrown herself on his bosom. 'Stand off,' said he; 'I shudder at myself; my breath is the blast of death:' adding after a long silence. 'Do you know me again in this state to which my crimes have reduced me? Is this that pure soul that used to mix itself with thine? Is this that half of thyself? Is this that nuptial bed that received me when worthy of thee? Perfidious friends; detestable enchantresses; come, see, and shudder! Oh, my soul! who will deliver thee from this hideous prison?----Sir,' said he to his physician, 'have I long to live? My pains are intolerable. Leave me not, my generous friend; I should fall, but for thee, into the most dreadful despair . . . . Cruel death, compleat, compleat the expiation of my life. There are no evils which I do not deserve: I have betrayed, dishonoured, basely persecuted innocence and virtue itself.'

The marchioness, in the agonies of grief, made every moment new efforts to throw herself on the bed, from which they endeavoured to remove her. At last the unhappy man expired; his eyes fixed upon her, and his voice died away in asking her pardon.

The only consolation the marchioness was capable of, arose from that religious confidence with which so good a death inspired her. 'He was,' said she, 'more weak than wicked, and more frail than culpable. The world led him astray by its pleasures; God brought him back again by afflictions: he has chastised and pardons him.---Yes, my husband, my dear Clarence,' cried she, 'now disencumbered of the ties of blood and the world, thou waitest me in the bosom of thy God.'

Her soul filled with these holy ideas, she went to join her friend, whom she found at the foot of the altar. Lucilia's heart was rent within her at the relation of this cruel and virtuous death. They wept together for the last time; and some time after, the marchioness

conſecrated to God, with the ſame vows as Lucilia, that heart, thoſe charms, thoſe virtues, of which the world was unworthy.

ALL OR NOTHING.

AT that time of life when it is ſo agreeable to be a widow, Cecilia could not help thinking of a freſh engagement. Two rivals diſputed her choice. One, modeſt and plain, loved only her; the other, artful and vain, was above all things fond of himſelf. The firſt had the confidence of Cecilia; the ſecond had her love. Cecilia was unjuſt, you will ſay: not at all. Plain folks neglect themſelves; they think, that in order to pleaſe, it is ſufficient to love with ſincerity, and to convince others of their love. But there are few diſpoſitions which do not require a little ornament. A man without art in the midſt of the world, is like a lady at the opera without *rouge*.

Eraſtus, with his uſual frankneſs, had ſaid to Cecilia, 'I love you!' and from that time loved her as if ſhe had hearkened nothing elſe: his love was his life. Floricourt had rendered himſelf agreeable by thoſe little gallantries which have the air of pretending to nothing. Among the attentions which he paid to Cecilia, he choſe, not the moſt paſſionate, but the moſt ſeducing. Nothing affected, nothing grave: he appeared ſo much the more amiable, as he ſeemed not to intend it. She pitied Eraſtus; did not know an honeſter man: it was pity that it was impoſſible to love him. She dreaded Floricourt; he was a dangerous creature; and would perhaps be the ruin of a woman; but how was it poſſible to defend one's ſelf? However, ſhe would not deceive Eraſtus. She muſt confeſs the whole to him.

'I eſteem you, Eraſtus,' ſaid Cecilia to him, 'and I am ſenſible you merit more. But the heart has its caprices; my own diſſents from my reaſon.'---'I underſtand you, Madam,' replied Eraſtus, containing himſelf, but with tears in his eyes, 'your reaſon pleads

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for me, but your heart for another.'---'I confeſs it, and not without regret: I ſhould be to blame, if I were free; but there is no anſwering for inclination.' ---'Very well, Madam: I will love then alone; I ſhall derive the more glory from it.'---'But there, now, is the very thing I would not have.'---'Nor I neither; but that is to no purpoſe.'---'And what is to become of you.'---'Whatever Love and Nature pleaſe.'---'You diſtreſs me, Eraſtus, by thus abandoning yourſelf.'--- 'I muſt abandon myſelf, when I cannot help it.'--- 'How unhappy am I in having ever known you!'--- 'Indeed you had need complain: it is a terrible misfortune to be beloved!'---'Yes, it is a misfortune to have cauſe to reproach one's ſelf on account of a man we eſteem.'---'You, Madam! you have nothing to reproach yourſelf. An honeſt man may complain of a coquette who trifles with him; or rather, ſhe is unworthy of his complaints and regret; but what wrongs have you committed? Have you employed any ſeducing arts to attract me; any complaiſance to retain me? Did I conſult you about loving you? Who obliges you to think me amiable? Follow your own inclination, and I will follow mine. Be not afraid that I ſhall plague you.'—'No, but you will plague yourſelf; for, in ſhort, you will ſee me.'—'What! would you be cruel enough to forbid me your ſight?'—'Far from it, I aſſure you; but I wiſh to ſee you eaſy, and as my beſt friend.'—'Friend, let it be; the name ſignifies nothing.'—'But the name is not enough; I would bring you back in reality to that ſentiment, ſo pure, ſo tender, and ſo ſolid, to that friendſhip which I feel for you.'—'Well, Madam, you may love me as you pleaſe; pray now permit me to love you as I can, and as much as I can. I only deſire the liberty of being unhappy after my own manner.'

The obſtinacy of Eraſtus grieved Cecilia; but, after all, ſhe had done her duty: ſo much the worſe for him if he loved her ſtill. She gave herſelf up, therefore, without concern or reproach, to her inclination

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for Floricourt. The moſt refined gallantry was put in practice to captivate her. Floricourt ſucceeded without difficulty. He knew how to pleaſe, thought he loved, and was happy, if he had choſen to be ſo. But ſelf-love is the bane of love. It was but a trifle in Floricourt's eyes to be loved more than every thing elſe; he wanted to be loved ſolely, without reſerve or participation. It is true that he ſet the example: he had detached himſelf for Cecilia from a prude whom he had ruined, and a coquette who ruined him; he had broke off with five or ſix of the vaineſt and fooliſheſt young fellows in the world. He ſupped no where but at Cecilia's, where it was delicious ſupping; and he had the goodneſs to think of her amidſt a circle of women, not one of whom equalled her either in grace or beauty. Such uncommon proceedings, not to ſpeak of merit ſtill more uncommon, had not they a right to exact from Cecilia the moſt abſolute devotion!

In the mean time, as he was not ſufficiently in love to be at all deficient in addreſs, he took care not to ſuffer his pretenſions to appear at firſt. Never had man before conqueſt been more complaiſant, more docile, leſs aſſuming, than Floricourt; but from the moment he ſaw himſelf maſter of her heart, he became its tyrant. Difficult, imperious, jealous, he wanted to poſſeſs alone all the faculties of Cecilia's ſoul. He could not ſo much as permit her one idea except his own, much leſs a thought which came not from him. A deciſive taſte, a ſtrict connection, was ſure to diſpleaſe him; but his meaning was to be gueſſed at. He would force her to aſk him a hundred times over what he was thinking of, or what had put him out of humour: and it was never but as a favour that he confeſſed at laſt that ſuch a thing had diſpleaſed him, or ſuch a perſon made him dull. In ſhort, as ſoon he ſaw that his will was a law, he declared it without ceremony; and it was ſubmitted to without oppoſition. It was but a ſmall matter to require of Cecilia the ſacrifice of thoſe pleaſures which naturally preſented themſelves;

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he gave birth to them the oftener, on purpose to see them sacrificed to him. He spoke with transport of a play or an entertainment; he invited Cecilia to it; and they settled the party with [illegible]dies of his own naming: the hour came, they were dressed, the horses put to; he changed his design, and Cecilia was obliged to pretend a head-ach. He presented her a she-friend, whom he introduced as an adorable woman; she was found such; an intimacy was contracted. A week after, he confessed he had been deceived; she was affected, insipid, or giddy! and Cecilia was obliged to break off with her. Cecilia was in a short time reduced to slight acquaintances, whom, however, he complained of her seeing too often. She perceives not that her complaisance was changed into slavery. We think we pursue our own will when we pursue the will of those we love. Floricourt seemed to her only to forestall her own desires. She sacrificed every thing to him, without so much as suspecting she made him any sacrifices; yet Floricourt's self-love was not satisfied.

The company of the town, perfectly frivolous and transitory as it was, yet appeared to him too interesting. He extolled solitude; he repeated a hundred times that there was no true love but in the country, far from dissipation and noise, and that he should never be happy but in a retreat inaccessible to impertinents and rivals. Cecilia had a country-house to his wish. She had longed to pass the finest part of the year there with him, but could she do it with decency? He gave her to understand, that it was sufficient to take off all the air of a private party, by carrying such a friend along with them as Erastus, and a woman of the character of Artenice. After all, if people should talk, their marriage which was soon to be concluded, would silence them. They set out; Erastus was of the party, and this again was a refinement of Floricourt's self-love. He knew that Erastus was his rival, his unsuccessful rival: it was the most flattering testimony that he could have of his triumph; therefore he had contrived excel-

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lently to bring it about. His attentions to him had an air of compaſſion and ſuperiority, at which Eraſtus was ſometimes quite out of patience; but the tender and delicate friendſhip of Cecilia made him amends for theſe humiliations, and the fear of diſpleaſing her made him diſguiſe them. However, ſure as he was that they were going into the country only in order to enjoy their love there at liberty, how could he reſolve with himſelf to follow them? This reflection Cecilia made as well as he; ſhe would have hindered him, but the party was ſettled, paſt revocation. Beſides, Artenice was young and handſome. Solitude, opportunity, liberty, example, jealouſy, and pique, might engage Eraſtus to turn towards her thoſe vows which Cecilia could not liſten to. Cecilia was modeſt enough to think it poſſible for a perſon to be unfaithful to her, and juſt enough to wiſh it; but it was betraying a very ſlight knowledge of the heart and character of Eraſtus.

Artenice was one of thoſe women with whom love is only an arrangement of ſociety, who are offended at a long attachment, who grow tired of a conſtant paſſion, and who depend ſufficiently on the honeſty of the men to deliver themſelves up to them without reſerve, and to ſuit them without heſitation. They had told her 'We are going to paſs ſome time in the country; Eraſtus is to be there; will you make one?' She replied, with a ſmile, 'With all my heart; a pleaſing ſcheme!' and the party was immediately ſettled. This was an additional torment to Eraſtus. Artenice had heard Cecilia praiſe her friend; as the moſt prudent man in the world, the honeſteſt and moſt reſerved. 'That is charming,' ſaid Artenice within herſelf; 'that is a kind of man to be taken and diſmiſſed without precaution or noiſe. Happy or unhappy, that is not to the purpoſe: one is never at one's eaſe but with people of this ſort. An Eraſtus is a rarity!' We may readily conclude, after theſe reflections, that Eraſtus did not want for encouragement.

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Floricourt behaved towards Cecilia with an aſſiduity perfectly diſtreſſing to an unſucceſsful rival. Cecilia in vain endeavoured to conſtrain herſelf; her looks, her voice, her very ſilence betrayed her. Eraſtus was upon the rack; but he concealed his pain. Artenice, like a dexterous woman, kept conveniently at a diſtance, and engaged Eraſtus to follow her. 'How happy are they,' ſaid the one day to him as they were walking together: 'wholly taken up with each other, they feel a mutual ſatisfaction, and live only for themſelves! It is a great happineſs merely to love. What ſay you to it?'—'Yes, Madam,' replied Eraſtus looking down, 'it is a great happineſs when two—' 'Oh, there are always two; for I do not ſee that one is alone in the world.'—'I mean, Madam, two hearts equally ſenſible, and made to love one another equally.'—'Equally! that is very unreaſonable. For my part, I think that we ought to be leſs difficult, and to content ourſelves with coming up within a ſmall matter of it. Suppoſe I have more ſenſibility in my temper than he that attaches himſelf to me, muſt I puniſh him for it? Every one gives what he has, and we have no room to reproach him who contributes towards ſociety that portion of ſenſibility which Nature has given him. I wonder that the coldeſt hearts are always the moſt delicate. You, for example; you, now, are a man that would expect one to love you to diſtraction.'—'I, Madam! I expect nothing.'—'You miſtake me; that is not what I mean. You have enough in you to ſeduce a woman to be ſure. I ſhould not even be ſurpriſed at her conceiving an inclination for you.'—'That may be, Madam: in point of folly, I doubt nothing; but if a woman were ſo fooliſh as to fall in love with me, I think ſhe would be much to be pitied.'—'Is this a caution, Sir, which you are ſo kind as to give me?'—'You Madam! I flatter myſelf that you think me neither fooliſh nor weak enough to give you any ſuch caution.'—'Very well, you ſpeak in general then, and except me out of politeneſs?'—'The exception itſelf is unneceſſary, Madam; for

you

you have nothing to do in the case.'—'Pardon me, Sir: it is I who tell you, that you have qualities enough to please, and that one might very easily love you to distraction; and it is to me that you reply, that one would be very much to be pitied if one loved you. Nothing, in my opinion can be more personal. Hey! what, you are embarrassed?'—'I confess that your raillery embarrasses me; I know not how to reply to it; but it is not generous to attack me with weapons which I am not armed with.'—'But if I were in earnest, Erastus; if nothing in the world were truer?' 'Your servant, Madam: the situation I am now reduced to will not permit me to amuse you any longer.'—'Ah! upon my word he is in downright earnest,' said she, following him with her eyes. 'The tone of levity, the laughing air which I assumed, piqued him: he is a man for sentiment; I must talk to him in his own language. To-morrow, in this grove, one turn more, and my victory is decided.'

Erastus's walk with Artenice had appeared very long to Cecilia. Erastus returned from it quite pensive, and Artenice in triumph. 'Well,' said Cecilia to her friend, in a very low voice, 'what do you think of Erastus?'

'Why I like him pretty well; he has not quite tired me, and that is a great deal; he has some excellent qualities, and one might make an agreeable man of him. I find him only a little romantic in his manner. He expects sentiment; a fault of habit, a mere country prejudice, of which it is easy to break him.'—'*He expects sentiment!*' said Cecilia within herself; 'they are coming to terms already! This is going very far at one interview. I think Erastus acts his part with a good grace. Well! but if he is happy am I to take it ill? Yet, it was wrong in him to want to persuade me that he was so greatly to be pitied. He might have spared my delicacy the heavy reproaches which he knew very well I heaped upon myself. It is the

frenzy of lovers always to exaggerate their pains. In short, he is conſoled, and I am ſufficiently comforted.'

Cecilia, in this idea, put leſs reſtraint on herſelf with regard to Floricourt. Eraſtus, whom nothing eſcaped, became more melancholy than uſual. Cecilia and Artenice attributed his melancholy to the ſame cauſe. A growing paſſion always produces that effect. The day after, Artenice did not fail to contrive a *tête-à-tête* for Cecilia and Floricourt, by taking away Eraſtus along with her.

'You are angry,' ſaid ſhe, 'and I want to be reconciled to you. I ſee, Eraſtus, that you are not one of thoſe men with whom love is to be treated with raillery: you look upon an engagement as one of the moſt ſerious things in the world; I like you the better for it.'---'If Not at all, Madam; I am too well perſuaded that a ſerious paſſion is the higheſt extravagance, and that love is no longer a pleaſure than while it is a jeſt.'---'Be conſiſtent then. Yeſterday evening you required an equal ſenſibility, a mutual inclination.'---'I required an impoſſibility; or, at leaſt, the moſt uncommon thing in the world; and I maintain, that without this union, which is ſo difficult that it muſt be given up, the wiſeſt and ſureſt way is to make a jeſt of love, without annexing any chimerical value and importance to it.'---'Upon my word, my dear Eraſtus, you talk like an angel. Why, indeed, ſhould we torment ourſelves to no purpoſe, endeavouring to love more than we are able? We agree, ſettle matters, grow weary of each other, and part. On caſting up the account, we have had pleaſure: the time, therefore, was well employed; and would to Heaven we could be ſo amuſed all our lives!'----'This now,' ſaid Eraſtus within himſelf, 'is a very convenient way of thinking!'---'I well know,' continued ſhe, 'what they call a ſerious paſſion: nothing is more gloomy, nothing more dull. Uneaſineſs, jealouſy, are continually tormenting the two unhappy creatures. They pretend to be ſatisfied with each other, and weary themſelves to

death.'---'Ah, Madam! what is it you say? They want nothing, if they love truly. Such an union is the charm of life, the delight of the ſoul, the fulneſs of happineſs!'---'Really, Sir, you are mad with your eternal inconſiſtencies. What would you have, pray?'---'What is not to be found, Madam; and what perhaps will never be ſeen.'---'A fine expectation, truly! And in the mean while your heart will continue diſengaged?'---'Alas, would to Heaven it could!'---'It is not ſo then, Eraſtus?'---'No, certainly Madam; and you would pity its condition, could you but conceive it.' At theſe words he left her, lifting his eyes towards heaven, and heaving a profound ſigh. 'This, then,' ſaid Artenice, 'is what they call a reſerved man! He is ſo much ſo, that it makes him a downright beaſt. By good luck, I have not explained myſelf. Poſſibly I ought to have ſpoken out: baſhful people muſt be aſſiſted. But he walks off with an exclamation, without giving one time to aſk him what poſſeſſes or afflicts him. He ſhall ſee: he muſt declare; for, in ſhort, I am come to a compromiſe, and my honour is concerned.'

Floricourt, during ſupper, wanted to entertain himſelf at the expence of Eraſtus. 'So,' ſaid he to Artenice, 'where have you been? Nothing ſhould be concealed from friends, and we ſet you the example.'—'Right,' ſaid Artenice, with indignation, 'if we knew how to profit by the examples that are ſet us; or did we even know what we would be at. If one talks of a ſerious paſſion, the gentleman treats it as a jeſt; if one agrees to its being a jeſt, he goes back again to the ſerious.'—'It is eaſy for you, Madam,' ſaid Eraſtus, 'to turn me into ridicule; I ſubmit to it as much as you pleaſe.'—'Nay, Sir, I have no ſuch deſign; but we are among friends, let us explain. We have not time to obſerve and gueſs at each other. I plead you, that you have given me to underſtand; I will not diſſemble that you are agreeable enough to me. We are not come here to be idle ſpectators; honour itſelf requires that

that we ſhould be employed; let us make an end, and underſtand one another. How is it that you would love me? How would you have me love you?'—'I Madam!' cried Eraſtus, 'I do not want you to love me.'—'What, Sir! have you deceived me then?'—'Not at all, Madam; I call heaven to witneſs, that I have not ſaid one word to you in the leaſt like love.'—'Nay, then,' ſaid ſhe to him, getting up from table, 'this is a piece of effrontery beyond any thing I ever ſaw.' Floricourt would have detained her. 'No, Sir, I am not able to endure the ſight of a man who has the aſſurance to deny the dull and inſipid declarations with which he has affronted me, and which I had the goodneſs to put up with, prepoſſeſſed by the commendations that had been given me, I know not why, of this wretched creature.'

'Artenice is gone off in a rage,' ſaid Cecilia to Eraſtus on ſeeing him again the next day; 'what has paſſed between you?'—'Some idle talk, Madam; the reſult of which on my ſide was, that nothing is more to be dreaded than a ſerious paſſion, and nothing is more deſpicable than a frivolous one. Artenice has ſeen me ſigh; ſhe thought I ſighed for her; and I undeceived her, that is all.'—'You undeceived her! that is handſome enough; but you ſhould have done it with a little more art!'—'How, Madam, could ſhe dare to tell you that we were on the brink of love, and would you have had me contain myſelf! What would you have thought of my aſſent, or even of my ſilence?'—'That you were in the right. Artenice is young and handſome, and your attachment would have been merely an amuſement.'—'I am not in an humour to amuſe myſelf, Madam; and I beg of you to ſpare the advice, by which I ſhall never profit.'—'But you are now alone with us, and you yourſelf muſt perceive that you will act but a very ſtrange part here.'—'I ſhall act, Madam, the part of a friend: nothing is, in my opinion, more honourable.'—'But, Eraſtus, how will you be able to ſupport it?'—'Leave that to me, Ma-

dam, and do not make yourself at all uneasy on my account.'---'I cannot help being uneasy; for, in short, I know your situation, and indeed it is dreadful.'---'May be so; but it is neither in your power nor mine to render it better: let me alone, and let us talk no more of it.'---'Talk no more of it! Soon said; but you are unhappy, and I am the cause.'---'Oh! no, Madam; no: I have told you so an hundred times; you have nothing to reproach yourself with. In God's name be easy.'---'I should be easy if you could but be so.'---'Nay, now, you are cruel. Though you should insist upon knowing what passes in my soul, yet I should not have one pang the less, but you would have a piece of chagrin the more for it: pr'ythee now forget that I love you.'---'Hey! how? forget it? I see it every moment.'---'You would have me leave you, then?'---'Why, our situation would require it.'---'Very well: drive me away then, that will be the best.'---'I drive you away, my friend! It is for you that I am in pain.'---'O, then, for my part I declare to you, that I cannot live without you.'---'You think so; but absence—' 'Absence! a fine remedy for love like mine!'—'Doubt not its efficacy, my dear Eraftus: there are women more amiable and less unjust than I.'—'I am glad of it; but that is all one to me.'—'You think so at present.'—'I am now what I shall be all my life long: I know myself; I know the women. Do not be afraid that any of them can make me either happy or unhappy.'—'I believe that you would not attach yourself at first; but you will dissipate in the world.'—'And with what? Nothing in it amuses me. Here, at least I have no time to grow dull: I see you, or am going to see you; you talk to me kindly; I am sure that you do not forget me; and if I were at a distance from you, I have an imagination that would be my torment.'—'And could it paint any thing more cruel than what you see?'—'I see nothing, Madam; I desire to see nothing, spare me the uneasiness of being your confident.'---

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'Indeed I admire your moderation.'---'Yes, I have great merit, indeed, in being moderate! Would you have me beat you?'—'No; but people uſually complain on ſuch occaſions.'—'And of what?'—'I do not know; but I cannot reconcile ſo much love with ſo much reaſon.'—'Be aſſured, Madam, every one loves after his own faſhion: mine is not to rave. If ill language would pleaſe you, I could beſtow as much as another; but I doubt whether that would ſucceed.'—'I loſe nothing by that, Eraſtus; and at the bottom of your heart—' 'No, I vow that my heart reſpects you as much as my mouth. I never ſurpriſed myſelf one moment poſſeſſed with the leaſt anger againſt you.'—'Yet you torment yourſelf, I ſee plainly. Melancholy gains upon you.'—'I am not very gay.'----'You hardly eat.'---'I live, at leaſt.'---'I am ſure you do not ſleep at all.'---'Pardon me, I ſleep a little, and that is the happieſt part of my time; for I ſee you in my ſlumbers ſuch almoſt as I wiſh you to be.'---'Eraſtus!'---'Cecilia!'---'You offend me.'---'Nay, Madam! it is too much to want to rob me of my dreams. You are, in reality, ſuch as you think proper; ſuffer me then, at leaſt in idea, to have you ſuch as pleaſes me.'—'Do not be angry, but let us talk reaſon. Theſe very dreams which I ought not to know of, nouriſh your paſſion.'—'So much the better, Madam, ſo much the better: I ſhould be very ſorry to be cured of it.'—'And why do you perſiſt to love me without hope?'---'Without hope! I am not reduced to that yet: if your ſentiments were juſt they would be durable. But----' 'Do not flatter yourſelf, Eraſtus; I am in love, and for my whole life.'---'I do not flatter myſelf, Cecilia; it is you that ſlander yourſelf. Your paſſion is a fever which will have its period. It is not generous to ſpeak ill of one's rival: I am ſilent; but I refer it to the goodneſs of your diſpoſition, to the delicacy of your heart---' 'They are both blind.'---'That is owning they are not ſo. One muſt have ſeen, or have had ſome glimmerings, even to know that

we see badly.'---'Well, I confess it: I remember to have discovered faults in Floricourt; but I know nothing more in him.'---'That knowledge will come to you, Madam, and on that I depend.'---'And if I marry Floricourt, as, indeed, every thing tends that way---' 'In that case I shall have nothing more either to hope or to fear; and my resolution is already taken.' 'And what is it?'---'To give over loving you.'---'And how are you to do that?'---'How? nothing so easy. If I were in the army, and a ball---' 'O Heavens!'---'Is it so difficult, then, to suppose one's self in the army?'---'Ah, my cruel friend, what is it you say? and with what levity do you tell me of a mischief for which I should never forgive myself!' Cecilia began to melt at this idea, when Floricourt came up to them. Eraftus soon left them, according to his usual practice. 'Our friend, my dear Cecilia,' said Floricourt, 'is a very gloomy mortal; what say you?'---'He is an honest creature,' replied Cecilia, 'whose virtues I respect.'---'Faith, with all his virtues I wish he would go and indulge his reveries somewhere else; we want gaiety and company in the country.'---'Perhaps he has some reason to be pensive and solitary.'---'Yes, I believe so, and I guess it. You blush, Cecilia! I shall be discreet, and your embarrassment imposes silence on me.'---'And what should be my embarrassment, Sir? You believe that Eraftus loves me, and you have reason to believe it. I pity him, I advise him, I talk to him as his friend; there is nothing in all this to blush at.'---'Such a confession my beautiful Cecilia, renders you still more deserving of esteem; but allow that it comes a little too late.'---'I did not think myself, obliged, Sir, to inform you of a secret which was not mine; and I should have concealed it from you all my life long, if you had not surprised me into the discovery. There is in these kinds of confidences an ostentation and cruelty not in my disposition. We should at least respect those whom we have made unhappy.'---'There is heroism for you!' cried Floricourt in

in a tone of anger and irony. 'And does this friend whom you uſe ſo well know how far matters are gone between us?'---'Yes, Sir, I have told him all.'---and he has ſtill the goodneſs to ſtay here!'---'I endeavoured to diſpoſe him to leave us.'---'Ah! I have nothing more to ſay; I ſhould have been ſurprized if your delicacy had not forerun mine. You perceived the indecency of ſuffering a man who loves you to continue in your houſe, at the very moment in which you are going to declare for his rival. There would even be inhumanity in it, to render him a witneſs of the ſacrifice you make me. When is he to depart?'---'I do not know; I have not had the courage to preſcribe the time; and he has not the reſolution to determine upon it.'---'You rally, Cecilia: who then is to propoſe to him to rid us of his preſence? it would not be handſome in me.'---'It ſhall be myſelf, Sir; do not be uneaſy.'---'And what uneaſineſs do I ſhew, Madam! Would you do me the honour of ſuppoſing me to be jealous? I aſſure you I am not in the leaſt ſo; my delicacy has yourſelf only in view, and for the little pain it may give you---' 'It will give me pain, no doubt, to deprive a reſpectable friend of the only conſolation that is left him: but I know how to do myſelf violence.'---'Violence, Madam! that is very ſtrong. I would have no violence; that would be the way to render me odious, and I ſhall therefore go myſelf, and perſuade this reſpectable friend not to abandon you.'---'Go on Sir, your raillery is mighty well timed; and I deſerve, indeed, that you ſhould talk to me in this manner.'---'I am very unhappy, Madam, to have diſpleaſed you,' ſaid Floricourt, on ſeeing her eyes bedewed with tears. 'Forgive me my imprudence. I did not know all the concern you had for my rival and your friend.' At theſe words he left her, overcome with grief.

Eraſtus, at his return, found her in this ſituation. 'What is the matter, Madam?' ſaid he, accoſting her; 'in tears!'---'You ſee, Sir, the moſt wretched of women: I am ſenſible that my weakneſs will ruin me,

and

and yet am unable to cure myself. A man, to whom I have sacrificed every thing, doubts of my sentiments, treats me with contempt, and suspects me.'---'I understand, Madam, he is jealous, and must be made easy. Your quiet is concerned in it, and there is nothing that I would not sacrifice to a concern so dear to me. Adieu: may you be happy! and I shall be less wretched.' Cecilia's tears burst forth afresh at these words. 'I have exhorted you to fly me, said she to him; I advised you to it as a friend, and for your own sake. The effort I made over my own soul had nothing humiliating in it; but to banish you to gratify an unreasonable man, to rid him of a suspicion which I ought never to have feared, to be obliged to justify my love by the sacrifice of friendship, is shameful and overwhelming! Never did any thing cost me so dear before.'---'It must be so, Madam, if you love Floricourt.'---'Yes, my dear Erastus, pity me: I do love him, and it is in vain I reproach myself for it.' Erastus listened no longer, but went off.

