





HUMAN BEINGS,

A NOVEL.



VOLUME I.



# HUMAN BEINGS,

*La-fage Royal. 1830*

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY FRANCIS LATHOM,

Author of Men and Manners—The Mysterious Freebooter—  
Mystery—The Impenetrable Secret—Astonishment—The  
Midnight Bell—Erestina, &c. &c.

"SUCH THINGS ARE."

VOLUME I.

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## P R E F A C E.



EVER since my pen has been a servant of the public I have felt a considerable degree of anxiety about publishing any Novel of which the scenes are drawn from common life.—The first rule of such a composition is, that the characters contained in it be natural ones;—the next, that they shall have a little strength of colouring given to them to render them acceptable in fiction.—Being natural, every reader of course finds in them some resemblance either to the minds or manners of some of his acquaintance; and if these persons happen also to be known to the author, he is immediately accused of personality; and every page of his book is construed into a caricature of some existing individual.

Now I do not take upon me to decide whether, in those who form these constructions, the error arises from a confined knowledge of the earth's inhabitants; that, being acquainted with only one of a kind, they conclude every like to be the same; as was the case with an old lady, who, never having seen any grey parrot but her own, entertained no doubt of a coloured representation which was shown her of a grey parrot, being her own grey parrot; or from the worse motive of endeavouring to mortify those to whom *they point out a resemblance*.—I say mortify, because I have invariably remarked, that they are the disagreeable, never the pleasant characters of any tale to which these resemblances are traced; and therefore I am much inclined to apprehend that illiberality is too often the magnifying glass through which the likeness is discovered:—However, be the cause what it may, aware that I was once most unjustly charged with an accusation of this nature, I trust that from the liberal minded I shall gain ready belief when I assert, that, however meagre my own invention, I never did, nor ever will supply the deficiency by sporting

with the foibles even of an enemy, much less of a friend; that I hold both characters, in this respect, equally sacred; that I consider the author who dips his pen but one hair's breath into the dirty water of personal satire, to deserve only contempt from the world, however ingenious the materials which he may extract from such impolitic daring, to treat it with; and the dullest of all authors who religiously refuses to make toys of the feelings of his fellow beings, a million times his superior in the scale of merit.

The present age savours so much of the world turned up side down, that the progress of daily events furnishes an author with superabundant matter, without placing him under the necessity of making his observations upon his neighbour's fire-side circle, in order to catch hints for his pen; as we are told authors used to be obliged to do, when human beings were more famed for regularity of conduct and decorum of manners. Numerous inversions of customs have taken place in this age of reform, which afford the novelist subjects that were never

known to his predecessors of half a century ago ; then boarding school girls were only employed in making puff-paste and ironing ruffles ; now they are studying how to captivate lovers and atchieve elopements :—married women were then employed in going to market and bringing up their children ; now they are engaged in studying languages and learning to draw, in order to make up for time mis-spent at school ; add to these, modern philosophers studying to improve the structure of frogs, by giving them silver legs to leap upon, instead of those nature designed for their use ; interesting females who cannot calculate the amount of five yards of five-penny ribbon at their milliner's shop, beating great generals at chess ; those great generals surpassing them again in the composition of sonnets to sun-beams and butterflies ; and little poetical Laura Marias, not six months entered into their teens, who attack you at every turn with, “ Pray, Sir, have you read the lay of the last Minstrel ? ”

But after all, these copious materials act towards the formation of a whole only like a

painter's colour box towards the composition of a picture; the lights and shades are full as difficult to group upon paper as upon canvass; and the impression also under which they meet the observation of those to whose contemplation they are offered, has great weight in producing the approbation or censure which they meet with;—for instance, any one who had been charmed with the wild and spirited exertions of the inimitable Fuseli's masterly pencil in the delineation of Macbeth and the Weird Sisters; or, of the Fairies in the Midsummer Night's Dream; and desiring, from the pleasure which he had received from viewing these paintings, to be shown another by the same designer, and to have produced to him the simple figure of an unadorned rustic; would in all probability be disappointed, however perfect and exquisite of its kind that piece might in every respect be, because it was not in the same style as those which had already charmed him.—In the same situation stands the author who has lately been accustomed to appear to the world in the glittering garb of courts,

castles, processions, battles, and mysteries, when he enters their presence in plain attire, and attempts only to delineate common place events and characters with fidelity to nature. — This, in the present instance, is my case; but trusting that of the numerous novel readers of the present day, an equal proportion at least, still retains a relish for what is natural and consistent, I feel no hesitation in occasionally quitting the gloomy and terrific tracks of a Radcliffe to become an humble follower of the more lively walks of a Burney and a Robinson.

In the subsequent pages I am conscious in only one instance of owing any thing to those who have gone before me; and that is my first idea of the character of Sir Jasper Wormeaten, which originally arose to my mind from contemplating that of Lord Ogleby. I considered that the lapse of nearly forty years had rendered an old beau so different a being to what he was at the period that the admirable comedy of the *Clandestine Marriage* made its appearance, that the

ground might safely, if not with novelty, be trodden over again; and I doubt not from the change which has taken place in dress and manners since that day, whether the imitation would be at all observable were it not pointed out, which it is my choice to do; as I do not wish to claim any greater degree of originality than is my due;—"To be spoken of as I am, nothing extenuated nor aught *set down in malice*," is the rule by which I always wish to be tried at the bar of criticism.

If an author is not utterly destitute of every generous feeling, in proportion to the indulgence with which he has been treated by the public are his apprehensions for the fate of every novelty which he submits to the fiat of its decisive voice:—sensible of the increasing obligations which I am under to its candour, gratitude will ever impel me to exert my powers to the utmost for its future entertainment. Success shall never hurry me into the unpardonable error of omitting to pay that attention to every page I publish,

which the public is justified in expecting that every author will bestow on the subject for which he solicits its patronage; I shall therefore always be better satisfied to be thought unfortunate in any attempt to please my readers, than deficient in the respect which I consider due to them.

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# HUMAN BEINGS.



## CHAPTER I.

### *The little Drummer-Boy.*

IT was one evening about five o'clock, in the first week of October, in the year 178—, that a violent shower of hail and rain compelled such passengers, as preferred dry clothes to wet ones, to seek shelter beneath the first covered avenue that presented itself to their view.

Under one of these, almost on the very spot where Holborn ends, and the precincts of Saint Giles's commence, one of the assembled group who were seeking preservation from the shower, was a gentleman plainly dressed, who continued walking backwards and forwards as far as the extent of the pas-

sage would permit him to do, as if apprehensive of taking cold from the draught which blew through it.

On one side of the passage was a flight of stairs leading to various mean habitations, and on the last step of these, sat a little girl about five years of age, weeping bitterly, whose sobs were unheeded by the persons near her, till they attracted the notice of a drummer-boy, who appeared to be at most twice her own age, and who desisted from practising a roll on his drum, to ask her what she cried for.

At the moment he asked the question, the gentleman whom we have just before mentioned, attracted likewise by her tears, stopped opposite to her, listening for her reply to the demand of the drummer-boy.

"My mammy and sister," answered the little girl, "are both very sick, almost dying, and they have not a bit of bread to eat; and I have had no victuals to-day myself; and I am so hungry: O dear! O dear!" and with these words she burst into a fresh flood of tears.

"I have got a penny, I'll give you if you like," said the little drummer-boy, producing it as he spoke.

“Is that all the money you have got?” asked the gentleman.

“Yes, I have no more,” returned the boy, “and this was to buy me a mutton-pye for my supper; but I have had a good dinner, and that little girl has had none, so I’ll give it to her;” and with these words he put it into her hand.

“You are a very good, a very charming boy,” said the gentleman; “there is half-a-crown to reward you for your generosity.”

The boy coloured, smiled, received the piece of silver from the hand of the rewarder of merit, but was too much surprised and delighted to be able to reply.

“Shew me to your mother, little girl,” rejoined the gentleman; “and I’ll see if I can do any thing to help her.”

“Yes,” answered the child, and began to climb the stairs, up which the gentleman followed her: arrived on the third story, she ran forward to a door which she opened, and going in, called out, “Here’s somebody coming!—here’s somebody coming!”

The gentleman went in after her. The first objects he perceived, except such as could not escape his observation on a first glance,

namely the poverty and dirt of the apartment, were a woman and a child in bed; these he concluded to be the sick mother and sister of whom the little girl had spoken; and he was approaching towards the bed to address the former of the two, when he caught a glimpse of a man's head and arm which peeped out from behind it.

This circumstance, added to the recollection of the part of the town he was in, the strangeness of the place, and the distance of the chamber from the street, gave him immediately suspicions of an unpleasant nature, which made him resolve to be gone without delay; accordingly, collecting sufficient presence of mind to say, "I have no money in my pocket, but I'll call upon you again with some presently," he ran down stairs as quickly as he was able.

As soon as he reached the street, he began to reflect deliberately on the circumstances of which he had just been a witness: he considered that if the persons whom he had seen were indeed in distress, in sickness, and in poverty, it was a duty which he owed to humanity to see them relieved; if, on the contrary, they were dishonest characters, it

was a duty which he owed to society to deliver them into the hands of justice: he accordingly resolved to repair to the public office in Bow-street, and request a proper officer to be sent with him, to make investigation into the matter: the personal trouble to which the business might subject him he was entirely indifferent about; for *self* it will be hereafter shewn, was the last consideration which entered his mind, when the means presented themselves to him of rendering a service to any of his fellow beings.

The rain was now abated, and the persons whom he had a little while before left collected under the shelter which the passage afforded, were all dispersed; the generous drummer-boy had also disappeared; and our stranger not seeing a coach within call, and entirely regardless that the wet streets might give him a cold that was likely to bring on a fit of the gout, pursued his way on foot towards the Bow-street office.

And whilst our man of benevolence is on his road thither, we will give some account of him to our readers, as he is one of the most prominent characters of the history for which we are entreating their patience.

## CHAPTER II.

*A Human Being of a superior kind.*

THE first questions which people usually ask about a new acquaintance, are—what is his name?—and what countryman is he?—accordingly, supposing our readers to be making the same inquiries about the character we have just given them a peep at in the preceding chapter, we reply, that his name is Sebastian Leuwitzer, and that he is a native of Germany.

Does any one upon this information throw down my book in contempt?—If such there be, let him on no account take it up again, for if he be already dissatisfied, he will find nothing in the subsequent pages, to put him into good humour again;—if he be angry that the first place in my book is given to a foreigner, let him not proceed with my tale; for he will not therein find every virtue con-

fin'd to Englishmen ; nor every perfection and blessing confin'd to English-land ;—he has to encounter an author, who believes the vices and virtues natural to human beings, to be scatter'd with an equal hand amongst the inhabitants of every country ; and who supposes Providence sufficiently just to have given adequate blessings, though of different kinds, to every soil which bears the stamp of its sovereignty—it is the cultivator who makes the land rich, both in the actual sense of tilling the soil, and in the metaphysical one of fertilizing the heart of man ;—talent is dispers'd in equal proportions all over the world ; and though I undoubtedly commend the man who would in a case of equal merit, lean with a spirit of patriotism towards his countryman, I should absolutely condemn him who was not willing to allow the man of any other country whatsoever, an equal claim to merit, as if fate had willed him to have been born in Britain.—He who contradicts this opinion doubts the justice of Providence ;—I write for those who acknowledge its wisdom equal to its power.

Having explain'd to my readers what they are to prepare themselves for, I proceed in my

narrative:—Mr. Leuwitzer was a native of Hamburg; his father, a German by birth, had been a merchant in that city; his mother who was now also dead, had been an English woman, the daughter of a British officer who had died abroad; to the trade of his father Mr. Leuwitzer had succeeded jointly with a cousin the son of a deceased uncle; by attention and industry, they had ensured themselves prosperity, and in the course of a few years after their becoming the principals of the house, they so greatly extended its connexions, as to make it necessary that one of the partners should reside in England.

For this purpose Mr. Leuwitzer was chosen, from various causes which it is here unnecessary to detail, and at the age of thirty-one he arrived in England with his only sister; who from attachment to him, and a desire to see the country which had given birth to her mother, accompanied him.

They took up their abode in London, as being the spot where Mr. Leuwitzer's presence was to be of service to their commerce. Mr. Leuwitzer having always been in the

habit of writing the English and French letters of his own house, was tolerably well acquainted with the former of the two languages, and when he found himself deficient in expressing himself in it, he had recourse to the latter, which is now become an auxiliary to almost every tongue in the world.

The letters of recommendation which Mr. Leuwitzer had brought over, procured for himself and his sister, many pleasant acquaintances, and some valuable friends; and their constant intercourse with English society, gave them in a very short time nearly all the facility of expression, with which a native could use the language.

Enough however of their language : let us inquire into the more material qualities of their hearts. Mr. Leuwitzer had been educated at that period when already the discovery had been made that something more than the knowledge of Geography and Arithmetic is necessary to the education of the merchant as well as the gentleman; accordingly no expence had been spared in rendering him acquainted with every manly science, as well as every polite acquirement

that gives a character to man in his intercourse with his fellow beings.

The tone of Mr. Leuwitzer's disposition was of the most gentle and complacent nature; and the greatest extacy his soul was capable of enjoying, was that of conferring active good upon society. His own religion was Lutheran, but his principles were so mild and tolerant, that even to the Pagan, much more to those who acknowledged the same Providence which he himself adored, his hand was extended in the hour of his need, with the same generous humanity with which it would have stretched itself out to a brother.

Not less amiable in temper and disposition was his sister Adelaide; and the happy and affectionate manner in which they lived together, had prevented them from entering into the married state, as they felt averse to a separation from each other.

The first three years of their residence in England, they lived in the city; but the confinement of the situation not agreeing with the health of either, they removed to a house at Richmond, of the lease of which Mr. Leuwitzer had made a purchase; and at

the time he was first introduced to our acquaintance, he was on his way to one of the coaches which passed his house several times in the course of the day.

The cause which detained him we are already informed of; and we will now proceed to the sequel of his adventure. Arrived at the office in Bow-street, he explained his motive for visiting it, and a couple of officers were directly ordered to go and make an investigation of the house; Mr. Leuwitzer declared his intention of going with them, and they returned to it together.

The door of the apartment into which Mr. Leuwitzer had a short time before been ushered by the little girl, they now found shut and locked; but the moment they stopped before it, they heard a child crying within; they called aloud, desiring the door to be opened——“I can’t, I can’t,” replied the voice of a child; and as some minutes passed and no one else was heard to speak, one of the officers placed his shoulder to the door, and forced it off the lock.

In the middle of the apartment stood the little girl whom Mr. Leuwitzer had before-

seen weeping bitterly; every one else had left the place.

“Where are your mother and sister, and the man that was behind the bed just now?” asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

“All gone, all gone,” cried the little girl.

“Why are they gone?” asked the good German.

“They all ran away as soon as you were gone down stairs,” replied the child, “and locked me up here, and would not let me go with them, though I cried so—oh dear.”

“What, your sick mother and sister! could they run away?” said Mr. Leuwitzer.

“They were not sick,” replied the child, “only they made me tell the people so.”

“Was there a man behind the bed?” he asked.

“Yes, daddy,” she replied; “if you had stopped a minute, he’d have come out.”

“For what?” returned her questioner.

“To get your money, and beat you,” answered the child

“ I remember this little girl’s face very well,” said one of the officers, “ the man she speaks of was at the same kind of tricks about a month ago in Swallow-street; he and all his family were brought up to the office then for beating and robbing a gentleman; but they got off by his saying that the person had been too intimate with his wife. I foretold then by his look, he had not long to live; he called himself John Preston—ain’t that daddy’s name, little one?”

The child it appeared did not know what his name was.

They searched the apartment, nothing was remaining but an old bedstead and its ragged furniture, a couple of broken chairs, a table, and a box; they looked into the box, and found in it a very handsome sword, and an old shagreen case: Mr. Leuwitzer opened the latter, and discovered it to contain an ivory toothpick case, upon the lid of which was a gold shield, on which was engraven the letters A D; a silver thimble, and a silver teaspoon, with the same initials as were on the case; he regarded them all, as articles which the depredators who had lately in-

habited the room, had purloined from their owners.

“ Well,” said one of the officers, “ we must raise the hue and cry after them; they’ll never come back here to a certainty; depend upon it, they were sly enough to understand that your honor smoked the rig, and have taken themselves off for fear of us.”

“ But if so, why have they not taken this child with them?” asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

“ As likely as not, for fear it should betray them to justice, as you could not help knowing it again; and perhaps because they had more of the brat kind than they wanted, and took this opportunity of getting one off their hands,” returned the officer.

“ Impossible any human being could be so unnatural,” said Mr. Leuwitzer.

“ You ain’t acquainted with the kind of human beings we see every day in the week,” replied the officer, “ or you’d think nothing of that: ten to one it is not their own.”

“ Whose do you suppose it then?” said Mr. Leuwitzer.

“ How can I tell?” exclaimed the officer, “ many of those kind of people steal children to beg for them.”

“ Poor babe!” ejaculated Mr. Leuwitzer, lifting the pocket-handkerchief to his own eyes with which he had before been wiping away the tears of the child.

“ Well, it is of no use stopping here,” the officer went on, “ I shall take care of this sword, and shagreen case and the *trinkums* that are in it; they may serve to give the rascal a lift to the gallows.”

“ I hope your honor,” said his companion, “ will be pleased to reward us for our trouble; and if you’ll leave us your address, we’ll send to you, and let you know when we trap him.”

Mr. Leuwitzer having complied with both these demands, the officers were departing, “ Stay, stay!” he exclaimed, “ what is to become of this poor child?”

“ We’ll send somebody from the parish workhouse to fetch her,” replied one of the men.

The parish workhouse was a sound which jarred with the feelings of Mr. Leuwitzer, when coupled with the name of an innocent being who might, from the contamination of the society into which she would there be thrown, imbibe the most dissolute of principles, and be for ever lost to the world for that worthy member of the community which an education of a different nature might render her.

“Is there no where but the parish workhouse to which this innocent babe can be taken?” he said.

“Nobody else will be troubled with such as she, I’m sure,” returned the man.

“Poor babe,” thought Mr. Leuwitzer, “and are the sins of thy father already visited on thee? if thou art cast upon the world thus, thy ruin is certain? if I feel it wrong that thou should’st be thus exposed, it must be wrong in me to suffer that exposure: thou shalt not go to the parish workhouse.”

“You need not wait,” said he, addressing the officers, “I will take care of the child myself; and if you should understand that she is inquired for, you will hear of her at my house,

to which I have already given you a direction."

The officers departed with a smile of satire and contempt; and Mr. Leuwitzer saw them retire with a smile, which the consciousness of his humane resolution drew upon his countenance.