Floricourt made use of every method to appease Cecilia; his gentleness, his complaisance, were not to be equalled, when his will was fulfilled. Erastus was almost forgot; and what is it we do not forget for the person we love, when we have the happiness to believe ourselves beloved again! One only amusement, alas! and that a very innocent one, yet remained to Cecilia in their solitude. She had brought up a goldfinch, which, by a wonderful instinct, answered to her caresses. He knew her voice, and would fly to meet her. He never sung but when he saw her; he never eat but out of her hand, nor drank but out of her mouth: if we would give him his liberty, he would use it but for a minute, and as soon as she called him, he flew to her immediately. No sooner was he placed on her bosom, than a sensibility seemed to agitate his wings, and to precipitate the warblings of his melodious throat. Could one believe that the haughty Floricourt was offended at the attention which Cecilia paid to the sensibility

sibility and sportiveness of this little animal! 'I will know,' said he one day within himself, 'whether the love she entertains for me is superior to these weaknesses. It would be pleasant, indeed, if she should be more attached to her goldfinch than her lover! Yet it may be so: I will make the experiment, and that before the evening be over.----And where is the little bird?' said he, accosting her with a smile. 'He is enjoying the open air and liberty; he is somewhere fluttering in the garden.'-------'And are you not afraid that at last he should accustom himself to that, and never return more?' ---'I would forgive him if he found himself happier.'--- 'Ah! pr'ythee now let us see if he be faithful to you. Will you please to recal him?' Cecilia made the usual signal, and the bird flew to her hand. 'That is charming,' says Floricourt; but he is too dear to you; I am jealous of him, and I would have *all or nothing* from the person I love.' At these words he attempted to lay hold of the dear little bird, in order to throttle it: she set up a cry; the bird flew away; Cecilia, affrighted, grew pale, and lost all sensation. The servants ran to her assistance, and recalled her to life. As soon as she opened her eyes, she saw at her feet, not the man whom she loved best, but to her the most odious of mortals. 'Be-gone, Sir!' said she to him with horror: 'This last stroke has given me a clear insight of your frightful character, equally mean and cruel. Out of my house! never to enter it more! You are too happy, that I still respect myself more than I despise you.---O, my dear and worthy Erastus! to what a man should I have sacrificed you!' Floricourt went out, fuming with rage and shame: the bird returned to caress his beautiful mistress; and it is unnecessary to add, that Erastus saw himself recalled.

THE PRETENDED PHILOSOPHER.

CLARISSA had for some years heard of nothing but philosophers. 'What kind of mortals are they?' said she; 'I want much to see one.' They tell her first,

firſt, that true philoſophers were very rare, and, not much addicted to communication; but in every other point, they were of all men the plaineſt, without the leaſt ſingularity. 'There are two ſorts, then?' ſaid ſhe; 'for in all the accounts that I hear, a philoſopher is a fantaſtical being, who pretends to be like nothing.' Of thoſe, they told her, there were enough every where: 'you ſhall have as many as you pleaſe of them: nothing ſo eaſily contrived.'

Clariſſa was in the country with an idle party who ſought only to amuſe themſelves. They preſented to her, a few days after, the ſententious Ariſtus. 'The gentleman, then, is a philoſopher?' ſaid ſhe on ſeeing him. 'Yes, Madam,' replied Ariſtus. 'This philoſophy is a fine thing; is it not?'---'Why, Madam, it is the knowledge of good and evil; or, if you pleaſe, wiſdom.'-----'Is that all?' ſaid Doris. 'And the fruit of this wiſdom,' continued Clariſſa, 'is to be happy, no doubt?'---'And, Madam, to make others happy alſo.'---'I ſhould be a philoſopher to them,' ſaid the ſimple Lucinda in a low voice, 'for I have been told a hundred times, that it depended only on me to be happy by making others happy.'----'Right! who does not know that?' reſumed Doris. 'It is a mere ſtage ſecret.'

Ariſtus, with a ſmile of contempt, gave them to underſtand, that philoſophical happineſs was not that which a pretty woman can taſte, and make others taſte. 'I doubted it much,' ſaid Clariſſa; 'nothing is more unlike, I ſhould think, than a fine woman and a philoſopher.---But let us hear, firſt, how the ſage Ariſtus makes uſe of it, in order to be happy himſelf?'---'That is very ſimple, Madam: I have no prejudices, I depend on nobody, I live on little, I love nothing, and I ſpeak every thing that I think.'-----'To love nothing,' obſerved Cleon, 'ſeems to me a diſpoſition but little favourable to make people happy.'---'How, Sir!' replied the philoſopher; 'what do we do good only to that we love? Do you love the miſerable wretch

whom

whom you relieve as you go along? It is juſt ſo that we diſtribute to mankind the aſſiſtance of our lights.' ---' And it is with your lights then, ſaid Doris, 'that you make people happy?'------' Yes, Madam, and that we are ſo, ourſelves.' The fat Lady Preſident of Ponval thought this happineſs very ſlender. 'Has a philoſopher,' demanded Lucinda, 'many pleaſures?'---' He has but one, Madam; that of deſpiſing them all?------' That muſt be very entertaining,' ſaid Mrs. Preſident roughly. 'And if you love nothing, Sir, what do you do with your ſoul?'-------' What do I do with it? I employ it to the only uſe worthy of it. I contemplate, I obſerve the wonders of Nature.'-------' Aye, but what can that nature have intereſting to you,' replied Clariſſa, 'if mankind, if your equals, have nothing in them to attach you?'---- 'My equals, Madam! I will not diſpute about words; but that expreſſion is a little too ſtrong. But however that be, nature, which I ſtudy, has to me the attraction of curioſity, which is the ſpring of underſtanding; as that which is called deſire is the movement of ſentiment.'------' Oh! aye, I conceive,' ſaid Doris, 'that curioſity is ſomething; but do you reckon deſire, Sir, as nothing?'----' Deſire, I have already told you, is an attraction of another ſort.'---' Why, then, deliver yourſelf up to one of theſe attractions, while you reſiſt the other?'---' Ah, Madam, becauſe the enjoyments of the underſtanding are not mingled with any bitterneſs, and all thoſe of the ſenſes contain a concealed poiſon.'---' But, at leaſt,' ſaid Cleon, 'you have ſenſes?'------' Yes, I have ſenſes, if you pleaſe; but they have no dominion over me: my mind receives their impreſſions as a glaſs, and nothing but the pure objects of the underſtanding can affect it ſtrongly.'----- 'A very inſipid fellow this!' ſaid Doris to Clariſſa in a very low voice: 'who brought this ſtrange creature here?'-----' Peace,' replied Clariſſa, 'this will do for the country; there is a way to divert ourſelves with him.'

Cleon, who wanted ſtill to develope the character of

Ariſtus,

Ariſtus, teſtified his ſurpriſe of ſeeing him reſolved to love nothing: 'For, after all,' ſaid he, 'do you know nothing amiable?'---'I know ſurfaces,' replied the philoſopher, 'but I know how to defy the bottom.'---'It remains, then, to know,' ſaid Cleon, 'whether this defiance be well founded.'----'Oh! very well founded, believe me: I have ſeen enough to convince me that this globe is peopled only by fools, knaves, and ingrates.'----'If you were to conſider it well,' ſaid Clariſſa to him in a tone of reproach, 'you would be leſs unjuſt, and perhaps alſo more happy.'

The ſage, confounded for a moment, pretended not to have heard. Word was brought that dinner was ready; he gave his hand to Clariſſa, and ſeated himſelf next her at table. 'I would fain,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'reconcile you to human nature.'-------'Impoſſible, Madam! impoſſible! man is the moſt vicious of beings. What can be more cruel, for example, than the ſpectacle of your dinner? How many innocent animals are ſacrificed to the voraciouſneſs of man? The ox, from which you have this beef, what harm had he done you? And the ſheep, from whence came this mutton, the ſymbol of candour, what right had you over his life? And this pigeon, the ornament of our dove-houſes, juſt torn from its tender mate? O heavens! if there had been a Buffon among the animals, in what claſs would he place man? The tiger, the vulture, the ſhark, would yield to him the firſt rank among thoſe of prey.' All the company concluded that the philoſopher ſubſiſted only on pulſe, and they were afraid to offer him any part of the meats which he enumerated with ſo much compaſſion. 'Nay, help me,' ſaid he; 'ſince they have gone ſo far as to kill them, ſomebody muſt eat them.' He declaimed, in like manner, at the ſame time that he eat of every thing, againſt the profuſion of victuals, the pains taken to procure them, and the delicacy of them. 'O happy time!' ſaid he, 'when man browzed with the goats.-----Some drink, pray!

* Buffon the famous naturaliſt.

Nature

Nature is greatly degenerated!' The philoſopher got drunk in deſcribing the clear brook where his forefathers uſed to quench their thirſt.

Cleon ſeized the moment when wine makes us ſay every thing, to diſcover the principle of this philoſophical ill-humour, which extended itſelf towards all mankind. 'Well,' ſaid he to Ariſtus, 'you are here now among men; do you find them ſo odious? Confeſs that you condemned them on hearſay, and that they do not deſerve all the harm that is ſaid of them?' ...'On hearſay, Sir! Learn that a philoſopher judges not but after his own notions: it is becauſe I have well conſidered and well developed mankind, that I believe them vain, proud, and unjuſt.'---'Ah! pr'ythee now,' interrupted Cleon, ſpare us a little: our admiration of you merits at leaſt ſome tenderneſs; for, in ſhort, you cannot reproach us with not honouring merit.'---'And how do you honour it?' replied the philoſopher briſkly; 'is it by neglect and deſertion that it is to be honoured? Oh! the philoſophers of Greece were the oracles of their age, the legiſlators of their country. Now-a-days wiſdom and virtue languiſh in oblivion: intrigue, meanneſs, and ſervility, carry all before them.'---'Suppoſe that were the caſe,' ſaid Cleon, 'it would poſſibly be the fault of thoſe great men who diſdain to ſhew themſelves.'----'And would you have them, then, run their heads into the faces, or rather throw themſelves at the feet of the diſpenſers of rewards?'------'It is true,' ſaid Cleon, 'that they might ſpare themſelves the trouble, and that ſuch a perſon as yourſelf, (pardon my bringing up your name)------' 'No harm done,' replied the philoſopher with great humility. 'Such a perſon as yourſelf ought to be diſpenſed from paying his court.'----'I pay my court! Ah! let them wait for that; I believe their pride would never have much to plume itſelf upon: I know how to ſet a right value on myſelf, thank heaven; and I would go and live in the deſarts rather than diſgrace my being.'----'It would be great

pity,' said Cleon, that society should lose you: born to enlighten mankind, you ought to live amongst them. You cannot think, ladies, the good that a philosopher does to the world: I will lay a wager, now, that this gentleman has discovered a multitude of moral truths, and that there are perhaps at this very time fifty virtues of his own making.'---'Virtues!' replied Aristus, looking down, 'I have not struck out many of them, but I have unveiled many vices.'-------'How, Sir!' said Lucinda to him, 'why did not you leave them their veil? They would have been less ugly.'---'Your humble servant for that,' replied Madam de Ponval: 'I love an acknowledged vice better than an equivocal virtue; one knows at least what to depend on.'---'And yet see how they requite us!' cried Aristus with indignation. 'It is on this account that I have taken the resolution to live only for myself: let the world go on as it may.'---'No,' said Clarissa politely to him, getting up from table, 'I must have you live for us. Have you any urgent business at Paris?'----'None, Madam: a philosopher has no business.'---'Well then, I shall keep you here. The country should be agreeable to philosophy; and I promise you solitude, repose, and freedom.'---'Freedom, Madam!' said the philosopher, in an articulate voice; 'I am greatly afraid you will fail in your promise.'

The company dispersed to walk, and Aristus with a thoughtful air pretended to go and meditate in a walk, where he mused without thinking of any thing. I mistake; he thought of Clarissa, and said within himself, 'A handsome woman, a good house, all the conveniences of life: that promises well! let us see the end. It must be confessed,' continued he, 'that society is a pleasant scene: if I were gallant now, forward, complaisant, amiable, they would scarce pay any attention to me: they see nothing else in the world, and the vanity of women is surfeited with these common homages; but to tame a bear, to civilize a philosopher, to bend his pride, to soften his soul, is a triumph

umph difficult and uncommon, with which their ſelf-love is not a little flattered. Clariſſa, of her own accord, ruſhes into my toils; let me expect her there without coming to any compromiſe.'

The company, on their ſide, amuſed themſelves at the expence of Ariſtus. 'He is a pleaſant original enough,' ſaid Doris; 'what ſhall we ſtrike out of him?'---'A comedy,' replied Cleon: 'and if Clariſſa will come into it, my plan is already ſettled.' He communicated his thought, all the company applauded it, and Clariſſa, after ſome difficulty, conſented to play her part. She was much younger and handſomer than was neceſſary to move a philoſopher; and ſome words, ſome looks, which had eſcaped our ſage, ſeemed to promiſe an excellent cataſtrophe. She threw herſelf therefore, as it were by chance, into the ſame walk with Ariſtus. 'I put you out,' ſaid ſhe; 'excuſe me, I was only paſſing.'---'You do not interrupt me, Madam, I can meditate with you.'---'You will do me pleaſure,' ſays Clariſſa: 'I perceive that a philoſopher does not think like another man, and I ſhould be very glad to ſee things with your eyes.'---'It is true, Madam, that philoſophy creates, as it were, a new world. The vulgar ſee only in the groſs; the details of nature are a ſpectacle reſerved for us; it is for us that ſhe ſeems to have diſpoſed, with an art ſo wonderful, the fibres of theſe leaves, the ſtamina of theſe flowers, the texture of this rind; an ant-hill is to me a republic, and each of the atoms that compoſe the world, appear in my eyes a new world.'---'That is admirable!' ſaid Clariſſa: 'what was it took up your thoughts this moment!'---'Theſe birds,' replied the ſage. 'They are happy, are they not?'---'Ah! very happy, without doubt; and can they be otherwiſe? Independence, equality, few wants, ready pleaſures, oblivion of the paſt, no concern for the future, and their whole ſolicitude to ſupport life, and to perpetuate their ſpecies; what leſſons, Madam! what leſſons for mankind!'---'Confeſs, then, that the country is a delicious abode:

for, in ſhort, it brings us nearer to the condition of animals; and, like them, we ſeem to have no laws there, but the gentle inſtinct of Nature.'---'Ah, Madam! how true is all this! but the impreſſion is effaced from the heart of man: ſociety has ruined every thing.'—'You are right; this ſociety is ſomething very troubleſome; and ſince we want nobody it would be quite natural to live for one's ſelf.'---'Alas! that is what I have ſaid a hundred times, and what I never ceaſe to write; but nobody will liſten to me: you, Madam, for example, who ſeem to acknowledge the truth of this principle, could you have the ſtrength to practiſe it?'---'I cannot but wiſh,' ſaid Clariſſa, 'that philoſophy ſhould come in faſhion: I ſhould not be the laſt to come into it, as I ought not to be the firſt to ſet it.'---'This is the language that every one ſpeaks: nobody will venture to ſet the example; and, in the mean time, human nature groans, loaded with the yoke of opinion, and the chains of cuſtom.'---'What would you have us do, Sir? Our eaſe, our honour, all that we hold dear, depends on decorums.'---'Well Madam, obſerve then theſe tyrannical decorums; wear virtues as you do habits, made to the taſte of the age; but your ſoul is your own: ſociety has no right but to externals, and you owe it only appearances. The decorums, ſo much inſiſted on, are themſelves nothing more than appearances well preſerved: but the interior, Madam, the interior is the ſanctuary of the will, and the will is independent.'---'I conceive,' ſaid Clariſſa, 'that I may wiſh for what I pleaſe, provided I go no farther.'---'To be ſure,' replied the philoſopher, 'it is better to ſtop there than to run the hazard of giving into imprudences: for, Madam, do you know what a vicious woman is? It is a woman who has no regard, no reſpect to herſelf, in any caſe.'---'What, Sir!' demanded Clariſſa, affecting an air of ſatisfaction, 'does vice, then, conſiſt only in imprudence?'---'Before I anſwer you, Madam, permit me to aſk you, what is vice in your eyes? Is it not that which overturns

turns order, which hurts, or which may hurt?'---'The very thing.'---'Very well, Madam; all that is external. Why then ſubmit your ſentiments and your thoughts to prejudice! See in theſe birds that ſoft and unreſtrained liberty which Nature gave you, and which you have loſt.---'Ah!' ſaid Clariſſa with a ſigh, 'the death of my huſband had reſtored me this precious gift; but I am on the point of renouncing it again.—'O, Heaven! what do I hear,' cried he; 'are you going to form a new chain?'—'Why, I do not know!'—'You do not know!'—'They will have it ſo.'—'And who, Madam? who are the enemies who dare propoſe it to you? No; believe me, marriage is a yoke, and freedom is the ſupreme good. But, however, who is the huſband whom they would give you?'—'Cleon.'—'Cleon, Madam! I am no longer ſurprized at the unconſtrained air he aſſumes here. He queſtions, decides, condeſcends ſometimes to be affable, and has that haughty politeneſs which ſeems to let himſelf down to a level with us; it is plain that he is doing the honours of his own houſe; and I know, from henceforth, the reſpect and deference that I owe him.'—'You owe to each other a mutual civility, and I intend that with me every body ſhall be on an equality.'—'You intend it, Clariſſa! Alas, your choice deſtroys all equality between mankind, and the perſon who is to poſſeſs you.—But let us talk no more of it, I have ſaid too much already; this place is not made for a philoſopher; permit me to leave it.'—'No,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'I have need of you, and you plunge me into irreſolutions, from which you alone can draw me. It muſt be confeſſed, that philoſophy is a very comfortable thing; but if a philoſopher were a deceiver, he would be a very dangerous friend! Adieu, I would not have them ſee us together; I am going to rejoin the company; come to us ſoon.—See there, then,' ſaid ſhe as ſhe was going from him, 'what they call a philoſopher!'—'Courage!' ſaid he on his ſide; 'Cleon hangs only by a thread.' Clariſſa with bluſhes, gave an ac-

count of the firſt ſcene, and her beginning was received with applauſe: but the lady preſident, knitting her brow, 'Do you intend,' ſaid ſhe, 'that I ſhould be only a looker on? No, no; I muſt play my part, and I aſſure you it ſhall be pleaſant. Do you think that you ſhall ſubdue this ſage? No: I will have the honour of it.'—'You, Madam!'—'Oh! you may laugh: my fifty years, my triple chin, and my muſtaches of Spaniſh ſnuff, defy all your graces.' The whole company applauded this challenge by redoubled peals of laughter. 'Nothing is more ſerious,' reſumed ſhe; 'and if it be not enough to triumph over one, you have only to join, and diſpute the conqueſt with me; I defy you all three. Go, divine Doris; charming Lucinda; admirable Clariſſa; go and diſplay before his eyes all the ſeductions of beauty and coquetry; I laugh at it.' She ſpoke theſe words with a tone of reſolution ſufficient to make her rivals tremble.

Cleon affected to appear dull and penſive at the arrival of Ariſtus, and Clariſſa aſſumed with the philoſopher a reſerved air of myſtery. They ſpoke little, but ogled much. Ariſtus on retiring to his apartment, found it furniſhed with all the inventions of luxury. 'O heavens!' ſaid he to the company, who for the ſake of diverting themſelves had conducted him thither; 'O heavens! is it not ridiculous that all this preparation ſhould be made for one man's ſleep? Was it thus that they ſlept at Lacedæmon? O Lycurgus, what wouldſt thou ſay! a toilette for me! This is downright mockery. Do they take me for a Sybarite? I muſt retire, I cannot ſtand it.'—'Would you have us,' ſaid Clariſſa, 'unfurniſh it on purpoſe for you? Take my advice, and enjoy the pleaſures of life when they preſent themſelves: a philoſopher ſhould know how to put up with every thing, and accommodate himſelf to every thing.'—'Very well, Madam,' ſaid he, ſomewhat appeaſed, 'I muſt at preſent comply with you; but I ſhall never be able to ſleep on this heap of down. Upon my word,' ſays he, as he laid

him-

himſelf down, 'this luxury is a fine thing!' and the philoſopher fell aſleep.

His dreams recalled to his remembrance his converſation with Clariſſa, and he awoke with the pleaſing idea, that this virtue by convention, which is called prudence in women, would make but a feeble reſiſtance againſt him.

He was not yet up when a lacquey came to propoſe the bath to him. The bath was a good preſage. 'Be it ſo,' ſaid he; 'I will bathe: the bath is a natural inſtitution. As for perfumes, the earth yields them: let us not diſdain her preſents.' He would fain have made uſe of the toilette which they had provided for him; but ſhame reſtrained him. He contented himſelf with giving to his philoſophical negligence the moſt decent air he could, and the glaſs was twenty times conſulted. 'What a fright you have made of yourſelf!' ſaid Clariſſa to him on ſeeing him appear: 'why not dreſſed like the reſt of the world? This habit, this wig, give you a vulgar air which you have not naturally.'—'What! Madam is it by the air that we are to judge of mankind? Would you have me ſubmit to the caprices of faſhion, and be dreſſed like your Cleons?'—'Why not, Sir? do you not know that they derive an advantage from your ſimplicity, and that it is this in particular that leſſens in people's opinions the conſideration due to you? I myſelf, in order to do you juſtice, have need of my reflection: the firſt ſight ſhakes againſt you; and it is very often the firſt ſight that decides. Why not give to Virtue all the charms of which ſhe is capable!'—'No, Madam, Art is not made for her. The more naked, the more beautiful; they diſguiſe her when they endeavour to adorn her.'—'Very well, Sir, let her contemplate herſelf alone at her eaſe; as for me, I declare, that this ruſtic and low air diſpleaſes me. Is it not ſtrange, that having received from nature a diſtinguiſhed figure, any one ſhould take a pride in degrading it?'—'But, Madam, what would you ſay if a philoſopher ſhould employ his atten-

attention about his dreſs, and ſet himſelf off like your marquis?'—'I would ſay he ſeeks to pleaſe; and he does right; for, do not flatter yourſelf, Ariſtus, there is no pleaſing without taking a good deal of pains.'—'Ah! I deſire nothing ſo much as to pleaſe in your eyes.'—'If ſuch a deſire really poſſeſſes you,' replied Clariſſa, with a tender look, 'beſtow at leaſt a quarter of an hour upon it. Here, Jaſmin, Jaſmin! go dreſs the gentleman's head.' Ariſtus, bluſhing, yields at length to theſe gentle inſtances; and now behold the ſage at his toilette!

The nimble hand of Jaſmin diſpoſes his locks with art; his phyſiognomy now diſplays itſelf; he admires the metamorphoſis, and is ſcarce able to conceive it. 'What will they ſay on ſeeing me?' ſaid he to himſelf; 'let them ſay what they pleaſe; but the philoſopher has a good face.' He preſents himſelf blown up with pride but with an aukward and baſhful air. 'Aye, now,' ſaid Clariſſa, 'you look handſome. There is nothing now but the colour of thoſe cloaths, that offends my eyes.'—'Ah! Madam, for the ſake of my reputation, leave me at leaſt this characteriſtic of the gravity of my condition.'—'And what then, by your leave, is this chimerical condition which you have ſo much at heart? I approve very much of people's being wiſe; but in my opinion all ſorts of colours are indifferent to wiſdom. Is this cheſnut of Mr. Guillaume more founded in nature, than the ſky blue or roſe-colour? By what caprice is it that you imitate in your garments the huſk of the cheſnut, rather than the leaf of the roſe or the tuft of the lily with which the ſpring is crowned! Ah, for my part I confeſs to you that the roſe colour charms my ſight: that colour has ſomething, I know not what, of ſoftneſs in it, which goes to my very ſoul, and I ſhould think you the handſomeſt creature living in a ſuit of roſe-colour.'—'Roſe-colour, Madam! O heavens! a philoſopher in roſe-colour!'—'Yes, Sir, a very roſe-colour: what would you have? It is my weakneſs. By writing

to

to Paris directly, you may have it by to-morrow afternoon, can you not?'—'What Madam?'—'A ſuit for the country of the colour of my ribbands.'—'No, Madam, it is impoſſible.'—'Pardon me, nothing is eaſier; the workmen need only be up all night.'—'Alas! it is of mighty conſequence to me what the time is which they are to employ in rendering me ridiculous? Conſider, I beſeech you, that ſuch an extravagance as this would ruin my reputation.'—'Well, Sir, when you ſhall have loſt that reputation, you will gain another, and it is odds that you will gain by the exchange.'—'I proteſt to you, Madam, that it is ſhocking to me to diſpleaſe you, but—'—'But! you put me out of all patience; I do not love to be thwarted. It is very ſtrange,' continued ſhe, in a tone of diſpleaſure, 'that you ſhould refuſe me a triſle. The importance you give it teaches me to take care of myſelf in matters that are more ſerious.' At theſe words ſhe quitted the room, leaving the philoſopher confounded that ſo trifling an incident ſhould deſtroy his hopes. 'Roſe colour!' ſaid he, 'roſe-colour! how ridiculous! what a contraſt! ſhe will have it ſo; I muſt ſubmit.' And the philoſopher wrote for the cloaths.

'You are obeyed, Madam,' ſaid he to Clariſſa, accoſting her. 'Has it coſt you much?' demanded ſhe, with a ſmile of diſdain. 'A great deal, Madam, more than I can expreſs: but, in ſhort, you would have it ſo.' 'All the company admired the philoſopher's head. Madam Preſident, above all, ſwore by the great gods, that ſhe had never ſeen any man's head ſo well dreſſed before, Ariſtus thanked her for ſo flattering a compliment. 'Compliments!' reſumed ſhe, 'compliments! I never make any. They are the falſe coin of the world.'—'Nothing was ever better conceived,' cried the ſage; 'that deſerves to be ſet down in writing.' They perceived that Madam Preſident was now beginning the attack, and they left them to themſelves. 'You think, then,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'that nobody but yourſelf can make ſentences? I am a phi-

loſopher

loſopher too, ſuch as you ſee me.'—'You, Madam! and of what ſect? A Stoick, or an Epicurean?—'Oh, take my word for it! the name is nothing. I have ten thouſand crowns a year which I ſpend with gaiety; I have good champagne which I drink with my friends, I enjoy a good ſtate of health; I do what I pleaſe, and leave every one to live after their own manner. There's a ſect for you!'—'It is well done, and exactly what Epicurus taught.'—'Oh! I declare to you I was taught nothing: all this comes of my own ſelf. For theſe twenty years I have read nothing but the liſt of my wines, and the bill of fare of my ſupper.'—'Why, upon that footing you muſt be the happieſt woman in the world.'—'Happy! not entirely ſo: I want a huſband of my own way of thinking. My preſident was a beaſt: good for nothing but the bar: he underſtood the law, and that was all. I want a man who knows how to love, and who would employ himſelf about me alone.'—'You may find a thouſand, Madam.'—'Oh! I want but one; but I would have him be a good one. Birth, fortune, all that is perfectly indifferent to me; I attach myſelf only to the man.'—'Indeed, Madam, you aſtoniſh me: you are the firſt woman in whom I have found any principles: but is it preciſely a huſband that you want?'—'Yes, Sir, a huſband who ſhall be mine in all forms. Theſe lovers are all rogues, who deceive us, and who forſake us without leaving us room to complain: whereas a huſband is ours in the face of the world; and if mine ſhould deſert me, I ſhould like to be able to go, with my title in my hand, and in all honour and honeſty give an hundred ſlaps on the face to the inſolent huſſy that ſhould have taken him from me.'—'Very good, Madam! very good! the right of property is an inviolable right. But do you know that there are very few ſouls like yours? What courage, what vigour!'—'Oh, I have as much as a lioneſs. I know I am not handſome; but ten thouſand crowns a year made over on the wedding-day, are worth all the prettineſſes of a Lucinda or Clariſſa; and though

Jove

love be rare in this age, one ought to have it for ten thouſand crowns.' This converſation brought them back again to the houſe, at the very inſtant that word was brought that ſupper was ready.