## CHAPTER III.

*Compassion is nothing without the fortitude to become benevolent.*

IT was now nearly dark, and so late that all the Richmond coaches were set out from London.—Mr. Leuwitzer accordingly proceeded with his young charge to the first livery-stables, and there procured a post-chaise, which he ordered to convey him, not to his own house, but to a neat tenement within a stone's throw of it, where resided a Mrs. Acton: she was the wife of an inferior clerk in a banking-house in the city; they had both seen better days, and were by inevitable misfortunes reduced to their present situation; she had several children, and being able to support them on easier terms in the country than in London, she lived in the house just mentioned, where Mr. Acton visited her every Sunday. As her family and the prices of articles necessary to their maintenance had

increased, Mrs. Acton had occasionally taken a lodger, and sometimes a child to nurse; Mr. Leuwitzer, therefore, judged that her house would be a most desirable situation for the little girl whom he had determined to protect; and secure from the many benefits which he had at different times conferred on Mrs. Acton, that she would let no impediment stand in the way of her receiving the child into her family, he ordered himself to be set down at her door.

When he arrived, Mrs. Acton had just put her children to bed, and had sat down to enjoy the conversation of her husband, who, it being Saturday evening, was arrived from London for his weekly relaxation of twenty-four hours. Mr. Leuwitzer related to them the story of his adventure exactly as it had happened; and this done, he proceeded to say, that he was willing to reward Mrs. Acton in any manner she pleased for giving her protection to the child.

Mrs. Acton was a woman who, with the exclusion of all selfish ideas for the occasional favours she had received at the hands of Mr. Leuwitzer, had sense enough to respect him for the honourable principles of his heart,

and benevolence enough in her composition to wish that she had the means of being as good a friend to her fellow beings in want as he was, and therefore immediately replied, "Take care of her! aye that I will; she shall want for nothing here."

"She is a pretty child," said Mr. Acton.

"Yes," returned his wife, "but very dirty—sadly dirty indeed; it will be no such choice job to wash her, and get her clean." For Mrs. Acton was a human being, of course not faultless; and a too nice propensity to cleanliness was her error, and the excess to which she carried her passion will be as sufficiently displayed by one instance as an hundred.

Mr. Leuwitzer had given the post-boy a five-pound note to change, and when he was paid and gone, Mr. Leuwitzer casting his eyes for the first time over the money, said, "One of these half-guineas, that the boy has given me, is a bad one."

"Is it indeed, Sir?" said Mr. Acton.—  
"What a good-for-nothing rascal!"

"No, no, husband, don't abuse the lad," returned his wife, "it must have been a mistake: I can't believe he is a rascal; for he

not only scraped his shoes, but brushed them on the mat afterwards, when he came into the house."

By which instance it is fully displayed that with Mrs. Acton, cleanliness was like charity, the coverer of a multitude of sins.

After a short stay at the house of Mrs. Acton, Mr. Leuwitzer retired to his own; where he found his sister surprised at his late return, and immediately explained to her the cause, by relating his adventure: she heard his story with attention, and applauded the manner in which he had acted. "You are so good, so benevolent," she said, "to every object in misfortune, that I had almost said it is a shame that there should exist a possibility of such goodness drawing a smile, the reverse of approbation, upon the actor of it."

"What do you mean?—What is it that you fear?" asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

"Why don't you remember," she returned, "that when you built a new cottage at the bottom of your garden for the poor soldier's widow, people said you had a nearer interest in her concerns than friendship? And I should not wonder if they were now to say that this child is your own."

Miss Leuwitzer was also a human being, and the imperfection by which she proved herself one was that of always desiring herself and her brother to appear in the eye of the world as upright in heart as she knew them both to be in reality, an opinion which all human beings are convinced that it would not be in the power of a saint living upon earth to derive unalloyed from the lips of the multitude.

Mr. Leuwitzer laughed at his sister's apprehensions, as he had done at the stories which had been circulated about himself and the soldier's widow. "What signifies what the people say?" he replied; "they will talk about their neighbours, and those only whom the cap of scandal fits need to mind their tattling. The degree of provocation which people receive from the remarks of their neighbours depends upon their own tempers and feelings; and you may rely that whatever they say, I shall not be half so angry at it as the old Nabob at the bottom of the hill was, because they reported that the child which was sworn to him was *not* his own."

Although Miss Leuwitzer was constantly uneasy that people did not see the benevolent actions of herself and her brother in their

true light, still she was never deterred from their exercise ; and on the following morning after breakfast, she took his arm to visit Mrs. Acton ; but at the same time besought him, if he were rallied upon the affair, to explain it in a decisive manner, that might shut people's mouths at once.

Mr. Leuwitzer found the little girl materially benefited in her appearance by the soap and water of Mrs. Acton : she had put her on one of her own children's white frocks ; and, having given her weekly present of a penny each to her own boys and girls, she had bestowed one equally on the little stranger ; but with a strict admonition to her not to buy any thing with it which was likely to stain her white frock.

The child appeared perfectly composed in her new situation ; a convincing proof, as Mr. Leuwitzer believed, that there had been no strong reasons for attaching her to those who had so unnaturally quitted her from a selfish regard to their own safety : it was true that she was crying violently when he had found her shut up alone in the chamber, but he conceived that this emotion might have proceeded rather from an instinctive sense of

the miseries to which desertion on the part of those who had been accustomed to feed and clothe her, might expose her, than from an affectionate regret at their loss.

He questioned her on many circumstances, to which she answered freely, but with the inconsistency and contradiction natural to her infant years; so that he soon found no history of herself, or those belonging to her, could be gathered from her lips.

As a week had passed, and Mr. Leuwitzer received no intelligence from Bow-street, he called at the office to make inquiry whether the late inhabitants of the chamber in St. Giles's had been heard of: "No, they had not," was the reply; "but it was very probable that the man would be practising his tricks again soon, and lead to his own apprehension."

Upon this hope Mr. Leuwitzer rested for three months; and as the weeks crept on, and neither the man nor the woman were yet heard of; he began to judge that they never would be; and that his little charge would remain his during her life.—"Well then, so be it," he said: "those who have children of their own always express themselves of them

as blessings; why may not this child of another person's prove so to me?"

The child had as yet only been called by the epithets of "tit," and "little one," and "the strange girl;" Mr. Leuwitzer now began to consider it proper that she should have some appellation given to her; and being unable to gather from herself what her own was, as she said that her daddy had never called her any thing but "girl," he held a consultation with his sister upon what name they should give her. After some minutes debate, he said, "We have been friends to her, let us trust that she will prove one to us, if ever we should stand in need of her services; and upon that hope let us call her *Amica*; it is Latin, sister, for a female friend: I do not know any single word in any other language which will express it so much to my liking; therefore I do not give it her out of pedantry, but because I cannot think of any other that so well suits my ideas."

Miss Leuwitzer was afraid that people would laugh at the poor child having a Latin name; but Mr. Leuwitzer, without any fears upon the subject, gave them free leave to do as they pleased; and the little *protégée* of the

good German was from that time called Amica.

As Mr. Leuwitzer was one day dwelling on the circumstance which had first brought him acquainted with the child, he reflected on what one of the Bow-street officers had said, "That people of the description of those with whom he had first seen Amica, were often guilty of stealing children to beg for them." One of these unhappy beings might the object of his charity be; a thought which had not before struck him; and being once admitted by him as a possibility, he began equally to suppose it possible, that the sword and the trinkets which he had found in the shagreen case might bear some reference to her, and for this reason he earnestly desired to possess them.

He mentioned his opinion to his sister, and she concurred in the probability of the idea: accordingly, on the following day, he once more proceeded to the office in Bow-street, and having inquired for the officer who had taken these articles into his care, he told him that having a very strong inclination to possess them himself, he was willing to reward him for making them over to him. After some hesitation, the man was brought to con-

fess, that the care he had taken of them had been to pawn them; and upon this confession, Mr. Leuwitzer used such forcible arguments of the purse, as induced the man to go and redeem the articles, and make a transfer of them to him.

On his return home, he locked the trinkets into a drawer, and the sword he suspended by its belt over his chimney-piece.

Seven years passed on, during which Amica continued the nominal inmate of Mrs. Acton's house; but during which the hours of sleep had been almost the only ones which she had not passed beneath the roof of her benefactor. Miss Leuwitzer was a good deal alone, by her brother's necessary absence in attending to his mercantile concerns in London; and she had found the society of Amica so amusing in her solitary hours, that she had taken upon herself the task of becoming her instructress; and the proficiency which Amica had made, and the attention which she had paid to the instructions of her kind teacher had been such, as had rendered Miss Leuwitzer not only pleased with her self-imposed task, but proud of it and of her pupil.

Amica had been guessed to be about five years old at the time Mr. Leuwitzer had first taken her under his protection; and, supposing this calculation to be just, at the time she had completed her twelfth year, Mrs. Acton was unexpectedly obliged to quit Richmond, which information she one evening called upon Mr. Leuwitzer to communicate to him in person.

A sister of her's had kept a reputable and well-established hotel in the vicinity of the Strand: this sister had died suddenly, and having left behind her a husband rendered by ill health entirely inadequate to the affairs of the house, in addition to five small children, Mrs. Acton had agreed to go and reside with them, in order that under her economy and industry the reputation of the house might be kept up. "It would be a profitable situation to her," she said; "and her only dislike to it was, that lodging-houses could never be kept clean: people ran from the top to the bottom of them without ever brushing their shoes; but she would take care and have a nice chamber set apart for Miss Amica, and she did not doubt but she would be as happy

there as she was at Richmond ; for the floor of it should be washed regularly every week."

Mr. Leuwitzer stood with his eyes fixed in thought on Mrs. Acton : at that moment he partook rather more of the common nature of human beings than he usually did ; he was debating not so much on the prospect of comfort which awaited Amica in the new abode proposed for her by Mrs. Acton, as on the curtailment of happiness he should himself experience in not receiving her daily visits.

Miss Leuwitzer, who was sitting at work by a table in the room into which Mrs. Acton had been admitted, laid down her netting, and casting her eyes alternately upon the frame on which she had just begun to teach Amica to work in tambour—a painting of animals on velvet, which stood unfinished upon a chair, and in which art she was also her instructress—and then on her brother ; most eloquently declared, by her silence, the regret she should feel at having her pupil taken from her in the midst of her improvements.

"I am grown very much attached to Amica, Mrs. Acton," said Mr. Leuwitzer, "and to

see her only when I might call in a morning at your house in London, I should not consider as seeing her at all. I am very much attached to her," he repeated: "I never feel so much pleasure, as when I find her warming my slippers against I come home in an evening with my boots wet."

"Why, true enough, Sir!" replied Mrs. Acton; "she never misses coming hither every day; and I think it quite right she should come in fine weather; but when it rains, Richmond is so dirty,—and if pattens keep one's shoes clean, they splash one's petticoats, and make equal work."

This observation was not heard either by the brother or sister; they were looking at each other, each expecting the other to propose some plan for their retaining their favourite companion near them.

"If I lose Amica, I shall be quite at a stop in my patch-work bed," said Miss Leuwitzer.

"Aye, your patch-work bed," returned Mr. Leuwitzer: "Amica almost deserves to have it given to her, for the earnestness with which she has worked at it. If it were done,

we might put it up in the little chamber next your dressing-room, and then"——

"Nay, if that be all, why can't she sleep in the chintz bed, till the patch-work is finished?" asked Miss Leuwitzer.

"My dear Adelaide!" exclaimed Mr. Leuwitzer, rising, and catching hold of her hand, which he pressed between both his, "how happy are the brother and sister whose feelings thus unite!—No bed can be too good for Amica; for she returns us affection for our love, and gratitude for our benevolence.—No, Mrs. Acton, we cannot part with Amica."

"I should be very sorry indeed," rejoined Miss Leuwitzer; "but I hope, brother—I hope you feel convinced that people can't think there is any thing improper in our"——

Mr. Leuwitzer stopped her from proceeding by a smile of which she understood the meaning, and she added, "Well, well, I don't suppose they can say any thing upon this; but the world is so ill-natured!"

It was accordingly fully determined that Amica should henceforward constitute a mem-

ber of the family of her benefactors; and Mrs. Acton departed, carrying with her their good wishes for her success in her new undertaking, which she returned in prayers for the happiness of them and Amica.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Attention, Ladies!—a Soldier approaches.*

WE are sometimes unaware that an increase of the happiness we already enjoy, is possible, till that increase be made ours; and the first proof of our experiencing it, is, our becoming for a while unfitted for its enjoyment. Thus it was with Amica, the becoming an inhabitant of her benefactor's house was a blessing of which she had not thought at all, and therefore one of which she had never seen the capability it possessed of giving her happiness, till she was actually possessed of it; and for a time her heart danced too much with joy to be able to settle itself to its former occupations; but in a very short time her fondness for them returned with additional ardor and perseverance.

About two years after this, as Mr. Leuwitzer was one evening walking on the green, hearing some drums beat in an adjoining

street, which sounds he knew to announce the arrival of a regiment that was on its march through Richmond in its way to a change of quarters; he strolled towards the spot where the soldiers were receiving their billets for the night, to take a view of the men.

He had not been long observing them before he saw a young officer fixing his eyes studiously upon him, and after a few minutes of observation, a smile of satisfaction and conviction passed over his features, and he bowed to Mr. Leuwitzer.

Mr. Leuwitzer returned his salutation entirely unconscious why it had been made to him, and at present withheld from making the inquiry, as the young man who had paid him the compliment, was standing in a square formed by the men, which it was not permitted to any one but the officers of the regiment to penetrate.

When the soldiers dispersed to their quarters, most of the officers entered the inn, but the young ensign moved towards Mr. Leuwitzer, and again touching his hat as he advanced towards him, "I think I cannot be mistaken Sir, you once made me a present of half-a-crown!" he said.

“What,” exclaimed Mr. Leuwitzer, are you the little drummer boy, who gave his penny to a child that——”

“Yes,” returned the youth, “I am he, and I could not forbear asking you how you did, and telling you that I had not forgotten your kindness.”

“I am very glad to see you in a better situation,” replied Mr. Leuwitzer, “you are now an officer, are you not?”

“Yes Sir,” he returned, “I have been an, ensign almost a month.”

“That little girl,” rejoined Mr. Leuwitzer, “to whom you gave the penny, is now grown almost as tall as yourself; and has ever since that evening been under my protection, and now lives in my house.” And as they walked along the street, he related to the young ensign the heads of Amica’s short story.

“She was a very pretty little girl then,” said he, “is she handsome still, Sir?”

Mr. Leuwitzer loved her too well not to think her so, had she been less ornamented by nature than she was, and he replied to that purpose.

“I should like to see her once more,” said the youth.

“That I shall have much pleasure in suffering you to do,” returned Mr. Leuwitzer. “When does your regiment march?”

“Not till to-morrow at one o’clock,” replied the young soldier.

“Then come and breakfast with me at half-past eight; any body will shew you where Mr. Leuwitzer, which is my name, lives, and she shall make your tea for you.”

The youth accepted this invitation with apparently great satisfaction. “I shall not fail being with you in time, Sir,” he said.

“Pray what is your name?” asked Mr. Leuwitzer, as they were on the point of parting.

“Stanton, Sir, Maurice Stanton,” was the reply. “Good night, Sir.”

“Good night,” repeated Mr. Leuwitzer. “Stay, shake hands with me; we met the first time of our seeing one another in circumstances that seem to have left a favorable impression for each on the heart of the other, so let us bid good night like friends.”

The youth extended his hand with a smile of the greatest gratification, and Mr. Leuwitzer having pressed it in his, they took different roads.

On returning home, Mr. Leuwitzer found his sister and Amica just come in from a female party with which they had been drinking tea in the village. "Comb your hair to the best advantage in the morning, Amica," he said, "for I have invited an officer to breakfast with you."

"An officer!" repeated she, "pray, dear Sir, who is he?"

Mr. Leuwitzer explained, and Amica returned, "Indeed! is it he? I am very glad you have asked him; I have a long while owed him a debt of thanks, and I shall now have an opportunity of discharging it."

"Do you know any thing more about him brother," asked Miss Leuwitzer, "who his family are, and so on?"

"No, he shall tell us all himself to-morrow," returned her brother.

"But mayn't it have a strange appearance," rejoined Adelaide, "our admitting him into our house before we are acquainted with those circumstances, as he was once only a drummer boy?"

"The greater his merit in being an officer now:—what great Prussian general was that

who was originally in the ranks?" asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

"Aye, I remember," returned his sister, "but I question whether those, who no doubt cringed to him as a commander, ever asked him into their houses as a subaltern."

"Very likely not," replied Mr. Leuwitzer, "but it was very silly of them if they did not; as his eventual rise satisfactorily proves that he must have had merit to deserve it."

"They could not foresee that," answered Adelaide.

"Nor can we tell what this lad may turn out in time," said her brother.

"True," she returned, "but I only meant that if any of our neighbours should drop in whilst he was here, and ask"—

Mr. Leuwitzer began his usual smile; it produced the certain effect of checking her utterance of those scruples which she was really sorry herself, that she could not banish from her mind; and of which she felt nothing but the apprehension of other people feeling them.

At the breakfast hour appeared Maurice Stanton; Miss Leuwitzer received him as cordially as her brother; and Amica welcomed him with a tear which was produced by a combination of various recollections.

Nothing appears more uninteresting than a group of persons who feel the utmost cordiality, esteem, and respect for each other, and who still meet as strangers; any attempt at intimacy, is damped by some remark which shews them to be just become acquainted.

Mr. Leuwitzer had conceived so favorable an opinion of the young officer, that he wished as soon as possible to remove the distance which there was at present between the inclinations and actions of them all: a little insight into the history of each other, is in a case of this nature the most effectual method of thawing restraint, as self is the subject upon which each man becomes most readily communicative;—Mr. Leuwitzer gave an opening to a conversation of this description, by saying, “Have you a father alive, Sir.”

“ No, Sir,” was the reply, “ I never knew my father; I was born after his death.”

“ Was your father in the army?”

“ No Sir, I have understood that he was in the church; he had no living of his own; only a curacy, I believe.”

“ Have you any brothers and sisters?”

“ Not any, my mother married again very soon after my birth; her second husband is a clerk in the admiralty. My own father left me scarcely any thing at his death; that little was expended in giving me an education, which consisted merely of reading, writing, and a little geography; and when it was gone, my father-in-law persuaded my mother to let me go into the band of the Coldstream regiment: soon after that my mother died.”

Stanton's voice faltered as he pronounced these words; and Mr. Leuwitzer having stirred his tea violently for about a minute, said, “ You had then no friend left you?”

“ Some of the inferior officers who knew my case were very kind to me,” replied the

young man, "and at their advice I laid down my drum, and enlisted as a volunteer into another regiment; in which I have been appointed an ensign."

"Very good, very good?" ejaculated Mr. Leuwitzer, "you are young yet."

"I shall be nineteen to-morrow, Sir," returned Maurice.

The ice of conversation being thus broken by the history Maurice had given of himself, a short time rendered them as intimate as if they had been known to each other all their lives.

While the breakfast things were removing, Maurice remarked the sword which was suspended over the chimney piece, and Mr. Leuwitzer having told him the reason of its hanging there, invited him to step with him into his library, and see the trinkets which had been found with it.

While Maurice was examining them, Mr. Leuwitzer shut the door, and when he turned his eye away from the shagreen case and its contents, Mr. Leuwitzer thus addressed him, "Do you ever receive any assistance from your father-in-law?"