Ariſtus appeared plunged into ſerious reflections; he weighed the advantages and inconveniencies that might attend his marrying the lady preſident, and calculated how much longer a woman of fifty could live, ſwallowing every evening a bottle of Champagne. A diſpute which aroſe between Madam de Ponval and Clariſſa, drew him out of his reverie. Doris gave riſe to the diſpute. 'Is it poſſible,' ſaid ſhe, 'that Madam Preſident ſhould have been able to ſupport for a whole hour a *tête-à-tête* with a philoſopher; ſhe who falls a yawning the moment one talks to her of reaſon!'—'Truly,' replied Madam de Ponval, 'it is becauſe your reaſon has not common ſenſe: aſk this wiſe man, here, if mine be not good. We talked of the ſtate that ſuits an honeſt woman, and he agrees with me, that a good huſband is by much the beſt for her.'—'Oh, fie!' cried Clariſſa, 'are we made to be ſlaves? and what becomes then of that freedom, which is the firſt of all goods?' Cleon declaimed againſt this ſyſtem of freedom: he maintained, that the union of hearts was very different from a ſtate of ſlavery. Madam Preſident ſupported this opinion, and declared that ſhe could perceive no diſtinction between the love of freedom, and the love of libertiniſm. 'May this glaſs of wine,' ſaid ſhe, 'be the laſt I ſhall drink, if I ever form the leaſt dependence on any man who ſhall not firſt have taken an oath that he will be only mine. All the reſt is but froth.'—'And there now,' ſaid Clariſſa, 'is the great mortification of marriage. Love, with its freedom, loſes all its delicacy. Is it not ſo, Sir?' demanded ſhe of the philoſopher. 'Why, Madam, I have thought as you do; yet it muſt be confeſſed that if freedom has its charms, it has alſo its dangers, its rocks: happy diſpoſitions are ſo great a good, and inconſtancy is ſo natural to man, that the moment

he

feels a laudable inclination, he acts prudently in depriving himself of the fatal power of changing.'—'Do you hear him ladies? these men for my money! no flattery! this it what is called a philosopher. Try to seduce him if you can: for my part I retire quite charmed.—Adieu, philosopher, I want rest; I did not shut my eyes all last night, and I long to be asleep, in order to have the pleasure of dreaming.' She accompanied this adieu with an amorous glance, twinkling with champagne. 'Ladies,' said Lucinda, 'did you mind that look?'—'Surely,' replied Doris, 'she is distracted for Aristus; that is clear.'—'For me, Madam! you do not think so; our tastes, I believe, and our tempers, are not made for each other. I drink but little, I swear still less, and I do not love to be confined.'—'Ah, Sir, ten thousand crowns a year!'—'Ten thousand crowns a year, Madam, are an insult when mentioned to persons like myself.'

These words were repeated the next day to Madam the President. 'Oh! the insolent wretch!' said she, 'I am piqued: you shall see him at my feet.' I pass slightly over the nocturnal reflections of the sage Aristus. A good coach, a commodious apartment very far from my lady's, and the best cook in Paris; such was his plan in life. 'Our philosophers,' said he, 'perhaps will murmur a little. However, an ugly woman has in it something philosophical; at least, they will not suspect that I have pursued the pleasures of sensuality.'

The day of his triumph arrives, and the suit of rose-colour along with it: he views it, and blushes through vanity rather than shame. Cleon, however, came to see him, with the disturbed air of one possessed; and after having cast an eye of indignation on the preparations for his dressing; 'Sir,' said he to him, 'if I had to do with a man of the world, I should propose to him by way of preface, to exchange a thrust with me. But I am speaking to a philosopher, and I come to assault him with no other arms than frankness and virtue.'—'What is the matter then?'

then?' demanded the ſage, ſomewhat confounded at this preamble. 'I loved Clariſſa, Sir,' replied Cleon; 'ſhe loved me; we were going to be married. I know not what change is made all of a ſudden in her ſoul, but ſhe will not hear me ſpeak any more either of marriage or of love. I had at firſt only ſome ſuſpicions concerning the cauſe, but this roſe-coloured ſuit confirms them. Roſe-colour is her paſſion; you adopted her colours: you are my rival.'—'I, Sir!'—'I cannot doubt it, and all the circumſtances that atteſt it croud on my imagination. Your ſecret walks, your whiſpers in the ear, looks and words that have eſcaped you, her hatred particularly againſt Madam de Ponval, every thing betrays you, every thing ſerves to open my eyes. Hear, then, Sir, what I have to propoſe. One of us muſt give place: violence is an unjuſt method; generoſity will ſet us on good terms. I love, I idolize Clariſſa; I had been happy but for you; I may ſtill be ſo: my aſſiduities, time, and your abſence, may bring her back to me. If, on the contrary, I muſt renounce her, you ſee one who will be driven to deſpair, and death will be my reſource. Judge, Ariſtus, whether your ſituation be the ſame. Conſult yourſelf, and anſwer me. If the happineſs of your life depends on giving up your conqueſt to me, I require nothing, and I retire.'—'Go, Sir,' replied the philoſopher to him with a ſerene air, 'you ſhall never overcome Ariſtus in a point of generoſity; and whatever it may coſt me, I will prove to you that I merited this mark of eſteem.'

'At laſt,' ſaid he, when Cleon had left the room, 'here is an opportunity of ſhewing an heroical virtue. Ha, ha! you gentlemen of the world, you will learn to admire us. . . . . They will not know it, perhaps. . . . . Oh, yes; Clariſſa will communicate it in confidence to her friends; theſe will tell it again to others; the adventure is uncommon enough to make a noiſe: the worſt that can happen will be to publiſh it myſelf. It is neceſſary that a good deed ſhould be known, and it matters not which way: our age has need of theſe

ples; they are leſſons for mankind. . . . However let me not become a dupe to my own virtues, and diſpoſſeſs myſelf of Clariſſa before I am ſure of Madam Preſident. Let me ſee what champagne and ſleep may have produceit.'

While he reflected thus on his conduct, the philoſopher dreſſed himſelf. The induſtrious Jaſmin ſurpaſſed himſelf in dreſſing his head: the roſe-coloured ſuit was put on before the looking-glaſs with a ſecret complacency, and the ſage ſallied out all radiant to viſit Madam Preſident, who received him with an exclamation of ſurprize. But paſſing all of a ſudden from joy to confuſion, 'I perceive,' ſaid ſhe, 'Clariſſa's favourite colour; you are attentive to ſtudy her taſte. Go, Ariſtus, go and avail yourſelf of the trouble you take to pleaſe her; it will, no doubt, have its reward.'—'My natural ingenuouſneſs,' replied the philoſopher, 'permits me not to conceal from you, that in the choice of this colour I have followed only her caprice. I will do more, Madam; I will confeſs that my firſt deſire was to pleaſe in her eyes. The wiſeſt is not without weakneſs; and when a woman prejudices us by flattering attentions, it is difficult not to be touched with them; but how my attachment is weakened! I acknowledge it with reproach to myſelf, Madam, and you ought alſo reproach yourſelf for it.'—'Ah! philoſopher, why is this not true? But this roſe-colour confounds all my ideas.'—'Very well, Madam, I aſſumed it with regret; I now go to quit it with joy; and if my firſt ſimplicity——' 'No, ſtay, I think you charming. But what do I ſay? Ah, how happy are people in being ſo handſome! Ariſtus, why am I not beautiful!'—'What, Madam, do not you know that uglineſs and beauty exiſt only in opinion? Nothing is handſome, nothing is ugly in itſelf. A beauty in one country is far from being reckoned a beauty in another; ſo many men, ſo many minds.'—'You flatter me,' ſaid Madam Preſident with a childiſh baſhfulneſs, and pretending to bluſh; 'but I know, alas! but too

well,

well, that I have nothing beautiful in me, except my ſoul.'---'Very well, and is not the ſupreme beauty the only charm worthy to touch the heart?'---'Ah! philoſopher! believe me, that beauty alone has few charms.'---'It has few, no doubt, for the vulgar! but, to repeat it once more, you are not reduced to that. Is there nothing in a noble air, a commanding look, and an expreſſive countenance? and then, as to majeſty, is ſhe not the queen of the graces?'---'And for this plumpneſs of mine, what ſay you to that?'---'Ah, Madam! this plumpneſs, which is reckoned an exceſs among us, is a beauty in Aſia. Do you think, for example, that the Turks have no ſkill in women? Well, then, all thoſe elegant figures which we admire at Paris would not even be admitted into the Grand Signior's ſeraglio; and the Grand Signior is no fool. In a word, a roſy ſtate of health is the mother of the pleaſures, and plumpneſs is its ſymbol.'---'You will bring me preſently to believe that my fat is not unbecoming. But for this noſe of mine, noſe without end, which runs out before my face.'---'Why, good God! what do you complain of? Were not the noſes of the Roman matrons noſes without end? Obſerve all the ancient buſts.'---'But at leaſt, they had not this great mouth, and ſuch blubber-lips?'---'Thick lips, Madam, are the charm of the American beauties: they are, as it were, two cuſhions, on which ſoft and tender pleaſure takes its repoſe. As to a wide mouth, I know nothing that gives the countenance more openneſs and gaiety.'---'True, when the teeth are fine; but unhappily---' 'Go to Siam, there fine teeth are vulgar, and it is a ſcandal even to have any. Thus all that is called beauty depends on the caprice of mankind, and the only real beauty is the object which has charmed us.'---'Shall I be yours, then, my dear philoſopher?' demanded ſhe, hiding her face behind her fan. 'Pardon me, Madam, if I heſitate. My delicacy renders me timid, and I profeſs a diſintereſtedneſs not yet ſufficiently known to you to be above ſuſpicion. You have

talked to me of ten thousand crowns a year, and that circumstance makes me tremble.'---'Go, Sir, you are too just to impute to me such mean suspicions; it is Clarissa that detains you; I see your evasions; leave me.'---'Yes, I leave you, to go and acquit myself of the promise I have just made to Cleon. He was dismissed, he complained to me of it, and I have promised to engage Clarissa to give him her hand. Now, believe that I love her.'—'Is it possible? Oh, you charm me, and I cannot stand this sacrifice. Go and see her, I wait you here; do not let me languish: this very evening we will leave the country.'

'I wonder at myself,' said he as he was going off, 'for having the courage to marry her. She is frightful; but she is rich.' He comes to Clarissa, finds her at her toilette, and Cleon along with her, who assumes on seeing him, a dejected air. 'O! the handsome suit!' cried she. 'Come this way that I may see you. It is quite delicious, is it not, Cleon? It was my choice.'—'I see it plainly, Madam,' replied he, with a melancholy air. 'Let us leave off this trifling,' interrupted the philosopher; 'I am come to clear myself of a crime of which I am accused, and to fulfil a serious duty. Cleon loves you, you love him; he has lost your heart, he tells me, and that I am the cause of it.'—'Yes, Sir: and why all this mystery? I have just been making a declaration of it to him.'—'And I, Madam, declare to you that I will never make unhappy a worthy man, who merits you, and dies if he loses you. I love you as much as he can love you: it is a confession which I am not ashamed to make; but his inclination has been more rooted by the unconquerable force of habit than mine, and perhaps also I shall find in myself resources which he has not in himself.'—'O, the wonderful man,' cried Cleon, embracing the philosopher. 'What shall I say to you? You confound me.'—'There is no mighty matter in all this,' replied the philosopher with humility; 'your generosity set the example, I only imitate you.'—'Come, ladies,' said

Clarissa

Clariſſa to Lucinda and Doris, whom ſhe ſaw appear at that inſtant, 'come and be witneſſes of the triumph of philoſophy. Ariſtus reſigns me to his rival, and ſacrifices his love for me to the happineſs of a man he hardly knows.' Their aſtoniſhment and admiration were acted up to the life; and Ariſtus, taking Clariſſa's hand, which he put into Cleon's, ſnuffed up in abundance, with a ſupercilious modeſty, the incenſe of adoration. 'Be happy,' ſaid he to them, 'and ceaſe your aſtoniſhment at an effort which, however painful, carries its recompence along with it. What would a philoſopher be, if virtue were not all in all with him?' At theſe words he retired, as it were, to withdraw himſelf from his glory.

Madam Preſident waited the philoſopher's coming. 'Is it done, then?' demanded ſhe of him. 'Yes, Madam, they are united; I am now my own and yours.'—'Oh, I triumph, you are mine; come here then that I may enchain you.'—'Ah, Madam!' ſaid he, falling at her knees, 'what dominion you have acquired over me! O Socrates! O Plato! what is become of your diſciple? Do you yet know him in this ſtate of debaſement!' While he ſpoke thus, Madam Preſident took a roſe-coloured ribband, which ſhe bound about the ſage's neck, and imitating Lucinda in the Oracle, with the moſt comical infantine air in the world, called him by the name of *Charmer*. 'Good Heaven! what would become of me if any body knew?---Ah, Madam,' ſaid he, 'let us fly, let us baniſh ourſelves from a ſociety that watches us; ſpare me the humiliation.'—'What is it you call humiliation? I muſt have you glory in their preſence that you are mine, that you wear my chain.' At theſe words the door opens, and Madam Preſident riſes from her chair, holding the philoſopher in a ſtring. 'See here,' ſaid ſhe to the company, 'ſee here this proud man, who ſighs at my feet for the beauty of my purſe; I deliver him up to you, I have played my part.' At this picture the roof reſounded with the name of *Charmer*, and innumerable peals of laugh-

laughter. Ariſtus tearing his hair, and rending his clothes with rage, launched out into reproaches on the perfidy of women, and went off to compoſe a book againſt the age, in which he roundly aſſerted, that there was no ſage but himſelf.

THE BAD MOTHER.

AMONG the monſtrous productions of nature may be reckoned the heart of a mother who loves one of her children to the excluſion of all the reſt. I do not mean an enlightened tenderneſs, which diſtinguiſhes among the young plants which it cultivates, that which yields the beſt returns to its early care; I ſpeak of a blind fondneſs, frequently excluſive, ſometimes jealous, which creates an idol and victims amid the little innocents brought into the world, for each of whom we are equally bound to ſoften the burdens of life. Of this error ſo common and ſo ſhameful to human nature, I am now going to give an example.

In one of the maritime provinces, M. de Carandon, an intendant, who had rendered himſelf reſpectable by his ſeverity in repreſſing grievances, making it a principle to favour the weak and controul the ſtrong, died poor, and almoſt inſolvent. He had left behind him a daughter, whom nobody would marry, becauſe ſhe had much pride, little beauty, and no fortune. At laſt, a rich and honeſt merchant made his addreſſes to her, out of reſpect to the memory of her father. 'He has done us ſo many good offices,' ſaid the worthy Corée, this was the merchant's name, 'it is but juſt that ſome of us ſhould repay them to the daughter.' With theſe thoughts Corée offered himſelf in an humble manner; and Mademoiſelle Carandon, with a great deal of reluctance, conſented to give him her hand, on condition that ſhe ſhould maintain an abſolute authority in his houſe. The good man's reſpect for the memory of the father extended even to the daughter; he conſulted her as his oracle; and if at any time he happened to differ in opinion from her, ſhe had nothing to do but to

utter

utter these silencing expressions, 'The late M. de Carandon, my father ——.' Corée never waited for her to conclude, before he confessed himself in the wrong.

He died rather young, and left her two children, of which she had condescended to permit him to be the father. On his death-bed he thought it his duty to regulate the partition of his effects; but M. de Carandon held it, as she told him, for a maxim, that in order to retain children under the dependence of a mother, it was necessary to render her the dispenser of their effects. This law was the rule of Corée's will; and his inheritance was left in the hands of his wife, with the fatal right of distributing it to her children as she should think proper. Of these two children the eldest was her delight; not that he was handsomer, or of a more happy disposition, than the younger, but because she had run some danger of her life in bringing him into the world; he had first made her experience the pains and joy of childbed, he had possessed himself of her tenderness, which he also seemed to have exhausted; she had, in short, all the bad reasons that a bad mother could have for loving only him.

Little Jemmy was the rejected child: his mother hardly vouchsafed to see him, and never spoke to him but to chide him. The poor child, intimidated, durst not look up before her, nor answer her without trembling. He had, she said, his father's disposition, a vulgar soul, and the air of such kind of folks.

As to the eldest, whom she had taken care to render as headstrong, disobedient, and humoursome as possible, he was gentility itself; his obstinacy was called greatness of spirit; his humours, excess of sensibility. She was delighted to see that he would never give up a point when he was in the right; and you must know that he was never in the wrong. She was eternally declaring that he knew his own good, and that he had the honour of resembling the sweet madam his mamma. This eldest boy, who was stiled M. De l'Etang, (for it was not thought right to leave him the name of Corée) had

masters

maſters of all ſorts: the leſſons they ſet were for him alone, but little Jemmy reaped the fruits of them; inſomuch, that at the end of a few years, Jemmy knew all that they had taught M. De l'Etang, who knew nothing at all.

The good women, who make a practice of attributing to children all the little wit they have themſelves, and who ruminate all the morning on the pretty things they are to ſay in the day, had made the mother, whoſe weakneſs they were well acquainted with, believe that her eldeſt ſon was a prodigy. The maſters, leſs complaiſant, or leſs artful, while they complained of the indocility and inattention of this favourite, were boundleſs in their encomiums on Jemmy; they did not abſolutely ſay that M. De l'Etang was a blockhead, but they ſaid that little Jemmy had the genius of an angel. The mother's vanity was wounded; and out of an injuſtice, which one would not believe exiſted in nature, if this vice of mothers were leſs in faſhion, ſhe redoubled her averſion to the little wretch, became jealous of his improvement, and reſolved to take away from her ſpoiled child the humiliation of a compariſon.

A very affecting adventure awakened, however, in her, the ſentiments of nature; but this retort upon herſelf only humbled, without correcting her. Jemmy was ten years of age, M. De l'Etang nearly fifteen, when ſhe fell dangerouſly ill. The eldeſt employed himſelf about his pleaſures, and very little about his mother's health. It is the puniſhment of fooliſh mothers to love unnatural children. However, ſhe began to grow uneaſy; Jemmy perceived it, and his little heart was ſeized with grief and fear: the impatience to ſee his mother grew too ſtrong for him to conceal. They had accuſtomed him never to appear but when he was called; but at laſt his tenderneſs gave him courage. He ſeized the inſtant when the chamber door was half open, entered ſilent, and with trembling ſteps, and approached his mother's bed. 'Is it you, my ſon?' ſaid ſhe. 'No, mamma, it is Jemmy.' This natural and overwhelming anſwer pene-

penetrated with ſhame and grief the ſoul of this unjuſt woman; but a few careſſes from her bad ſon ſoon reſtored him to his full aſcendancy; and Jemmy in the end was neither the better beloved, nor reckoned the more worthy to be ſo.

Scarce was Madam Corée recovered, when ſhe reſumed the deſign of baniſhing him her houſe; her pretence was, that M. De l'Etang, being naturally lively, was too ſuſceptible of diſſipation to have a companion in his ſtudies; and the impertinent prepoſſeſſions of the maſters for the child, who was the moſt humble and fawning with them, might eaſily diſcourage the other, whoſe ſpirit being higher, and leſs tractable, required more management: it was her pleaſure, therefore, that L'Etang ſhould be the only object of their cares, and ſhe got rid of the unfortunate Jemmy by exiling him to a college.

At ſixteen L'Etang quitted his maſters in the mathematics, phyſics, muſic, &c. juſt as he had taken them: he began his exerciſe, which he performed much in the ſame manner as he had done his ſtudies; and at twenty he appeared in the world with the ſelf-ſufficiency of a coxcomb, who has heard of every thing, but reflected on nothing.

Jemmy, on his part, had gone through his ſtudies; and his mother was quite wearied with the commendations they gave him. 'Well then,' ſaid ſhe, 'ſince he is ſo wiſe, he will ſucceed in the church; he has nothing to do but to take to that courſe of life.'

Unfortunately, Jemmy had no inclination for the eccleſiaſtic ſtate; he came therefore to entreat his mother to diſpenſe with his entering into it. 'You imagine, then,' ſaid ſhe to him, with a cold and ſevere air, 'that I have enough to maintain you in the world? I aſſure you I have not. Your father's fortune was not ſo conſiderable as was imagined; it will ſcarce be ſufficient to ſettle your elder brother. For your part, you have only to conſider whether you will run the career of benefices or of arms; whether you will have your head ſhaven or broken.

broken. In ſhort whether you will take a band, or a lieutenancy of infantry: this is all that I can do for you.' Jemmy anſwered with reſpect, that there were leſs violent courſes to be taken by the ſon of a merchant. At theſe words Mad. de Garandon was near dying with grief, for having brought into the world a ſon ſo unworthy of her, and forbid him her ſight. Young Corée, diſtreſſed at having incurred his mother's anger, retired ſighing, and reſolved to try whether fortune would be leſs cruel to him than nature. He learned that a veſſel was on the point of ſailing for the Antilles, whither he had a deſign of repairing. He writ to his mother to aſk her conſent, her bleſſing, and a parcel of goods. The two firſt articles were amply granted him, but the latter very ſparingly.

His mother, too happy in being rid of him, wanted to ſee him before his departure, and, while ſhe embraced him, beſtowed on him a few tears. His brother alſo had the goodneſs to wiſh him a good voyage. Theſe were the firſt careſſes he had ever received from his relations: his ſenſible heart was penetrated with them; yet he durſt not aſk them to write to him; but he had a fellow collegian by whom he was tenderly beloved, and he conjured him at parting, now and then to ſend him news of his mother.

She was now only employed in the care of ſettling her favourite ſon. He declined for the robe; they obtained him a diſpenſation from its ſtudies; and he was ſoon admitted into the ſanctuary of the laws. Nothing remained wanting but an advantageous marriage; they propoſed a rich heireſs: but they required of the widow the ſettlement of her fortune. She had the weakneſs to conſent to it, ſcarce reſerving to herſelf ſufficient to live decently; well aſſured that her ſon's fortune would be always at her diſpoſal.

At the age of twenty-five, M. De l'Etang found himſelf a dapper little counſellor, neglecting his wife as much as his mother, taking great care of his own perſon, and paying very little regard to the bar. As it

it was genteel for a husband to have somebody besides his wife, L'Etang thought it his duty to set up for a man of intrigue. A young girl, whom he ogled at the play, returned his invitations, received him at her lodgings with a great deal of politeness, told him he was charming, which he very readily believed, and in a short time eased him of a pocket-book with ten thousand crowns. But as there is no such thing as eternal love, this perjured beauty quitted him at the expiration of three months for a young English lord, equally foolish, and more magnificent. L'Etang, who could not conceive how they could dismiss such a person as himself, resolved to avenge himself by taking a mistress still more celebrated, and loading her with favours. His new conquest raised him a thousand rivals; and when he compared himself with a crowd of adorers, who sighed for her in vain, he had the pleasure of thinking himself more amiable, as he found himself more happy. However, having perceived that he was not without uneasiness, she was desirous of convincing him, that there was nothing in the world which she was not resolved to quit for him, and proposed, for the sake of avoiding impertinence, that they should go together to Paris, to forget all the world, and live only for each other. L'Etang was transported at this mark of tenderness. Every thing is got ready for the journey; they set out, they arrive, and chuse their retreat in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal. Fatima (that was the name of the beauty) asked and obtained, without difficulty, a coach to take the air. L'Etang was surprized at the number of friends he found in this good city. These friends had never seen him, but his merit attracted them in crowds. Fatima received none but L'Etang's company, and he was always very sure of his friends and of her. This charming woman, had, however, one weakness; she believed in dreams. One night she had had one, which could not, she said, be effaced from her memory. L'Etang wanted to know this dream which engaged her attention so seriously.

'I dreamed,'

'I dreamed,' ſaid ſhe, 'that I was in a delicious apartment. In it was a damaſk bed of three different colours, with tapeſtry and ſephas ſuited to this ſuperb bed; pannels dazzling with gold, poliſhed cabinets, porcelaine of Japan, China monkies, the prettieſt in the world: but all this was nothing. A toilette was ready ſet out; I drew near to it; what did I ſee? My heart beats at it: a caſket of diamonds; and what diamonds! the moſt beautiful aigrette, the fineſt ear-rings, the handſomeſt eſclavage, and a river without end. I am ſure, Sir, ſomething very extraordinary will happen to me. This dream has affected me very ſtrongly, and my dreams never deceive me.'

It was in vain that M. De l'Etang employed all his eloquence to perſuade her that dreams ſignified nothing; ſhe maintained that this dream did ſignify ſomething; and, at length, he feared leſt ſome of his rivals ſhould propoſe to realiſe it. He was under a neceſſity, therefore, of capitulating; and, except in ſome few circumſtances, reſolved to accompliſh it himſelf. We may eaſily judge, that this experiment did not cure her of dreaming; ſhe took a delight in it, and dreamed ſo often, that even the fortune of good Maſter Corée became hardly any thing more than a dream. M. De L'Etang's young wife, to whom this journey had not been very agreeable, demanded to be ſeparated from the fortunes of a huſband who abandoned her; and her portion, which he was obliged to reſtore, put him ſtill leſs at his eaſe.

Play is a reſource. L'Etang pretended to excel at piquet; his friends, who made up a common purſe, all betted for him, while one of them played againſt him. Every time that he threw out, 'Faith,' ſaid one of the betters, 'that is well played!'—'There is no playing better,' ſaid another. In ſhort, M. De l'Etang played the beſt in the world, but he never had the aces. While they inſenſibly ſtripped him, the faithful Fatima, who perceived his decline, dreamed one night that ſhe quitted him, and left him the next day; however, as it is mortifying

tifying to fall off, he piqued himself upon his honour, and would not abate any thing of his grandeur, so that in a few years he was ruined.

He was now at his last shifts, when the good lady his mother, who had not managed her own reserve better, wrote to him to desire some money. He returned her answer, that he was very sorry; but that, far from being able to send her any relief, he stood in need of it himself. The alarm was already spread among their creditors, and the question was, who should first seize the ruins of their fortune----'What have I done,' said the distracted mother; 'I have stripped myself of all for a son who has squandered every thing.'

In the mean time, what became of the unfortunate Jemmy?—Jemmy, with a good understanding, the best heart, the handsomest figure in the world, and his little venture, was happily arrived at St. Domingo. It is well known how easy a Frenchman of good morals, and a good person, finds it to establish himself in the isles. The name of Corée, his own good sense and prudence, soon acquired him the confidence of the inhabitants. With the assistances that were offered him, he purchased himself a settlement, cultivated it, and rendered it flourishing; trade, which was then very brisk, enriched him in a short time, and in the space of five years he was become the object of the jealousy of the handsomest and richest widows and and damsels of the colony. But, alas! his fellow-collegian, who till that time had given him none but the most satisfactory news, now sent him word that his brother was ruined, and that his mother abandoned by every body, was driven to the most dreadful extremities. This fatal letter was bedewed with tears. 'Ah, my poor mother,' cried he, 'I will fly to your relief.' He would not trust his charge to any body. Accident, infidelity, neglect, or delay, might deprive her of the assistance sent by her son, and leave her to perish in indigence and despair. 'Nothing ought to detain a son,' said he to himself, when the honour and life of a mother are at stake.'

With these sentiments Corée was only employed in the care of rendering his riches portable. He sold all his possessions, and this sacrifice cost him nothing; but he could not but feel some regret for a more precious treasure which he left in America. Lucella, the young widow of an old colonist, who had left her immense riches, had cast upon Corée one of those looks which seem to penetrate to the bottom of the soul, and to unravel its character; one of those looks which decide the opinion, determine the inclination, and the sudden and confused effect of which is generally taken for a sympathetic emotion. She had imagined she saw in this young man every thing that could render a virtuous and sensible woman happy; and her love for him had not waited for reflection to give it birth and discover itself. Corée, on his side, had distinguished her among her rivals, as the most worthy of captivating the heart of a wise and virtuous man. Lucella, with a figure the most noble and interesting; an air the most animated, and yet the most modest; a brown complexion, but fresher than the rose; hair of the blackness of the ebony, and teeth of a dazzling whiteness and enamel; the stature and gait of one of Diana's nymphs; the smile and look of the companions of Venus; Lucella, with all these charms, was endowed with that greatness of spirit, that loftiness of temper, that justness in her ideas, that rectitude in her sentiments, which makes us say, though not with the greatest propriety, that such a woman has the soul of a man. It was not one of Lucella's principles to be ashamed of a virtuous inclination. Scarce had Corée confessed to her the choice of his heart, when he obtained from her, without evasion, a like confession, by way of reply; and their mutual inclination becoming more tender, in proportion as it became more considered, now wanted nothing but to be consecrated at the altar. Some disputes, concerning the inheritance of Lucella's husband, had retarded their happiness. These disputes were on the point of being settled, when the letter from

Corée

Corée's friend arrived, to tear him all at once from what he held dearest in the world except his mother. He repaired to the beauteous widow's, shewed her the letter from his friend, and asked her advice. 'I flatter myself,' said she, 'that you have no need of it. Convert your wealth into mercantile commodities, hasten to the relief of your mother, pay your respects to all your friends, and come back again: my fortune awaits you. If I die, my will shall secure it to you; if I live, instead of a will, you know what right you will have over it.' Corée, struck with gratitude and admiration, seized the hands of this generous woman, and bathed them with his tears; but as he was launching out in encomiums on her, 'Go,' said she to him, 'you are a child: entertain not the prejudices of Europe. The moment a woman does any thing tolerably handsome, they cry her up as a prodigy, as if Nature had not given us a soul. Should you, in my place, now, be much pleased to see me in astonishment, and viewin you, as a phenomenon, the pure emotion of a good heart?'---'Pardon me,' said Corée, 'I ought to have expected it? but your principles, your sentiments, the ease, the simplicity of your virtues, enchant me: I admire them without being amazed at them.'---'Go, my dear,' said she to him, saluting him; 'I am thine, such as God has made me. Do your duty, and return as soon as possible.'

He embarks, and with him he embarks all his fortune. The passage was pretty favourable till they came towards the Canaries; but there, their vessel, pursued by a corsair from Morocco, was obliged to seek for safety in its sails. The corsair which chased them was on the point of joining them; and the captain, terrified at the danger of being boarded, was going to strike to the pirate. 'Oh, my dear mother!' cried Corée, embracing the casket in which were contained all his hopes, and then tearing his hair with grief and rage. 'No,' said he, 'this barbarous African shall have my heart first.' Then addressing himself to the

captain, the crew, and the affrighted paſſengers, 'What! my friends,' ſaid he, 'ſhall we ſurrender ourſelves like cowards? Shall we ſuffer this robber to carry us to Morocco, loaded with irons; and to ſell us like beaſts? Are we diſarmed? Are the people on board the enemy's ſhip invulnerable; or are they braver than we? They want to board us; let them! what then? we ſhall have them the nearer.' His courage reanimated their ſpirits; and the captain, embracing him, extolled him for having ſet the example. Every thing is now got ready for defence; the corſair boards them; the veſſels daſh againſt each other: death flies on both ſides. In a ſhort time the two ſhips are covered with a cloud of ſmoke and fire. The cannonade ceaſes; day-light appears, and the ſword ſingles out its victims. Corée, ſabre in hand, made a dreadful ſlaughter. The moment he ſaw an African throw himſelf on board, he ran up to him, and cleaved him in two, crying out, 'Oh, my poor mother!' His fury was as that of the lioneſs defending her little ones; it was the laſt effort of nature in deſpair: and the gentleſt, the moſt ſenſible heart that ever exiſted, was now become the moſt violent and bloody. The captain diſcerned him every where, his eye flaſhing fire and his arm drenched in blood. 'This is not a mortal,' ſaid he to his companions, 'it is a god who fights for us!' His example kindled their courage. He finds himſelf at length hand to hand with the chief of the barbarians. 'My God!' cried he, 'have pity on my mother!' and at theſe words, with a back-handed blow, he let out the pirate's bowels. From this moment the victory was deciſive: the few who were left of the crew of the corſair begged their lives, and were put in irons. Corée's veſſel, with her booty, arrives at length on the coaſt of France; and this worthy ſon, without allowing himſelf one night's repoſe, repairs with his treaſure to his unhappy mother. He finds her on the brink of the grave, and in a ſtate more dreadful than death itſelf; ſtripped of all relief, and in the care of one man-ſervant, who diſguſted at ſuffering

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the indigence to which she was reduced, paid her, with regret, the last duties of an humiliating pity. The shame of her situation had induced her to forbid this servant from admitting any person, except the priest and the charitable physician who sometimes visited her. Corée asks to see her, and is refused.

'Tell my name,' said he to the servant. 'And what is your name?'—'Jemmy.' The servant approaches the bed. 'A stranger,' says he, 'asks to see you, Madam.'—'Alas! and who is this stranger?'—'He says that his name is Jemmy.' At this name her heart was so violently agitated, that she was near expiring. 'Ah! my son,' said she, with a faint voice, and lifting upon him her dying eye-lids. 'Ah! my son, at what a moment are you returned to see your mother! Your hand will soon close her eyes.' What was the grief of this pious and tender child, to see that mother whom he had left in the bosom of luxury and opulence, to see her now in a bed surrounded with rags, the very description of which would make the stomach rise, if it were permitted me to give it. 'Oh, my mother,' cried he, throwing himself upon this bed of woe: his sobs choaked his voice, and the rivers of tears with which he bathed the bosom of his expiring mother, were for a long time the only expression of his grief and love. 'Heaven punishes me,' replied she, 'for having loved too much an unnatural son; for having—' He interrupted her: 'All is atoned for, my dear mother,' said this virtuous young man; 'live: Fortune has loaded me with her favours; I come to pour them into the lap of Nature; it is for you that they are given me. Live! I have enough to make you love life.'—'Ah! my dear child, if I have any desire to live, it is to expiate my injustice; it is to love a son of whom I was not worthy; a son whom I have deprived of his inheritance.' At these words she covered her face, as unworthy to see the light. 'Ah, Madam!' cried he, pressing her in his arms, 'deprive me not of the sight of my mother. I am come across the seas to seek and relieve her!' At

this inſtant arrive the prieſt and phyſician. 'See there,' ſaid ſhe, 'my child, the only comforters that Heaven has left me: without their charity I ſhould now be no more.' Corée embraces them, burſting into tears. 'My friends!' ſays he to them; 'my benefactors! what do I not owe you! but for you I ſhould no longer have had a mother: go on, recal her to life. I am rich; I am come to make her happy. Redouble your cares, your conſolations, your aſſiſtances: reſtore her to me.' The phyſician prudently ſaw that this ſituation was too violent for the ſick lady. 'Go, Sir,' ſaid he to Corée; 'truſt in our zeal, and think of nothing but to provide her a convenient and wholeſome lodging; to which the lady ſhall this evening be removed.'

Change of air, proper nouriſhment, or rather the revolution created by joy, and the calm which ſucceeded it, inſenſibly reanimated the organs of life. A profound chagrin had been the ground of the diſeaſe; conſolation was the remedy. Corée learned that his unhappy brother had juſt periſhed in miſery. I draw a veil over the frightful picture of his death, which he had but too juſtly merited. They kept the knowledge of it from a feeling mother, who was as yet too weak to ſupport, without expiring, a new attack of grief. She learned it at laſt, when her health was better eſtabliſhed. All the wounds of her heart were now opened afreſh, and the maternal tears trickled from her eyes. But Heaven, while it took away from her a ſon unworthy of her tenderneſs, reſtored her one who had merited it by every ſenſible and touching tie of nature and virtue. He confided to her the deſires of his ſoul; which were to embrace at once his mother and his wife. Madam Corée ſeized with joy the opportunity of going over with her ſon to America. A city, filled with her follies and misfortunes, was to her an odious place of reſidence; and the moment in which ſhe embarked reſtored her a new life. Heaven, which protects piety, granted them a favourable paſſage. Lucella received the mother

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of her lover as she would have received her own. Hymen made of these lovers the happiest couple, and their days still roll on in that unalterable peace, in those pure and serene pleasures, which are the portion of virtue.

THE GOOD MOTHER.

THE care of a mother for her children is of all duties the most religiously observed. This universal sentiment governs all the passions; it prevails even over the love of life. It renders the fiercest of animals sensible and gentle, the most sluggish indefatigable, the most timid courageous to excess: not one of them loses sight of its little ones, till the moment that their care becomes useless. We see only among mankind the odious examples of a too early desertion.

In the midst of a world, where vice, ingenious to disguise itself, takes a thousand seducing forms; it is there, above all, that the most happy disposition requires to be enlightened without ceasing. The more shelves there are, and the more they are hidden, the more need has the frail bark of innocence and happiness of a prudent pilot. What would have been, for example, the fate of Miss Troëne, if Heaven had not made expressly for her a mother, who was one of ten thousand.

This respectable widow had devoted to the education of an only daughter the most agreeable years of her life. These were her reflections at the age of five and twenty.

'I have lost my husband,' said she; 'I have nothing but my daughter and myself: shall I live for myself, or shall I live for her? The world smiles upon me, and pleases me still: but if I give myself up to it, I abandon my daughter, and hazard her happiness and my own. Suppose that a life of noise and dissipation has all the charms that are attributed to it, how long may I be able to taste them? How few of my years, which are rolling on, have I to pass in the world? how many in solitude and the bosom of my child? The

world

world which invites me now, will dismiss me soon without pity; and if my daughter should forget herself, according to my example; if she is unhappy through my negligence, what will be my comfort? Let me in good time add grace to my retreat; let me render it as agreeable as it is honourable; and let me sacrifice to my daughter, who is every thing to me, that alien multitude, to whom in a short time I shall be nothing.'

From that moment this prudent mother became the friend and companion of her daughter. But to obtain her confidence was not the work of a day.

Emily (that was the young lady's name) had received from Nature a soul susceptible of the most lively impressions; and her mother, who studied it incessantly, experienced an uneasy joy on perceiving this sensibility, which does so much harm and so much good. 'Happy,' said she sometimes, 'happy the husband whom she will love, if he is deserving of her tenderness; if by esteem and friendship he knows how to render dear to her the cares she shall take to please him; but woe to him, if he humbles and shocks her: her wounded delicacy will be the torment of them both. I see that if a reproach escapes even me, a slight complaint which she has not merited, tears of grief trickle from her eyes; her drooping heart is dispirited. Nothing is easier than to sooth her, nothing easier than to frighten her.'

Temperate as was the life of Madam Du Treene, it was however conformable to her condition, and relative to the design she had of instructing herself at leisure in the choice of a husband worthy of Emily. A crowd of admirers, caught with the charms of the daughter, paid, according to custom, assiduous court to the mother. Of this number was the Marquis de Verglan, who, to his own misfortune, was endowed with a very handsome figure. His glass and the ladies had so often told him so, that he could not but believe it. He listened to them with pleasure, contemplated himself with delight, smiled upon himself, and was eternally

nally singing his own praiſes. Nothing could be objected to his politeneſs; but it was ſo cold, and ſo ſlight, in compariſon to the attentions with which he honoured himſelf, that one might clearly perceive that he poſſeſſed the firſt place in his own eſteem. He would have had, without thinking on them, all the graces of Nature: he ſpoiled them all by affecting them. In regard to underſtanding, he wanted only juſtneſs, or rather reflection. Nobody would have talked better than he, if he had known what he was going to ſay; but it was his firſt care to be of an opinion contrary to that of another. Right or wrong was all one to him; he was ſure of dazzling, of ſeducing, of perſuading to whatever he would. He knew by heart all that little toilette chit-chat, all thoſe pretty things which mean nothing. He was thoroughly verſed in all the love-anecdotes of the city and court: who was the gallant of yeſterday, who of to-day, who of the morrow, and how many times in the year ſuch and ſuch a lady had changed her admirers. He even knew a certain perſon who had refuſed to be upon the liſt, and who would have ſupplanted all his rivals, if he had choſen to give himſelf the trouble.

This young coxcomb was the ſon of an old friend of M. Du Troëne, and the widow ſpoke of him to her daughter with a kind of compaſſion. 'It is a pity,' ſaid ſhe, 'that they ſpoil this young man! He is of a good family, and might have ſucceeded.' He had already ſucceeded but too well in the heart of Emily. That which is ridiculous in the eyes of a mother, is not always ſo in the eyes of a daughter. Youth is indulgent to youth; and there are ſuch things as beautiful defects.

Verglan, on his ſide, thought Emily tolerably handſome, only a little too plain and ſimple; but that might be corrected. He took but very little care to pleaſe her; but when the firſt impreſſion is made, every thing contributes to ſink it deeper. The very diſſipation of this young fop was a new attraction to Emily,

as it threatened her with the danger of losing him; and nothing hastens, so much as jealousy, the progress of a growing love.

In giving an account of his life to Madam Du Troëne, Verglan represented himself (as to be sure he ought) the most desirable man in the world.

Madam Du Troëne dropped a hint concerning modesty: but he protested that nobody was less vain than himself; that he knew perfectly well that it was not for his own sake that they sought him; that his birth did a great deal, and that he owed the rest to his wit and figure, qualities which he had not given himself, and which he was far from being proud of.

The more pleasure Emily felt in seeing and hearing him, the more care she took to conceal it. A reproach from her mother would have touched her to the heart; and this delicate sensibility rendered her fearful to excess.

In the mean time, Emily's charms, with which Verglan was so faintly touched, had inspired the discreet and modest Belzors with the tenderest passion. A just way of thinking, and an upright heart, formed the basis of his character. His agreeable and open figure was still more ennobled by the high idea that was conceived of his soul; for we are naturally disposed to seek, and believe that we discover, in the features of a man, what we know to be in his heart.

Belzors, in whom nature had been directed to virtue from his infancy, enjoyed the inestimable advantage of being able to give himself up to it without precaution and constraint. Decency, honesty, candour, a frankness which gains confidence, together with a severity of manners which creates respect, had in him the free ease of habit. An enemy to vice, without pride; indulgent to follies, without contracting any; complying with innocent customs; incorruptible by bad examples; he swam upon the torrent of the world; beloved, respected, even by those to whom his life was a reproach, and to whom the public esteem delighted to oppose it, in order to humble their pride.

Madam

Madam Du Troëne, charmed with the character of this young man, had ſecretly pitched upon him as the moſt deſerving huſband ſhe could give her daughter. She was inexhauſtible in his commendations; and while Emily applauded with the modeſty of her age, Madam Du Troëne miſtook the ingenuous and agreeable air which her daughter aſſumed towards him: for, as the eſteem with which Belzors inſpired her was not mingled with any ſentiment that ſhe needed to conceal, Emily was quite at her eaſe.

It were to be wiſhed, that ſhe had been as free and as tranquil with the dangerous Verglan; though the painful ſituation in which his preſence caſt her, had in good meaſure the appearance of ſpleen. If Madam Du Troëne ſpoke in commendation of him, Emily looked down, and kept ſilence. 'You do not ſeem to me, daughter,' ſaid Madam Du Troëne, 'to reliſh thoſe light and ſhining graces, on which the world lays ſo much ſtreſs.'—'I know nothing at all of them!' ſaid Emily, bluſhing. The good mother concealed her joy: ſhe thought ſhe ſaw the plain and modeſt virtues of Belzors triumphing in Emily's heart over the little brilliant vices of Verglan, and thoſe of his character; till an accident, ſlight in appearance, but ſtriking to an attentive and diſcerning mother, drew her out of this illuſion.

One of Emily's accompliſhments was drawing. She had choſen the delineation of flowers, as the moſt ſuitable to her age: for what can be more natural than to ſee a roſe blow beneath the hand of beauty; Verglan, by a taſte ſomewhat reſembling hers, was paſſionately fond of flowers; and he never appeared without a noſegay, the prettieſt in the world.

One day Madam Du Troëne's eyes were thrown caſually on Verglan's noſegay. The day after, ſhe perceived that Emily, perhaps without thinking of it, was drawing the flowers of it. It was natural enough, that the flowers ſhe had ſeen the evening before ſhould be ſtill preſent to her imagination, and come, as it were,

were, of their own accord, to offer themſelves to her pencil; but that which was not quite ſo natural, was the air of enthuſiaſm which ſhe betrayed in drawing them. Her eyes ſparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth ſmiled amorouſly at every ſtroke of the pencil, and a colour more animated than that of the flowers which ſhe was endeavouring to delineate, diffuſed itſelf over her cheeks. 'Are you pleaſed with your execution?' ſaid the mother to her careleſsly. 'It is impoſſible,' replied Emily, 'to repreſent nature well, when we have her not before our eyes.' It was certain, however, that ſhe had never copied her more faithfully.

Some few days after, Verglan came again with new flowers. Madam Du Troëne, without any particularity, obſerved them, one after another; and, in Emily's next leſſon, Verglan's noſegay was drawn again. The good mother continued her obſervations, and every trial confirming her ſuſpicions, redoubled her uneaſineſs. 'After all,' ſaid ſhe, 'I am alarmed, perhaps, at ſomewhat very innocent. Let me ſee, however, if ſhe has any meaning in all this.'

The ſtudies and accompliſhments of Emily were a ſecret to her mother's acquaintance. As ſhe had only intended to make her reliſh ſolitude, and preſerve her imagination from the dangers of meditation, and the tedioufneſs of idleneſs, Madam Du Troëne derived neither to herſelf nor daughter the leaſt vanity from thoſe talents which ſhe had cultivated with ſo much care. But one day when they were alone with Belzors, and the converſation turned on the great advantage of employing and amuſing one's ſelf; 'My daughter,' ſaid Madam Du Troëne, 'has created herſelf an amuſement, which ſhe reliſhes more and more. I want to have you ſee ſome of her deſigns.' Emily opened her port-folio; and Belzors, charmed, was never weary of admiration of her performances. 'How ſoft and pure,' ſaid he, 'are the pleaſures of innocence! In vain does vice torment itſelf, it will never taſte the like.

like. Is it not true, Madam, that the hour of labour passes away quick? And yet you have fixed it: see it here retraced and produced anew to your eyes. Time is never lost but to the idle.' Madam Du Troëne listened with a secret complacency. Emily thought his observations very sensible, but was not in the least touched by them.

Some days after, Verglan came to see them. 'Do you know, Sir,' says Madam Du Troëne, 'that my daughter has received the highest encomiums from Belzors on her talent for drawing? I want your opinion of it.' Emily, in confusion, blushed, hesitated, said that she had nothing finished by her, and beseeched her mother to wait till she should have some piece fit to be seen. She did not doubt but her mother was laying a snare for her. 'Since there is a mystery in this, there is also a design,' said this discerning mother within herself: 'she is afraid that Verglan may know his own flowers, and penetrate into the secret motive of the pleasure she has taken in drawing them. My daughter loves this young fop; my fears were but too well founded.'

Madam Du Troëne, solicited on all sides, excused herself still on account of Emily's youth, and the resolution she had taken not to constrain her in her choice. However, this choice alarmed her. 'My daughter,' said she, 'is going to prefer Verglan; there is, at least, room to think so: and this young man has every quality that can render a woman unhappy. If I declare my will to Emily, if I only suffer her to have the slightest perception of it, she will make it a law to subscribe to it without murmuring; she will marry a man whom she does not love, and the remembrance of the man she loves will haunt her even in the arms of another. I know her soul; she will become the victim of her duty. But shall I ordain this grievous sacrifice? God forbid! No; let her own inclination decide it; but I may direct her inclination by enlightening it, and that is the only lawful use of the authority that is

given me. I am certain of the goodneſs of heart, of the juſtneſs of my daughter's ſentiments; let me ſupply, by the light natural to my years, the inexperience of hers; let her ſee by her mother's eyes, and fancy, if poſſible, that ſhe conſults only her own inclination.'

Every time that Verglan and Belzors met together at Madam Du Troëne's, ſhe turned the converſation on the manners, cuſtoms, and maxims of the world. She encouraged contradiction; and without taking any ſide, gave their diſpoſitions room to diſplay themſelves. Thoſe little adventures with which ſociety abounds, and which entertain the idle curioſity of the circles at Paris, moſt commonly furniſhed matter for their reflections. Verglan, light, deciſive, and lively, was conſtantly on the ſide of the faſhion. Belzors, in a modeſter tone, conſtantly defended the cauſe of morality with a noble freedom.

The arrangement of Count D'Auberive with his lady was at that time the town-talk. It was ſaid, that after a pretty briſk quarrel, and bitter complaints on both ſides, on the ſubject of their mutual infidelity, they agreed, that they owed each other nothing; that they had concluded by laughing at the folly of being jealous without loving; that D'Auberive had conſented to ſee the Chevalier De Clange make love to his wife; and that ſhe had promiſed, on her ſide, to receive with the greateſt politeneſs the Marchioneſs De Talbe, to whom D'Auberive paid his court; that the peace had been ratified by a ſupper, and that two couple of lovers never maintained a better underſtanding with each other.

At this recital Verglan cried out, that nothing was wiſer. 'They talk of the good old times,' ſaid he; 'let them produce an inſtance of the manners of our forefathers comparable to this. Formerly an inſtance of infidelity ſet a family in flames; they ſhut up, they beat their wives. If the huſband made uſe of the liberty that was reſerved to him, his ſad and faithful half was obliged to put up with the injury, and veil her

her moans at home, as in an obſcure priſon. If ſhe imitated her wandering huſband, it was with terrible riſks. Nothing leſs than her lover's and her own life were at ſtake. They had the folly to attach the honour of the man to the virtue of his wife; and the huſband, who was not the leſs a fine gentleman for intriguing elſewhere himſelf, became the ridiculous object of public contempt on the firſt falſe ſtep of his lady. Upon honour, I do not conceive how, in theſe barbarous ages, they had the courage to marry. The bands of Hymen were then downright chains. Now-a-days, complaiſance, freedom, peace, reign in the boſom of families. If the married pair love one another, ſo much the better; they live together, they are happy. If they ceaſe to love, they tell it like well-bred perſons, and diſpenſe with each other's promiſe of fidelity. They give over being lovers, and become friends. Theſe are what I call ſocial manners, free and eaſy. This makes one long to be married.'—'You find it then quite eaſy,' ſaid Madam Du Troëne, 'for a wife to be the confidante of her huſband, and for him to be the complaiſant friend of his wife?'—'To be ſure; provided it be mutual. Is it not juſt to grant our confidence to thoſe who honour us with theirs, and to render each other by turns the offices of friendſhip? Can a man have a better friend than his wife, or the wife a ſurer and more intimate friend than her huſband? With whom ſhall we be free, if not with the perſon, who, from ſituation is one with us? And when unfortunately we no longer find any pleaſure at home, what can be better than to ſeek it abroad, to return each at their own time, without jealouſy and reſtraint?'

'Nothing is more pleaſant,' ſaid Belzors, 'than this new method; but you and I have a great deal of ground to go over before we can reliſh it. In the firſt place, we muſt give up all love for ourſelves, wife, and children; we muſt be able to accuſtom ourſelves to conſider, without repugnance, as being one half of one's ſelf, ſomebody whom we deſpiſe ſufficiently, to

deliver up——' 'Well,' replied Verglan, 'what but mere prejudices are all these scruples! what hinders us from esteeming one another, if it be settled that there is no longer any scandal in it?'—'When that is settled,' said Belzors, 'all the ties of society are broken. The inviolable sanctity of the marriage-tie forms the sanctity of all the ties of nature. Remember, my friend, that if there are no longer any sacred duties for the parents, there will no longer be any for the children. All these conditions depend on each other. Family quarrels were violent in the days of our fathers; but the mass of morals was sound, and the wound soon closed up again. At present it is a languishing body, wasting by a slow poison. On the other side, my dear Verglan, we have not now the idea of those pure and intimate pleasures which the married pair felt amidst their family; nor of that union which formed the delight of their youth, and the consolation of their advanced years. Now-a-days, when a mother is afflicted at the dissipations of her son, or a father overwhelmed with any reverse of fortune, are they a refuge or support to each other? They are obliged to unbosom their grief abroad; and the consolation of strangers is very weak indeed.'

'You talk like an oracle, my sage Belzors,' said Verglan; 'but who has told you that two married persons would not do best to love, and to be faithful to each other all their lives? I am only, if unfortunately this mutual liking should cease, for their consoling each other, and settling matters amicably, without forbidding those who may have loved reciprocally from the times of our fathers, to love on still, if their hearts incline them to it.'—'Aye,' said Madam Du Tresne, 'what is there to hinder them?'——'What is there to hinder them, Madam?' replied Belzors. 'Custom, example, the *bon ton*, the facility of living, without shame according to their liking. Verglan will agree, that the life led in the world is agreeable: and change is naturally pleasing: our very weakness invites

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us to it. Who, then, will reſiſt this inclination, if they take off the curb of morality?'----'I! I take off nothing,' ſaid Verglan, 'but I am for every body's living according to their liking; and I very much approve of the courſe that D'Auberive and his lady have taken to overlook on both ſides what are called injuries. If they are ſatisfied, every body elſe ought to be ſo too.'

As he finiſhed theſe laſt words, a ſervant announced the Marquis D'Auberive. 'Ah, Marquis! you come very opportunely,' ſaid Verglan: 'tell us, pry'thee, if your ſtory be true. They ſay that your lady forgives you your rhubarb, and that you paſs by her ſena.'----'Pſha! what ſtuff!' ſaid D'Auberive to him careleſsly.---'I have maintained that nothing was more reaſonable; but Belzors there condemns you without appeal.'---'Why ſo, pray? Would not he have done as much? My wife is young and handſome: a coquette; that is quite evident. At the bottom, however, I believe her to be very virtuous; but though ſhe ſhould err a little, juſtice ought to take place. I conceive, however, that a perſon more jealous than myſelf may condemn me; but what aſtoniſhes me is, that Belzors ſhould be the firſt. I have hitherto received nothing but commendations. Nothing is more natural than my proceeding; and all the world felicitate me upon it as on ſomething marvellous. It looks as if they did not think I had underſtanding enough to take a reaſonable ſtep. Upon honour I am quite confounded at the compliments I receive on it. As to the rigid gentlemen I honour them ſufficiently; but I live for myſelf. Let every one do as much, and the happieſt will always be the wiſeſt.'---'Well, how is the marchioneſs!' ſaid Madam de Troëne to him, with a deſign of changing the ſubject. 'Wonderfully well, Madam; we ſupped together laſt night, and I never ſaw her in ſuch good-humour.'----'I will lay a wager,' ſays Verglan, 'that you will take her again ſome day.'---'Faith, very poſſible: for

but yesterday when we got up from table, I caught myself saying tender things to her.'

This first experiment made the most lively impression on Emily's understanding. Her mother, who perceived it, gave free course to her reflections; but in order to put her into the way, 'It is wonderful,' said she, 'how much opinions depend upon tempers. Here, now, these two young men, educated with the same care, both endued with the same principles of honesty and virtue; observe, however, how they differ from one another! and each of them believes he is in the right.' Emily's heart did its best to excuse in Verglan the fault of having defended the manners of the age. 'With what levity,' said she, 'do they treat modesty and fidelity! how they sport with what is most sacred in nature! and Verglan gives into these irregularities! Why has he not the soul of Belzors!'