“No, Sir, not any,” answered Maurice, “I have only seen him once since the death of my mother; I then called upon him at his house, and he received me in such a manner as made me resolve never to go near him again.”

“You then stand, as I may say, alone in the world?”

Maurice breathed a sigh in the affirmative.

Mr. Leuwitzer proceeded thus, “It is at the age of childhood, when the mind is yet untutored in the lessons of hypocrisy, that a true estimate may be formed of the merits of the heart;—at that age I had an instance that yours was of a deserving nature; I did not at that moment suppose that we should ever meet again; but I am glad that we have met again, since it is in my power to repair to you the want of relations, which you experience.—I am a single man, without any relatives of my own who stand in need of my assistance; I am what the world calls rich; and I am never so happy as when I can make my riches of the proper use for which they certainly were intended, when they were first discovered to man;—regard me hence forward, as one to whom you may

look up equally as a friend and father; while your conduct continues to be such as merits the countenance of the one, and the affection of the other."

"Sir! Mr. Leuwitzer!" stammered out Maurice, "can it be possible that I have heard aright? that you will deign to take that interest—that—Oh! I cannot speak."—

"I am glad of it," returned Mr. Leuwitzer, "I don't want you to speak; if your heart is indeed in the proper place, in which I believe it to be; I can guess your feelings as well as you could explain them:—If you are not the good young man I believe you, your conduct will soon point out to me my error; for I am of the contrary opinion of those who think that adversity is the touchstone of the heart; in my own idea the use a young man makes of prosperity, most infallibly explains what are his principles.—Have you any debts?"

"Not any, Sir," was the reply.

"Are you sure of that?" returned Mr. Leuwitzer, "how could you manage to live without sometimes incurring them?"

"I denied myself every gratification, Sir," replied Maurice, "rather than make myself

a debtor; as I had no probable chance of ever having any money at my command, I considered it dishonest, very dishonest, to contract debts, which at the time of my so doing, I believed that I should never be able to repay."

"That is sensible, that is good, very honorable! very good!" cried Mr. Leuwitzer, catching the hands of Maurice in his, and pressing them with energy together:—after a pause he continued, "there are ten guineas, take them and put them into your pocket; but pull them out of it again with caution:—and now as I am a friend to you in generosity, I should be a very indifferent sort of a friend, if I did not also prove myself a friend to you in the giving of you good advice:—without possessing some money there is no passing through life comfortably:—without resolving to follow good advice, there is no passing through life happily. Misers and prodigals are all bad people; it is the middle way that is the best: you are in the army, it is a sad school for dissipation; but I would nevertheless have you now pass your ordeal through it, because if

you escape being consumed by the fire, you will come out the purer for having been in it; don't do any thing while you *are* in it, to get the character of a mean, morose, selfish young fellow; but don't be a profligate for the sake of any body's approbation; are you fond of cards?"

"No, Sir; they have seldom come in my way," answered Stanton.

"That's good; then keep you out of their's now," rejoined Mr. Leuwitzer; "billiards are as bad; if you play at first for skill, you will want afterwards to play for gain, besides at your time of life, such games occupy a great deal of time that a young man ought to employ in reading, and improving his mind in many different ways."

"I am very fond of reading," replied Maurice, "but I find some difficulty in procuring books; and I am also rather at a loss to know what kind of reading is most adviseable."

"These difficulties I will remove," returned Mr. Leuwitzer; "you shall have access to my library, and I will select for you

such books as are most likely to prove conducive to your good."

"But recollect that I am going away in two or three hours time, Sir," said Maurice.

"I know that," answered Mr. Leuwitzer, "but I will send after you to your quarters, a certain portion of them; and when you have finished those, you shall return them to me, and I will send you some more."

This arrangement being made, Maurice returned to the breakfast apartment a new creature; the offerings of benevolence, are undefinably grateful to the feelings of those who stand on the face of the globe unconnected with any natural protectors; and poor Maurice was so unexpectedly become happy that the overflowings of his heart stood trembling in his eyes.

Miss Leuwitzer guessed what had been the subject of her brother's private conversation with the young man; she knew him to be as eager after the performance of active good to his fellow be-

ings, as most men are in the devising of plans for adding to their own possessions; she had often heard him speak in raptures of the humane action of the little drummer boy; she could not doubt therefore that his history of his orphan state, had attached to him her brother as a firm friend.

The affection which Miss Leuwitzer bore her brother, was such that she never felt so happy, and self-satisfied, as when her conduct was an imitation of his; accordingly contriving to whisper in Maurice's ear in her turn, she said, "If you will leave me a shirt for a pattern, I will make you up a dozen, and send them to you as soon as some little girls who always work for me in the village can get them done."

Maurice was so overpowered by the kindness he was experiencing, as to be entirely unable to express the gratitude he felt; and as a relief for his agitated mind he crept to the side of Amica, who was the only person present, whom he felt himself able to address without confusion—"I am glad we have a peace just

now," she said, as he placed himself by her side, "if we were at war, I should wish you were not a soldier."

This was too much; the interest which she expressed in his fate, made the deepest impression of all on his heart;—he fixed his eyes upon her in eloquent thankfulness; and at the same moment he heard the drum beat to collect the regiment, for the pursuance of its march.

## CHAPTER V.

*A sprig of divine nobility—and another sprig to which belongs neither divinity nor nobility.*

NEVER did the heart of a young ensign beat more lightly in his breast than did that of Maurice Stanton, as he pursued his march towards Lewes; and the moment he arrived there, he composed his thoughts for expressing those sentiments, by letter, to Mr. Leuwitzer and his family, with which their unparalleled benignity had inspired him.

Mr. Leuwitzer directly replied to his letter, and sent with it a portion of the promised books. This intercourse continued for full two years; Maurice profiting not less by the contents of his friend's library, than by the correspondence which was kept up between them; and which evinced Mr. Leuwitzer to be not less the scholar than the gentleman and the friend.

At the expiration of this time, Mr. Leuwitzer, entertaining a wish to see his pupil, invited him to obtain leave of absence from his regiment for a month or six weeks, and to come and visit Richmond. Maurice immediately made application to his Colonel, but the desired permission could not be obtained: he had just received orders to send out his younger officers upon the recruiting-service; and Maurice, instead of being permitted to visit Richmond upon leave of absence, was sent to the small sea-port of Worthing; which, it being then the dreary month of November, was of all places the most dull and uncomfortable.

The object of such families as were still remaining in the place being retirement, they did not even exchange a bow with poor Maurice in his solitary wanderings on the beach; and, although he could amuse his time much better than young men in general have the fortitude to do, he still found the hours hang heavily on his hand.

One day, on his return from his morning's walk, he found upon his table a printed card — *The Rev. Sidney Valmont.* The card itself

was remarkably fantastic: its face was a pale straw colour; its back pink; and from a smart border in relief which ran round the edge, he would sooner have pronounced it the complimentary card of a pastry-cook than of a divine, had not the writing prevented the error.

When the waiter came into the room, for Maurice's abode was at the inn, he inquired who Mr. Valmont was.

"Our parson, Sir," replied the man.

"Where does he live?—Is he married?" asked Maurice.

"No, Sir; he is not married," returned the waiter: "quite a young gentleman like yourself. He lodges next door to the hair-dresser's shop."

Maurice looked out of the window, in the direction that the waiter pointed; and next door to the hair-dresser's shop he saw a low thatch, with a sash-window on one side of the door, and a girth-light on the other.

"That is but an indifferent lodging I should suspect," returned Maurice.

"Why it is not so good as some certainly Sir," replied the waiter; "and he has it cheaper, because it is not our season; but in

the bathing-time I have known a gentleman's family, that came from one of the best houses and parks in the kingdom, give five guineas a week for it, because it was the *fashion* to be here. Mr. Valmont is only our curate," added the man: "Mr. Bull, the rector, lives at Swanton."

Maurice asked no farther questions, and the subject dropped. He hoped that in the curate he might find a pleasant companion and a profitable one; that is, a man whose profession must have led him to study, and who would perhaps be communicative of his knowledge.

On the following morning he received a letter from his watchful friend, Mr. Leuwitzer: a lieutenant of his regiment had been promoted to a company, and Mr. Leuwitzer had purchased for Maurice his vacated station. Maurice was too much elevated by this intelligence to be able to read immediately after receiving it; and taking up his hat, he whistled to his dog, and turned out for a stroll.

He wandered about the outskirts of the town; and as he was passing by a moderate-sized house, which was enriched with large new

sash-windows, and a cumbrous portico full of heavy carving, very incongruous with the appearance of the house itself; the violent cries of a duck made him turn round his head, and he saw his dog Tray pursuing the creature whose shrieks he had heard. He called aloud to Tray, but Tray was uncontrollable; and seeing him fastening upon the bird, he pursued him into a yard into which he had run, menacing him with a short whip which he happened to have in his hand.

Just as he was on the point of striking the dog, out burst from a back-door of the house a corpulent man, of about thirty years of age, who looked very good-tempered, and at the same time very self-important, and who exclaimed, "Oh, Sir, don't hurt your dog; the loss of a duck is nothing to me, thank God!—trade is very capital just now!"

Maurice called off the dog, and making an apology for him, was departing.

"Walk in, Sir, if you please; pray do," said the man, "I shall be very happy to give you a glass of wine: I have some port that has been ten years in bottles."

The invitation was so strange a one that Maurice bowed, irresolute what to do.

“Come, Sir, oblige me,” said the stranger; and Maurice followed him into a parlour of which the furniture was superabundant and very costly; the walls were crouded with coloured prints in gilt frames, with enamelled glasses; the curtains of chintz swept the ground; Wedgwood vases were ranged thick on the chimney; and the multitude of chairs, tables, and foot-stools which the apartment contained, hardly left room for the visitor to move between them. Before the fire stood a table on which a cloth was spread, and upon it were set out a cold pigeon-pie, a hot lobster, some cheese, some bread, and a bottle of white wine.

“Well, Sir, I am very happy to see you, indeed,” said the stranger, as soon as they had entered the room: “I’m just taking a snack before dinner, and hope you’ll do the same. There’s nothing though here that you’ll like, I dare say; I’ll ring the bell and”—— This Maurice prevented.—“Here’s one thing I can recommend,” said his entertainer; ‘this Madeira has crossed the sea twice: I always take about half a bottle of it at my luncheon.’”

Maurice tasted the wine, which was indeed excellent of its kind: its owner drank a glass to their better acquaintance. "I have been from home, Sir, almost ever since you arrived in town, or I should have invited you to dine with me. I knew all the gentry that came here a bathing in the summer. I live here—I am a merchant: my name is Jarvis Block at your service."

Maurice recollected to have heard the name mentioned by some of his brother officers who had occasionally visited Worthing in the summer, and many odd stories he had listened to of him who bore it; but of his history, he knew nothing.

"You have heard people talk of me, I dare say?" rejoined Mr. Block.

Maurice replied in the affirmative.

"Yes, I carry all before me here: I am in a concern where I must nett three or four thousand a year in a short time. That's something like a business ain't it?—I take my pleasure though, I assure you: my clerk does all the fagging.—I was one in all the games last summer, for I have not lived here quite a year yet."

“ You have balls here, Sir?” said Maurice, “ have you not?”

“ Oh yes,” replied Mr. Block, “ and assemblies too.—One young lady took the pains to teach me to dance; that is, she managed to put me right in the way I was to go: I never could jig my legs exactly in the manner they did to the tune.—I’ll tell you what, Mr. Stanton.—Ain’t that your name, Sir?”

“ Yes, Sir, Stanton.”

“ I’ll tell you what Sir; say what you please, it’s a devilish difficult matter to be minding one’s ears and one’s legs at the same time, as one is forced to do in a dance, provided one has not been brought up to the trick of it from one’s youth.”

Maurice was too much entertained to wish to make his visit a short one; as they sat chatting together—“ There, do you know him?” cried Mr. Block, jumping up, and going to the window.

Maurice went to the window also, and saw advancing towards the house what he should have conceived a remarkably pretty animal for a lady’s horse, but which he saw crossed by one of the other sex, who bore the ap-

pearance of what is called a very *smart* man: he was moving at a gentle canter, and as he stopped opposite to the window, Mr. Block said, "It's parson Valmont:" then throwing up the sash, he accosted him with, "Pray how do you, reverend Sir?"

"*Tout à vous,*" returned Valmont with a gentle inclination of his head; then added, "Can you by any possible means inform me whether there is a male heir to the barony of Crayden in Westmoreland, or whether the title becomes extinct on the death of the present Lord Thomas?"

"Lord bless you! I ain't acquainted with any of them," replied Mr. Block.

"*Tant pis!*" returned the divine.—"It's extravagantly cold," he went on after a pause.

"Then why do you ride without a great coat?" asked Mr. Block.—"Shall I lend you one?"

"Oh, by no means: no, a great coat on horseback looks so extremely *gauche*," answered Valmont.

"Come, come in, and have a bit of a lunch to keep the cold off your stomach, if you won't have a coat to keep it off your back," said Block.

"Oh no, you are immensely good!" replied Valmont. "I never do any thing of the kind, upon my honour!—Then you can't tell me about the Craydens?—*Au revoir*," and away he cantered.

"I wonder he has not called upon you," said Block as soon as he was gone.

"He has," returned Maurice.

"Aye," cried Block: "why he did not speak to you.—Oh, but perhaps you have not left a card at his house?"

"Not yet," replied Maurice: "he only left his with me yesterday."

"Ah, that's it then," rejoined Block.—"Bless you, I knew nothing about the meaning of cards with your name on them, when he first brought one to me; and do you know when he met me in company, he said, it was quite contrary to *etiquette*, I think he called it, to be acquainted with me till I had returned his visit; so he desired me just to drop a card at his house, and then he said we should be quite sociable, and so we have been ever since."

"He seems a good deal interested about that family he mentioned in Westmoreland," said Maurice

“I’ll bet any body five pounds,” returned Block, “he never saw them in all his life.—Oh, no, no, he’s the fourth son of a baronet himself, and it is his whim always to be talking about people’s titles and people’s ranks. He has the family descent of all the grandees by heart: he’s as good as a red book for finding out by who is who.—It’s his character; every body knows it, and they joke him about it.”

Mr. Block was now called to attend to some of his mercantile concerns, and Maurice took the opportunity of wishing him good morning. Mr. Block desired him to come again soon: told him he could not do him a greater pleasure than to give him his company; and to be sure not to forget to leave his card with the parson, that they might all be sociable when they met together again.

## CHAPTER VI.

*“What says mine host of the garter?”  
Shakspeare, hem!*

AS the landlord of Maurice's inn was not one of those intrusive gentry who press their conversation upon their guests, Maurice felt no objection to sometimes chatting with him for a quarter of an hour as he passed through the house to his own apartment.

On returning home, he happened to meet the landlord at his door, and mentioning to him the occurrence of the morning, he inquired who, and what Mr. Jarvis Block was.

“Every thing at present Sir,” replied the landlord. “He is what is vulgarly called a new broom, and they always sweep clean; he has been settled here nearly a year in the corn trade. He pretends to be doing business for himself, but it is said, that he is only

the agent of a house in London; and he lives away in such a manner, that I think it will be well for him, if he does not involve himself with his employers, instead of netting the profits he brags of."

"He does not seem to be much accustomed to society," returned Maurice.

"He contrived to introduce himself to the bathers last summer," replied the landlord; "before that his acquaintance had been of a very different stamp. He is a strange character; I give him credit for having a good heart in some things, but he undoubtedly has also a pleasure in making himself appear of consequence in the place.—He never bathes in a machine that any body else goes into the sea with; that you may have seen on the beach with red wheels, and a green silk awning is his. The handsome pleasure boat of which the colours are always flying, belongs to him; and he had a great pride in making that and his horses and carriages, of which he has several, serviceable to the lodgers here last season."

"But how did he manage to get introduced to them," exclaimed Maurice, "as people in

general are particularly careful whom they associate with at a watering place?"

"Why," returned the landlord, "he got introduced to them by a gentleman with whom he formed an acquaintance about the beginning of last summer at Smooth Turf races, a few miles up the country; the gentleman was frequently down here in the summer; let me see his name was—what was it? Oh Colonel Buckhurst."

"Colonel Buckhurst," reiterated Maurice, "that is the Colonel of my regiment."

"Very probable, indeed Sir," replied the landlord, "for I recollect that his regimentals were the same as yours; well, Sir, that was the gentleman who introduced him to genteel company."

From the farther account which the landlord gave of Mr. Jarvis Block, it appeared that though not ornamental to society, his utility had permitted him to be endured by it; and that all the visitors to the place had submitted to his acquaintance for the sake of the accommodation which they had reaped from his pleasure boat, his horses, his wine cellar, and numerous others of his proper-

ties; and that he had felt satisfied to be accounted their equal, without considering the cause, or investigating the reason why he was so.

Maurice smiled inwardly, for he concluded that the world contained instances of many more *Blocks* who were satisfied to be admitted to the society of those whom they deem to be their superiors, upon the same accommodating terms; and was just turning to his own apartment, when recollecting the Reverend Mr. Valmont, he judged that he might as well benefit by the present opportunity for making himself a little acquainted with his character also; and stepping back, he said, "but who is your curate, is he not the son of a Baronet?"

"Yes, Sir," answered the landlord; "Sir Owen his father, is a Welch Baronet with twelve children, resident in Monmouthshire, who inherited little more of the substantials with his title than a castle on the mountains, which was in too ruinous a state for him to make a habitation of; about twenty acres of land that it stood upon, (for the original estate had been selling off by the rood for many a generation); and a few hundred ounces of

family plate; but with this slender inheritance, added to the fortune, which was brought him by his wife, he possessed enough of the Welch family pride, to qualify him for one of its ancient Princes; and his children, who are all sons but two, are brought up to starve, or next thing to it, upon professions, when they might have lived and enjoyed themselves, had they been brought up to trade!

“What interest settled him here?” asked Maurice.

“Sir Owen,” replied the landlord, “is particularly acquainted with our rector, as I have understood; our curate died about seven months ago, and Mr. Sidney Valmont directly came and filled his place; the preferment is scarcely worth having, Sir, a mere maintenance, it does not average forty five pounds a year; but it is whispered that the reason of Sir Owen getting his son appointed to it, was in order to throw him into the way of the Bishop of ——’s family, who had taken lodgings here for the whole Summer, and whose eldest daughter had shewn a partiality for him when he was a boy; but report says

that the Bishop's family saw through his views, and looked coolly upon him."

Maurice's dinner was now carrying into his apartment, and feeling a greater appetite to attack his beef-steak, than to learn more anecdotes of his newly formed acquaintances, he broke off his conversation with his landlord.

Whilst Maurice sat before his solitary fire, he reflected on the amicable terms upon which the landlord had described Colonel Buckhurst to be with Mr. Jarvis Block; when he had been mentioned at the mess, which he had frequently been by different officers who had fallen in with him in the course of their summer excursions to Worthing, Colonel Buckhurst so far from standing forth as his champion, had always been one of the loudest in the quiz which had run round the table at his expence; and he could not also, by any means, conceive it to be a likely thing, that the Colonel, who was a man of pride and fashion, should select so untutored a being as poor Block for his companion; it appeared to him an assertion past belief, that the Colonel would voluntarily have passed ten minutes in company with such a man;

much more incredible still, that he should have been his introducer to any circle of fashion.