Some time after, Emily and her mother being at the play, Belzors and Verglan presented themselves at their box, and Madam Du Troëne invited them both to take their seats there. The play was Ines*. The scene of the children gave Verglan an opportunity of uttering some *bon mots*, which he put off as excellent criticisms. Belzors, without listening to him, melted into tears, and took no pains to conceal it. His rival rallied him on his weakness. 'What,' said he to him, 'do children make you cry?'---'And what would you have me be affected by?' said Belzors. 'Yes, I confess, I never hear, without much emotion, the tender names of father and mother; the pathos of Nature penetrates me; even the most touching love interests me, moves me much less.' Ines was followed by Nanine†: and when they came to the catastrophe, 'Oh, said Verglan, 'that is carrying the jest too far: let Dolban love this little wench, with all my heart; but to marry her, I think, is rather too much.'---'It is a folly,

* Ines de Castro, from which Mallet's Elvira is taken.
† A petit piece of Voltaire, the story somewhat like Pamela.

perhaps,'

perhaps,' replied Belzors; 'but I feel myself capable of it: when virtue and beauty are united, I cannot answer for my discretion.' Not one of their observations escaped Madam Du Troëne; Emily, still more attentive, blushed at the advantage which Belzors had over his rival. After the play, they saw the Chevalier D'Oleet pass by in weepers. 'What is the meaning of this, Chevalier?' said Verglan to him with an air of gaiety. 'An old uncle,' replies D'Oleet, 'who has been so kind as to leave me ten thousand crowns a year.'—'Ten thousand crowns! I give you joy. This uncle was a brave old fellow. Ten thousand crowns! charming.' Belzors, embracing him in his turn, said to him, 'Chevalier, I condole with you on his death: I know that you think too justly to conceive any unnatural joy on the occasion.'—'He has long been as a father to me,' said the Chevalier, confounded at the pleasant air he had assumed; 'but he was so old you know!'—'That is a cause for patience,' replied Belzors mildly, 'but not for consolation. A good relation is the best of friends; and the riches he has left you are not equal to such a one.'—'An old uncle is but a dull kind of friend,' said Verglan, 'and it is a rule that every one must live in his turn. Young folks would be much to be pitied if old fellows were immortal.' Belzors changed the discourse, in order to spare Verglan an humiliating reply. At every stroke of this contrast, Emily's heart was cruelly torn. Madam Du Troëne saw with joy the respectful and sensible air she assumed towards Belzors, and the cold and chagrined air with which she replied to Verglan's compliments; but, in order to bring about another trial, she invited them both to supper.

They played at cards. Verglan and Belzors had a *tête à tête* at trictrac. Verglan liked nothing but high play; Belzors would play for as little as you please. The party was interesting. Mademoiselle Du Troëne was of the number of lookers-on; and the Good Mother, in making her own party, kept an eye upon

upon her daughter, to read in her countenance what paſſed in her heart. Fortune favoured Belzors; Emily, diſpleaſed as ſhe was with Verglan, had too good a heart not to ſuffer, on ſeeing him engaged in a ſerious loſs. The young coxcomb could no longer contain himſelf; he grew angry, he doubled the game, and, before ſupper, he was on the point of playing upon honour. Ill-humour had ſeized him: he did his utmoſt to be merry; but the alteration of his countenance baniſhed all joy. He perceived himſelf that they pitied him, and that they did not laugh at ſome pleaſantries he endeavoured to throw out; he was humbled, and indignation would have taken place, if they had not quitted the table. Belzors, whom neither his own good luck, nor the chagrin of his rival had moved, was eaſy and modeſt, according to cuſtom. They ſat down again to play. Madam Du Troëne, who had finiſhed her own party, came to be preſent at this, extremely uneaſy at the iſſue it might have, but deſirous that it might make its impreſſion on the ſoul of Emily. The ſucceſs exceeded her expectation: Verglan loſt more than he had to pay; his trembling hand and pale countenance expreſſed the trouble he wanted to conceal. Belzors, with an unbounded complaiſance, gave him as many opportunities of revenging himſelf as he thought proper; and when, by doubling the game, he had ſuffered Verglan to get off for a reaſonable ſum, 'If you pleaſe,' ſaid he, 'we will ſtop here: I think I may fairly win as much as I was reſolved to loſe.' So much moderation and diſcretion excited a murmur of applauſe in the company. Verglan alone appeared inſenſible to it, and ſaid, on getting up with an air of diſdain, 'It was not worth the trouble of playing ſo long for.'

Emily did not ſleep that night, ſo violently was her ſoul agitated with what ſhe had juſt ſeen and heard. 'What a difference!' ſaid ſhe, 'and by what caprice is it that I muſt ſigh at having been enlightened? Ought not the ſeduction to ceaſe, as ſoon as we perceive that we are ſeduced? I admire one, and love the other.

other. What is this misunderstanding between the heart and the reason, which makes us still hold dear that which we cease to esteem?'

In the morning she appeared according to custom, at her mother's levee. 'You seem strangely altered,' said Madam Du Troëne. 'Yes, Madam, I am very much so.'—'What, have not you slept well?'—'Very little,' said she with a sigh. 'You must endeavour, however, to look handsome; for I am going to take you this morning to the Thuilleries, where all Paris is to be assembled. I used to lament that the finest garden in the world was abandoned: I am very glad it is come into fashion again.'

Verglan failed not to repair there, and Madam Du Troëne retained him about her. The view of this walk had the air of enchantment. A thousand beauties, in all the gaiety of dress, were seated round the bason, whose sides are decorated by sculpture. The superb walk which this basen crowns, was filled with young nymphs; who, by their charms and accomplishments, attracted the desires after their steps. Verglan knew them all, and smiled upon them, following them with his eyes. 'This here,' said he, 'is Fatime. Nothing is more tender and sensible; she lives like an angel with Cleon; he has given her twenty thousand crowns in six months; they love like two turtles. That is the celebrated Corinna; her house is the temple of luxury; her suppers the most brilliant in Paris; she does the honours of them with a grace that enchants us. Do you see that fair beauty who looks so modest, and whose glances wander languishingly on every side? She has three lovers, each of whom flatters himself, that he alone is the happy man. It is a pleasure to see her amidst her adorers, distributing slight favors to each, and persuading each in their turn that she jilts their rivals. She is a model of coquetry, and nobody deceives a set of lovers with so much address and sprightliness. She will go a great way, on my word, and I have told her so.'—'You are in her confidence, then?' said Madam

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Du Troëne. 'Oh, yes; they do not diſſemble with me: they know me; they know very well that they cannot impoſe upon me.'---'And you, Belzors,' ſaid Madam Du Troëne to the ſenſible and virtuous young man, who had joined, 'are you initiated in theſe myſteries?'---'No, Madam: I can believe that all this is very amuſing; but the charm makes the danger.' Madam Du Troëne obſerved that the modeſt women received, with a cold and reſerved air, the ſmiling and familiar ſalute of Verglan, while they returned with an air of eſteem and friendſhip the reſpectful ſalutation of Belzors. She rallied Verglan on this diſtinction, in order to make Emily perceive it. 'It is true,' ſaid he, 'Madam, that they behave rigidly to me in public; but, *tête à tête*, they make me amends for it.'

On her return home with them, ſhe received a viſit from Eleonora, a young widow of uncommon beauty. Eleonora ſpoke of the misfortune ſhe had ſuſtained in loſing a deſerving huſband; ſhe ſpoke of it with ſo much ſenſibility, candour, and grace, that Madam Du Troëne, Emily, and Belzors, liſtened to her with tears in their eyes. 'To a young, handſome woman,' ſaid Verglan, in a gay tone, 'a huſband is a trifling loſs, and eaſy to be repaired.'---'Not to me, Sir,' replied the tender and modeſt Eleonora: 'a huſband who honoured a wife of my age with his eſteem and confidence, and whoſe delicate love never was tainted either by fears or jealouſy, or the negligences of habitude, is not one of thoſe whom we can eaſily replace.'---'He had, I take it for granted, a fine perſon?' ſaid Verglan. 'No, Sir, but his ſoul was beautiful.'---'A beautiful ſoul!' replied Verglan with a diſdainful air: 'a beautiful ſoul! He was young at leaſt?'----'Not at all; he was of an age wherein we are affected when we have any occaſion to be ſo.'----'But if he was neither young nor handſome, I do not ſee why you ſhould afflict yourſelf. Confidence, eſteem, handſome treatment, attend of courſe an amiable woman; nothing of that kind could have been wanting to you. Believe me, Madam, the eſſential

eſſential point is to ſuit yourſelf, as to age and figure; to unite the Graces with the Loves; in one word, to marry a handſome man, or to preſerve your liberty.'---'Your advice is very gallant,' replied Eleonora; 'but unfortunately it is miſplaced.'---'There is a pretty prude!' ſaid Verglan, as ſoon as ſhe was gone. 'Prudery, Sir;' replied Madam Du Troëne, 'is an exaggerated copy of prudence and reaſon; and I ſee nothing in Eleonora but what is plain and natural.'---'For my part,' ſaid Belzors, 'I think her as reſpectable as ſhe is handſome.'---'Reſpect her, Sir! reſpect her!' reſumed Verglan, with vivacity, 'who hinders you? She is the only perſon can take it ill.'----'Do you know,' interrupted Madam Du Troëne, 'who could conſole Eleonora? Such a man as Belzors; and if I were the confidante that he conſulted to his choice, I would perſuade him to think of her.'---'You do me great honour, Madam,' ſaid Belzors, colouring, 'but Eleonora deſerves a heart that is diſengaged, and unhappily mine is not ſo.' At theſe words he took his leave, quite confounded with the diſmiſſion which he thought he had received. 'For, in ſhort,' ſaid he, 'to invite me herſelf to pay my addreſſes to Eleonora, is not that giving me notice to renounce Emily? Alas! how little my heart is known to her!' Verglan, who took it in the ſame ſenſe, affected to pity his rival. He ſpoke of him as one of the honeſteſt men in the world. 'It is a pity he is ſo gloomy,' ſaid he, with a tone of compaſſion; 'that is all they get by their virtue; they grow tireſome, and are diſmiſſed.' Madam Du Troëne, without explaining herſelf, aſſured him, that ſhe had not intended ſaying any thing diſobliging to a man for whom ſhe had a moſt particular eſteem and regard. In the mean time Emily ſat with downcaſt eyes, and her bluſhes betrayed the agitation of her ſoul. Verglan, not doubting but this confuſion was an emotion of joy, retired in triumph, and the day following wrote her a billet conceived in theſe terms.

'You

'You must have thought me very romantic, beautiful Emily, in having so long spoke to you only by my eyes! Do not accuse me of an unjust diffidence: I have read your heart, and if I had only that to consult, I should be very sure of its answer. But you depend on a mother, and mothers have their caprices. Happily your mother loves you, and her affection has enlightened her choice. The dismission of Belzor apprizes me that she has determined; but your consent ought to precede hers: I wait it with the most tender impatience, and the most violent love.'

Emily opened this billet without knowing whence it came: she was as much offended as surprised at it, and without hesitation communicated it to her mother. 'I take very kindly of you,' said Madam Du Troene, 'this mark of your friendship; but I owe you in my turn confidence for confidence. Belzors has writ to me; read his letter.' Emily obeyed and read.

'Madam,

I honour the virtue, I admire the beauty, I do justice to Eleonora; but has Heaven favoured only her? And after having adored in your image every thing that Heaven has made most affecting, do you think me in a condition to follow the counsel which you have given me? I will not say to you how cruel it is; my respect stifles my complaints. If I have not the name, I have at least the sentiments of your son, and that character cannot be effaced.'

Emily could not finish without the most lively emotion. Her mother pretended not to perceive it, and said to her, 'There now, child, *I* indeed must answer these two rivals; but *you* must dictate my answers,'---'I, Madam!'---'Who else? Is it I whom they demand in marriage? Is it my heart that I am to consult?'---'Ah, Madam! is not your will mine? Have not you the right to dispose of me?'—'You are very good, my dear; but as your own happiness is concerned, it is just that you should decide on it. These young men are both well born; their conditions and fortunes nearly

the

the ſame; ſee which comes up neareſt to the idea you have formed of a good huſband. Let us keep him, and diſmiſs the other.' Emily ſtruck, kiſſed her mother's hands, and bathed them with her tears. 'Compleat your goodneſs,' ſaid ſhe to her, 'by enlightning me in my choice: the more important it is, the more need have I for your advice to determine it. The huſband whom my mother ſhall chuſe for me ſhall be dear to me; my heart dares promiſe that.'---'No, my dear, there is no loving out of mere duty, and you know better than myſelf the man who is likely to make you happy. If you are not ſo, I will conſole you: I would readily ſhare your ſorrows, but I would not be the cauſe of them. Come, I take pen in hand; I am going to write, you need but to dictate.' Imagine the trouble, the confuſion, the moving ſituation of Emily. Trembling by the ſide of this tender mother, one hand on her eyes and the other on her heart, ſhe eſſayed in vain to obey her; her voice expired on her lips. 'Well,' ſaid the good mother, 'to which of the two are we to return an anſwer? Make an end, or I ſhall grow impatient.'---'To Verglan,' ſaid Emily, with a feeble and faultering voice. 'To Verglan; be it ſo: what ſhall I ſay to him?'

"It is impoſſible, Sir, that a man, ſo neceſſary to ſociety as yourſelf, ſhould renounce it to live in the boſom of his family. My Emily has not qualities ſufficient to indemnify you for the ſacrifices which ſhe would require. Continue to embelliſh the world; for it is for that you are made."---'Is this all?'---'Yes, Madam.'---'And to Belzors; what ſhall we ſay to him?' Emily continued to dictate with ſomewhat more confidence. "To deem you worthy of a woman as virtuous as handſome, was not, Sir, to forbid you to make a choice which intereſts me as much as it does me honour; it was even to encourage you. Your modeſty has reverſed things, and you have been unjuſt both to yourſelf and to me. Come, and learn to judge better of the intentions of a Good Mother. I diſpoſe of the heart

of my daughter, and I eſteem none in the world more than yourſelf."

'Come hither, my child, that I may embrace you,' cried Madam Du Troëne; 'you fulfil the wiſhes of your mother, and you could not have ſaid better, though you had conſulted my heart.'

Belzors haſtened to them, quite beſide himſelf with joy. Never was marriage more applauded, more fortunate. Belzors' affection was divided between Emily and her mother; and it was a moot point among the world, which of the two he loved moſt.

THE SHEPHERDESS OF THE ALPS.

IN the mountains of Savoy, not far from the road, from Briançon to Modena, is a ſolitary valley, the ſight of which inſpires travellers with a pleaſing melancholy. Three little hills in form of an amphitheatre, on which are ſcattered, at a great diſtance from each other, ſome ſhepherds huts, torrents that fall from the mountains, clumps of trees here and there, paſtures always green, form the ornament of this rural place.

The marchioneſs of Fonroſe was returning from France to Italy with her huſband. The axle-tree of their carriage broke, and as the day was on the decline, they were obliged to ſeek in this valley for ſome ſhelter to paſs the night. As they advanced towards one of the huts, they ſaw a flock going that way, conducted by a ſhepherdeſs whoſe gait aſtoniſhed them. They drew nearer, and heard a heavenly voice, whoſe plaintive and moving accents made the echoes groan.

'How the ſetting ſun ſtill glitters with a gentle light! It is thus,' ſaid ſhe, 'that at the end of a painful race, the exhauſted ſoul departs to grow young again in the pure ſource of immortality. But, alas! how diſtant is the period, and how long is life!' On ſaying theſe words, the ſhepherdeſs retired, with her head inclined; but the negligence of her attitude ſeemed to give ſtill more nobleneſs and majeſty to her perſon and deportment.

Struck

Struck with what they ſaw, and ſtill more with what they had juſt heard, the Marquis and Marchioneſs of Fonroſe redoubled their pace, in order to overtake the ſhepherdeſs whom they admired. But what was their ſurprize, when under the plaineſt head dreſs, beneath the moſt humble garb, they ſaw all the graces, all the beauties united! 'Child,' ſaid the marchioneſs to her, on ſeeing that ſhe avoided them, 'fear nothing; we are travellers, whom an accident obliges to ſeek ſhelter in theſe huts till the day: will you be ſo good as to be our guide?'—'I pity you, Madam,' ſaid the ſhepherdeſs to her, looking down and bluſhing; 'theſe huts are inhabited by poor wretches, and you will be very ill lodged.'—'You lodge there, without doubt, yourſelf,' replied the Marchioneſs; 'and I can eaſily endure, for one night, the inconveniences which you ſuffer always.'—'I am formed for that,' ſaid the ſhepherdeſs, with a modeſty that charmed them. 'No, ſurely,' ſaid the Marquis de-Fonroſe, who could no longer diſſemble the emotion ſhe had cauſed in him; 'no, you are not formed to ſuffer; and Fortune is very unjuſt! Is it poſſible, lovely damſel, that ſo many charms are buried in this deſart, under that habit?'—'Fortune, Sir!' replied Adelaïde, (this was the name of the ſhepherdeſs) 'Fortune is not cruel, but when ſhe takes from us that which ſhe has given us. My condition has its pleaſures for one who knows no other; and cuſtom creates wants for you, which ſhepherds do not know.'—'That may be,' ſaid the Marquis, 'with reſpect to thoſe whom Heaven has placed from their birth in this obſcure condition; but you, aſtoniſhing damſel, you whom I admire, you who enchant me, you were never born what you now are! that air, that gait, that voice, that language, every thing betrays you. But two words which you have juſt now ſpoken, proclaim a cultivated underſtanding, a noble ſoul. Proceed; teach us what misfortune can have reduced you to this ſtrange abaſement.'—'For a man in misfortune,'

tune,' replied Adelaide, 'there are a thousand ways to extricate himself; for a woman, you know, there is no other honeſt reſource than ſervitude, and the choice of maſters. They do well, in my opinion, who prefer the good. You are now going to ſee mine; you will be charmed with the innocence of their lives, the candour, the ſimplicity, the probity of their manners.'

While ſhe talked thus, they arrived at the hut. It was ſeparated by a partition from the fold into which this incognita drove her ſheep, telling them over with the moſt ſerious attention, and without deigning to take any farther notice of the travellers, who contemplated her. An old man and his wife, ſuch as Philemon and Baucis are deſcribed to us, came forth to meet their gueſts, with that village-honeſty which recals the golden age to our minds. 'We have nothing to offer you,' ſaid the good woman, 'but freſh ſtraw for a bed; milk, fruit, and rye-bread for your food; but the little that Heaven gives us, we will moſt heartily ſhare with you.' The travellers on entering the hut, were ſurprized at the air of regularity which every thing breathed there. The table was one ſingle plank of walnut-tree highly poliſhed: they ſaw themſelves in the enamel of the earthen veſſels deſigned for their milk. Every thing preſented the image of cheerful poverty, and of the firſt wants of Nature agreeably ſatisfied. 'It is our dear daughter,' ſaid the good woman, 'who takes upon her the management of our houſe. In the morning, before her flock ramble far into the country, and while they begin to graze round the houſe on the graſs covered with dew, ſhe waſhes, cleans, and ſets every thing in order, with a dexterity that charms us.'—'What!' ſaid the marchioneſs, 'is this ſhepherdeſs your daughter?'—'Ah, Madam, would to Heaven ſhe were!' cried the good old woman; it is my heart that calls her ſo, for I have a mother's love for her: but I am not ſo happy as to have borne her; we are not worthy to have given her birth.'—'Who is ſhe then? Whence came ſhe? and what misfortune has reduced her to ſuch a condition?'

dition?'—'All that is unknown to us. It is now four years since she came in the habit of a female peasant to offer herself to keep our flocks; we would have taken her for nothing, so much had her good look and pleasing manner won upon our hearts. We doubted her being born a villager; but our questions afflicted her, and we thought it our duty to abstain from them. This respect has but augmented in proportion as we have become better acquainted with her soul; but the more we would humble ourselves to her, the more she humbles herself to us. Never had daughter more attention for her father and mother, nor officiousness more tender. She cannot obey us, because we are far from commanding her; but it seems as if she saw through us, and every thing that we can wish is done, before we perceive that she thinks of it. She is an angel come down among us to comfort our old age.'—'And what is she doing now in the fold?' demanded the marchioness. 'Giving the flock fresh litter; drawing the milk from the ewes and she-goats. This milk, pressed out by her hand, seems to become the more delicate for it. I, who go and sell it in the town, cannot serve it fast enough. They think it delicious. 'The dear child employs herself, while she is watching the flock, in works of straw and osier, which are admired by all. Every thing becomes valuable beneath her fingers. You see, Madam,' continued the good old woman, 'you see here the image of an easy and quiet life: it is she that procures it to us. This heavenly daughter is never employed but to make us happy.'—'Is she happy herself?' demanded the Marquis De Fonrose. 'She endeavours to persuade us so,' replied the old man; 'but I have frequently observed to my wife, that at her return from the pasture, she had her eyes bedewed with tears, and the most afflicted air in the world. The moment she sees us, she affects to smile; but we see plainly that she has some grief that consumes her. We dare not ask her what it is.'——'Ah, Madam!' said the old woman, 'how I suffer for this child, when

ſhe perſiſts in leading out her flocks to paſture in ſpite of rain and froſt! Many a time have I thrown myſelf on my knees, in order to prevail with her to let me go in her ſtead; but I never could prevail on her. She goes out at ſun-riſe, and returns in the evening benumbed with cold. "Judge, now," ſays ſhe to me, "whether I would ſuffer you to quit your fire-ſide, and expoſe yourſelf at your age to the rigours of the ſeaſon. I am ſcarce able to withſtand it myſelf." Nevertheleſs, ſhe brings home under her arm the wood with which we warm ourſelves; and when I complain of the fatigue ſhe gives herſelf: "Have done, have done, my good mother, it is by exerciſe that I keep myſelf from cold: labour is made for my age." In ſhort, Madam, ſhe is as good as ſhe is handſome, and my huſband and I never ſpeak of her but with tears in our eyes.'——'And if ſhe ſhould be taken from you?' ſaid the marchioneſs—'We ſhould loſe,' interrupted the old man, 'all that we hold deareſt in the world; but if ſhe herſelf was to be the happier for it, we would die happy in that conſolation.'—'Oh, aye!' replied the old woman, ſhedding tears; 'Heaven grant her a fortune worthy of her, if it be poſſible! It was my hope, that that hand ſo dear to me, would have cloſed my eyes, for I love her more than my life.' Her arrival broke off their diſcourſe.

She appeared with a pail of milk in one hand, a baſket of fruit in the other; and after ſaluting them with an ineffable grace, ſhe directed her attention to the care of the family, as if nobody obſerved her. 'You give yourſelf a great deal of trouble, my dear child,' ſaid the marchioneſs. 'I endeavour, Madam, replied ſhe, 'to fulfil the intention of thoſe I ſerve, who are deſirous of entertaining you in the beſt manner they are able. You will have,' continued ſhe, ſpreading over the table a coarſe but very white cloth, 'you will have a frugal and rural repaſt: this bread is not the whiteſt in the world, but it taſtes pretty well; the eggs are freſh, the milk is good; and the fruits, which

I have

I have just now gathered, are such as the season affords.' The diligence, the attention, the noble and becoming grace with which this wonderful shepherdess paid them all the duties of hospitality; the respect she shewed for her master and mistress, whether she spoke to them, or whether she sought to read in their eyes what they wanted her to do; all these things filled the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose with astonishment and admiration. As soon as they were laid down on the bed of fresh straw which the shepherdess had prepared for them herself, 'Our adventure has the air of a prodigy,' said they one to another; 'we must clear up this mystery; we must carry away this child along with us.'

At break of day, one of the men, who had been up all night mending their carriage, came to inform them that it was thoroughly repaired. Madam De Fonrose, before she set out, ordered the shepherdess to be called to her. 'Without wanting to pry,' said she, 'into the secret of your birth, and the cause of your misfortune; all that I see, all that I hear, interests me in your favour. I see that your spirit has raised you above ill-fortune; and that you have suited your sentiments to your present condition: your charms and your virtues render it respectable, but yet it is unworthy of you. I have it in my power, amiable stranger, to procure you a happier lot; my husband's intentions agree entirely with mine. I have a considerable estate at Turin: I want a friend of my own sex, and I shall think I bear away from this place an invaluable treasure, if you will accompany me. Separate from the proposal, from the suit I now make you, all notion of servitude: I do not think you made for that condition; but though my prepossessions in your favour should deceive me, I had rather raise you above your birth, than leave you beneath it. I repeat to you, it is a friend of my own sex that I want to attach to me. For the rest, be under no concern for the fate of these good people: there is nothing which I would not do to make them amends for your loss; at least they shall have where-

with

with to ſpend the remainder of their lives happily, according to their condition; and it is from your hand that they ſhall receive the benefits I intend them.' The old folks who were preſent at this diſcourſe, kiſſing the hands of the marchioneſs, and throwing themſelves at her feet, begged the young incognita to accept of theſe generous offers: they repreſented to her with tears, that they were on the brink of the grave; that ſhe had no other conſolation than to make them happy in their old age; and that at their death, when left to herſelf, their habitation would become a dreadful ſolitude. The ſhepherdeſs, embracing them, mingled her tears with their's; ſhe returned thanks to the Marquis and Marchioneſs of Fonroſe for their goodneſs, with a ſenſibility that made her ſtill more beautiful. 'I cannot,' ſaid ſhe, 'accept of your courteſies. Heaven has marked out my place, and its will is accompliſhed; but your goodneſs has made impreſſions on my ſoul which will never be effaced. The reſpectable name of Fonroſe ſhall ever be preſent to my imagination. I have but one favour more to aſk you,' ſaid ſhe, bluſhing, and looking down; 'that is, to be ſo good as to bury this adventure in eternal ſilence, and to leave the world for ever ignorant of the lot of an unknown wretch, who wants to live and die in oblivion.' The Marquis and Marchioneſs of Fonroſe, moved with pity and grief, redoubled a thouſand times their inſtances: ſhe was immoveable, and the old people, the travellers, and the ſhepherdeſs, ſeparated with tears in their eyes.

During the journey, the marquis and his lady were taken up with nothing but this adventure. They thought they had been in a dream. Their imaginations being filled with this kind of romance, they arrive at Turin. It may eaſily be imagined that they did not keep ſilence, and this was an inexhauſtible ſubject for reflections and conjectures. The young Fonroſe, being preſent at theſe diſcourſes, loſt not one circumſtance. He was at that age wherein the imagination is moſt lively,

lively, and the heart moſt ſuſceptible; but he was one of thoſe characters whoſe ſenſibility diſplays not itſelf outwardly, and who are ſo much the more violently agitated, when they are ſo at all, as the ſentiment which affects them them does not weaken itſelf by any ſort of diſſipation. All that Fonroſe hears ſaid of the charms, virtues and misfortunes of the ſhepherdeſs of Savoy, kindles in his ſoul the moſt ardent deſire of ſeeing her. He forms to himſelf an image of her, which is always preſent to him. He compares her to every thing that he ſees, and every thing that he ſees vaniſhes before her. But the more his impatience redoubles, the more care he takes to conceal it. Turin becomes odious to him. The valley, which conceals from the world its brighteſt ornament, attracts his whole ſoul. It is there that happineſs waits him. But if his project is known, he foreſees the greateſt obſtacles: they will never conſent to the journey he meditates; it is the folly of a young man, the conſequences of which they will be apprehenſive of; the ſhepherdeſs herſelf, affrighted at his purſuits, will not fail to withdraw herſelf from them; he loſes her, if he ſhould be known. After all theſe reflections, which employed his thoughts for three months, he takes a reſolution to quit every thing for her ſake; to go, under the habit of a ſhepherd, to ſeek her in her ſolitude, and to die there, or to draw her out of it.

He diſappears; they ſee him no more. His parents become alarmed at his abſence: their fear increaſes every day; their expectations diſappointed throw the whole family into affliction; the fruitleſſneſs of their enquiries compleats their deſpair; a duel, an aſſaſſination, every thing that is moſt unfortunate, preſents itſelf to their imagination; and theſe unhappy parents ended their reſearches by lamenting the death of their ſon, their only hope. While his family are in mourning, Fonroſe, under the habit of a ſhepherd, preſents himſelf to the inhabitants of the hamlets adjoining to the vallies, which they had but too well deſcribed to him,

him. His ambition is accompliſhed: they truſt him with the care of their flocks.

The firſt day after his arrival, he left them to wander at random, ſolely attentive to diſcover the place to which the ſhepherdeſs led hers.

'Let us manage,' ſaid he, 'the timidity of this ſolitary fair-one: if ſhe is unfortunate, her heart has need of conſolation; if it be nothing but a deſire to baniſh herſelf from the world, and the pleaſure of a tranquil and innocent life that retains her here, ſhe will feel ſome dull moments, and wiſh for company to amuſe or conſole her. If I ſucceed ſo far as to render that agreeable to her, ſhe will ſoon find it neceſſary; then I ſhall take counſel from the ſituation of her ſoul. After all we are here alone, as it were in the world, and we ſhall be every thing to each other. From confidence to friendſhip the paſſage is not long; and from friendſhip to love, at our age, the road is ſtill eaſier.' And what was Fonroſe's age when he reaſoned thus? Fonroſe was eighteen: but three months reflection on the ſame object unfolds a number of ideas. While he was thus giving himſelf up to his imagination, with his eyes wandering over the country, he hears at a diſtance that voice, the charms of which had been ſo often extolled to him. The emotion it excited in him was as lively as if ſhe had been unexpected. 'It is here,' ſaid the ſhepherdeſs in her plaintive ſtrains; 'it is here that my heart enjoys the only happineſs that remains to it. My grief has a luxury in it for my ſoul; I prefer its bitterneſs to the deceitful ſweets of joy.' Theſe accents rent the ſenſible heart of Fonroſe. 'What,' ſaid he, 'can be the cauſe of the chagrin that conſumes her? How pleaſing would it be to conſole her!' A hope ſtill more pleaſing preſumed, not without difficulty, to flatter his deſires. He feared to alarm the ſhepherdeſs if he reſigned himſelf imprudently to his impatience of ſeeing her near, and for the firſt time it was ſufficient to have heard her. The next day he went out again to lead his ſheep to paſture;

and

and after observing the route which she had taken, he placed himself at the foot of the rock, which the day before repeated to him the sounds of that touching voice. I forgot to mention that Fonrose, to the handsomest figure had joined those talents which the young nobility of Italy do not neglect. He played on the hautboy like Besuzzi, of whom he had taken his lessons, and who formed at that time the delight of Europe. Adelaïde, buried in her own afflicting ideas, had not yet made her voice heard, and the echoes kept silence. All on a sudden this silence was interrupted by the plaintive sounds of Fonrose's hautboy. These unknown sounds excited in the soul of Adelaïde, a surprize mingled with anxiety. The keepers of the flocks that wandered on the hills had never caused her to hear aught before but the sounds of rustic pipes. Immoveable and attentive, she seeks with her eyes who it was that could form such harmonious sounds. She perceives, at a distance, a young shepherd seated in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which he fed his flock; she draws near, to hear him the better. 'See,' said she, 'what the mere instinct of Nature can do! The ear teaches this shepherd all the refinements of art. Can any one breathe purer sounds? What delicacy in his inflexions! what variety in his gradations! Who can say after this, that taste is not a gift of Nature?' Ever since Adelaïde had dwelled in this solitude, this was the first time that her grief, suspended by an agreeable distraction, had delivered up her soul to the sweet emotion of pleasure. Fonrose, who saw her approach and seat herself at the foot of a willow to hear him, pretended not to perceive her. He seized without seeming to affect it, the moment of her retreat, and managed the course of his own flock in such a manner as to meet her on a declivity of a hill, where the road crossed. He cast only one look on her, and continued his route, as if taken up with nothing but the care of his flock. But what beauties had that one look ran over; What eyes! what a divine mouth! How much more ravishing

ravishing still would those features be, which are so noble and touching in their languor, if love re-animated them! He saw plainly that gentle sloth had withered in their spring the roses on her lovely cheeks; but of so many charms, that which had moved him most was the noble elegance of her person and her gait; in the ease of her motions he thought he saw a young cedar, whose straight and flexible trunk yields gently to the zephyrs. This image, which love had just engraven in flaming characters on his memory, took up all his thoughts. 'How feebly,' said he, 'have they painted to me this beauty, unknown to the world, whose adoration she merits! And it is a desart that she inhabits! and it is thatch that covers her! She who ought to see kings at her feet, employs herself in tending an humble flock! Beneath what garments has she presented herself to my view? She adorns every thing, and nothing disfigures her. Yet what a life for a frame so delicate! Coarse food, a savage climate, a bed of straw; great gods! And for whom are the roses made? Yes, I will draw her out of this state, so much too hard and too unworthy of her.' Sleep interrupted his reflections, but effaced not her image. Adelaide, on her side, sensibly struck with the youth, the beauty of Fonrose, ceased not to admire the caprices of Fortune. 'Where is Nature going,' said she, 'to re-assemble together so many talents and so many graces! But, alas! those gifts which to him are here but useless, would be perhaps his misfortune in a more elevated state. What evils does not beauty create in the world! Unhappy as I am, is it for me to set any value on it?' This melancholy reflection began to poison in her soul the pleasures she had tasted; she reproached herself for having been sensible of it, and resolved to deny it herself for the future. The next day Fonrose thought he perceived that she avoided his approach; he fell into a profound melancholy. 'Could she suspect my disguise?' said he. 'Should I have betrayed it myself?' This uneasiness possessed him all the live-long-day, and

and his hautboy was neglected. Adelaïde was not so far but she could easily have heard it; and his silence astonished her. She began to sing herself. 'It seems,' said the song, 'that every thing around me partakes of my heaviness: the birds sends forth none but sorrowful notes; Echo replies to me in complaints; the Zephyrs moan amidst these leaves; the sound of the brooks imitates my sighs, one might say that they flowed with tears.' Fonrose, softened by these strains, could not help replying to them. Never was concert more moving than that of his hautboy with Adelaïde's voice. 'O Heaven!' said she, 'it is enchantment! I dare not believe my ears: it is not a shepherd, it is a god whom I have heard! Can the natural sense of harmony inspire such concord of sounds?' While she was speaking thus, a rural, or rather a celestial melody, made the valley resound. Adelaïde thought she saw those prodigies realizing which Poetry attributes to her sprightly sister Muse. Astonished, confounded, she knew not whether she ought to take herself away, or resign herself up to this enchantment. But she perceived the shepherd, whom she had just heard, re-assembling his flock in order to regain his hut. 'He knows not,' says she, 'the delight he diffuses around him; his undisguised soul is not in the least vain of it: he waits not even for the praises I owe him. Such is the power of music: it is the only talent that places its happiness in itself; all the others require witnesses. This gift of Heaven was granted to man in his innocence: it is the purest of all pleasures. Alas! it is the only one I still relish; and I consider this shepherd as a new echo, who is come to answer my grief.'

The following day Fonrose affected to keep at a distance in his turn: Adelaïde was afflicted at it. 'Chance,' said she, 'seemed to have procured me this feeble consolation; I gave myself up to it too easily, and, to punish me, she has deprived me of it.' At last, one day, when they happened to meet on the declivity of the hill, 'Shepherd,' said she to him, 'are you

leading your flocks far off?' Theſe firſt words of Adelaïde cauſed an emotion in Fonroſe which almoſt deprived him of the uſe of his voice. 'I do not know,' ſaid he, heſitating; 'it is not I who lead my flock, but my flock leads me; theſe places are better known to it than to me: I leave to it the choice of the beſt paſtures.'—'Whence are you, then?' ſaid the ſhepherdeſs to him. 'I was born beyond the Alps,' replied Fonroſe. 'Were you born among ſhepherds?' continued ſhe. 'As I am a ſhepherd,' ſaid he, looking down, 'I muſt have been born to be one.'—'I doubt it,' replied Adelaïde, viewing him with attention. 'Your talents, your language, your very air, all tell me, that Fate had placed you in a better ſituation.'—'You are very obliging,' ſaid Fonroſe; 'but ought you of all perſons, to believe that Nature refuſes every thing to ſhepherds? Were you born to be a queen?' Adelaïde bluſhed at this anſwer; and changing the ſubject, 'The other day,' ſaid ſhe, 'by the ſound of a hautboy you accompanied my ſongs with an art that would be a prodigy in a ſimple ſhepherd.'—'It is your voice that is ſo,' replied Fonroſe, 'in a ſimple ſhepherdeſs.'—'But has nobody inſtructed you?'—'I have, like yourſelf, no other guide than my heart and my ear. You ſung, I was melted; what my heart feels, my hautboy expreſſes; I breathe my ſoul into it. This is the whole of my ſecret; nothing in the world is eaſier.'—'That is incredible,' ſaid Adelaïde. 'I ſaid the very ſame on hearing you,' replied Fonroſe; 'but I was forced to believe it. What will you ſay? Nature and Love ſometimes take a delight in aſſembling their moſt precious gifts in perſons of the moſt humble fortune, to ſhew that there is no condition which they cannot ennoble.'

During this diſcourſe, they advanced towards the valley; and Fonroſe, whom a ray of hope now animated, began to make the air reſound with thoſe ſprightly notes which pleaſure inſpires. 'Ah, pr'ythee now!' ſaid Adelaïde, 'ſpare my ſoul the troubleſome

ſome image of a ſentiment which ſhe cannot reliſh. This ſolitude is conſecrated to Grief; her echoes are not uſed to repeat the accents of a profane joy; here every thing groans in concert with me.'—'I alſo have cauſe to complain!' replied the young man; and theſe words, pronounced with a ſigh, were followed by a long ſilence. 'You have cauſe to complain!' replied Adelaïde; 'is it of mankind? is it of fortune?'—'No matter,' ſaid he, 'but I am not happy: aſk me no more.'—'Hear me,' ſaid Adelaïde: 'Heaven gives us to each other as a conſolation in our troubles; mine are like an overwhelming load, which weighs down my heart. Whoever you may be, if you know misfortune, you ought to be compaſſionate, and I believe you worthy of my confidence; but promiſe me that it ſhall be mutual.'—'Alas!' ſaid Fonroſe, 'my misfortunes are ſuch, that I ſhall perhaps be condemned never to reveal them.' This myſtery but redoubled the curioſity of Adelaïde. 'Repair to-morrow,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'to the foot of that hill, beneath that old tufted oak where you have heard me moan. There I will teach you things that will excite your pity.' Fonroſe paſſed the night in the utmoſt emotion. His fate depended on what he was going to hear. A thouſand alarming ideas agitated him by turns. He dreaded, above all, the being driven to deſpair by the communication of an unſucceſsful and faithful love. 'If ſhe is in love,' ſaid he, 'I am undone!'

He repairs to the appointed place. He ſees Adelaïde arrive, the day was overcaſt with clouds, and nature mourning ſeemed to forebode the ſadneſs of their converſation. As ſoon as they were ſeated at the foot of the oak, Adelaïde ſpoke thus. 'You ſee theſe ſtones which the graſs begins to cover; they are the tomb of the moſt tender, the moſt virtuous of men, whom my love and my imprudence have coſt his life. I am a French woman, of a family of diſtinction; and, to my misfortune, too rich. The Count D'Oreſlan conceived the tendereſt paſſion for me; I was ſenſible of it, ſen-

ſible to exceſs. My parents oppoſed the inclination of our hearts, and my frantic paſſion made me conſent to a marriage ſacred to virtuous ſouls, but diſallowed by the laws. Italy was at that time the theatre of war. My huſband went thither to join the corps which he was to command; I followed him as far Briançon: my fooliſh tenderneſs retained him there two days in ſpite of himſelf: for he, a young man, full of honour, prolonged his ſtay there with the greateſt reluctance. He ſacrificed his duty to me: but what would not I have ſacrificed to him? In a word, I required it of him; and he could not withſtand my tears. He took leave with a foreboding which alarmed me. I accompanied him as far as this valley, where I received his adieus; and in order to wait to hear from him, I returned to Briançon. A few days after a report was ſpread of a battle. I doubted whether D'Oreſtan had got thither; I wiſhed it for his honour, I dreaded it for my love; when I received a letter from him, which I thought very conſoling, "I ſhall be ſuch a day, at ſuch an hour," ſaid he, "in the valley, and under the oak where we parted; I ſhall repair there alone; I conjure you to go there, and expect me, likewiſe, alone; I live yet but for you." How great was my miſtake! I perceived in his billet nothing more than an impatience to ſee me again, and this impatience made me happy. I repaired, then, to this very oak. D'Oreſtan arrives; and after the tendereſt reception: "You would have it ſo, my dear ſide-laide," ſaid he, "I have failed in my duty at the moſt important moment of my life. What I feared is come to paſs. A battle has happened, my regiment charged. It performed prodigies of valour, and I was not there. I am diſhonoured, loſt without reſource. I reproach not you with my misfortune, but I have now but one ſacrifice more to make you, and my heart is come to accompliſh it." At this diſcourſe, pale, trembling, and ſcarce breathing, I took my huſband into my arms. I felt my blood congeal in my veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell down ſenſeleſs. He availed

himſelf

himſelf of my fainting to tear himſelf from my boſom; and in a little time I was recalled to life by the report of a ſhot which killed him. I will not deſcribe to you the ſituation I was in; it is inexpreſſible; and the tears which you now ſee flowing, the ſighs that ſtifle my voice, are but a feeble image of it. After paſſing the whole night beſide his bloody corpſe, in a grief that ſtupified me, my firſt care was to bury along with him my ſhame: my hands dug out his grave. I ſeek not to move you; but the moment in which the earth was to ſeparate me from the ſorrowful remains of my huſband, was a thouſand times more dreadful to me than that can be which is to ſeparate my body from my ſoul. Spent with grief, and deprived of nouriſhment, my enfeebled hands took up two whole days in hollowing out this tomb with inconceivable labour. When my ſtrength forſook me, I repoſed myſelf on the livid and cold boſom of my huſband. In ſhort, I paid him the rites of ſepulture, and my heart promiſed him to wait in theſe parts till death reunites us. In the mean time, cruel hunger began to devour my exhauſted entrails. I thought it criminal to refuſe nature the ſupports of a life more grievous than death. I changed my garments for the plain habit of a ſhepherdeſs, and I embraced that condition as my only refuge. From that time my only conſolation has been to come here, and weep over this grave, which ſhall be my own. You ſee,' continued ſhe, 'with what ſincerity I open my ſoul to you. With you I may henceforth weep at liberty: it is a conſolation I had need of; but I expect the ſame confidence from you. Do not think that you have deceived me. I ſee clearly that the ſtate of a ſhepherd is as foreign, and newer to you than to me. You are young, perhaps ſenſible; and, if I may believe my conjectures, our misfortunes have the ſame ſource, and you have loved as well as I. We ſhall only feel the more for one another. I conſider you as a friend, whom Heaven, touched by my misfortunes, deigns to ſend me in my ſolitude. Do

you alſo conſider me as a friend, capable of giving you, if not ſalutary counſel, at leaſt a conſolatory example.'

'You pierce my very ſoul,' ſaid Fonroſe, overcome with what he had juſt heard; 'and whatever ſenſibility you may attribute to me, you are very far from conceiving the impreſſion that the recital of your misfortunes has made on me. Alas! why cannot I return it with that confidence which you teſtify towards me, and of which you are ſo worthy? But I warned you of it; I foreſaw it. Such is the nature of my ſorrows, that an eternal ſilence muſt ſhut them up in the bottom of my heart. You are very unhappy,' added he with a profound ſigh; 'I am ſtill more unhappy: this is all I can tell you. Be not offended at my ſilence; it is terrible to me to be condemned to it. The conſtant companion of all your ſteps, I will ſoften your labours: I will partake of all your griefs: I will ſee you weep over this grave, I will mingle my tears with yours. You ſhall not repent having depoſited your woes in a heart, alas! but too ſenſible.'—'I repent me of it from this moment,' ſaid ſhe with confuſion; and both, with downcaſt eyes, retired in ſilence from each other. Adelaïde, on quitting Fonroſe, thought ſhe ſaw in his countenance the impreſſion of a profound grief. 'I have revived,' ſaid ſhe, 'the ſenſe of his ſorrows; and what muſt be their horror, when he thinks himſelf ſtill more wretched than I!'

From that day more ſighing and more converſation followed between Fonroſe and Adelaïde. They neither ſought nor avoided one another: looks of conſternation formed almoſt their only language; if he found her weeping over the grave of her huſband, his heart was ſeized with pity, jealouſy, and grief; he contemplated her in ſilence, and anſwered her ſighs with deep groans.

Two months had paſſed away in this painful ſituation, and Adelaide ſaw Fonroſe's youth wither as a flower. The ſorrow which conſumed him afflicted her ſo much the more deeply, as the cauſe of it was unknown

known to her. She had not the moſt diſtant ſuſpicion that ſhe was the cauſe of it. However, as it is natural, when two ſentiments divide a ſoul, for one to weaken the other, Adelaïde's regret on account of the death of D'Oreſtan became leſs lively every day, in proportion as ſhe delivered herſelf up to the pity with which Fonroſe inſpired her. She was very ſure that this pity had nothing but what was innocent in it; it did not even come into her head to defend herſelf from it; and the object of this generous ſentiment being continually preſent to her view, awakened it every inſtant. The langour into which this young man was fallen became ſuch, that ſhe thought it her duty not to leave him any longer to himſelf. 'You are dying,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'and you add to my griefs that of ſeeing you conſumed with ſorrow under my eye, without being able to apply any remedy. If the recital of the imprudences of my youth has not inſpired you with a contempt for me; if the pureſt and tendereſt friendſhip be dear to you: in ſhort, if you would not render me more unhappy than I was before I knew you, confide to me the cauſe of your griefs: you have no perſon in the world but myſelf to aſſiſt you in ſupporting them; your ſecret, though it were more important than mine, fear not that I ſhall divulge. The death of my huſband has placed a gulph betwixt the world and me; and the confidence which I require will ſoon be buried in this grave, to which grief is with ſlow ſteps conducting me.'—'I hope to go before you,' ſaid Fonroſe, burſting into tears. 'Suffer me to finiſh my deplorable life without leaving you afterwards the reproach of having ſhortened its courſe.'—'O Heaven, what do I hear,' cried ſhe with diſtraction. 'What! I! can I have contributed to the evils which overwhelm you? Go on; you pierce my ſoul! What have I done? what have I ſaid? Alas, I tremble! Good heaven! had thou ſent me into the world only to create wretches? Speak; nay, ſpeak; you muſt no longer conceal who you are; you have ſaid too much to diſſemble any longer.'—'Well, then, I am——I am

Fonroſe,

Fonroſe, the ſon of thoſe travellers, whom you filled with admiration and reſpect. All that they related of your virtues and your charms inſpired me with the fatal deſign of coming to ſee you in this diſguiſe. I have left my family in the deepeſt ſorrow, thinking they have loſt me, and lamenting my death. I have ſeen you; I know what attaches you to this place; I know that the only hope that is left me, is to die here adoring you. Give me no uſeleſs counſel or unjuſt reproaches. My reſolution is as firm and immoveable as your own. If in betraying my ſecret, you diſturb the laſt moments of a life almoſt at an end, you will to no purpoſe injure me, who would never offend you.'

Adelaïde, confounded, endeavoured to calm the deſpair into which this young man was plunged. 'Let me,' ſaid ſhe, 'do to his parents the ſervice of reſtoring him to life; let me ſave their only hope: Heaven preſents me with this opportunity of acknowledging their favours.' Thus, far from making him furious by a miſplaced rigour, all the tenderneſs of pity, and conſolation of friendſhip, were put in practice in order to ſoothe him.

'Heavenly angel!' cried Fonroſe, 'I ſee all the reluctance that you feel to make any one unhappy: your heart is with him who repoſes in this grave: I ſee that nothing can detach you from him; I ſee how ingenuous your virtue is to conceal your woe from me; I perceive it in all its extent, I am overwhelmed by it, but I pardon you: it is your duty never to love me, it is mine ever to adore you.'

Impatient of executing the deſign which ſhe had conceived, Adelaïde arrives at her hut. 'Father,' ſaid ſhe to her old maſter, 'do you think you have ſtrength to travel to Turin? I have need of ſomebody whom I can truſt, to give the Marquis and Marchioneſs of Fonroſe the moſt intereſting intelligence.' The old man replied, that his zeal to ſerve them inſpired him with courage. 'Go,' reſumed Adelaïde, 'you will find them bewailing the death of their only ſon; tell them that he is living.

ing, and in theſe parts, and that I will reſtore him to them; but that there is an indiſpenſible neceſſity for their coming here themſelves to fetch him.'

He ſets out, arrives at Turin, ſends in his addreſs as the old man of the valley of Savoy. 'Ah!' cried Madam de Fonroſe, 'ſome misfortune, perhaps, has happened to our ſhepherdeſs.'—'Let him come in,' added the marquis, 'he will tell us, perhaps, that ſhe conſents to live with us.'—'After the loſs of my ſon,' ſaid the marchioneſs, 'it is the only comfort I can taſte in this world.' The old man is introduced. He throws himſelf at their feet; they raiſe him. 'You are lamenting the death of your ſon,' ſaid he; 'I come to tell you that he lives; our dear child has diſcovered him in the valley; ſhe ſends me to inform you of it; but yourſelves only, ſhe ſays, can bring him back.' As he ſpoke this, ſurprize and joy deprived the Marchioneſs De Fonroſe of her ſenſes. The Marquis diſtracted and amazed, calls out for help for his lady, recals her to life, embraces the old man, publiſhes to the whole houſe that their ſon is reſtored to them. The Marchioneſs reſuming her ſpirits, 'What ſhall we do,' ſaid ſhe, taking the old man by the hands, and preſſing them with tenderneſs, 'what ſhall we do in gratitude for this benefit which reſtores life to us?'

Every thing is ordered for their departure. They ſet out with the good man! they travel night and day, and repair to the valley, where their only good awaits them. The ſhepherdeſs was out at paſture: the old woman conducts them to her; they approach. How great is their ſurprize! their ſon, that well-beloved ſon, is by her ſide in the habit of a ſimple ſhepherd. Their hearts ſooner than their eyes acknowledge him. 'Ah, cruel child,' cried his mother, throwing herſelf into his arms, 'what ſorrow have you occaſioned us! why withdraw yourſelf from our tenderneſs? and what is it you come here for?'—'To adore,' ſaid he, 'what you yourſelf admired.'—'Pardon me, Madam,' ſaid Adelaïde, while Fonroſe embraced his father's knees, who raiſed him

with

with kindneſs; 'pardon me for having left you ſo long in grief: if I had known it ſooner, you ſhould have been ſooner conſoled.' After the firſt emotions of nature, Fonroſe relapſed into the deepeſt affliction. 'Let us go,' ſaid the Marquis, 'let us go reſt ourſelves in the hut, and forget all the pain that this young madman has occaſioned us.'—'Yes, Sir, I have been mad,' ſaid Fonroſe to his father, who led him by the hand. 'Nothing but the loſs of my reaſon could have ſuſpended in my heart the emotions of nature, ſo as to make me forget the moſt ſacred duties; in ſhort, to detach myſelf from every thing that I held deareſt in the world: but this madneſs you gave birth to, and I am but too ſeverely puniſhed for it. I love without hope the moſt accompliſhed perſon in the world; you ſee nothing, you know nothing of this incomparable woman; ſhe is honeſty, ſenſibility, virtue itſelf; I love her even to idolatry, I cannot be happy without her, and I know that ſhe cannot be mine.'—'Has ſhe confided to you,' ſaid the Marquis, 'the ſecret of her birth?'—'I have learned enough of it,' ſaid Fonroſe, 'to aſſure you, that it is in no reſpect beneath my own; ſhe has even renounced a conſiderable fortune to bury herſelf in this deſart.'—'And do you know what has induced her to it?'—'Yes, Sir, but it is a ſecret which ſhe alone can reveal to you.'—'She is married, perhaps?'—'She is a widow, but her heart is not the more diſengaged; her ties are but too ſtrong.'—'Daughter,' ſaid the marquis, on entering the hut, 'you ſee that you turn the heads of the whole family of Fonroſe. The extravagant paſſion of this young man cannot be juſtified but by ſuch a prodigy as you are. All my wife's wiſhes are confined to having you for a companion and a friend; this child here, will not live, unleſs he obtains you for his wife; I deſire no leſs to have you for my daughter: ſee how many perſons you will make unhappy by a refuſal.'—'Ah, Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'your goodneſs confounds me, but hear and judge for me.' Then Adelaïde, in the preſence of the old man and his wife, made a recital of her

deplorable

deplorable adventure. She added the name of her family, which was not unknown to the Marquis de Fonrose, and ended by calling on himself to witness the inviolable fidelity she owed her spouse. At these words consternation spread itself over every countenance. Young Fonrose, choaked with sobs, threw himself into a corner of the hut, in order to give them free scope. The father, moved at the sight, flew to the assistance of his son. 'See,' said he, 'my dear Adelaïde, to what a condition you have reduced him!' Madam de Fonrose, who was near Adelaïde, pressed her in her arms, bathing her at the same time with her tears. 'Alas! why, my daughter,' said she, 'why will you a second time make us mourn the death of our dear child?' The old man and his wife, their eyes filled with tears, and fixed upon Adelaïde, waited her speaking. 'Heaven is my witness,' said Adelaïde, rising, 'that I would lay down my life in gratitude for such goodness. It would heighten my misfortunes to have occasion to reproach myself with yours; but I am willing that Fonrose himself should be my judge; suffer me, if you please, to speak to him for a moment.' Then retiring with him alone; 'Fonrose,' said she, 'You know what sacred ties retain me in this place. If I could cease to love and lament a husband who loved me but too well, I should be the most despicable of women. Esteem, friendship, gratitude, are the sentiments I owe you; but none of these can cancel love: the more you have conceived for me, the more you should expect from me; it is the impossibility of fulfilling that duty, that hinders my imposing it on myself. At the same time I see you in a situation that would move the least sensible heart; it is shocking to me to be the cause, it would be still more shocking to me to hear your parents accuse me with having been your destruction. I will forget myself, then, for the present, and leave you, as far as in me lies, to be the arbiter of our destiny. It is for you to chuse that of the two situations which appears to you least painful; either to renounce me, to subdue yourself,

yourſelf, and forget me; or to poſſeſs a woman, whoſe heart being full of another object, can only grant you ſentiments too feeble to ſatisfy the wiſhes of a lover.' ——'That is enough,' ſaid Fonroſe; 'and in a ſoul like yours, friendſhip ſhould take place of love. I ſhall be jealous, without doubt, of the tears which you ſhall beſtow on the memory of another huſband; but the cauſe of that jealouſy, in rendering you more reſpectable, will render you alſo more dear in my eyes.'

'She is mine!' ſaid he, coming and throwing himſelf into the arms of his parents; 'it is to her reſpect for you, to your goodneſs, that I owe her, and it is owing you a ſecond life.' From that moment their arms were chains from which Adelaïde could not diſengage herſelf.

Did ſhe yield only to pity, to gratitude? I would fain believe it, in order to admire her the more: Adelaïde believed ſo herſelf. However it be, before ſhe ſet out, ſhe would reviſit the tomb, which ſhe quitted but with regret. 'O, my dear D'Oreſtan,' ſaid ſhe, 'if from the womb of the dead thou canſt read the bottom of my ſoul, thy ſhade has no cauſe to murmur at the ſacrifice I make: I owe it to the generous ſentiments of this virtuous family; but my heart remains thine for ever. I go to endeavour to make them happy, without any hope of being myſelf ſo.' It was not without ſome ſort of violence they forced her from the place; but ſhe inſiſted that they ſhould erect a monument there to the memory of her huſband; and that the hut of her old maſter and miſtreſs, who followed her to Turin, ſhould be converted into a country-houſe, as plain as it was ſolitary, where ſhe propoſed to come ſometimes to mourn the errors and misfortunes of her youth. Time, the aſſiduities of Fonroſe, the fruits of her ſecond marriage, have ſince opened her ſoul to the impreſſions of a new affection; and they cite her as an example of a woman, remarkable and reſpectable even in her infidelity.