Lieut. Colonel Buckhurst, now about twenty-four years of age, was the only son of Sir Benjamin Buckhurst, one of the leading men in the city of Rochester. The father being himself an entirely unlettered man, had been unable to regulate the education of his son; and the son having been always amply supplied with the key of power from his father's well stocked purse, had wandered into the path of temptation, rather than the road to wisdom, and had made a proficiency solely in such acquirements as tend to turn out a youth one, whom the unthinking term a dashing fine fellow; and whom the more acute scrutinizers of human beings, discover to be deficient in understanding, in morals and in manners.

If a man break the windows of a cobbler's stall, his peace may be easily made, and his good name restored to him, by paying the expence of a glazier's attendance, and labour; but when a man who is introduced as a gentleman, into polished society, brings with him haughty manners, in which he has

not education to support him; and endeavours to run down the observance of good manners, with a careless indifference, almost amounting to a clownishness of behaviour; his peace is not so easily made with persons of regular habits, and reflecting minds, as it would be with the cobbler, under the circumstance just alluded to.

Such a man was Colonel Buckhurst; the indulgence of every wish, had rendered him petulant and oppressive; the rank which had been purchased for him in the army, had given him pride; his own good opinion of himself, had tainted his mind with conceit; and a desire to shine in every circle as the dashing man of fashion, rendered him as disgusting as a man must ever be, who sacrifices all his actions to a correspondence with the whims of the day.

No man could boast a greater number of horses, servants, carriages, mistresses, shooting boxes, toad-eaters, &c. than the gay Colonel Buckhurst; and no man's language more forcibly denied his claim to the title of a real gentleman; for it was impossible

for him to utter two successive sentences without the introduction of some of those words, which, in the terms of those who use them, are denominated cant phrases; and which have for some years past been adopted by the members of fashion.

These expressions ought properly to be termed the short hand of conversation; and as the great fault of short hand writing consists in its being legible only to few, so the short hand of conversation, becomes more an absurdity than an error; since, why do we speak at all, if it is not with the intention of being understood?

The Colonel was a fine looking fellow, rather than a handsome man; his countenance was florid, and his person good; but his features had none of the harmony which constitutes beauty; nor his eyes any of the expression which fascinates and conciliates; he was tall, and tolerably well shaped; his muscular strength was great; he had improved its powers under the tutorage of Belcher; and kept himself in practice by accidental sparrings with grooms and chairmen.

Such was the dashing Colonel whom the landlord had pronounced to have been the particular friend of Mr. Jarvis Block, and his original introducer into polite circles ; and it was an enigma which Maurice could not solve.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Jouons ! buvons ! c'est la vie !*

ON the following morning Maurice went out to return the call of the Reverend Sidney Valmont; in his way thither he met Mr. Block. — “Good morrow, my good Sir,” cried the latter: “I was just steering my course towards your inn; you must do me the favour to come and dine with me to-day;—I expect Colonel Buckhurst; he is shooting somewhere in this neighbourhood, and sent me word last night, that he’ll take a dinner and a bed with me.—I have asked the parson.—Six o’clock precisely; you’ll come, won’t you?”

Maurice had no great predilection for the society of his Colonel, who always took care most religiously to preserve the distance between a commanding officer and his subalterns, both with him and his bro

ther officers; but he felt full as averse to shew that he would not as soon meet him as any other man, and accordingly accepted Block's invitation;—upon which the latter bade him good morning, saying that “he was going to send off a boat of his own to sea, to get some fish for dinner.”

Maurice proceeded to Valmont's: on reaching the house, and perceiving no knocker, he rapped upon the door with his stick, and immediately a dirty boy in a fustian jacket, popped his head out of the girth-light, which we have already said was on one side of the door. “Is your master——at home?” Maurice was going to say, but before he could utter the two last words, the boy had snatched in his head, with all the haste of apparent alarm.

Some moments elapsed, and as the door was not opened, Maurice repeated his knock;—another interval passed away, and Maurice was on the point of knocking a third time, when the door was opened and the same boy appeared within, drest in a smart brown serge coat, upon which a

scarlet collar and cuffs might have been translated into, "Now I am in livery."—"My master is in his dressing room, Sir," said the boy, without waiting for Maurice's inquiry; who stepping in, followed his conductor up a few narrow stairs into a dressing room, which in any house of tolerable dimensions would have been denied the name of a good sized closet.

Before the window stood a wash-hand stand, upon which were displayed a score of bottles of different washes, and essences; almost as many boxes of tooth powder; and a silver tray, at one end of which lay a cake of Bandana soap; at the other end almond paste; and in the centre, tooth brushes, nail brushes, scissars, and tweezers;—near the fire stood the breakfast table, of which the order had not yet been disturbed.—Between these two was just room enough for Maurice and the chair upon which he was intended to sit; and opposite to him was a second door, through which issued the Reverend Sidney Valmont from his bed chamber, in a flannel gown, and slippers.

"Mr. Stanton, I hope you are very well; you do me great honor," was the salutation on the part of the divine.

Maurice replied to his question, took a chair at his invitation, and Mr. Valmont then expressed as much elegant regret at hearing that his visitor had already breakfasted, as if he had really felt it a matter of importance to his happiness.—Maurice was himself no flatterer, and had so little acquaintance with the art of swelling out nothings to the size of realities, that the regrets and importunities of Valmont acted upon him quite the reverse of compliments, and confirmed him in the opinion of his frivolous nature, which he had taken up originally on what had passed between him and Block on the preceding day; and which had been strengthened by the view he had just had of his toilet.

That intercourse with society which it is necessary for every man to keep up who does not wish to pass through life a misanthrope, often obliges us to spend a portion of our time with human beings who neither add to our pleasure whilst we are with them, nor leave any impression

on our minds that leads us to wish for seeing them again ; and it sometimes forces us into an exchange of civilities with characters in whose society we cannot be thus negatively happy ; but whom, from the respect which we owe to ourselves in the practice of good manners, rather than from any consideration we have for them, we treat with politeness.

Of the latter class of characters did Mr. Valmont appear to Maurice ; but as he had received from him the civility of his having first sought the acquaintance, he considered himself bound to return that politeness in a way that he would receive and understand as an equivalent tribute of civility.—Accordingly having listened to his anecdotes of many great people of whom he had before never heard the names ; and made some common place observations upon them, which Valmont mistook for interest in the subject, Maurice took his leave ; Mr. Valmont expressing himself prodigiously happy that they were to meet at dinner at Mr. Block's, and extending his *forefinger* to *shake hands* with him at parting.

Maurice could not forbear dwelling with a smile on his visit: the sovereign pride of which the landlord had expressed Valmont to be possessed, had so evidently shone forth in every action which he had yet witnessed of his new acquaintance, that he could not help exclaiming to himself, "How happy ought I to be that my father, who was also a curate, was not of Welch descent; I might have been burthened with all the vain and arrogant ideas that haunt Mr. Valmont!"

Over the chimney piece of his so called dressing room, Maurice had noticed a shelf of books, and had examined their contents while awaiting the appearance of their owner; but there were none amongst them which he coveted; they were merely Red Books for several successive years; Kearsley's Peerage; Porny's Heraldry; some numbers of the Mirror of Fashion Magazine; and a few others of the same nature: all corroborating testimonies of Valmont's taste.

About a quarter before six he proceeded to his dinner appointment at Mr. Block's, and on being shown into the parlour, had

he not perceived that Valmont was not yet arrived, he would have been tempted to imagine that he had mistaken the hour of invitation, and that the cloth had been already removed; for the curtains were let down, the candles lighted, the card table set out, and Colonel Buckhurst and Mr. Block at play.

"How are you Stanton?" said the Colonel to Maurice on his entrance.

"Very glad to see you, Sir," cried Block, "will you excuse my getting up to hand you a chair, as"—

"Phoo, deal away, don't be a quiz," ejaculated the Colonel, and his adversary obeyed.

In a few minutes Valmont entered;—"Most amazingly happy to see you, *mon ami*," he said, addressing the Colonel.

"Don't put me out," cried Buckhurst, "I have got a damned beggarly hand."

Before the hand was concluded, dinner was announced, and it appeared that out of nineteen games at picquet, the Colonel had lost only one, which was the last; but not a word was said of the stake they

had played for ; nor was there any exultation on the part of the winner.

The dinner past off jovially ; every one present was well acquainted with the quality of Mr. Block's madeira, and did ample justice to its excellence.

About nine o'clock, the Colonel, who had for nearly an hour sat between sleeping and waking, having stretched himself out with a loud yawn, exclaimed, " Come, Block, do you give us any lap ?—we've had wine enough."

His motion was seconded by Valmont and Maurice ; and they returned to the other room.

The Colonel placed himself before the card table, and shuffling the cards as he spoke, said, " Come, will you have your revenge, Block ?"

Valmont caught Maurice's eye at the moment, and he gave him a wink, which Maurice understood to imply, that Mr. Block in accepting the challenge would only run the risk of increasing his loss.

" Aye, I don't care," returned Block, in answer to the Colonel's demand ; " But

won't these gentlemen play too ; if so we can cut in for a rubber, or something ?”

“ Oh no, not for me,” replied Valmont, “ I never play, except at Cassino with the women.”

“ And I never play at all from choice,” said Maurice.

“ Well come then clap down,” cried the Colonel.

Maurice had throughout the day particularly remarked Block ; he had discovered him to be extremely ready where any question connected with commerce was in debate ; and an entire infant in every branch of polite knowledge and worldly customs.

After they had played some time, Block rose from his seat, and ringing the bell violently, exclaimed, “ I'll have another pack of cards I'm determined, and try what that will do towards changing my luck ; I'll be hanged if I have not lost one and twenty games.”

“ I'll give you a good chance if you like,” cried the Colonel, “ you've certainly been unlucky, and so if you please I'll

bet you double or quits upon the next game."

"Double or quits;" returned Block, in consideration, "why at that rate I should lose, let me see, two hundred and ten guineas."

"Yes, five guineas a game, two hundred and ten guineas," replied the Colonel; "come, on or off."

"Oh, off, off," cried Block, and they were on the point of cutting for the deal with the new pack, when Block half addressing himself, and half the by-standers, said, "If ever I do win a game, I think it must be now with the new pack: Come, I'll hold you double or quits, Colonel."

"Done!" cried the Colonel.

"Done!" added Block.

"I'll take a small bet, *si vous voulez*, upon the game," said Valmont, addressing Block; encouraged to the undertaking by the better luck he had seen the Colonel have; and by the better skill with which he believed him to play.

"I'll indulge you;" answered Block, "what shall it be—a five pound note?"

"If you please," replied Valmont,

"Very well," cried Block, "Double or quits with you—and a five pound note with you;—now then; you deal."

"In the first three hands Block scored eighty-one, and his opponent only fifty-three; Block chuckled, but he crowed too soon, for the next deal gave the Colonel a capot, and made him the winner of the game.

For a few moments Block lost his temper, but cooling again, he swore the Colonel should play him another game for the same stake; the Colonel swore as vehemently that the stake was too high to be continued; and after a quarter of an hour lost in debate, they compromised the matter by agreeing to play three games for one hundred guineas each.

As Block was sitting down again, he put the five pound note into Valmont's hand, at the same time saying, "Won't you go on?"

"No," replied Valmont, "I never make more than one bet in an evening, whether I win or lose.—I must go home, I have letters to write—good night, Colonel, *vo-tres très humble serviteur*, if you stay to-morrow, I shall be glad to see you."

"No, I'm off after breakfast, poz," cried the Colonel.

"Then recollect to save me a day the next time you visit this place," returned the divine, and he then departed, Maurice following his example.

Ever since Maurice had been acquainted with Colonel Buckhurst, which was considerably above two years, he had known him to be fond of play; and having now had a proof that Block had the same propensity, he no longer wondered at their being attracted to the society of each other; as the love of play is a magnet which draws to the same centre the learned, the illiterate, the proud and the humble; and levels all distinctions but the supremacy of luck.

He could not forbear an inward smile at the cunning with which Valmont had hedged himself in for a bet against the unfortunate Block; and the meanness with which he had sneaked off with it;—how ill did such conduct, he considered, agree with the noble Welch blood and arrogant spirit of him who had pursued it!

## CHAPTER VIII.

*A Separation.*

MAURICE's winter passed on solitarily; Colonel Buckhurst visited Worthing no more; Mr. Block was absent for several weeks in London; and the dispositions of himself and Valmont assimilated so little, that they never met above once a week, and frequently not so often.

Early in the spring Maurice being recalled from his recruiting service to join his regiment, he again applied to his Colonel for leave of absence, and having obtained it, he posted joyfully down to Richmond.

On arriving there his reception was as kind as he had predicted it would be, and in addition to the usual number of Mr. Leuwitzer's family, he found a gentleman who was introduced to him by the name of Weimar, and

whom he understood to be Mr. Leuwitzer's cousin, and partner in trade.

This gentleman had regularly visited England every other year since Mr. Leuwitzer had been in it; an attachment had from their early youth subsisted between him and Mr. Leuwitzer's sister; he had repeatedly implored her to give him her hand, but she had always resisted his importunities; she had gone so far as to say that she loved him sufficiently to declare, that if ever she did marry, he was the man on whom her choice would fall, but that she was so extremely attached to her brother, as to feel unwilling to leave him without any intimate companion or friend.

On his present visit Mr. Weimar had again pleaded his suit with all the ardor of real affection; he had urged that Mr. Leuwitzer had now an intimate friend and companion in his *protégée* Amica, who would most affectionately prevent his feeling the loss of his sister; this argument on the part of the lover, backed by the persuasions of Mr. Leuwitzer himself, who desired to see his sister blessed with the happiness which an union with Mr. Weimar

seemed to promise her, made an impression on her mind, and from once beginning to listen to arguments in favour of changing her situation in life, she was insensibly led on to give her consent to the accomplishment of his wishes.

The manners of Mr. Weimar were as prepossessing as those of Mr. Leuwitzer; and he appeared in the eyes of every one, a man calculated to make Adelaide a happy wife.

About a fortnight after Maurice's arrival at Richmond, the marriage took place; and a few days after their union, Mr. Leuwitzer, Maurice, and Amica, accompanied them about thirty miles on their way to the port from which they were to embark for Germany.—They slept at the same inn that night, and after an early breakfast next morning, an affectionate parting took place:—Mrs. Weimar and Amica freely shed those tears which Mr. Leuwitzer could with difficulty suppress, and Mrs. Weimar, as she gave Amica a last embrace, said, “Remember, my dear girl, that if you had not been living with my brother, I should never have married thus to quit him; I

hope therefore that you will not abandon him."

"Alas, my dear madam," said Amica, returning her embrace, "were I ungrateful enough to wish to quit him, you know that I have no other being to whom I could turn for friendship; I will not leave him, depend upon it."

The travellers then took separate roads, and none of them could regain their wonted spirits that day; indeed perfect composure of mind was not restored either to Mr. Leuwitzer or Amica, till they had received an account of their beloved Adelaide's safe arrival in Hamburgh.

Maurice's leave of absence had been only for two months, and when it was within a week of expiring, as he was one afternoon taking a stroll with Mr. Leuwitzer and Amica, the exclamation of "Stanton, how are you, my boy?" made him turn suddenly round, and he saw Colonel Buckhurst in plain clothes, leaning on the arm of Sidney Valmont.

They came up to him, and after the common place sentences of the day, he in-

troduced them to Mr. Leuwitzer and Amica.

"I did not know you were in this part of the world," said Valmont, "or I should certainly have called upon you."

"I was equally surprized at seeing you," returned Maurice.

"*Oh pardie*, I live here," answered Valmont.

"Live here!" echoed Maurice.

"Yes, I got this church about a month ago, and am just arrived."

"Indeed, Sir," said Mr. Leuwitzer, "I hope we shall be good neighbours; I was so with the other clergyman."

"Sir, you do me honour," cried Valmont.

"Will you drink tea at my house this afternoon? we are now going home to take some; will you and your friend come?" said Mr. Leuwitzer.

Unfortunately the Colonel and the divine were going to dine at the very hour at which Mr. Leuwitzer had mentioned that his tea would be ready, so were obliged to decline the invitation.

When they parted at the turn of the road, Maurice satisfied Mr. Leuwitzer and Amica with such particulars as he was acquainted with concerning their new acquaintance.

“ Ah!” said Mr. Leuwitzer, “ I do not like such parsons as those; family pride is a very bad quality for a clergyman, who ought to preach the doctrine of our all being one family, equal in the eyes of God;—neither is he drest in such a way as I like to see a clergyman, and in such a manner as commands respect; his leather breeches with boots and spurs look like those of a jockey groom; and that pink and white handkerchief about his neck, and that straw hat lined with green on his head, make him look as if he was one of the Bond-street men-milliners rather than a clergyman.”

“ How does the Colonel strike you?” asked Maurice. Amica answered this question—“ I have seen enough of him in this short interview to know that I could never like him; he stared at me as if he wanted to command my attention by his assurance, rather than by his respect; an effrontery which I think no woman who has a proper

regard for herself would ever indulge in any man."

"And which no man of sense would ever require," said Mr. Leuwitzer. "He is a very contemptible judge of female accomplishments, and female beauty, who does not admire them most under the veil of modesty."

Maurice had heard the Colonel so universally extolled by the women, that he felt rather surprised at finding that Amica was so decidedly of a contrary opinion to her sex in general in this particular; but he felt pleased with the cause which she had assigned for her dislike; and he would almost have parted with an eye to have learnt what was her opinion of himself.

The next day was Sunday; after the morning service, a loud rap at the door announced visitors, and in a few moments it was opened to Colonel Buckhurst and Mr. Valmont.

They took chairs—the weather is an Englishman's universal prologue to conversation; it had unfortunately for some time

past been settled, and therefore afforded a scanty topic.

As Buckhurst was Maurice's Lieutenant Colonel, Mr. Leuwitzer wished to treat him in a manner which he might deem polite; he offered them refreshments; entered most affably upon subjects of conversation which he thought might have interest for the Colonel, and invited them to take a turn in his garden;—as they entered it, they were met by Maurice, for Mr. Leuwitzer had been alone in the parlour on their arrival.

"Stanton, my fine fellow!" cried Buckhurst, "I'll drive you back to Hastings if you like, on Wednesday, in my tandem; it is a day longer than your time I know, but I'll settle that for you;—I shall start about noon."

Maurice replied that he should be happy to accompany him.

"Are you fit for the business?" asked the Colonel, "how are you for wind?—hearty, eh?"

Maurice understood the meaning of the question, and replied with a smile in the affirmative.

Mr. Leuwitzer's stare expressed that it was unintelligible to him ;—Maurice thus explained it. " It is a whim of the Colonel's, Sir," he said, " when he drives a tandem, that his companion shall blow a horn as a signal to carriages before him to get out of his way ; and, also to call out the people at the turnpike gates, that he may not be delayed in going through them."