THE

THE HAPPY DIVORCE.

UNEASINESS and inconſtancy are, in the greateſt part of mankind, nothing more than the conſequence of falſe calculation. Too ſtrong a prepoſſeſſion in favour of the happineſs we deſire, makes us experience, as ſoon as we poſſeſs it, that uneaſineſs and diſguſt which ſuffer us to reliſh nothing. The imagination deceived and the heart diſſatisfied, wander to new objects, the proſpect of which dazzles us in its turn, and the approach diſabuſes us. Thus from illuſion to illuſion, life is paſſed away in changing the chimera: this is the malady of lively and delicate ſouls; nature has nothing ſufficiently perfect for them; whence it proceeds, that it is thought ſuch a mighty matter to fix the taſte of a pretty woman.

Lucilia, in the convent, had painted to herſelf the charms of love, and the delights of marriage, with the colouring of an imagination of a girl of fifteen, whoſe flower nothing had yet tarniſhed.

She had ſeen the world only in thoſe ingenious fictions which are the romance of human nature. It coſts nothing to an eloquent man to give love and marriage all the charms that he conceives. Lucilia, according to theſe pictures, ſaw lovers and huſbands only as they are to be met with in fables, always tender and full of love, ſaying nothing but fine things, taken up ſolely with the care of pleaſing, new homages, or pleaſures eternally varied.

Such was the prepoſſeſſion of Lucilia, when they came to draw her out of the convent to marry the Marquis De Liſere. His engaging and noble figure inſpired her with a favourable opinion of him, and his firſt addreſſes ſucceeded in determining the irreſolution of her ſoul. She ſaw not yet in the marquis the ardour of a paſſionate lover; but ſhe thought modeſtly enough of herſelf not to pretend to ſet him on fire at firſt ſight. This liking, tranquil at its birth, would make a rapid progreſs; he muſt have time. However, the marriage

was concluded upon, and ſolemnized before the inclination of the marquis was grown a violent paſſion.

Nothing was more ſteady or ſolid than the temper of the Marquis de Liſere. In marrying a young woman, he propoſed to himſelf, in order to make her happy, to begin by being her friend, perſuaded that an honeſt man does whatever he pleaſes with a well-diſpoſed-woman, when he has gained her confidence; and that a huſband who makes himſelf dreaded, invites his wife to deceive him, and authoriſes her to hate him.

In order to follow the plan which he had traced out to himſelf, it was neceſſary not to be a too paſſionate lover; paſſion knows no rule. He had conſidered well before his engagement, on the kind of liking with which Lucilia inſpired him, reſolved never to marry a woman whom he ſhould love to diſtraction. Lucilia found in her huſband only that lively and tender friendſhip, that attentive and conſtant complaiſance, that ſoft and pure pleaſure, that love, in ſhort, which has neither its hot nor cold fits. At firſt, ſhe flattered herſelf that intoxication, enchantment, tranſports would have their turn; but the ſoul of Liſere was unalterable.

'This is very extraordinary,' ſaid ſhe; 'I am young, handſome, and my huſband does not love me! I am his, and he thinks it enough to poſſeſs me with coldneſs. But, then, why ſuffer him to be cold? Can he have any violent longings for what is in his power without reſerve or trouble? He would become paſſionately fond of me, if he were jealous. How unjuſt are men! We muſt torment them, in order to pleaſe them. Be tender, faithful, fond, they neglect, they diſdain you. An even courſe of happineſs makes them dull: caprice, coquetry, inconſtancy, rouze and enliven them; they ſet no value on pleaſure, but in proportion to the trouble it gives them. Liſere, leſs ſure of being beloved, will become a thouſand times fonder. That is eaſy, let me be in the faſhion. Every thing around me preſents

preſents me with enough to make him uneaſy, if he is capable of jealouſy.'

After this fine project, Lucilia gave herſelf up to diſſipation, to coquetry: ſhe aſſumed a myſtery in all her proceedings; ſhe made parties without the marquis. 'Did I not foreſee it,' ſaid he to himſelf, 'that I had a wife like other women? Six months after marriage, ſhe begins to be tired of it. I ſhould be a happy man, now, if I were paſſionately fond of my wife! Happily my liking and eſteem for her leave me full enjoyment of my reaſon: I muſt make uſe of it, diſſemble, ſubdue myſelf, and employ nothing but gentleneſs and ſoothing meaſures, to keep her in order. They do not always ſucceed; but reproaches, complaints, reſtraint, and violence, ſucceed ſtill leſs.' The moderation, complaiſance, and tranquility of the marquis, put Lucilia out of all patience. 'Alas!' ſaid ſhe, 'do what I will it is all to no purpoſe; this man will never love me: he is one of thoſe cold ſouls whom nothing moves, nothing engages; and I am condemned to paſs my life with a ſtone, that knows neither how to love nor hate! O, the delight of ſenſible ſouls, the charm of impaſſioned hearts!—Love, who raiſeſt us to Heaven on thy fiery pinions! where are thoſe flaming darts, with which thou woundeſt happy lovers? where is that intoxication into which thou plungeſt them? where are thoſe raviſhing tranſports with which they mutually inſpire each other?—Where are they?' continued ſhe. 'In free and independent love, in the diſpoſal of two hearts which give a looſe to themſelves. And why ſhould the marquis be fond? What ſacrifice have I made him? By what marks of courage, by what heroic devotion of myſelf, have I moved the ſenſibility of his ſoul? Where is the merit of having obeyed, of having accepted for a huſband an amiable and rich young man, choſen without my conſent? Is it for love to interfere in a marriage of convenience? But is this then the lot of a woman of ſixteen, to whom, without vanity, Nature has given wherewith to pleaſe, and

ſtill more wherewith to love? For after all, I cannot conceal from myſelf the graces of my figure, nor the ſenſibility of my heart. At ſixteen, to languiſh without hope in cold indifference, and to ſee at leaſt a ſcore of years waſte away without pleaſure, which might have been delicious! I ſay a ſcore, at leaſt, and it is not deſiring to tire the world, to be content to renounce it before forty years of age. Cruel family! was it for you that I took a huſband? You choſe me an honeſt man! a rare preſent you made me! To be dull with an honeſt man, and to be dull all one's life! Very hard, indeed!'

This diſcontent ſoon degenerated into peeviſhneſs; and Liſere thought he perceived, at laſt, that ſhe had taken an averſion to him. His friends diſpleaſed her, their company became troubleſome to her, ſhe received them with a coolneſs ſufficient to keep them at a diſtance. The marquis could no longer diſſemble. 'Madam,' ſaid he to Lucilia, 'the end of marriage is to make people happy; we are not ſo, and it is in vain to pique ourſelves on a conſtancy which reſtrains us. Our fortune puts us in a condition of doing without each other, and of reſuming that liberty of which we imprudently made a mutual ſacrifice. Live by yourſelf; I will live by myſelf. I aſk towards me only that decency and regard which you owe to yourſelf.'—'With all my heart, Sir,' replied Lucilia with the coldneſs of diſguſt; and from that moment every thing was ſettled, that Madam might have her equipage, her table, her domeſtics, in one word, a ſeparate maintenance.

Lucilia's ſuppers ſoon became ranked among the moſt brilliant in Paris. Her company was ſought by all the handſome women and men of gallantry. But there was a neceſſity for Lucilia's having ſome particular, and he who ſhould engage her firſt, it was obſerved, had the only hard taſk! In the mean time ſhe enjoyed the hommages of a brilliant ſet; and her heart, yet irreſolute, ſeemed to ſuſpend her choice only to render it more flattering. She thought, at laſt, ſhe ſaw the perſon who would determine it. At the approach

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of the Count de Blamzé, all other pretenders lowered their tone. He was, of the whole court, the moſt to be dreaded by a young woman, it was agreed that there was no reſiſting him, and ſo they ſpared themſelves the trouble. He was beautiful as the day, preſented himſelf with grace, ſpoke little, but extremely well; and if he ſaid common things, he rendered them intereſting by the moſt pleaſing ſound of voice, and the moſt beautiful look in the world. They could not ſay that Blamzé was a fop, his foppery had ſo much dignity. A modeſt haughtineſs formed his character; he decided with the genteeſt air in the world, and the moſt laconic tone: he liſtened to contradictions with good humour, replied to them only with a ſmile; and if they preſſed him to explain himſelf, he ſmiled ſtill and kept ſilence, or repeated what he had ſaid before. Never did he combat the opinion of another, never did he take any trouble to give a reaſon for his own: it was the moſt attentive politeneſs, and the moſt deciſive preſumption that had ever yet been united in a young man of quality.

This aſſurance had ſomething commanding in it, which rendered him the oracle of taſte, and the legiſlator of faſhion. They were never ſure of being right in the choice of a ſuit, or the colour of a carriage, till Blamzé had approved by a glance. '*It is excellent, it is handſome!*' were the precious words from his mouth; and his ſilence a dead warrant. The deſpotiſm of his opinion extended even over beauty, talents, wit, and graces. In a circle of women, ſhe whom he had honoured with a particular attention was that inſtant in vogue.

Blamzé's reputation had gone before him to Lucilia's; but the deference which even his rivals paid him, redoubled the eſteem ſhe had conceived for him. She was dazzled with his beauty, and ſtill more ſuprized at his modeſty. He preſented himſelf with the moſt reſpectful air, ſeated himſelf in the loweſt place, but all looks were ſoon directed towards him. His dreſs

was the model of taſte: all the young people who ſurrounded him ſtudied it with a ſcrupulous attention. His laces, his embroidery, his manner of dreſſing his head, were all examined: they wrote down the names of his trades-people and workmen, 'It is ſtrange,' ſaid they, 'we ſee theſe deſigns, theſe colours, no where elſe!' Blamzé confeſſed modeſtly, that it coſt him very little trouble. 'Induſtry,' ſaid he, 'is at its higheſt perfection; you need but to enlighten and direct it.' He took a pinch of ſnuff as he ſaid theſe words, and his box excited new curioſity; it was, however, the work of a young artiſt whom Blamzé had drawn from his obſcurity. They aſked him the price of every thing; he replied with a ſmile, that he knew the price of none of them; and the women whiſpered in each other's ear the name of the female who took theſe matters under her care.'

'I am aſhamed, Madam,' ſaid Blamzé to Lucilia, 'that theſe trifles ſhould engage the attention which ought to centre in a more intereſting object. Pardon me if I liſten to the frivolous queſtions of theſe young men: never did complaiſance coſt me ſo dear. I hope,' added he in a low voice, 'that you will permit me to come and make myſelf amends in ſome more tranquil moment.'—'I ſhall be very glad to ſee you,' replied Lucilia bluſhing, and by her bluſhes, and the tender ſmile with which Blamzé accompanied a moſt reſpectful bow, the aſſembly judged that it would not be long before matters came to a concluſion. Lucilia, who did not ſee the conſequence of a few words ſaid in her ear, and who did not think that ſhe had made an aſſignation, ſcarce paid any attention to the meaning looks which the women caſt on each other, or the light railleries which eſcaped the men. She delivered herſelf up inſenſibly to her own reflections, and was quite grave the whole evening. They often turned the converſation on Blamzé; all the company ſpoke well of him: his rivals talked of him with eſteem; Lucilia's rivals ſpoke of him with complaiſance. Nobody was more genteel,

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more gallant, more reſpectful; and of twenty women, on whoſe account he had reaſon to pride himſelf, not one had any reaſon to complain. Lucilia became attentive: nothing eſcaped her. 'Twenty women?' ſaid ſhe within herſelf; 'that is much: but where is the wonder? He ſeeks one who may be worthy to fix him, and capable of fixing herſelf.'

She hoped the next day that he would come early, and before the crowd of viſitors: ſhe waited for him; ſhe grew uneaſy; he never came; ſhe was out of temper: he writ; ſhe read his billet, and her ill-humour ceaſed. He was diſtracted to loſe the moſt agreeable moments of his life. Some impertinents had broke in upon him, he would have made his eſcape; but theſe impertinents were people of rank. It was not in his power to be happy till the next day; but he beſeeched Lucilia to receive him early, 'To abridge,' ſaid he, 'by a few hours, the cruel wearineſs of abſence.' The company came as uſual, and Lucilia received them with a coldneſs at which they were piqued. 'We ſhall not have Blamzé this evening, ſaid Clariſſa, with a diſconſolate air, 'he goes to ſup at Araminta's little box.' At theſe words Lucilia turned pale, and the gaiety which reigned around her only ſerved to redouble the grief which ſhe endeavoured to diſſemble. Her firſt emotion was, not to ſee the perfidious man more. But Clariſſa wanted, perhaps, either out of malice or jealouſy, to impute a wrong to him of which he was not guilty. It was after all engaging herſelf to nothing, to ſee him once more; and before condemning him, it was but juſt to hear him.

While ſhe was yet at her toilette, Blamzé arrives in an undreſs, but the moſt elegant undreſs in the world. Lucilia was a little ſurprized to ſee a man whom ſhe ſcarce knew appear in a diſhabille; yet if he had given himſelf time to dreſs, perhaps ſhe would have been ſorry for it. But he ſaid ſo many handſome things to her on the freſhneſs of her complexion, the beauty of her hair, the brilliancy of her morning appearance, that ſhe had

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not the courage to complain. However, Araminta did not go out of her head; but it would not have been decent to appear jealous so soon; and one reproach might betray her. She contented herself with asking him what he had done with himself the evening before. 'What did I do with myself! Do I know myself? O, how troublesome the world is? How happy are we in being forgotten and far from the crowd, in being devoted to one's self, and the person we love! Follow my advice, Lucilia, get out of this whirlwind: the more repose, the more liberty, as soon as we give ourselves up to it. Now I have mentioned the whirlwind, what do you with all these young fellows who pay court to you? They dispute with each other the conquest of you: have you vouchsafed to make a choice?' The easy familiarity of Blamzé had at first astonished Lucilia; this question entirely confounded her. 'I am impertinent, perhaps?' resumed Blamzé, who perceived it. 'Not at all,' replied Lucilia, with gentleness, 'I have nothing to conceal, and I am not afraid that any body should see through me. I amuse myself with the levity of these giddy young fellows, but not one of them seems to me worthy of a serious attachment.' Blamzé spoke of his rivals with indulgence, and thought that Lucilia judged too severely of them. 'Cleon, for example,' said he, 'has something very amiable in him; he knows nothing as yet; it is a pity, for he speaks well enough of things which he is ignorant of, and he is a proof to me, that with wit one may dispense with common sense. Clairfont is a coxcomb; but it is the first fire of his age, and he only wants to be disciplined by a woman who has seen life. Pomblac's disposition pronounces him a man of sentiment; and that simplicity which looks so like silliness, would please me well enough if I were a woman: some coquette will make her advantage of him. Little Linval is conceited, but when he has been supplanted five or six times, people will not be surprized to see him grown modest. At present,' continued Blamzé, 'none of all these will suit you; we behold you there-

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fore, free: what uſe do you make of your freedom?' —'I endeavour to enjoy it,' replied Lucilia. 'That is mere childiſhneſs' reſumed the count: 'we never enjoy our freedom but in the moment when we renounce it; and ought not to preſerve it with care, but in order to loſe it at a proper opportunity. You are young, you are handſome: do not flatter yourſelf with being long diſengaged: if you will not reſign your heart, it will reſign itſelf; but among thoſe who may pretend to it, it is of importance to make a right choice. As ſoon as you love, and even when you do not love, you will be beloved infallibly: that is not the point; but at your age women have need of finding in a lover, a counſellor, a guide, a friend, a man formed by the cuſtom of the world, and able to enlighten you in reſpect to the dangers you are going to run in it.'—'A man like yourſelf, for example!' ſaid Lucilia, in an ironical tone, and with a ſneering ſmile. 'Yes, indeed,' continued Blamzé; 'I ſhould do pretty well for your purpoſe, were it not for all this multitude that beſiege me; but how to diſengage myſelf from it.'—'Why do not diſengage yourſelf from it at all,' replied Lucilia; you would excite too many complaints, and make me too many enemies.'—'As to complaints,' ſaid the count, coldly, 'I am accuſtomed to them: as to enemies, one never gives one's ſelf the leaſt concern about them, when one has cauſe to be ſatisfied, and the good ſenſe to live for one's ſelf.'—'At my age,' ſaid Lucilia, ſmiling, 'we are ſtill too timorous, and though there were nothing farther to experience in it than the deſpair of an Araminta, that alone would make me tremble.'—'An Araminta,' replied Blamzé, without any emotion. 'Araminta is a good creature who hears reaſon, and who does not give herſelf up to deſpair: I ſee ſomebody has been talking to you of her; you ſhall have the whole account of my connections with her. Araminta is one of thoſe beauties, who ſeeing themſelves on the decline, that they may not fall into oblivion, and to revive their expiring conſequence, have occaſion from time to time to make

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ſome noiſe in the world. She has engaged me to pay her ſome ſmall attentions, and to behave to her with ſome warmth. It would not have been handſome to refuſe her, ſo I made myſelf ſubſervient to her views. In order to give the more celebrity to our adventure, ſhe has thought proper to take a little box. It was in vain that I repreſented to her that it was not worth while for a month at moſt which I had to beſtow on her: the box was furniſhed without my knowledge, and in the handſomeſt manner; ſhe made me promiſe, and there lay the grand point, to ſup with her there with an air of myſtery; yeſterday was the day appointed. Araminta, for the greater ſecrecy, invited nobody there but five of her female friends, and permitted me to carry only the like number of my friends. I went; aſſumed an air of pleaſure: was gallant and warm towards her: In a word, I let all the gueſts go away, and did not retire myſelf till half an hour after them; this was all, in my opinion that decorum required: and accordingly Araminta was charmed with me. It was ſufficient to bring her again into vogue: and I may henceforth take my leave of her whenever I pleaſe, without fear of reproach. This, Madam, is my manner of conducting myſelf. The reputation of a woman is as dear to me as my own; nay, more: it coſts me nothing to make a ſacrifice to her glory of my own vanity. The greateſt misfortune to a woman who ſets up for a beauty, is to be forſaken; I never forſake them; I leave myſelf to be diſcharged, I pretend even to be inconſolable at it, and ſometimes I have ſhut myſelf up three days ſucceſſively without ſeeing any body, in order to leave the lady from whom I had detached myſelf all the honour of the rupture. You ſee, beautiful Lucilia, that the men are not all as bad as they ſay, and that there are ſtill among us principles and morals.'

Lucilia, who had read only the romances of time paſt, was not at all accuſtomed to this new ſtyle, and her ſurprize redoubled at every ſyllable. 'What, Sir?' ſaid ſhe; 'is this what you call principles and morals?'

morals?'—'Yes, Madam; but this is rare, and the ſingular reputation which my proceedings have acquired me, does no great honour to the reſt of our youth. Upon honour, the more I think on it, the more I wiſh, for your own intereſt, that you had ſomebody like me.'—'I flatter myſelf,' ſaid Lucilia, 'that I ſhall be treated as tenderly as another, and that, at leaſt, I ſhall not experience the ſhock of being forſaken.'—'You are merry, Madam; but, to be ſerious, you deſerve a perſon who thinks, and knows how to develope thoſe qualities of heart and underſtanding, which I think I have diſcovered in you. Liſere is a good man; but he never knew how to make the moſt of his wife; and in general the deſire of pleaſing a huſband is not ſtrong enough, to induce a woman to give herſelf the trouble of being amiable to him to a certain degree. Happily, he leaves you at your own pleaſure; and you would not be worthy of ſo reaſonable a procedure, if you ſhould loſe the moſt precious time of your life in indolence or diſſipation.'—'I am not afraid,' ſaid Lucilia, 'of falling into any of theſe exceſſes.'——'We ſee, however, nothing elſe in the world.'—'True, Sir; and that is the reaſon why I ſhould be difficult in my choice, if I had any deſign of making one: for I think there is no excuſe for an attachment, but that it is ſolid and durable.'—'What, Lucilia! at your age would you pique yourſelf upon conſtancy? Really, if I thought ſo, I ſhould be capable of committing a folly.'——'And that folly would be——' 'To grow prudent, and attach myſelf in good earneſt.'——'Seriouſly! would you have the courage?'—'Upon my credit, I am a little fearful of it, if you would have me own the truth.'—'A ſtrange declaration!'—'It is a little ill expreſſed; but I beg you will pardon me: it is the firſt in my life.'—'The firſt, ſay you?'—'Yes, Madam: hitherto they have had the modeſty to ſpare me the trouble of making advances; but I ſee plainly that I grow old.'—'Well, Sir, for the novelty of the thing, I pardon you this

firſt

firſt eſſay: I will do more ſtill, I will confeſs to you, that it cannot diſpleaſe me.'----'That is happineſs indeed! Do you give me leave to love you; and will you do me the honour to love me too?'---'Ah! that is another thing; time ſhall ſhew me whether you deſerve it.'---'Look at me, Lucilia.'---'I do look at you.'---'And do not you laugh?'---'What ſhould I laugh at?'----'At your own anſwer. Do you take me for a child?'---'I talk reaſonably to you, I think.'---'And it is in order to talk reaſonably to me, that you have done me the honour to grant me a *tête à tête?*'---I did not think, that in order to be reaſonable, we had need of witneſſes; after all, what have I ſaid to you, which you ought not to have expected? I find in you graces, wit, an engaging and noble air.'---'You are very good.'---'But that is not enough to merit my confidence, and determine my inclination.'------'Not enough, Madam! excuſe me a little. Pleaſe to inform me, what you would require more?'----'A more thorough knowledge of your temper, a more intimate perſuaſion of your ſentiments for me. I promiſe you nothing. I forbid myſelf nothing; you have every thing to hope, but nothing to claim: you are to conſider whether that ſuits you.'---'No price, without doubt, beautiful Lucilia, ſhould be thought too dear to merit and obtain you: but ſeriouſly, would you have me renounce all the charms of the world to have my happineſs depend on an uncertain contingency? I am, you know, and I am not conceited of it, I am the man the moſt ſought after in all France; be it taſte or fancy, it is no matter; it is her concern that ſhould have me, though but for a time.'---'You are right,' ſaid Lucilia; 'I was unreaſonable, and your moments are too precious.'---'No, I confeſs to you ſeriouſly, that I am tired of being in faſhion; I was looking out for an object that might fix me: I have found it; I attach myſelf: nothing can be more fortunate; but ſtill this ought not to be to no purpoſe. You would have time for reflection; I give you twenty-four hours: I think

I think that is very handſome, and I never gave ſo much time before.'---' My reflections are too ſlow,' replied Lucilia, 'and you are too much in a hurry for us to agree on this point. I am young, perhaps have ſenſibility; but my age and ſenſibility ſhall never engage me in an imprudent ſtep. I have told you, if my heart yields, time, proofs, reflection, the pleaſing habitude of confidence and eſteem, will have decided its choice.'------' Madam, in good earneſt, now do you think to find an amiable man ſufficiently diſengaged to loſe his time in ſpinning out an intrigue to this length? and do you yourſelf intend to paſs your youth in conſulting whether you ſhall love or no?'----' I cannot tell,' replied Lucilia, 'whether I ſhall ever love, nor what time I ſhall employ in reſolving: but that time will not be loſt, if it ſpares me regret.'-----' I admire you, Madam; I admire you!' ſaid Blamzé, taking his leave; 'but I have not the honour to be of the ancient order of chivalry, and I did not come here ſo early to compoſe a romance with you.'

Lucilia thunderſtruck at the ſcene which ſhe had juſt had with Blamzé, paſſed in a ſhort time from aſtoniſhment to reflection. 'Is this, then, ſaid ſhe, the man in vogue, the moſt amiable man in the world? He condeſcends to think me handſome; and if he believed me capable of conſtancy, he would be guilty of the folly of loving me in good earneſt; but yet he has not time to wait till I have conſulted myſelf. I muſt ſeize the moment of pleaſing him, and determine in twenty-four hours: he never gave ſo much time before. Do the women, then, humble themſelves thus, and the men thus preſcribe them the condition? happily he has made himſelf known to me. Under that modeſt air which had ſeduced me, what conceit, what preſumption! Ah! I ſee, the moſt mortifying evil to a woman, is that of loving a fop.'

The ſame day after the opera, Lucilia's company being met together, Pomblac came to tell her, with an air of myſtery, that ſhe would have neither Blamzé

nor Clairfont to ſup with her. 'Very well,' ſaid ſhe, 'I require not of my friends any aſſiduity that conſtrains them: there are even ſuch people whoſe aſſiduity would conſtrain me.'—'If Blamzé be of that number,' replied Pomblac frankly, 'Clairfont has delivered you from him, at leaſt for ſome time.'---'How ſo?'---'Do not be frightened: all is very well over.'---'How, Sir, what is over?'-----'After the opera, the curtain being dropped, we were on the ſtage, and, according to cuſtom, hearing Blamzé deciding on every thing. Having given us his opinion on the ſinging, the dancing, and the decorations, he aſked us, if we were to ſup at the little marchioneſs's: (pardon me, Madam, it was you he ſpoke of.) We replied, "Yes."---"I ſhall not be there," ſaid he; "we are in the pouts ſince this morning." I aſked what might be the cauſe of theſe pouts. Blamzé told us that you had made him an aſſignation; that he never came; that you were piqued at it; that he had made up that this morning; that you played the child; that he was in a hurry to conclude; that you had demanded time for reflection; and that, tired out with your *ifs* and your *buts*, he had left you in the lurch. He told us, that you wanted to ſet off with a ſerious engagement; that he had ſome inclination to it; but that he had not time enough on his hands; that, on calculating the ſtrength of the citadel, he had judged that it might ſuſtain a ſiege; but that nothing would do for him but a ſurprize. "It is an exploit that may ſuit ſome of you," added he; "you are young, it is the time when one loves to encounter difficulties, in order to overcome them; but I forewarn you, that virtue is her fort, and ſenſibility her weak part: every thing was concluded, if I had taken the trouble to play the paſſionate lover!" I was fully perſuaded that he lied,' reſumed the young man, but I had the prudence to be ſilent. Clairfont was not ſo patient as I: he ſignified to him, that he did not believe one word of his ſtory; and at this declaration they went out together. I followed them.

Clairfont

Clairfont received a wound'-----' And Blamzé-----?' ' Blamzé has two, of which he will not recover without ſome difficulty. While I helped him to get into his coach, " It Clairfont," ſaid he, " knows how to make an advantage of this adventure, he will carry Lucilia. A woman defends herſelf but ill againſt a man who defends her ſo well. Tell him that I diſpenſe with this being a ſecret to her; it is juſt that ſhe ſhould know what ſhe owes to her knight." Lucilia had all the difficulty in the world to conceal the trouble and conſternation which this ſtory gave her. She feigned a head-ache, and it is well known that a head ache, in a handſome woman, is a civil way of diſmiſſing impertinents: ſo they left her alone at their riſing from table.