" It is the fashion, Sir," said the Colonel, " and a devilish good way too, ai'nt it?"

" Why it does seem to be capable of some little service," replied Mr. Leuwitzer, " and that is what fashion, seldom can boast of."

" I hope, Sir," said Valmont, casting a side glance at the Colonel, which did not escape Maurice, " I hope that Miss Leuwitzer is quite well to-day ; but I beg pardon, I believe I am not perfectly correct in calling her by that name."

" I know not what her own name is, Sir," replied Mr. Leuwitzer, " she is therefore at present quite as welcome to my name as she could be to any other !"

"Not know her name!" echoed Valmont.

"How the devil do you make that out?" cried the Colonel; though it was evident from the countenances of them both that they had been making inquiries which had let them into an acquaintance with her history.

Mr. Leuwitzer's tone and manner were such as ever commanded the respect of those whom he addressed; not by their vehemence, but their calm firmness;—and in a few words he related the principal incidents of Amica's life, and his own subsequent benevolence;—he had no desire to make a display of the latter, nor any wish to keep the former a secret;—he wished things always to be known as they really were, and to this end he always spoke the truth.

"Shall we not have the happiness of seeing the lady this morning?" asked Mr. Valmont.

They were now entering the house, and Mr. Leuwitzer inquired for Amica of a servant, who replied,—"that she was dressing."

"Then let us be off!" cried the polite Colonel, unguardedly confessing the motive of his visit.

Mr. Leuwitzer with a smile wished them a good morning.

As they were leaving the house, Valmont called out to Maurice. "Don't you go to church this afternoon, it is quite the gay thing, I assure you?" and without waiting for an answer, he caught hold of the Colonel's arm, and they sauntered away together.

"The gay thing, indeed!" echoed Mr. Leuwitzer. "Is it possible that any human beings can be so depraved in their ideas as to connect the name of worship with that of fashion?—and a clergyman to express such sentiments too!—The fashion to go to church indeed! Oh for shame! for shame!"

But shameful as the truth is, it is still a truth that fashion has extended its sovereign sway even over the exercise of religion; and that many are devout from fashion who would never be so from a better motive; if we can allow the name of de-

votion to the actions of those who make parties for church just as they would do for the play ; and with whom the hours of service at Saint George's, Hanover-Square, are but a continuation of the assemblage of beau-monde which met at the Opera on the Saturday night before.

Nor is this evil confined solely to the metropolis ; London is undoubtedly the great hot bed which produces fresh varieties of vice, but as soon as they are brought to seed, it is dispersed over the whole country, and every town and village becomes a new nursery for it.— Thus, amongst other fashionable perversions of duty and decency, the country church is become a spot for the display of rival tastes in dress ; and the country church-yard is the witness of as much scandal, jealousy, envy, and pride, as the drawing room of the first duchess in the kingdom.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Frailty, not confined to Woman.*

"**T**HAT *protegée* of the German's is a damned fine girl!" cried the Colonel, as he was driving Maurice down to Hastings in his tandem; "fine limbs, devilishly well put together, upon my soul."

Maurice did not reply.

"What does the old fellow mean to do with her? eh Stanton? do you know?" continued the Colonel.

"He considers her as his daughter," replied Maurice, "and will therefore, I doubt not, protect her as a parent while he lives."

"His daughter!" ejaculated the Colonel, "Pshaw! why she was only a beggar's brat—was she?"

"He found her in a beggar's habitation," answered Maurice, "but he has instilled

such principles and good sense into her mind, as would do credit to a sovereign."

"Pshaw! damn the mind, and all that; sense only makes women conceited—give me the body, say I—has she any game in her?" cried the Colonel.

"Pardon me, Sir," returned Stanton, "but I cannot listen to questions of this nature, when she is the object which occasions them; we are alike the children of Mr. Leuwitzer's beneficence, and on this account I consider Amica as my sister."

"Devilish cunning dog you are," returned the Colonel, "call her your sister, and think all is snug—sister indeed!—I only wish I had such a cousin!"

Had Maurice allowed himself to have spoken, he probably would have uttered some words which he would afterwards have wished to recall; he therefore wisely maintained a silence, which was perhaps less painful than the event of breaking it might have been.

It is in possessing a command over himself, that a man most successfully obtains a command over others; especially over those

whose minds are callous to argument; who are vehemently positive, or familiarly offensive; such was the case with Maurice and the Colonel, who finding that his companion would not keep up the subject he was anxious to discuss, began talking to his horses; and after he had amused himself some time with them, he started a fresh topic, upon which he found Maurice willing to join in conversation with him.

The Colonel did not stop to dine till eight o'clock, intending, as he said, to drive a stage after dinner by moonlight.—“If they sport Burgundy at this place,” cried he, as they drove into the inn-yard, “we’ll just take a bottle’ apiece, and then start again, all alive and kicking.”

Maurice did not choose to object to any of Colonel Buckhurst’s propositions which were confined within the bounds of reason; and the Burgundy, at least such Burgundy as an inn upon the road usually produces, was brought in.—Maurice expected to hear the Colonel condemn it, and very probably throw it in the landlord’s face, as he had once before seen him perform an exploit of a similar nature; but the Colonel had ordered Burgun-

dy, solely to show that he was *somebody*, and therefore swallowed a few glasses of it without comments.—It was not the flavour of the wine, but the name which a man gets by ordering expensive liquor, that he had sought to be gratified by in calling for it; in this he had been satisfied; and almost immediately after the cloth was removed, he rang for the bill.

When it was brought in, Maurice pulled out his purse to pay his share; but the Colonel swore he would never speak to him again, if he attempted any thing of the kind; Maurice remonstrated; the Colonel said he had invited him to dinner, and he should consider it as an affront if he did not put up his purse. Maurice was obliged to submit, and the Colonel having paid the whole bill merely from the same feelings that had actuated him in calling for the Burgundy, enjoyed the reward of knowing that the “Thank you Sirs,” and low bows from the landlord, waiters, and hostler, at his leaving the inn were intended indivisibly and alone for him; and strange as it may appear, there are not a few human beings scattered over the face of the globe, who glory in these

feelings, because they have minds incapable of tasting the more refined sensations of satisfaction.

A couple of days past in this entertaining stile of travelling brought them to Hastings, where Maurice once more composed his mind for study and attention to his professional duties: the army was perhaps not exactly the line of life which he would have chosen for himself had not circumstances thrown him into it; but being once placed in it, he used every method of learning the business of a good soldier; whatever was worth doing at all, he considered to be worth doing well; a determination which begets in those who form it, a habit of industry, that leads by an easy ascent to the eminence of perfection.

At the time of Amica's introduction to Colonel Buckhurst, she was only seventeen, but she had attained her full growth, and with a countenance more interesting than regularly beautiful, was by every one termed a very handsome girl.

That the Colonel had seen her with the eyes of admiration, we have already gathered from his own expressions; but that marriage

had no share in his thoughts, is a secret with which it is proper that we should acquaint our readers, if they have not had penetration enough to discover from his general character, and manners, that he is not what the world calls a marrying man.

Mr. Valmont saw Amica with the same eyes that the Colonel beheld her, but with an infinitely more reflective mind ; he had early perceived that honourably was the only way in which any advances could be attempted to be made towards the heart of a young woman under the protection of a perfect character like Mr. Leuwitzer's ; and as matrimony with any thing less than the fifth cousin of an Earl was entirely incompatible with the fourth son of a Welch baronet ; with that easy *sang froid* which many fine gentlemen like the Reverend Sidney Valmont can command ; he resolved to enjoy the luxury of beholding Amica as frequently as opportunity should allow him the happiness ; but not to suffer his thoughts to wander beyond the pleasure of gratifying his optic nerves.

Amica had no aversion to the visits of Mr. Valmont at Mr. Leuwitzer's ; his manners were entirely free from those open violations

of decorum which marked the actions of Colonel Buckhurst; his conversation was sometimes more entertaining than the newspaper, which she generally took up once a day as half an hour's relaxation from her regular employments; and like the newspaper it was generally a farrago of intelligence which required neither reflection to listen to, nor implicit faith to be pinned upon it.

The passion of love had never for a single moment been the subject of Amica's reflections; she felt that she preferred the poor little drummer boy, the joint object with herself of Mr. Leuwitzer's benevolence and solicitude, to every other man whom she had seen; but she had never analyzed the feeling, and was content with its simple existence.

At Valmont's first visit to Mr. Leuwitzer, after the departure of Colonel Buckhurst and Maurice, he so frequently interlarded his conversation with French phrases, that Mr. Leuwitzer remarking it, said, with an expression of satisfaction on his countenance, and in his voice, "*Il me semble, Monsieur, que vous preferez la langue Française; j'en suis charmé, c'est une belle langue, j'aime bien*

*la parler, et je me promets quelque fois ce plaisir avec vous."*

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Valmont, "I really don't"—understand you, his manner implied.

"I say" returned Mr. Leuwitzer, "that you seem to be much attached to the French language, and that I hope we shall sometimes converse in it together!"

"Oh, upon my honor, I understand very little of it," replied Valmont, "very little indeed, Sir."

"I should have supposed you understood it better than any other language, as you use some words of it so often," rejoined Mr. Leuwitzer.

Valmont changed the conversation, and Mr. Leuwitzer felt quite at a loss to conceive what could be a man's whim for expressing accidental parts of his conversation in a language that he confessed he knew nothing more of than the literal meaning of the few words which he thus employed.

When frivolity is coupled with vice, the junction renders the character in which they

centre intolerable; but when its companions are only follies, offensive to no one but itself, it becomes endurable; and Mr. Leuwitzer believing such to be the nature of Valmont, permitted his occasional visits without disgust.

Chance having one day thrown them into conversation together, Amica happened to be mentioned by Mr. Leuwitzer, and Valmont directly breaking out into a string of encomiums on her temper, her mind, and her person, remarked, that he wondered from the extreme anxiety which he had constantly heard Mr. Leuwitzer express for her being in every respect perfect and accomplished, that he should not have determined to send her, for a year at least, to one of the first rate boarding schools in the metropolis, where the finishing strokes are given to elegance of person and brilliancy of understanding.

“We have a very different idea of those kind of places I find,” said Mr. Leuwitzer; “in my opinion they are seminaries where the seeds of inutility and infelicity are sown in the hearts of all who are members of

them;—and for the privilege of having their manners and their morals corrupted, you pay two or three hundred pounds a year. Of religion they are taught nothing but the art of selecting a becoming undress to go to church in; they are perhaps appointed to read a certain portion of history or the belles lettres every morning, and they are permitted to read it as fast as they can utter the words, without any time being allowed for it to sink into their minds; without any comments being made to them upon it; or any inquiries used whether they understand the subject it treats of or not.”

“ You are severe,” said Valmont.

“ I am just,” replied Mr. Leuwitzer; “ I have had examples under my eye, that from those seminaries they come home to their friends the children that you would expect to see them leave the nursery; with no one recommendation which can command them respect; with no one quality to render them good wives or happy mothers; at these places a carriage is kept for them; they are carried to the opera, and taught to look every where about the house but upon the stage; this is what is called introducing them; that is

teaching them to watch who is looking at them, and stare about for admiration."

"All girls must be *brought out*, as it is called," said Valmont, "or they cannot expect to form connexions in life."

"No; there is no occasion at all for it," returned Mr. Leuwitzer, "if a girl is worth having for a wife, some man that is worth having for a husband will find her out."

"But the polite accomplishments are taught at those schools in great perfection," rejoined Valmont.

"I think just the reverse," answered Mr. Leuwitzer; "in dancing they are only taught to display themselves in an indelicate manner; in music they can only rattle off a few country dances upon a piano forte; or jingle the bells of the tambourin to shew off their shape and arms; and in their drawing, the art dies away from them as soon as they lose their master."

Mr. Valmont could not be convinced that such expensive, and elegant places, where people of rank frequently sent their daughters, were not the very essence of human perfection; and Mr. Leuwitzer could not be made to swerve from his opinion of the per-

nicious effects which must arise from suffering daughters, for the sake of being elegantly *brought out*, to grow up into women in the elegant ignorance of all that is worth knowing, and the elegant incapacity of doing whatever is useful.

## CHAPTER X.

*A Bank-Note.*

A Year now passed unmarked by any particular event. In the course of the following winter a material alteration took place in the plans of both Colonel Buckhurst and Lieutenant Stanton.

The Colonel grew weary of the army, and retired with his rank upon half-pay: his commission was purchased by a man to whom many of the officers had a dislike, and they immediately changed their commissions for situations in other regiments. This change introduced amongst those who remained some new-comers, whose conduct was not pleasing to the former officers of the regiment; and Maurice resolved to quit it, as soon as his benevolent friend could procure him an advantageous exchange.

About this time, as Mr. Leuwitzer was one day crossing a street at the back of the Ex-

change, in a violent shower of snow, he perceived something red lying on the foot-path, which he picked up, and found to be a bank-note case. He looked around him to see if there was any one near whom he might suppose to have lost it: the badness of the weather had driven almost every body into their houses, and he saw only a man and a woman, who by their appearance he could not suppose to be the owners of a thing of the kind.

Mr. Leuwitzer had just left his counting-house for the day; and proceeding into Cheapside by short cuts and back streets, he was fortunate enough to find a coach, which he engaged to carry him to the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly, where he usually met the Richmond stage.

The stage was as full as it could be crammed, two more than its limited number having been admitted from motives of humanity, in order to shelter them from the coarseness of the weather; and amongst the passengers, there being two or three of Mr. Leuwitzer's neighbours, with whom he chatted during his ride on the topics of the day, he thought no more of the case he had found till he had been some time returned to his own house.

He then produced it, and shewed it to Amica: she opened it, and looking into one of the pockets, of which it had two, found in it a one-pound note.

“I wish I knew the owner, with all my heart,” said Mr. Leuwitzer; “a pound sterling is a great deal more than most persons can afford to lose: it is a pity that people should be so careless as to drop things of this kind in the street!”

Whilst he was speaking, Amica turned to the other pocket of the case:—“Here is another note,” she said.

“Is that a one-pound note too?” asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

Amica opened it, and immediately exclaimed, “Bless me, why this is for five hundred pounds!”

Mr. Leuwitzer received the note from her hands, and cast his eyes over it in silence.

“Am not I right?” asked Amica: “it is for five hundred pounds—is it not?”

“Indeed it is,” said Mr. Leuwitzer.

“This is a worse loss than that of the one-pound note for which we were just now commiserating the owner!” returned Amica.

“I don’t know that,” replied Mr. Leuwitzer: “those who are in possession of five-

hundred-pound notes are generally people to whom the loss of five hundred pounds would be no material injury. This vast increase of the sum I have found rather diminishes my pity for the loser of it, upon the principle I have just laid down to you."

It was too late that night for Mr. Leuwitzer to take any steps for restoring the property he had found to its owner. On the following morning, upon reaching London, he made it his business to proceed to several of the newspaper offices, in each of which he caused to be inserted an advertisement explanatory of what he had the day before found, and announcing that he would restore the case and its contents to any one who could shew a satisfactory claim to them, by mentioning the signatures and number of the five-hundred-pound note, and paying the expence of the advertisements.

Mr. Leuwitzer's walk through the snow on the day of his finding the note-case, had given him cold, and settled the gout in his feet; and on the third day he was confined to his house, with his legs wrapped up in flannels, and supported on a cradle before the fire.

In the course of the same week Maurice Stanton arrived at Richmond, having resolved to quit his regiment, he was come to reside at his patron's till he should obtain a new situation in the army.

The advertisements respecting the note-case and its contents continued to be daily repeated in the newspapers, and nearly a fortnight passed without any application having been made in consequence of them:—at length one day, about the hour of noon, the rattle of wheels, followed by a loud rap at Mr. Leuwitzer's door, announced the approach of company, and the servant entering the parlour, informed his master, that a gentleman in a curricule at the door, attended by a groom on horseback, desired to see him respecting the advertisement.

Mr. Leuwitzer ordered the gentleman to be shewn in. In the course of a few minutes appeared a handsome young man, about twenty-two years of age, dressed in the extreme of the fashion. Mr. Leuwitzer apologised for not being able to rise to receive him on his entrance, and he apologised, in turn, for his intrusion, with the words and address of a gentleman.

The stranger's language had in it a slight mixture of the Jewish dialect, and his account of himself soon confirmed it to be his natural accent; for he informed Mr. Leuwitzer that his name was Reuben Davids, the nephew of Mr. Nathan Davids, a stock-broker of eminence in the city, in whose house he was a junior partner, and that he had had the misfortune to lose the case which Mr. Leuwitzer had found: the advertisement concerning it in the papers, he said, had not met his eye till that day.

“Nathan Davids!” repeated Mr. Leuwitzer. “I am myself very much acquainted with all people of business in London, but that house I do not know.”

The young man appeared greatly surprised at this declaration. “I thought every child had known our house,” he said: “it is in Birchin-lane, number”——

“Oh Sir,” returned Mr. Leuwitzer, interrupting him, “I have no reason to doubt your word!—if you will therefore repeat to me the number of the note, which is of much more consequence in the business we are upon than the number of your house, I will return it to you directly.”

“Why, upon my honour, Sir,” replied Mr. Davids, “this note being a part of my own private property, and not of the trade of our house, I really can’t pretend to say that I am acquainted with the number; I can only assert that I lost a red Morocco note-case, on the very day your advertisement mentions, in the very street your advertisement describes; that in one of the pockets was a bank-note of five hundred pounds, and in the other a one-pound note: and having declared this upon the honour of a gentleman, I submit it to your own decision whether I am not entitled to receive it at your hands.”

“You must pardon me, Sir,” replied Mr. Leuwitzer, “if I am of a contrary opinion. As you are to me an entire stranger, and as you cannot give me that satisfactory proof of your being the right owner of the notes I am in possession of, which my advertisement requires, it is my duty to consider that, in delivering them up to you, there is a possibility of my wronging some other person; I therefore feel myself bound to keep them two months longer at least in my hands, before I transfer them to you; and if at the expiration of that time, no one else shall appear to claim them, who can

certify the numbers, and by so doing prove a stronger right to them than you can, they shall be your's: you cannot object to this caution on my part."

The young man justified Mr. Leuwitzer's precaution in a manner that bespoke an honourable mind, and almost brought him to an opinion that he ought to deliver the notes up to him without farther debate.—"Will you permit me to see the case," said Mr. Davids, "that I may be fully satisfied whether it is my own or not?"

Mr. Leuwitzer immediately produced it. "Oh, yes!" Mr. Davids instantly exclaimed: "I knew it must be mine!" He looked at each of the notes, replaced them in their separate pockets, and then saying, "I am happy that it is in such good hands as your's, Sir, and will have the pleasure of calling for it two months hence, or six if you prefer it:" again commended Mr. Leuwitzer's caution in not delivering it up to a stranger, who could not comply with the terms of the advertisement; ordered his carriage, and departed.