Delivered up to herſelf, Lucilia could not conſole herſelf for having been the ſubject of a duel, which would make her the town talk. She was ſtrongly touched by the warmth with which Clairfont had revenged the affront offered her; but what an humiliation to her if this adventure ſhould make a noiſe, and Lifere ſhould be informed of it? Happily the ſecret was kept. Pomblac and Clairfont made a point of ſaving Lucilia's honour; and Blamzé, being cured of his wounds, was far from boaſting of an imprudence by which he had been ſo ſeverely puniſhed. It will be aſked, perhaps, how a man, till then ſo diſcreet, came all of a ſudden to ceaſe to be ſo. It is becauſe we are under leſs temptation to publiſh favours which we obtain, than to avenge ourſelves for the rigours we undergo. This firſt indiſcretion had like to have coſt him his life. He was for a month on the brink of the grave. Clairfont had leſs difficulty to get his wound cured, and Lucilia ſaw him again with a tenderneſs hitherto unknown to him. If we attach ourſelves to any one who has expoſed his life for us, we attach ourſelves as naturally to the perſon for whom we have expoſed our life; and ſuch ſervices, perhaps, are ſtronger ties to the perſon who has performed them, than to the party for whom they were performed. Clairfont then became

came desperately in love with Lucilia; but the more she owed him in return, the less he dared to require any thing of her; he found a sensible pleasure in being generous, and he ceased to be so if he availed himself of the rights he had required to Lucilia's gratitude: accordingly, he was more timorous than if he had merited nothing; but Lucilia read his soul, and this delicacy took the strongest hold of her. In the mean time, the fear of appearing to want gratitude, or the dread of carrying it too far, made her dissemble her knowledge of the intelligence Pombiac had given her; thus the good-will she testified towards Clairfont appeared free and disinterested, and he was so much the more affected by it. Their mutual inclination every day made a sensible progress. They sought one another with their eyes, conferred with intimacy, listened to each other with complaisance, gave one another an account of their proceedings, in reality, without affectation, and, as it were, for the sake of saying something; but with so much exactness, that they knew, almost to a minute, the hour at which they were to see each other again. Clairfont insensibly became more familiar, and Lucilia less reserved. Nothing remained but to explain themselves; for which purpose there was no need of those marvellous incidents which love sometimes sends to the assistance of bashful lovers. One day that they were alone, Lucilia let her fan drop; Clairfont picks it up, and presents it to her; she receives it with a pleasing smile; that smile inspires the lover with the courage to kiss her hand; that hand was the most beautiful hand in the world; and from the moment that Clairfont's lips were applied to it, she was unable to withdraw it. Lucilia, in her emotion, made a slight effort to draw back her hand; he opposed a gentle violence, and his eyes tenderly fixed on Lucilia's eyes, entirely disarmed her. Their looks had expressed every thing before their tongues interfered; and the mutual confession of their love was made and returned in two words. 'I breathe, we love!' said Clairfont,

intoxicated

intoxicated with joy. 'Alas! yes, we do love!' replied Lucilia, with a profound ſigh; 'it is no longer time to deny it. But remember that I am bound by duties; thoſe duties are inviolable; and, if I am dear to you, they will be ſacred.'

Lucilia's inclination was not one of thoſe faſhionable paſſions which ſtifle ſhame in their infancy, and Clairfont reſpected it too much to take advantage of it as a weakneſs. Tranſported with being loved, he for a long time confined his deſires to the delicious poſſeſſion of a heart pure, virtuous, and faithful. 'How little we love,' ſaid he to himſelf in his delirium, 'when we are not made happy by the ſingle pleaſure of loving! Who was the ſtupid ſavage who firſt branded with the name of rigour that reſiſtance which timid modeſty oppoſes to wild deſire? Is there, beautiful Lucilia, is there a denial which your looks would not ſoften? Can I complain when you ſmile upon me? And has my ſoul any wiſhes ſtill to form, when my eyes draw from yours that heavenly voluptuouſneſs with which you intoxicate all my ſenſes? Far be from us, I conſent to it, all thoſe pleaſures followed by regrets, which would trouble the ſerenity of your life. I reſpect your virtue as much as you cheriſh it yourſelf; and I ſhould never pardon myſelf the having cauſed any remorſe to ſpring up in the boſom of innocence itſelf.' Sentiments ſo heroic charmed Lucilia; and Clairfont, more tender every day, was every day more beloved, more happy, and more worthy to be ſo. But at length the railleries of his friends, and the ſuſpicions they excited in him with reſpect to that virtue which he adored, embittered his happineſs. He became gloomy, uneaſy, jealous; every thing vexed him, every thing gave him umbrage. Lucilia every day perceived her chain become cloſer and heavier; every day there were new complaints to hear, new reproaches to undergo. Every man that ſhe received with civility was a rival whom ſhe muſt baniſh. The firſt ſacrifices that he required were made without oppoſition: he demanded new ones, he obtained

tained them; he wanted ſtill more, ſhe was weary of obeying him. Clairfont imagined he ſaw in Lucilia's impatience an invincible attachment to the connections which he prohibited; and that love, at firſt ſo delicate and ſubmiſſive, became fierce and tyrannical. Lucilia was terrified; ſhe ſought to appeaſe him, but to no purpoſe. 'I will not believe,' ſaid the imperious Clairfont, 'I will not believe that you love me till you live for me alone, as I do for you. What! if I poſſeſs, if I fill your ſoul, what do you do with this troubleſome crowd? Ought it to coſt you any thing to baniſh what afflicts me? Would it coſt me any pain to renounce every thing that would diſpleaſe you? What do I ſay? Is it not a continual violence that I do myſelf to ſee any thing but Lucilia? Would to Heaven we were freed from this crowd, which beſieges you, and which deprives me every moment either of your looks or your thoughts! The ſolitude that ſo terrifies you would compleat all my wiſhes. Are not our ſouls of the ſame nature? or the love which you think you feel, is it not the ſame that I feel? You complain that I demand ſacrifices of you! Require, Lucilia, require in your turn; chuſe the moſt painful, the moſt grievous trials; you ſhall ſee whether I heſitate. There is no connection which I would not break, no effort which I would not make; or rather I ſhould not make any. The pleaſure of gratifying you will make me amends, will ſerve inſtead of every thing; and what they call denials would be to me enjoyments.'—'You think ſo, Clairfont,' replied the tender and ingenuous Lucilia, 'but you deceive yourſelf. Each of theſe denials is but little; but altogether make up a great deal. It is the continuance of them that is tireſome: you have made me know by experience, that no complaiſance is inexhauſtible.' While ſhe ſpoke thus, Clairfont's eyes, ſparkling with impatience, were ſometimes turned up to heaven, and ſometimes fixed on her. 'Believe me,' continued Lucilia, 'the ſacrifices of true love are made in the heart, and under the veil of myſtery

myſtery: ſelf-love alone demands public ones; to that victory is little; it aſpires to the honours of a triumph; and that is what you exact.'

'What a cold analyſis,' cried he, 'and what vain metaphyſics! Love, to be ſure, reaſons thus! I love you, Madam; nothing, to my misfortune, is truer; I would ſacrifice a thouſand lives to pleaſe you; and whatever may be this ſentiment which you call ſelf-love, it detaches me from the whole world to deliver myſelf up to you; but in abominating myſelf thus, I would poſſeſs you in the ſame manner. Cleon, Linval, Pombiac, all theſe are ſufficient to make me uneaſy: I cannot anſwer for myſelf. After this, if you love me, nothing ought to be more precious to you than my repoſe; and my uneaſineſs, were it even a folly, you ought to diſſipate. But why do I ſay a folly? You render my alarms and ſuſpicions but too reaſonable. And how ſhould I be eaſy, when I ſee that every one who comes near you engages you more than myſelf?'

'Ah, Sir! what acknowledgements do I owe you?' ſaid Lucilia with a ſigh; 'you make me ſee the depth of the abyſs into which love was going to plunge me. Yes, I ſee that there is no ſlavery comparable to that which a jealous lover impoſes.'—'I, Madam! do I make you a ſlave? Have not even you an abſolute empire over me? do not you do what you pleaſe with me?'—'Enough, Sir: I have ſuffered a long time; I flattered myſelf; but you now draw me out of my illuſion, and nothing can lead me into it again. Be my friend, if you can be ſo: it is the only title that remains to you with me.'—'Ah, cruel woman! would you have my death?'—'I want nothing but your eaſe and my own.'—'You overwhelm me. What is my crime?'—'Loving yourſelf too well, and not eſteeming me enough.'—'Ah! I ſwear to you—' 'Swear r thing: your jealouſy is a vice in your diſpoſition, . the diſpoſition never corrects itſelf. I know you, Chirſont; I begin to dread you, and ceaſe to love you.

you. This very moment I see my frankness makes you desperate; but of two punishments I chuse the shortest; and by taking away from you the right of being jealous, I create you the happy necessity of ceasing to be so.'——'I know you in my turn,' replied Clairfont with a stifled rage: the delicacy of a sensible soul ill agrees with the levity of yours; it is a Blamzé that you must have for a lover, and I was a fool to take it ill . . . .'—'Go no farther, interrupted Lucilia, I know all that I owe to you; but I retire, to spare you the shame of having reproached me with it.'

Clairfont went off in a rage, and fully resolved never more to revisit a woman whom he had so tenderly loved, and who had dismissed him with so much inhumanity.

Lucilia, restored to herself, found herself, as it were, relieved from a burden that overwhelmed her. But, on one side, the dangers of love, which she had just experienced, on the other, the sad prospect of everlasting indifference, suffered her to hope hereafter for nothing but cruel disquietudes, or insupportable dulness. 'What,' said she, has Heaven given me a sensible heart, only to make me the sport of a fop, the victim of a tyrant, or the gloomy companion of a kind of philosopher, neither affected nor moved at any thing!' These reflections plunged her into a languor which she was not able to conceal: her company perceived it, and became soon as melancholy as herself. The women, to whom her house was a rendezvous, were alarmed at it. 'She is lost,' said they, 'if we draw her not out of this sad state; she is disgusted with the world: she loves nothing but solitude; the symptoms of her melancholy become every day more terrible; and, by the force of some violent passion which agitates her, it is to be feared that she will fall again into the power of her husband. Do we know nobody to turn this young head? Blamzé himself set about it the wrong way, and did not succeed: as to Clairfont, on whom we depended, he is a little fool who loves like a madman; no wonder she

should

ſhould be affronted.'——' Hold,' ſaid Cephiſa, after being loſt in thought for ſome time, 'Lucilia has a romantic way of thinking; ſhe muſt have ſomething in the fairy taſte, and the magnificent Dorimon is exactly the man that ſuits her. She will grow mad for him, I am ſure; let us engage him only to go and invite her to ſupper at his fine country-houſe: I will take upon me to give him his leſſon.' The party was accepted, and Dorimon made acquainted with it.

Dorimon was the man in the world who knew beſt the moſt able artiſts, received them with the beſt grace, and recompenſed them moſt liberally; accordingly, he had the reputation of a connoiſſeur, and a man of taſte.

If, ſome centuries hence, this tale ſhould be read, they may imagine it mere fiction, and the habitation I am going to deſcribe may paſs for a fairy caſtle; but it is not my fault if the luxury of our times come into competition with the marvellous of fables, and if, in the repreſentation of our follies, probability ſhould be wanting to truth.

On the rich banks of the Seine ariſes, in form of an amphitheatre, a ſmall eminence expoſed to the firſt rays of the morning, and the ardent fires of noon. The foreſt which crowns it, defends it from the chilling blaſt of the north, and the watry influence of the weſt. From the ſummit of the hill fall in caſcades three copious ſprings of water purer than chryſtal, which the induſtrious hand of art has conducted by a thouſand windings over green ſlopes. Sometimes theſe waters divide themſelves, and glide along in meanders; ſometimes they re-unite in baſons, in which the heavens behold themſelves with delight; then they precipitate themſelves, and pour along, daſhing againſt rocks cut out into grottoes in which the chizzel has imitated the fanciful varieties of nature. The Seine, which forms a bow at the foot of the hill, receives them into his peaceable boſom; and their fall recalls to our minds thoſe fabulous times in which the nymphs of the fountains deſcended

ſcended into the humid palace of the rivers, to temper the ardours of youth and love.

An ingenious whimſicalneſs ſeems to have deſigned the gardens watered by theſe ſtreams. All ſides of this ſmiling ſcene agree without ſameneſs; the very ſymmetry is ſtriking; the eye roves without laſſitude, and repoſes without dulneſs. A noble elegance, a richneſs well managed, a bold and yet delicate taſte, have been employed in embelliſhing them. Nothing is neglected, nothing forced or laboured with too much art. The concourſe of ſimple beauties forms all its magnificence; and the equilibrium of maſſes, joined to the variety of forms, produces that beautiful harmony which forms the delight of beholders.

Groves ornamented with ſtatues, lattice-work faſhioned into arbours and bowers, decorate all the known gardens; but theſe riches diſplayed without underſtanding and taſte, generally excite nothing more than a cold and dull admiration, ſoon attended with ſatiety. Here the diſpoſition and connection of the parts form, of a thouſand different ſenſations, but one continued enchantment. The ſecond object that is diſcovered adds to the pleaſure raiſed by the firſt; and both are ſtill farther embelliſhed by the charms of the new object that ſucceeds without effacing them.

This delicious landſcape is terminated by a palace of ſuch airy architecture, that the Corinthian order itſelf has leſs elegance and lightneſs. Here the columns imitated the palm-trees united in arbours. The roof of the vault, formed of palms, compoſes a chapitre more natural and as noble as the vaſe of Callimachus. Theſe palms were interwoven among each other in the interſtices of the columns, and their natural wreathings concealed from the deceived eye the heavineſs of the entablature. As theſe columns are ſufficient for the weight of the edifice, they leave continued tranſparency to the walls, by means of chaſms artfully contrived. We ſee none of thoſe double roofs which cruſh our modern archi-

architecture: and the frightful irregularity of our Gothic chimnies is loſt in the crown-work.

The interior luxury of the palace is ſuitable to the magnificence without. It is, in ſhort, the temple of the arts and of taſte. The pencil, the chizzel, the graving tool, every thing that induſtry has invented for the delicacies of life, is there diſplayed with a diſcreet profuſion; and the Pleaſures, the daughters of Opulence, there flatter the ſoul through all the ſenſes.

Lucilia was dazzled with ſo much magnificence; the firſt evening appeared to her a dream; it was nothing but one continued ſcene of ſhews and feaſtings, of which ſhe plainly perceived herſelf was the divinity. The earneſtneſs, the vivacity, the gallantry with which Dorimon did the honours of this beautiful dwelling, the changes of ſcene which he produced with one ſingle look, the abſolute empire which he ſeemed to exerciſe over the arts and pleaſures, recalled to Lucilia's imagination every thing that ſhe read of the moſt celebrated enchanters. She dare not truſt her eyes, and even thought herſelf enchanted. If Dorimon had availed himſelf of the intoxication into which ſhe was plunged, the dream perhaps had ended after the manner of modern romances. But Dorimon was merely gallant; and all he had the courage to permit himſelf to do, was to aſk Lucilia to come ſometimes and embelliſh his hermitage, for ſo he called his manſion.

Lucilia's companions had obſerved her with attention. The moſt experienced judged that Dorimon was too much taken up with his magnificence, and too little with his happineſs. 'He ought,' ſaid they, 'to have ſeized the firſt moment of ſurprize: it is a kind of tranſport which we do not feel twice.'

In the mean time, Lucilia's head being filled with all that ſhe had juſt ſeen, ſhe formed to herſelf the moſt wonderful idea of Dorimon himſelf. So much gallantry beſpoke an imagination briſk and ſprightly, a cultivated genius, a delicate taſte, and a lover, if ever there was one, wholly taken up with the care of pleaſing.

ing. This portrait, though a little too flattering, was not wholly unlike. Dorimon was yet young, of an engaging figure, and a moſt joyous temper. His wit was all in ſallies: he had in his way of thinking little warmth, but much refinement. Nobody ſaid more gallant things; but he had not the gift of enforcing them: every body loved to hear him, but nobody believed him. He was the moſt ſeducing man in the world for a coquette, the leaſt dangerous to a woman of ſentiment.

She conſented to ſee him again at his own houſe, and this gave occaſion to new entertainments. But in vain had the gallantry of Dorimon re-aſſembled there all the pleaſures which ſhe had given birth to; in vain were theſe pleaſures varied every inſtant with as much art as taſte: Lucilia was at firſt ſlightly moved, ſoon after ſatiated; and before the cloſe of the day, ſhe conceived it poſſible to grow dull in this delicious abode. Dorimon, who never quitted her, exerted all the talents of pleaſing; he held her in diſcourſe on a thouſand ingenious ſubjects, he mingled alſo ſome ſoft things with them; but ſtill this was not what ſhe had conceived. She thought to find a god, and Dorimon was but a man; the pomp of his houſe eclipſed him; proportions were not obſerved; and Dorimon, while he ſurpaſſed himſelf, was all the while inferior to the idea which every thing around him inſpired.

He was very far from ſuſpecting the injury which this compariſon did him in the imagination of Lucilia, and he waited only one happy moment to avail himſelf of his advantages. After the concert, and before ſupper, he led her, as it were by chance, into a ſolitary cloſet, where ſhe might go, he ſaid, and ruminate, when ſhe ſhould have any moments of pouting. The door opens, and Lucilia ſees her image reflected a thouſand times in the dazzling pier-glaſſes; the voluptuous paintings with which the pannels were covered, multiplied themſelves around her. Lucilia admiring herſelf thought ſhe beheld the goddeſs of loves. At this ſight an exclamation of ſurprize and admiration eſcaped her, and

Dorimon

Dorimon ſeized the inſtant of this ſudden emotion. 'Reign here; there is your throne,' ſaid he to her, ſhewing her a ſofa, which the hand of fairies had ſown with flowers. 'My throne!' ſaid Lucilia, ſeating herſelf, and with a tone of gaiety; 'well, aye, I like it pretty well, and I find myſelf the queen of a mighty pretty people.' She ſpoke of the multitude of Loves which ſhe perceived in the glaſſes. 'Amidſt theſe ſubjects, will you condeſcend, Madam, to admit me,' ſaid Dorimon with ardour, and throwing himſelf at her feet. 'Ah! as to you,' ſaid ſhe, with a ſerious air, 'you are no child;' and at theſe words ſhe would have got up, but he retained her with a ſtrong hand, and the effort ſhe made to eſcape rendered him ſtill bolder. 'Where am I then?' ſaid ſhe with terror: 'let me go; let me go, I ſay! or my cries--------' Theſe words awed him. 'Excuſe, Madam,' ſaid he, 'an imprudence, of which you are yourſelf in ſome meaſure the cauſe. To come here *tête-à-tête*, and repoſe yourſelf on this ſofa as you have done, is giving to underſtand, according to the received cuſtom, that a little violence would not be ill-taken. With you I ſee plainly that it means nothing; we miſunderſtand each other.'—'O very much,' ſaid Lucilia, going out in a rage; and Dorimon followed her, a little confounded at his miſtake. Happily their abſence had not been long enough to give time for ſlander to ſpeak ill of it. Lucilia diſſembling her perturbation, told the company that ſhe had juſt been ſeeing a very fine cabinet. They ran there in a body; and their exclamations of admiration were only interrupted by the coming in of ſupper.

The ſumptuouſneſs of this feaſt ſeemed to improve ſtill upon all the pleaſures that they had taſted. But Dorimon endeavoured in vain to do the honours of it: he had loſt that gaiety which was ſo natural to him; and Lucilia replied to the gallant things they addreſſed to her, in order to draw her out of her reverie, only by a forced ſmile, with which good-breeding endeavours to diſguiſe ill-humour.

'There,' said her friends to her, on going home with her, 'there now is a man who suits you: with him life is a continual enchantment; it appears as if all the pleasures obeyed his voice; the moment he commands, they arrive in troops.'

'There are some,' said Lucilia coldly, 'which cannot be commanded: they are above riches; we find them only in our hearts.'—'Upon my word, my dear,' said Cephisa to her, 'you are very difficult.'—'Yes, Madam, very difficult,' replied she with a sigh: and during the rest of the journey they kept a profound silence. 'This is nothing but a handsome woman spoiled,' said her friends, at quitting her; yet if her whims were chearful ones, we might amuse ourselves with them: but nothing in the world is more gloomy. It was worth while indeed to separate from her husband, to be a prude to the rest of the world!'

'Is this then the world so much boasted of? said Lucilia, on her side; I have passed rapidly through every thing agreeable in it; what have I found? a coxcomb, a jealous lover, a vain man, who arrogates to himself, as so many charms, his gardens, his palace, and his entertainments, and who thinks that the severest virtue can desire no better than to yield to him. Ah, how I hate those makers of romances, who have lulled me with their fables! My imagination filled with a thousand chimeras, I thought my husband insipid; and yet he is worth more than all I have seen. He is plain: but is not his plainness a thousand times preferable to the vain pretensions of a Blamzé? He is temperate in his affections, and what would become of me, if he were violent and passionate like Clairfont? He loved me little, but he loved only me; and if I had been reasonable, he loved me enough to make me happy. I had not with him those pompous and noisy pleasures which intoxicate at first, and soon after cloy: but his complaisance, his sweetness, his delicate attentions, furnished me every moment with pleasures, the most pure and solid, if I had but known how to re-

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fifh them. Fool that I was! I purfued illufions, and fled happineſs itſelf; it is placed in the ſilence of the paſſions, the equanimity and repoſe of the ſoul. But, alas! it is a late time to acknowledge my errors, when they have made me loſe the friendſhip, the confidence, perhaps the eſteem, of my huſband. Thank Heaven, I have nothing to reproach myſelf with but the indifcretion of my age.—But is I obliged to believe me in this point, and would he vouchſafe to hear me?—Ah, how difficult is it to return to one's duty, when we have once abandoned it!—Difficult! and why? Who hinders me? The dread of being humbled.—But Lucius is a good man; and if he has ſpared me in my errors, would he diſtreſs me in my reformation? I have but to detach myſelf from a pernicious ſociety, to live at home with ſuch of my female friends as my huſband reſpects, and whom I can ſee without ſhuddering. All the while that he has ſeen me delivered up to the world, he has never come near me; but if he ſees me diſguſted with myſelf, he will condeſcend, perhaps, to recall me to him; and if his heart be not reſtored to me, the only conſolation that remains to me, is that of rendering myſelf worthy of it. I ſhall be at leaſt reconciled to myſelf, if I cannot be ſo to my huſband.'

Lucius, full of grief, had kept ſight of her through all her whirl of company: he depended on the juſtneſs of her way of thinking, and the probity of her ſoul. 'She will perceive,' ſaid he, 'the frivolouſneſs of the pleaſures which ſhe ſeeks, the folly of the women, the vanity of the men, the falſity of both; and, if ſhe returns virtuous, her virtue will be but the more confirmed by the dangers it has run. But will ſhe have eſcaped all the wiles that ſurround her, the charms of flattery, the ſnares of ſeduction, the attractions of pleaſure? We deſpiſe the world when we know it thoroughly, but we give ourſelves up to it before we know it, and the heart is frequently loſt before reaſon enlightens it. O Lucius!' cried he, looking at the portrait of his wife, which in ſolitude was his only conſolation, 'O

Lucilia! you were so deserving of being happy! and I flattered myself that you would be so with me. Alas! perhaps some one of those handsome corrupters, who form at once the ornament and misfortune of the world, is at this very time employed in seducing her innocence, and is bent upon her defeat, merely for the pleasure of boasting of it. What, would my wife's shame raise an eternal barrier between us! It would no longer be permitted me to live with her, from whom death alone ought to separate me! I have betrayed her in abandoning her. Heaven had chosen me for the guardian of her imprudent and frail youth. I have consulted only custom, and I have been struck only by the frightful idea of being hated as a tyrant.

While Lisere roasted thus in this cruel uncertainty, Lucilia was not less agitated between the desire of returning, and the dread of being repulsed. Twenty times had she risen, after passing the night in sighs and tears, with the resolution of going to wait his rising, in order to throw herself at his feet, and ask his pardon. But a shame well known to sensible and delicate souls, had still withheld her footsteps. If Lisere did not despise her, if he still preserved any feeling for her, any esteem, from the time when she had broken off with her parties, from the time that she had lived retired and solitary, how came it that he had never vouchsafed to see her even once? Every day, as he went by, he enquired after his lady's health; she heard of it; she hoped that at last he would ask to see her: each day this hope was renewed; she expected, all trembling, the moment of Lisere's calling; she threw her ear as possible, in order to listen to him, and retired in tears, after having heard him ask, as he went along, '*How does my Lady do?*' She could have wished to have Lisere informed of her repentance, of her return to herself: 'But to whom can I trust,' said she, 'to friends? is there one of them faithful enough, discreet enough, wise enough for so delicate an interposition? Some of them might have the talents but had

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not the zeal; and others had the zeal, but not the talents: beſides, it is ſo hard to truſt to others what we dare not confeſs ourſelves! A letter . . . . . ; but what ſhall I write to him? General expreſſions would not touch him, and particulars are ſo humiliating! At length a thought came into her head, by which her delicacy and ſenſibility were equally ſatisfied. Lilere had anointed himſelf for two days, and Lucilla ſeized the opportunity of his abſence to execute her deſign.

Lilere had an old ſervant whom Lucilla ſaw melting into tears at the moment of their ſeparation, and whoſe zeal, honeſty, and diſcretion, were well known to her. 'Ambroiſe,' ſaid ſhe to him, 'I have a favour to aſk of you.'—'Ah, Madam!' ſaid the good man, 'command me; I am yours with all my ſoul: would to God that you and my maſter loved one another as I love you! I know not which of you is wrong, but I am ſorry for you both; it would be delightful to ſee you together, and I ſee nothing here which does not give me ſorrow, ever ſince you have been on ill-terms.'—'It is perhaps my fault,' ſaid Lucilla, humiliated; 'but my dear Ambroiſe, the evil is not without remedy: only do what I ſhall tell you. You know that my portrait is in your maſter's chamber.'—'O yes, Madam, he knows it very well too; for he ſometimes ſhuts himſelf up with it for whole days: it is all his conſolation. He looks at it, he talks to it, he ſighs moſt pitifully; and I ſee plainly that the poor gentleman would ſtill much rather converſe with you than with your picture.'—'You tell me very comfortable news, my dear Ambroiſe; but go and take away that portrait privately, and chuſe, in order to bring it me, a time when you may not be ſeen by any body.'—'I, Madam, deprive my maſter of all that he holds deareſt in the world! rather aſk my life.'—'Be aſſured,' replied Lucilla, 'my deſign is not to deprive him of it. To-morrow evening thou ſhalt come and fetch it, to put it in its place again: I will only beg of you to ſay nothing to my huſband.'—'Very well,' ſaid Ambroiſe, 'I know that you are goodneſs itſelf,

life, and you would not now, at the latter end of my life, give me the mortification of having made my mother unhappy.' The faithful Amber is executed Lucilla's order. She had in her pencil the tender and languishing air which was natural to her; her dress was serene, and her hair set with flowers. She sent for her painter, and ordered him to draw her with her hair dishevelled, and to paint the tears trickling from her eyes. As soon as her idea was carried into execution, the picture was replaced in Lifere's apartment. He comes into it, and his eyes are soon fixed on the dear object. It is easy to conceive how great was his surprize. The dishevelled hair strikes him first; he draws near, and sees the tears flow. 'Ah!' cried he; 'is, Lucilia! are these the tears of repentance? Is that the sorrow of love?' He goes out transported; he flies to her, he seeks her with his eyes, and he finds her in the same situation as the picture had represented her. Immoveable for a moment, he eyes her with tenderness, and suddenly throwing himself at her feet, 'Is it really true,' said he, 'that my wife is restored to me?'—'Yes,' said Lucilia with sighs; 'yes, if you think her still worthy of you:'—'Can she have ceased to be so,' replied Lifere, locking her in his arms? 'No, my dear, be comforted; I know your soul, and I have never ceased to mourn and to esteem you. You would not return to me if the world had been able to seduce you, and this voluntary return is the proof of your virtue.'—'Oh! thank Heaven,' said she, her heart being eased by the tears which flowed in abundance from her eyes, 'I thank Heaven, I have no occasion to blush at it: I have been foolish, but not criminal.'—'If I doubted it, would you now be in my bosom?' replied Lifere; and at these words.....but who can describe the transports of two sensible hearts, which, after having groaned under a cruel separation, were reunited for ever. On learning their reconciliation, the family were filled with joy, and the good Androis find his

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eyes ſwimming with tears, 'God be praiſed! I ſhall now die content.'

From that day, the tender union of this pair ſerves as an example to all thoſe of their age. Their divorce has convinced them that the world had nothing that could make either of them amends: and this is what I call A HAPPY DIVORCE.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.