At the time of Mr. Davids' application, Maurice was from home; he was gone to call upon Sidney Valmont. Scarcely were the

wheels of Mr. Davids' curricie again put in motion from the door of Mr. Leuwitzer's house, before Maurice and Valmont both entered the apartment where the good German was sitting, the prisoner of his gout, in a fit of laughter, which for some moments prevented the utterance of either of them: Amica followed them in, and joined Mr. Leuwitzer in enquiring what had so wonderfully amused them.

Maurice spoke first: "Pray, Sir," he said, "do you know who it is that you have just had to visit you?—What could his business be with you?"

Mr. Leuwitzer informed them of the cause that had brought the young man to his house.

"*Ah, bien fait, Monsieur!*" exclaimed Valmont; "he thought this was a better hit than acting, I suppose."

"What do you mean?" said Mr. Leuwitzer; "pray explain the joke to us."

"I will, Sir," cried Maurice: but as his laugh rather increased than diminished, and as laughing men are very bad tellers of a story, we will tell it for him.

In the course of the preceding summer, Valmont had passed a few days with Colonel Buckhurst at Lewes; Maurice had at that

time been removed thither from Hastings. One evening, after Valmont had dined at the mess, they went together to lounge away an hour or two at the theatre: on entering the house they found that the play was just done; Valmont took a bill, and on reading it, they were informed that it had been the tragedy of King John, in which a gentleman had played Faulconbridge, and that the same gentleman was to appear as young Wilding in the farce of the Liar.

When the curtain was drawn up for the beginning of the farce, in the representative of the hero of the piece, appeared a handsome dashing young man, who supported the character with great spirit, and was rewarded with much applause: having been entertained with the first act, Maurice and his party were induced to stay and see the second; but, to their great surprise, the manner of the actor was entirely changed since he had left the stage before: he was become confused, imperfect, and they observed also that he kept standing on a particular spot without stirring an inch from it; and that his eyes were constantly turned towards the entrance upon the stage from behind the scenes.

But in a few moments the surprise of the spectators was still more increased, by the actor suddenly breaking off in one of the speeches of his part, and exclaiming, "Now, now!—down with it now!" which words he accompanied by stamping violently with his foot upon the boards, and in less than half a dozen seconds the part of the stage on which he was standing, which was a trap-door, sunk down with him, and two ill-looking fellows, rushing upon the stage, were within an ace of slipping through after him. "Oh, this won't do," cried one of them; "but we'll be too deep for you yet!" and off they ran again.

For the space of a minute the silence of consternation tied the tongues of the audience, and an actress who had been alone on the stage with young Wilding at the moment of his sudden exit, seeing the trap closed again, and no appearance of his return, walked deliberately off. A hiss now issued from every part of the house, and a performer came forward to say, that he was sorry to announce to the audience that the farce could not be continued, as the gentleman who had been performing the Liar had run away.

Men like Colonel Buckhurst and Sidney Valmont are not satisfied without a full explanation of a scene of this nature; and in order to obtain one in the present case, they directly left the boxes and went round to the stage.

To their inquiries the manager replied, "That the new performer of the night had a few days before introduced himself to him by the name of Melmoth, and solicited an engagement in his company; which he had promised him, provided he should meet with approbation in a couple of parts of trial.—He has proved himself by no means a bad actor," continued the manager, "and all went on to my satisfaction till the end of the first act of the farce; Melmoth then had a hint from one of my other performers, that there were two men lurking about the theatre, who were making inquiries after the new actor, and appeared to be watching an opportunity of getting to him behind the scenes.

"It appears that he immediately supposed them to be bailiffs, and calling to him one of the scene-shifters, he gave him a crown upon condition of his letting him down a certain trap which he pointed out to him, the mo-

ment he should give him a signal which was agreed on between them: having made this proviso, he proceeded to the performance of the second act; the bailiffs, as he had suspected, actually gained admittance behind the scenes, and as they were on the point of rushing upon the stage to seize him, he gave his signal to the scene-shifter in his confidence, and disappeared from their view in the manner you saw; and being acquainted with an outlet from the lower parts of the theatre, unknown to them, he has for the present actually escaped them."

The Colonel and his party burst into a hearty laugh at the idea of the well-planned stratagem by which the gentleman-actor had escaped his pursuers; but one of these defeated personages, who happened to be standing near them, in no very pleasant humour at his late disappointment, said, "It may be a laughing matter to you, gentlemen; but it is not so to us and to his creditors."

"Who the devil is he?" asked the Colonel.

"That is more than I can positively tell you," replied the bailiff; "but I believe he is little better than a common swindler. He has gone by so many names that nobody

knows what his real one is: we had a scent of his coming down here, and thought we could not miss him, if we once got within arm's length of him upon the stage; but, damn him! he'd be too sharp for the devil himself."

Melmoth, if such was his name, found some means of immediately quitting Lewes, for he was seen in it no more after his sudden exit from the theatre; and the bailiffs, according to their own cant expression, were obliged to go upon a new scent after him.

At the recollection of this circumstance it was that Maurice and Valmont were laughing at their entrance into Mr. Leuwitzer's parlour; and what had revived it in their minds had been the view they had caught of Mr. Reuben Davids, in his curricule; for in his person they had recognised the very hero of the anecdote just related.

On hearing this account, Mr. Leuwitzer could not express himself sufficiently thankful for the caution which he had used in not parting with the case and its contents, without some satisfactory conviction that he who demanded them was justly entitled to their possession.

On the following day, Maurice was sent by Mr. Leuwitzer to transact some business for him in the city, which his gout still rendered him incapable of leaving home to perform in person; and Maurice, according to his instructions, took the same opportunity for inquiring whether there was such a name as that of Davids, a stock-broker, known in the mercantile world. He was satisfactorily assured that no such person existed, and not a shadow of doubt could now be entertained of the dishonesty of the young man who had appeared to claim the notes on the preceding day.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Another Visitor.*

ON the succeeding Sunday Mr. Leuwitzer was so much recovered from his lameness as to say that he should visit his counting house in London on the following day, as usual, and that on this account he should make an alteration in his advertisement, directing those who had claims to the property which he had found to apply to him there.

Scarcely had he made this declaration, ere his servant came into the room to inform him that there was an elderly gentleman waiting to see him in the hall, who was come, he said, in consequence of a loss he had sustained; and an advertisement which he had read respecting its restitution, in one of the daily papers. Mr. Leuwitzer directly ordered him to

be invited into the parlour, where he was sitting;—the stranger accordingly entered, and took a seat; he appeared to be about sixty-years of age, was plainly drest, and looked more like an honest man than like a gentleman.

“I call upon you, Sir,” he said, “to recover some part of my property at your hands; to thank you for the honourable manner in which you have dealt by it; and to pay you the expences of its restitution:—My name, Sir, is Robertson; I am retired from trade, and I have an only daughter with a large family, to whom it is my custom to give five hundred pounds as a present, every time she lies in;—the note which you found, I had put into my case for that purpose, and dropt it in my way to her house, near the back of the Exchange;—I suspect that I pulled it out of my pocket with my handkerchief; I can no other way account for my having lost it.”

“Do you know the number and signatures of the largest note, Sir?” asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

“Oh yes, Sir,” returned the old gentleman with a smile, “I was forty-seven years in trade, and it taught me to do every thing with exactness;—In this little book,” pulling one from his pocket as he spoke, “are the numbers and signatures of every bank note of above one pound value, which has passed through my hands for many years past.”—He put on his spectacles, and turned to a leaf from which he read, “a five hundred pound note of the Bank of England, number 19,873, August 26, 1796, entered by the name of C. Banks, signed J. Taylor.”

Mr. Leuwitzer examined the note while Mr. Robertson read, and found him correct in every particular.

“Now, Sir, I can tell you still more to certify my claim,” rejoined the old gentleman, “on the back of the one pound note is written, ‘A. Bunn,’ for I took it at a shop, where the people were strangers to me, and then I always mark the names of those from whom I receive them on their backs, that in case of their proving forged ones, I may know where to return them.”

A. Bunn was indeed written on the back of the one pound note.

“The reason of the small note being in the same case with the five hundred pound one,” continued the stranger, “was, because I had intended it as a gift to my daughter’s nurse, and therefore put it up with my present to her:—a man with nine grand children, as I have,” he continued, “cannot very comfortably afford to lose a sum of this nature;—I thank you heartily, Sir, that your honesty has corrected the ill effects which might have resulted from my carelessness:—pray, Sir, what are the charges of the advertisements, and other expences which you have been at?”

“Why, Sir,” replied Mr. Leuwitzer, “I have no grand-children, you have nine; do me the pleasure therefore to make a present of the small sum to which the price of the advertisements amount, to your little folks, instead of paying it to me.”

Mr. Robertson remonstrated, but Mr. Leuwitzer thought his visitor looked as if the action was one from which he would

derive satisfaction, if he did not feel ashamed to accept what might be construed into a charity, and therefore said, "Come, I'll tell you what, you shall pay me my expences, and I will call upon you when I come to London, and you shall introduce me yourself to your nine grand children."

Mr. Robertson said it would give him great happiness, and Mr. Leuwitzer stepped into his library to fetch the account of his expenditure in advertisements, from his bureau.

When he returned to the parlour, he found the stranger standing with one foot upon a stool on the hearth in order to raise himself the nearer to the sword which was suspended over the chimney-piece, and which he appeared to be examining very attentively.

A momentary suspicion that it might be known to him, flashed across the mind of Mr. Leuwitzer, and he said, "Do you see any thing remarkable about that sword, Sir?"

"Only that it is a very handsome one, Sir," returned Mr. Robertson.

"You never by any possible means, saw it before then, Sir?" inquired Mr. Leuwitzer.

"Oh dear, no Sir, never," returned Mr. Robertson, "I never had the pleasure of being in this house before."

Mr. Leuwitzer felt immediately convinced that nothing but common curiosity had drawn his visitor's observation to the sword, and changed the conversation:—a few minutes more entirely settled the business of their meeting; and Mr. Robertson having given Mr. Leuwitzer his address in London, and repeated his sense of the obligation he owed him, departed, saying that he had a chaise waiting for him on the road by the side of the green, near which Mr. Leuwitzer's house stood.

About ten minutes after the departure of the old gentleman, Mr. Leuwitzer's man servant, who had lived with him ever since his arrival in England, and whose fidelity had given him some claim to a share in his master's confidence, came into the parlour, and said, "Pray, Sir, was that gentleman the real owner of the notes?"

"Yes, yes, he was the right owner," replied Mr. Leuwitzer.

"I guessed so," rejoined Clarke, "by his generosity to me; he gave me a guinea, when I opened the door to let him out, which could only be in compliment to you."

"He seems a very good kind of a man," said Mr. Leuwitzer.

"After he had put the guinea into my hand, Sir," rejoined Clarke, "as he stood upon the step at the door, he asked me if you had a daughter;—I told him no;—Then that young lady who lives with him is a foundling whom he protects; is she not? he returned;—Yes, Sir, I answered, she is; my master makes no secret of her story."

—"And there is a story belonging to the sword that hangs over the chimney-piece, is there not?" he rejoined—"no other story I replied, "than that my master found it with the young lady whom he protects, Sir"———"Good morning," he returned; and going to a chaise which was standing at a short distance, he got into it, and it drove off."

“ This is strange ! very strange indeed ! ” returned Mr. Leuwitzer, and he then mentioned to Clarke the attentive manner in which he had seen the stranger looking at the sword ; “ I can’t help thinking,” he said, “ that he knows something more about that and my dear girl than he has confessed to us that he does.—These inquiries could hardly proceed from his having at some time or other heard the story of my finding Amica :—it is possible, certainly, that there might be no other cause for his making them, but it does not appear probable ; at all events I will make it my business to visit him the first thing I do in the morning, and beg of him if he can throw any light upon the mystery of my child, to do so ! ”

Mr. Leuwitzer resolved to say nothing to Amica of the occurrences of the morning, except merely that a just claimant for the notes which he had found, had been with him, and received them at his hands ; —He did not wish to cause her gentle heart any unnecessary agitation ; and as he in his own mind continued to dwell on the circumstances just past, he became almost

inclined himself to believe that the old gentleman's questions had only proceeded from the natural curiosity of all human beings to learn the truth of any uncommon occurrence of which the report is circulated in the world,

Since Colonel Buckhurst had retired from the army, he had taken apartments in Bond-street, where he passed infinitely more of his time than he did at his father's house in Rochester;—Valmont constantly visited him at least once in every week, and the Colonel generally passed his Sundays at Richmond; they were days on which he considered it vulgar to follow his constant custom on all other days, of lounging away his time on the pavé of Saint James's street, and Bond street;—Sunday is a day on which those ranks of society whom trade confines to their houses and shops during all the rest of the week, are at liberty to breathe the air; as well as those who have no business in existence, but pleasure;—and the equality of power which the day gives for pursuing the enjoyment, renders it incompatible with

those who pride themselves upon their excellent breeding, to be seen abroad.

As the Colonel seldom left Richmond till after breakfast on the Monday morning, Mr. Leuwitzer had sent a message to him by Maurice, requesting him to prolong his visit till the Tuesday, and to give him his company at dinner on the Monday;—Mr. Leuwitzer considered Maurice to lie under some trifling obligations to him, incurred whilst they had been officers in the same regiment; and desirous of cancelling them by civility on his part to the Colonel, had sent him the invitation just mentioned——The Colonel had readily accepted it, and Mr. Leuwitzer had engaged a party of gentlemen to meet him.

On the following morning Mr. Leuwitzer went to London, at rather an earlier hour than he was accustomed to do;—a fortnight had elapsed since he had visited his counting house, accordingly his attention would be required to more matters than if he had not been absent from it above a day or two: he had also resolved to call upon Mr. Robertson that morning; and it was besides necessary that he should

he returned to Richmond at five o'clock, to receive the gentlemen who had been invited to dine with him.

Having given a few necessary directions at his counting-room, he proceeded to call upon Mr. Robertson. The street was one in the vicinity of his own mercantile house: he readily found the number to which the old gentleman had himself directed him; and, knocking at the door, he inquired for him of a female servant who opened it: she replied that her master's name was Green, that they had no lodgers, nor any visitors at that time in the house of the name of Robertson, or of any other.

Mr. Leuwitzer could only suppose that he had mistaken the street, or the number, and hope that his memory would shortly rectify his error. He returned slowly and in thought to his counting-room: here the first person who presented herself to his sight was Mrs. Acton. "Oh, my dear Sir!" she cried, "how do you do? Bless your good heart! I knew directly that what was said in the advertisement about the number of the house at Richmond must mean your's. I never had a sight of the paper that it was in till last night after

supper : I am sure I scarcely closed my eyes with joy all night ; and so I thought the best way would be for me to meet you here, at your usual hour of coming to town."

"What, Mrs. Acton!—What is it you say?" asked Mr. Leuwitzer: "let me understand you?"

"I say, Sir, thank God!" she replied, "that the bank-note case, and all the money in it, that my poor husband had the misfortune to lose out of his pocket, are safe in your hands."

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Mr. Leuwitzer, letting himself sink into a chair as he spoke. "Was it your husband after all who lost that money?"

An explanation now immediately took place; and Mr. Leuwitzer was fully convinced that the old man who had called himself Robertson, had been an impostor, as well as the young one who had introduced himself to him by the name of Davids; as the husband of Mrs. Acton had indeed been the person who had unfortunately dropped the note case and its contents: it had been money belonging to the house in which he was a clerk, and he had been so hurt by the stigma which had attached itself to his character from the ap-

pearance of dishonesty that was allied with his misfortune, that he had been taken ill, and was actually confined to his bed in consequence. He had put repeated advertisements into various papers stating his loss, and offering a liberal reward for the restitution of the property; but the papers in which his advertisements had been placed had not met the eye of Mr. Leuwitzer, and not one of those in which Mr. Leuwitzer had advertised the case and its contents had been seen by any of Mr. Acton's family till the night before, when Mrs. Acton had by accident taken up an old paper which had been left upon a table by one of her lodgers, and read the welcome intelligence that the benevolent Mr. Leuwitzer had found the notes of which the loss was causing herself and her husband so much distress and anxiety of mind: a proof that the great number of newspapers which are in circulation in our metropolis carries with it *at least* as many bad consequences as could arise from a reduced number.

When Mrs. Acton had told her melancholy story, Mr. Leuwitzer maintained a few moments' silence, and then spoke thus: "Well, never mind, it is at all events better for me to

lose the sum of five hundred pounds than you." He rose, and going to one of the desks took a blank check from the file, and having filled it up for the sum of five hundred pounds, he put it into the hands of Mrs. Acton, and said, "There, take that to my banker, and he will pay you the money. Some people may say that I deserve this loss for my carelessness; that I care nothing about: I am myself convinced that I was not careless, but grossly deceived; of this, however, I am assured, that every justly thinking person must be sensible, that whatever the motive from which I parted with the money to a dishonest claimant, it is I, and not the right owner of the property, who deserves to suffer for the action. So there is besides a twenty-pound note to pay you for all the expences you have been at for advertisements, and your loss of time in running after me."

It was in vain that Mrs. Acton attempted to reply: the sense of real gratitude is most forcibly expressed by the silence of the tongue; loquacity fritters away all idea of the obligation being felt in its true force. It was to no purpose that the honest-hearted Mrs. Acton endeavoured to call her organs

of speech to their customary function: the tears burst into her eyes, and she would have fallen on her knees before her benefactor, had he not turned hastily away, and passed through a door at the farther end of his counting-room, which led into his warehouses, in order to avoid her thanks.

To receive those prayers and blessings, which most human beings deem a gratifying remuneration for their charity, the heart of Mr. Leuwitzer was particularly averse; the blessing which his own feelings in these cases afforded him, was a more grateful reward than the voices of an universe uniting in his praise could have bestowed on him: so unnecessary is it for any individual to depend on the words or actions of his fellow-beings for his own happiness: it requires only that the heart be actuated by just and proper sentiments of morality and religion, with the fortitude to practice them under every circumstance of existence, to render any man the most enviable and happy of his race.

## CHAPTER XII.

*Retrospection.*

REFLECTION on the occurrences which had marked the few last days, certainly did not tend to increase the satisfaction of Mr. Leuwitzer's mind ; he felt displeased at the additional proofs which he had gained of the depravity of human beings, and also vexed that the subtilty of a knave should have deprived him of a sum by which it might have been in his power to have contributed materially to the comforts of some honest man.

Mrs. Acton, in the warmth of her gratitude, and in the fervor of her reverence for the liberal and generous conduct of Mr. Leuwitzer, forgot even how dirty a rapid thaw had made the streets, and remembering only to make haste home to her husband, and share

her joy with him, avoided neither wet nor dirt, by running through which she shortened her way from the city into the Strand.

Ill as Mr. Acton had heretofore been, the turn which had been given to his spirits by his wife's discovery of the advertisement on the foregoing evening, had communicated itself to his animal feelings, and the course of one night had produced in him a considerable amendment; he was still however unwell, but no sooner did he hear from her the occurrence of the morning, than no persuasions could restrain him from immediately going to return his thanks in person to the benefactor of himself and family; and as he could not be withheld from putting his resolution into effect, a coach was called, and Mrs. Acton returned with him into the city.

Averse as we have already said our benevolent German was, to being the auditor of encomiums upon his own actions, he could not in the present instance refuse the pressing intreaties of a man circumstanced as Acton was, to see him; he was accordingly admitted with his wife into Mr. Leuwitzer's little

parlour adjoining to his counting room; he knew the nature of his benefactor's heart, and therefore forbore that adulating language by which a grosser mind would have been gratified; his expressions of thankfulness were short, but from the heart; and he then said, "As, Sir, it is to my carelessness in originally dropping the note case and its contents from my pocket, that the loss which you so generously take upon yourself is owing, permit me to make you the only restitution which it is in my power to offer you; describe to me, Sir, every particular concerning the villain to whom you delivered up the notes, and suffer me to set on foot such inquiries after him, as may eventually ensure him the punishment which he deserves, from the hand of justice."

Mr. Leuwitzer never heard the sentence of the law pronounced on a criminal, but he pitied the individual; still, he was so well convinced of the public necessity of not voluntarily suffering offenders against the rights of their fellow beings to escape unchecked in their progress of villainy, for the perpetration of still greater crimes than may have already marked their course through

society, that he consented to the plan proposed by Mr. Acton; and a statement of the case was accordingly drawn up for delivery to the office in Bow-street; and an advertisement for insertion in some of the public papers, offering one hundred pounds reward for his apprehension.

This point being settled, Acton bent his steps towards the house in which he had lately been a clerk, and from which he had been discharged on account of the accident which has formed the subject of our last pages. At his first stating the fact to the principals of the house, his honesty had been suspected, and he had been immediately threatened with a prison; but upon his solemn protestations of innocence, and the recognizance into which his wife's brother had entered for him, he had been allowed a month of grace, in which he was to endeavour by the means of advertisements, &c. to recover the notes for which his honesty stood suspected; at the expiration of that period, the money was either to have been paid by the surety, or the unfortunate Acton sent to a prison.

He was received by one of the partners of the house; Mr. Leuwitzer's check was universally known to be good; it was accordingly accepted without hesitation in payment of the sum for which Acton stood indebted to the firm; but they refused to reinstate him in his former situation in their service.

When Mr. Leuwitzer returned to Richmond it wanted but a few minutes of his dinner hour; thus he had scarcely time to relate the occurrences of the morning to his family before some of his company arrived.

Their conversation during dinner, as it may naturally be supposed, turned upon the knavery which had been practised against their entertainer; all agreed that it was evident there had been a collusion between the young fellow who had called himself Davids and the old man; that the former had carried in his mind the number and signatures of the notes, and communicated them to his accomplice, who had proceeded upon the knowledge thus obtained;—some proposed to him one method for endeavouring to gain redress, some

another, till wandering from the subject of Mr. Leuwitzer's loss, they began to inquire who Acton was?—"I have known him a long while for an honest man," replied Mr. Leuwitzer, "he, and his wife once lived at Richmond; she it was, under whose care I first placed Amica."

Colonel Buckhurst declared that Amica was the finest girl he knew, and proposed her health in a bumper.

The conversation now turned upon the story of her whom they had just toasted—Some of the party had seen the sword, and trinkets, which Mr. Leuwitzer had found with her; but there were two gentlemen present besides Colonel Buckhurst to whom they had never been shewn;—to gratify their curiosity Mr. Leuwitzer produced them: they were handed round with many observations; and at length the subject was dropped.

Whilst they were yet at table, "Stanton!" cried the Colonel, "will you take a drive down with me to Rochester to-morrow for a day or two; I shan't stay longer upon my honour; and if Lady Buckhurst crams you with clotted cream and mince-pies

my father will give you some damned good wine to wash them down with ;— come, what say you ?”

Maurice did not foresee much gratification which could result to him from accompanying the Colonel on a visit to his father Sir Benjamin ; and therefore replied, that he was so lately arrived at Richmond, that he did not wish so soon again to leave Mr. Leuwitzer.

“Pshaw ! damn it, that’s all fudge,” exclaimed the Colonel, “you’ve got some nonsense into your head about not liking to go down because you don’t know my father, or some such stupid stuff as that ;— But I rule the roast there, my boy ; let that satisfy you ;—and I swear you shall go, by”——

“Well, well, don’t swear,” interrupted Mr. Leuwitzer, “and I dare say you will have his company ; I shall be very willing to spare him for the day or two you mention.”

Maurice was sorry Mr. Leuwitzer had taken his excuse to the Colonel so literally ; but he could not with any degree of politeness bring forward a second ; and

therefore it was agreed that he should breakfast at Valmont's on the following morning, and set out from thence with the Colonel for Rochester; the Colonel declaring that he should positively be in London again on the Thursday evening at the latest.

The Colonel had intended to take Valmont as the companion of his drive down to Rochester; but as Valmont was prevented from accompanying him by some church duties in which he could get no one to officiate for him, the Colonel had resolved upon taking Stanton for his substitute, as he had an aversion to travelling alone; and to this cause Maurice owed the invitation which Mr. Leuwitzer's misconception of his apology for not accepting it at first, had ultimately reduced him to the necessity of complying with.

Nor did Mr. Leuwitzer much repent the effect his interference had produced; he wished Maurice to gain friends and acquaintance; and to that end desired him never to refuse any opportunities of introduction to such persons as fashion and custom make of consequence in the world;—Of this

stamp were the family whom Maurice had now engaged his word to visit; and as they will occupy a large, if not a brilliant portion of the subsequent pages, we shall, ere we proceed in our history, introduce our readers to the acquaintance of Sir Benjamin Buckhurst and his lady wife.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Which introduces Sir Knight.*

NO wonder short memories are so much the fashion when many a man now rolls his carriage over the same streets along which his father used to croud a wheel-barrow! Let it not be supposed that our observation is made in the way of reflecting upon those to whom this rise in life has happened; but let it at the same time be remembered, that the claim it gives them to respect depends infinitely more upon their conduct under their influx of prosperity, than upon the wealth and name which it brings them.

After the foregoing hint, we think it unnecessary to give the particulars of Sir Benjamin's origin and rise to his present situation and title, as every one knows the usual mode of proceeding, by which a man in the course of half a century increases the number of his carriage-wheels from one to four: it is only to

be done by plodding and saving: and the sweets arising from the profits of such industry are greatly heightened in *gusto*, when there is no bitter drawback upon the memory of the edge of our industry having been occasionally whetted upon the sharp stone of knavery.—As to his title, they are now become such common ware, that it is not improbable it may soon be a distinction to be without one, except indeed such as are acquired upon the field of glory, in the support of our country's honour and interest: these are laurel wreaths which will ever bloom, when the vervain chaplets of chamber knights shall be withered and forgotten.

In person Sir Benjamin was what is called a hale handsome man, at the age of fifty-seven: he was tall and robust; his limbs were jointed together with more firmness than symmetry; his person was fair, and his eyes remarkably light; but they were gifted with a quickness of expression, which is more usually found in the dark countenance and black eye,—it did not indicate depth of understanding, but craftiness and policy, and in conveying this idea it was a true index of the knight's mind: a fixed colour in his cheeks made him appear

younger than he was; and he really would have been a handsome man, but for two personal defects—the one chargeable upon the hand of nature, the other upon that of art: in the latter instance, the scissars of the tonsor had deprived him at an early age of his hair, and its substitute was a highly-frizzed and powdered wig; in the former, the razor of nature had shaved off the tip of a nose, which if it had not been cut short at the immediate point where it shewed an inclination to have become a curve, would have been a handsome Roman appendage to his countenance: but these accidents are nothing where a man is rich; Sir Benjamin was reputed to be an hundred-thousand-pound man—and instead of a Roman nose being important to such a man, it matters not whether he has a nose at all.

In arithmetic he was a proficient; of geography he knew a little by rote, but to have referred him to a map would have puzzled him beyond all conception: of history he knew most of the popular stories, and there ended his knowledge of that; for had he been questioned whether the signing of the Magna Charta or the defeat of the Armada was the more remote circumstance, he would have

been exceedingly at a loss how to reply.— He could write pretty well; that is, he could make all the letters of the alphabet in decent shape and proportion: but if he began a sentence in the third person, he ended it in the first; and if he could not conjugate, he could still contrive to introduce all the tenses into one half-sheet of composition. He could read with tolerable correctness most words of not more than three syllables; but where he blundered, was in the properly connecting, or dividing the words he read; as he had a trick of making full stops where there was not even a comma, and of sometimes galloping over periods without allowing himself to breathe.

Sir Benjamin being a gentleman, chose always to be dressed like one; a weighty silver buckle made him a gentleman's foot; a satin waistcoat conferred the same dignity on the part it covered; every limb was alike rendered part of a gentleman, by being clad in the best and most costly apparel; and even his nose had its snuff administered to it like a gentleman's nose, from a hand ornamented with a diamond ring, which fetched the rappee from a gold box set with rubies.

And now having dressed him all over like a gentleman, we will attend him on his first expedition in courtship.—This was to the daughter of a country gentleman, of considerable landed property, and good establishment in his own county: she was tired of her home, and so without much persuasion ran the risk of becoming equally tired of Sir Benjamin; but, as the Fates decreed it, he first grew weary of her. The daughters of some country gentlemen who keep up good establishments, and outlive in appearance men of the same fortune who reside in cities, know nothing of money but the name: they ride in a coach which is more frequently drawn by four horses than two, because the same animals will the next hour be serviceable at the plough. They give two-course dinners, of which the delicacies have been reared at a very small cost in a farm at the bottom of the park. They frame excuses for not mixing in public places in the county, on account of the expence. Thus when the daughters once become wives, all they think of is doing what they have not had the power of doing before.

This discovery was made to Sir Benjamin in the person of his first wife. Like one just recovered from a severe illness, whose appetite becomes insatiable as health and strength return, and to whom the effects of unrestrained indulgence are certain to prove fatal, Lady Buckhurst, in her eager pursuit after pleasure, fell the victim of her immoderate desires: the event of her leaving her chamber too soon after the birth of the Colonel, who was their only child, in order to be present at a ball in the neighbourhood, was her death. Whether Sir Benjamin had other reasons for not contradicting her, or whether he had a mind to try the truth of the proverb which says, "Give a woman her own way and kill her," we cannot take upon us to determine; we can only state that as far as the withholding of proper advice for restraining the foolish actions of a wife can be termed indulgence, that he was indulgent beyond all dispute; and the violence of his grief may be estimated from the reply which he made to a friend, who remarked how elegant and expensive a funeral he had given his wife. "Yes, it has cost me a good round sum," he said; "but it is cheap

compared to the five shillings I gave for her wedding-ring."

From this time Sir Benjamin thought no more for many years of the holy yoke of wedlock: in the fowler's phrase, he laid down the gun and took up the net; that is, from having been a regular sportsman on his own estate, he now became a poacher on his neighbours' manors. Game of all kinds is much more easily brought down with a golden cartridge than a leaden shot, and Sir Benjamin never wanted his bird: it was even whispered that he had a young covey of his own; but the suspected mother took flight from the neighbourhood, and the report died away at her departure.

Besides the little hobbies which a man rides in his hours of retirement from the public gaze, he has usually some gigantic inclination of the war-horse kind, which he bestrides in the eyes of the world; and that upon which Sir Benjamin had for some time past held an uneasy seat was an infatuation to be returned a member of parliament.

For many places he had made the attempt of getting himself nominated without being able to accomplish his design; for the bo-

rough of Derby he had stood two unsuccessful polls, and spent no inconsiderable sum of money upon each canvass; still his spirit was not broken—the nervous irritation which had settled itself in a certain part of his frame nothing could compose but the act of pressing a seat in Saint Stephen's chapel.

About seven years from the present time, a vacancy suddenly occurring by the death of a member in the representation of the city of Exeter, Sir Benjamin posted down thither with all speed. He had scarcely a single acquaintance in the place, and certainly no interest: his son, at that time a lieutenant in the army, happened to be quartered there; he had received civilities from various families in the place, and imagining himself able to engage some strength in his father's cause, had invited him down to stand a contested election.

The first question asked by the inhabitants was, "Through which interest Sir Benjamin wished to come in?—What were his politics?" And this was the most difficult question that could have been proposed to him; for Sir Benjamin knew no more about politics than the chair in which he hoped to be tossed

above the heads of the applauding multitude. He neither wanted to vote on this side, nor on that; he only wanted to be a parliament-man.

A man in Sir Benjamin's situation, who is not immoveably fixed in his principles, must soon fall into disgrace with both sides, especially in a place where party spirit is carried to a considerable height; and where it may naturally be supposed that each individual has an eye to his own advantage in the display which he makes of his zeal for the public good.

"Damn it, Sir!" cried the knight's son, "this will never do. Your telling the people you intend to serve the city if they return you one of their representatives, means nothing; they want to know the how, and the why:—your chance ain't worth a fillip, unless you declare yourself instantly a firm adherent either to black or to white."

With all possible precipitancy, Sir Benjamin followed his son's advice; but those whom he now selected for his countenance to shine upon, not having any very satisfactory opinion of him in character of a son; but

thinking that he more strongly resembled the sun-flower, turning itself for warmth to them, stuck to a man whom they believed more firm in the principles they professed, and Sir Benjamin's visits of canvass were but coolly received.

With all these disadvantages Sir Benjamin was still not to be discouraged from standing the poll: the Colonel kept constantly heartening him with the exclamations of, "It will do! It will do, by G—d! only cram them, Sir; give them all they can eat and drink; sing to them; talk to them; shake hands with the men; kiss the women; and you have them all your own."

And in these particulars the Colonel was right: they would willingly do all these things with his father; but their minds were nevertheless made up to vote according to the interest of those with whom it was much more to their real advantage to keep in favour, than to consider who was to be their representative in parliament.

At length the day of election arrived: the conquest was violently contested for by two other candidates of opposite principles; and

the only thing in which both parties appeared to be unanimous, was their resolution of hrowing out the aspiring Sir Benjamin.

The Colonel had managed to assemble a good many friends round his father's booth; but, unfortunately, they were all persons without votes or interest; they however possessed the talent of making a noise, and the Colonel judging that the show of violent applause might draw strength to their numbers, persuaded his father to make a speech.

As an orator, it may be easily imagined that Sir Benjamin found himself more perplexed than he had done in settling his party. "What can I say?" he inquired of his son: "I know nothing about speechifying—not I. I have told them all I have to say in my address to the freemen. Suppose I read that to them?"

"Oh no, no; nothing of that kind!" cried the Colonel, petulantly: "you must flam them about their trade, their manufactures, and so on. Tell them you'll promote their advantage when you get into parliament—that's the way, Sir! that's the way!—Come, Sir; come, every moment you lose, the votes are going to your opponent."

“ I shall never get through it,” returned Sir Benjamin; “ and yet, if I thought it was likely to do me any good——Talk to them about their manufacture, don’t you say?—Stuff ain’t it, eh?—is it not stuff?”

“ Yes, Sir! yes,” replied his son: now then lose no time.”

“ Gentlemen,” Sir Benjamin began, humming and hawing between every other word; “ If I have the honour to be a member of parliament—that is, I mean, if I have the honour to represent you,—I’ll do and say all I can to serve your manufactures,—for I am convinced they are very charming things:—Gentlemen, very charming things!—Oh, stuff is an admirable commodity!—There’s nothing like stuff!—Too much can’t be said in praise of stuff!—Stuff is, gentlemen—stuff is”——

“ Oh, damn it! this all stuff!” cried a wag from the middle of the mob.—“ He’ll never do for us!”

A roar of laughter burst from every mouth, and the unfortunate Sir Benjamin could not by any possible means recover himself sufficiently to proceed in his speech: however it is very improbable, that had his eloquence been of a different nature from what it was, it

would have had any effect in changing the temper of the day. The crown of victory was in a very few hours adjudged to one of his opponents by a great majority of votes.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*Which introduces the Knight's Lady.*

AFTER his defeat, Sir Benjamin felt that it would be as uncomfortable to him immediately to return home, as to remain in Exeter;—The Colonel accordingly proposed a short visit to Sidmouth; it happened to be the season at which that spot is resorted to as a watering place by a good deal of company, and the Colonel finding amongst the number some of his Devonshire acquaintance who had not taken an active share in the late election, his father and himself associated with them during their stay in that place.

Amongst the number was a Mrs. Dimick; this lady was a widow, who had just completed her fifty-seventh year; she was a neat, dapper, little woman of a tolerably good form, but ill favoured face, being most

egregiously marked by the small-pox; her husband had been a manufacturer in the city of Exeter, but had retired from business a few years before his death, to a house which he had purchased in the vicinity of Topsham; he had now been dead five years, and to the surprise of every one, his lady was yet a widow;—and indeed it was a matter of astonishment, for she had seventy thousand sterling charms to recommend her to the notice of a second husband.

This piece of intelligence Sir Benjamin heard a few hours after his introduction to her, and almost immediately on becoming acquainted with it, he formed the resolution of making an offer of his hand to the lady; or as it might with greater propriety be termed, of petitioning her to put her money into his purse;—for the contents of his own had been very considerably diminished by his efforts to get seated in the aforementioned chapel; and he began to think it absolutely necessary to seek the means of re-establishing them.

Mr. Dimick seemed to be the woman exactly suited to his purpose; but he resolved to

be certain that she was so, before he encumbered himself with her person ; he recollected even now, remote as the period was, his former wife's extravagance with a sigh, and he was determined to be satisfied that Mrs. Dimick had not the same inclinations, before he professed himself her admirer.

He made particular inquiries to this end of a common friend of them both, by whom he was informed that Mrs. Dimick's father had been only a small manufacturer of yarn ; that she had been brought up with the most rigid notions of economy, in which she had been strengthened by her husband, who had amassed his fortune entirely by trade ; and that now although mistress of the fortune she possessed, her establishment consisted of only two maid servants, and a boy who drove her to the Topsham market every Saturday morning in a taxed cart, which she kept for that purpose.

On receiving this grateful information Sir Benjamin returned a hint of his ideas respecting the widow ; and whether the friend communicated them to her or not, it was undoubtedly evident that she con-

ducted herself with much complacency towards the knight; and appeared very fully prepared to take upon herself the duties of Lady Buckhurst:—the lady had settled to leave Sidmouth two days before the Colonel and his father had thought of departing from it; and Mrs. Dimick engaged them, and a few more of her friends, to dine with her on the day of their return to Exeter, at her villa, on their way to that place.

The most trivial circumstances it has been commonly remarked in affairs of much greater importance than the transformation of a Mrs. Dimick into a Lady Buckhurst, have been the causes of actions of consequence.

On arriving at the good lady's house on the day fixed upon for them to dine with her, they found their hostess in a great agitation, which had mantled her cheeks with an unusual colour, and which Sir Benjamin flattered himself had arisen from her fatigue in inspecting the preparations which had been making for the feast; but this was not the exact cause of the lady's present

warmth ;—she had that morning lost from her finger her wedding-ring, which she valued more, she said, than any present she had ever received from her dear dead Mr. Dimick.

The dinner to which they sat down, was marked by the most inviting neatness ; the table was handsomely but not extravagantly covered ; and the feast proceeded with due form and propriety, till Sir Benjamin started up from table, choaked ; he had been eating a slice of ham, and part of a fillet of veal ; and as they were both free from bones, every one was wondering what could occasion the accident he was labouring under.

At length with a long cough, partaking rather more of the nature of a groan, Sir Benjamin drew from his throat Mrs. Dimick's gold ring ;—this occasioned greater surprise than the knight's obstructed swallow had done ; and the good lady hostess was obliged to confess that she had herself made the force-meat for the veal ; which avowal accounted both for the losing and the finding of the ring.

This accident, at which no one but the Knight himself could have felt displeased, produced him the highest degree of satisfaction, as it gave him a full conviction of Mrs. Dimick's economical principles ; and he resolved to ask her permission that evening to pay her a morning visit on the following day, for the purpose of making to her a declaration of his passion :—for let men marry from whatever consideration they may, they invariably fancy that love has at least some little concern in the business.

The widow returned a most polite affirmative to his request ; and at the hour agreed upon for his coming, he found her in a Chinese summer-house at the bottom of the garden ; which it was not improbable to suppose she had selected to receive him in, from the poetical illusion which every mind commonly draws between love, and *demi-al-fresco* buildings of this kind.

However, if not of love, their conversation was in a very few minutes upon matrimony ; the lady had been prepared for the Knight's question, and had already

determined how to reply to it :—She was herself the daughter of a man whose first consideration had at all times been money ; her first husband's disposition had been very similar to her father's, and therefore from having been accustomed to contemplate their characters, and to believe their actions always becoming, she was not at all surprised that Sir Benjamin in his offer of himself to her, inserted a clause of, “ Provided, Ma'am, your fortune is equal to what I have understood that it is, and at your own disposal.”

“ Why look you, Sir Benjamin,” returned the lady, “ fair dealing is a jewel, and I would *not* for the world impose upon *nobody*.”—Mrs. Dimick having been born and bred in a most homely manner, and her education having in every respect been very contracted, as her character and manners farther develope themselves, many particularities will be observable in the lady's language and conduct ; but of these as they occur.

“ Poor dear Mr. Dimick,” she continued, “ would not have gone to the grave

the rich man he did, but for me ;—while he earned money in the counting room, I made savings in house keeping ; and all sensible people know that where fortunes are made in business, saving is as good a friend as getting ;—Mr. Dimick considered this, and left me his whole seventy thousand pounds that he died worth, with only one exception.”

“ And pray, Ma’am, what might that be ? ” inquired Sir Benjamin, who felt some alarm lest the condition of her possessing this most enviable sum, should be her continuing in the state of widowhood.

In reply to this question, the lady proceeded to inform him, that her union with Mr. Dimick had been blessed with only one child, a daughter, whom she had christened after herself by the name of Amy ; that when this child was about three years old, having one day left her at play in a small garden which divided their house from the road, on her return to look for her, the child was not to be found ; that she had immediately raised an alarm after her, but without its obtaining the de-

sired end of restoring her to the arms of her parents, as she had never since that period been heard of; and that the only conjecture which they could form concerning her, was, that she must have been carried off by gypsies; as a gang of them had been seen in the neighbourhood that very day, and disappeared from it immediately on the loss of the child becoming generally known.

Here, as it may be natural to suppose, Mrs. Dimick dropt a tear to the memory of her daughter; and Sir Benjamin in a very able manner affected to sympathize in her affliction.

After a few moment's pause, she continued her explanation, "The condition," she said, "which her late husband had annexed to his will, respecting the whole property of which he had died possessed, being indivisibly hers, was this; that in case their lost child should ever be restored to her mother, Mrs. Dimick should on her becoming of age, be bound to pay into her hands the sum of twenty thousand pounds."

—"but," added she, "indeed I think it very unlikely that I should ever see

Amy again ; and should she by any unforeseen accident come back to me, she is but eleven, if she is alive ; so there are ten years yet to come, before I am bound in law to pay her her fortunes ; and take twenty from seventy, there are still fifty thousand good pounds left then."

Thus argued Mrs. Dimick, and from her arguments Sir Benjamin very clearly understood, that although according to her own declaration, she would *not* for the world impose upon *nobody*, there was a *somebody* whom she would at that moment be very reluctant to give up ; and having resolved in his own mind that the chance of the lost child's return should not be any obstacle to his becoming her husband, he determined to profit by the eagerness she displayed for a participation of the honor of his knighthood, to strike a good bargain with her respecting her marriage settlement.

Accordingly the agreement which the knight contrived to make with her was, that in case her daughter should never be restored to her, the twenty thousand pounds which her father had willed her, should be considered as Mrs. Dimick's marriage settlement ;

and that if her daughter ever did return to her, he would immediately give her a bond for half the sum, or an annuity of seven hundred pounds a year for her life. Positive herself that her child was no more, Mrs. Dimick with very little difficulty agreed to these terms; a lawyer accordingly rendered them firm and binding, and Sir Benjamin having been absent for about a month in Kent, to prepare for the reception of his lady at his house, returned into Devonshire, and gave his hand to Mrs. Dimick.

The ringing of bells, firing of pop-guns, and many other noisy expressions of joy, welcomed the new Lady Buckhurst into Rochester; all the inhabitants of the city and county round about, flocked to pay their compliments to the bride, and all contended for the honor of receiving her at their respective houses; although there was scarcely any one who did not throw out some sneer against her manners, her dialect, her dress, or some particular about her; which shews that they were all people of fashion themselves, eager to have their table graced by entertaining a title, let who would wear it; and willing to pay the most devout respect to the

most devout respect to the faces of those whom they laughed at behind their backs; which is the very quintessence of good breeding, according to the explanation we should find of it in a new dictionary written by a pupil of *ton* within the last ten years, if there were such a book to refer to.

Lady Buckhurst thus gaining all the notice she had expected from her title, was more than satisfied with her change of name, and loss of money; her sense was not of that discriminating kind, nor her feelings of that delicate nature to inquire into, or care about the reason why she received adulation and attention; she had them, and that was enough for her; or probably she might be so well satisfied with herself, that her repose of mind never was disturbed with the idea of a possibility existing, of all other persons not seeing her in the same light in which she regarded herself; and this is a cause which renders many more persons happy than any other invention which has yet been discovered for the purpose.

As people always hear what is said of their neighbours, and very seldom have any

true friend to inform them what is reported of themselves, many weak minds on hearing others scandalized, assume to themselves the praise of virtue and perfection; whilst such as are capable of reflection, ever consider that those who deal out scandal to the prejudice of such as are absent, will immediately convert those who have just been listeners to their illiberality, into equal objects of censure as soon as they are out of hearing.

One of these common minds was Lady Buckhurst's, and while she regarded it as an excellent piece of wit, to call the banker's wife, whose name was Finch—Mrs. Goldfinch; and as a not less admirable joke to name the master of an academy in the place whose name was Willow, Doctor Birch—she had not the least idea that she herself was universally spoken of as Lady Mushroom.

Nick-names, are of all other things the greatest proof of a want of good manners and good sense in those who use them; it may therefore be judged that they are equally disgraceful to record; but let it be remembered that this is a history of human beings; and that to write such a history with any degree

of fidelity in the resemblance, many vulgar errors must have place in it; they shall not however pass without a hint how they might be expunged from society with credit, and advantage to its members; and let this one observation serve as an apology, for whatever veracity may demand from the pen of him who endeavours to draw the portrait of human beings.

These substitutes for the real appellations of those who bear them, always take their rise from something; the world is not yet wanton enough to study with what ridiculous epithet it shall load the shoulders of one of its members, although it may be sufficiently ripe for mischief, never to suffer an opportunity for doing a thing of the kind to escape; and Lady Buckhurst's nick name arose from a cause which almost justified the laugh it brought upon her.

It will probably be imagined that the name of Mushroom had been given to her ladyship in consequence of her sudden exaltation to a title; as there are always persons very ready to ridicule those marks of distinction in others, which they have not been able to arrive at themselves; but such was

not the occasion of the nickname now borne by Lady Buckhurst, although accident conspired to render it doubly satirical; as it never failed to bring to the minds of those who heard it, a recollection of the precipitate rise which she had experienced from plain Mrs. Dimick to her present honors. The cause was this.

Her ladyship having been invited to a dinner or a supper at the house of every genteel family in the town, and neighbourhood; in her turn gave dinners, and suppers to them; she had certainly a nominal house-keeper, but the preparations for the table, and the arrangement of the delicacies upon it, were entirely her own; and her dear Sir Benjamin, gloried not less in the culinary, and confectionary powers of his wife, than in the economy with which she exercised them.—Of which one principal manœuvre was, always to give a supper the day after a dinner, that the fragments of the first feast might be cooked up again for the second party.

As the fashion of praising what we eat, admiring the beauty of the devices upon the table, and extolling the arrangement of the

dishes, is entirely exploded, her ladyship had no opportunity of ascertaining what was the opinion of her guests upon these matters, but by making an intimate acquaintance with some friend, who would let her into a knowledge of these particulars; and for this purpose she paid many civilities to an old tabby of the place, who had for many years been stiled the *Walking Gazette*; and whose communications and favorable reports were at the service of any body who would reward them with a good dinner, which she could ill afford to provide for herself at home.

Accordingly in order to insinuate herself thoroughly into the good graces of Miss Una Withers, she never omitted inviting her to her parties, when she wanted an odd one to fill up a vacant place at the table; sending for her when the rector accidentally dropped in to tea, and Sir Benjamin and herself wished for a fourth to make up a pool at quadrille; and having lately sent her a present of a hare, which she had first dispatched in the morning to another friend, and which after having passed through a variety of hands, had travelled home to her again at

night, she had entirely won the heart of the old damsel, who was perfectly ignorant that she was not the first person to whom its acceptance had been offered.

Miss Withers constantly assured her, that all she could wish was said of her entertainments; and Lady Buckhurst certainly heard her say so with pleasure; but Miss Una still perceived that some little degree of doubt hung over her mind; and upon this observation she one day thus addressed her, "If you have a mind to be made certain of the truth of what I am always telling you, come and drink tea at my house this afternoon; I expect several ladies of your acquaintance, and you shall hear their opinion of your last dinner yourself."

"They won't speak their minds before me," returned her ladyship.

"But they shall not know you are present," replied her friend, "don't you know the closet where I keep my plants; it has a window into my best parlour?"

Lady Buckhurst answered in the affirmative.

"Well," returned Miss Withers, "I've been planning it for you to sit there behind

the greens; I'll throw up the sash into the parlour, and as soon as they are come, I'll introduce the subject of your dinner, without their knowing any thing of your being within hearing; and then you will have their real thoughts upon it."

Her ladyship admired the idea, as her friend assured her that she would not hear herself *run down*; and at the hour that Miss Withers's company was expected, Lady Buckhurst took her seat in the little greenhouse; it being agreed that when she had been sufficiently long the auditor of encomiums upon herself and her dinners, she should leave her retreat by a back door which led into the kitchen, and come and join the party at tea.

A few minutes after the arrival of her guests, Miss Withers kept her promise of introducing the subject of Lady Buckhurst's last dinner;—it received much praise at the lips of its fair judges, and her ladyship felt the carnation on her cheeks increasing with every fresh encomium.

Two of the ladies now assembled at Miss Withers's had not been of the number invited to this feast, and they requested to be informed

of what the dinner had consisted; this Miss Una took upon her to acquaint them with, and proceeded through the first course with as great accuracy as Lady Buckhurst herself could have done; but in recounting the second, she could not recollect what had been one of the side dishes; she appealed to such of her guests as had been of the party; they were equally at a loss;—"there were stewed oysters on one side," said Miss Una, "but what could the other side be?"

Lady Buckhurst's pride had been so highly gratified by the encomiums bestowed on her feast, that her joy was raised to an uncontrollable pitch, and entirely forgetting that she was in ambush, she called out in reply to Miss Una's question of "what could the other side be?"—"why mushrooms, ladies!"

At the first sound of her voice, as great a consternation seized the party, as if a spirit had appeared amongst them; but quickly recovering themselves they ran to the window from which the voice had proceeded, and discovered her ladyship in her concealment; covered with blushes, she attempted an awkward apology for being found there, by saying that she had come in that way,

in order to look at Miss Una's plants, and that just at the minute of her entrance, having heard them repeating the question to which she had replied, she had spoken in order to surprise them: but it appeared so evidently that she herself was most surprised at having been betrayed into speaking, that a laugh in the sleeve, if not on the face, was raised against her; and though the occurrence was not spoken of again that evening in her presence, she was from that moment dubbed with the title of Lady Mushroom.

## CHAPTER XV.

*What may perhaps be anticipated.*

HOWEVER, regardless of nicknames and such foolish trifles as may be offensive to many, but never ruffle the self-satisfaction of people who can turn to their hundred thousands for comfort, for consequence, and for name, Sir Benjamin and his lady continued to live together a very happy couple; who, if they never experienced the fire of adoration, never suffered from the coldness of neglect: not that we wish to insinuate one word against the immaculate chastity of the lady, but merely to hint that Sir Benjamin could not absolutely break himself of his poaching tricks, though he was again in possession of a matrimonial manor of his own.

Since his defeat at Exeter, Sir Benjamin had made no more attempts at entering the chapel of Saint Stephen, although the uncom-

portable irritation under which he laboured had not at all abated, and could be subdued by no medicine but a seat in it: he had resolved to let the noise of his last failure die away a little in the world before he stood forth again, and then to proceed upon what he believed and hoped would prove to him surer means of success. He had meanwhile been speculating deeply in trade; from a variety of projects, in some of which he had failed and in others prospered, he had lately entered deeply into the Spanish and Portugal trade, and nuts and wine now divided his thoughts with the honours of parliamentary dignity.

Upon his son's retiring from the army he had added his name to the firm of the house, and his presence being on this account occasionally required at Rochester, was the reason of his present visit of two or three days to his father's house; upon which Maurice Stanton was his companion.

The reception which Maurice met with from Sir Benjamin and her ladyship fully convinced him of what the Colonel had asserted, that his will was the law of his father's house: his prophecy too respecting

the good things with which Lady Buckhurst would treat them proved correct; as did also the character he had given of the Knight's wine, who kept an excellent stock of port, more out of gratification to his own taste than compliment to the palates of his guests, as it was his pleasure to take a most liberal potation of it every day after dinner, in order to drive from his head the anxieties of trade in which he had passed the morning.

In a family like Sir Benjamin's, it appears almost needless to say that the conversation was never of a more exalted nature than upon the topics of the day; and it may be as unnecessary to repeat to most of our readers, that people capable only of conversing on frivolous subjects are those who at all times talk the most; and for this plain reason,—because no portion of their time is given to reflection.

“What's the news in London, gentlemen?” was the question which Lady Buckhurst and her friend Miss Withers proposed to Maurice and the Colonel, when they had retired to the tea-room after dinner. The Colonel placed himself between them, and having run through a variety of fashionable anecdotes, he exclaimed, “I'll tell you what though, if you

have a mind to hear a good story of a new mode of swindling, I'll tell you a devilish fair thing of that kind."

The ladies begged he would indulge them, and he proceeded to relate the story of Mr. Leuwitzer's adventure in consequence of the bank-notes which he had found.—Men whose talents and discrimination are not superior to those of Colonel Buckhurst, like to be listened to, even by those for whose opinions they have no very great respect; and as he had found his loving mother and her chaste friend entertained by his first story, he determined to amuse them again, and therefore proceeded to the relation of Mr. Leuwitzer's prior adventure to the circumstance of the note-case; that is, his finding Amica in the chamber in St. Giles's, with all the relative parts of the history.

"Oh, Lord be good to me!" exclaimed Lady Buckhurst; "Is this all true, or are you making a jest of me? Pray, dear Colonel, tell me the truth at once."

The Colonel swore it was no fable, and called upon Maurice to corroborate his assertion; which Maurice did in the most decided manner.

“ And was there indeed a tooth-pick case, with an A. D. marked on the top, and a silver tea-spoon with the same letters on the handle, and a silver thimble besides, found with this little girl?” she demanded in the utmost agitation.

Maurice replied in the affirmative.

“ Oh, mercy upon me!” reiterated Lady Buckhurst, “ It is my Amy!—It must be my Amy!—It can’t be nobody but my Amy!—She is found at last!—She is found at last!—Poor Amy!—Poor Amy!” and with these words she burst into a flood of tears.

Before she had regained her utterance, Sir Benjamin entered the apartment, his nap having been taken in the room where they had dined; and at the present moment, between the pressure of wine and sleep, he was in a most insensible state: however his perceptions were just keen enough to give him the power of comprehending that his wife was weeping, and to inquire the cause.

This the Colonel explained as well as his knowledge of the affair would allow him to do; and her Ladyship now recovering her speech, repeated it in her own words; declaring that the tooth-pick case with her initials

upon it, the tea-spoon, and the thimble, were the very things she had given to her little girl to play with, while she had left her in the garden before the house from whence she was stolen. "And so," she went on, "the gentleman you speak of found her in a garret amongst beggars?—Only think of my poor child in a garret amongst beggars, that had been used to the best to eat, and the best to wear!—And so this kind gentleman took her home with him?—And what is she now—his house-maid, or his upper servant, or what?"

This was addressed to Maurice, who replied, "Not in any situation of that kind, Madam, I assure you. Mr. Leuwitzer, who has been equally my protector through life, as he has been of the young lady, who it now appears is your daughter, has had a delight and satisfaction in bestowing on her the best of educations, and treating her in every respect as his own child. He is a man of the most unbounded benevolence; and it has ever been his pride to consider, that whoever her parents might be, her mind is so qualified as to render her an honour to them, at any hour when chance might lead them to her.

“Oh, Lord bless the dear gentleman!” cried Lady Buckhurst in an extacy.—“Oh, my dear Sir Benjamin! Only think!—Only think!” she added, throwing her arms round his neck, and staring in his face, as if she wanted to infuse her joy into his soul—“To be sure,” she continued, as he did not immediately reply, “you ain’t angry, that poor Amy is come to light?”

“Oh no, no! that I ain’t love, he returned. “You know, according as our affairs are settled, it makes very little difference to me in the way of money matters.”

“No, to be sure it don’t,” she rejoined, “and you know in a family like our’s, one more in the way of eating and drinking can’t make much difference neither: besides one can’t turn one’s back on one’s own. I am sure you would not desire me to be so unnatural to poor Amy: would you, my dearest?”

“How can you think of such a thing?” cried Sir Benjamin, in no very pleasant tone; for he was piqued at the idea that his wife had seen deeply enough into his thoughts to perceive that he certainly would have been equally well content if the lost Amy had not

been found again. "How can you think of such a thing?" he repeated. "I'm sure you can't say but what I've always behaved well to you, and so I shall to them that belong to you—as long as they and you behave well to me."

"Well, I knew you would," answered the lady, impressing a kiss on his lips; which she thought it a favour to bestow, whatever the Knight might consider it to receive; then added, "Do, my dear, let me have the coach, and go and fetch her home directly."

This request was soon over-ruled by the persuasions of all present, as it was already past ten o'clock at night.

"Upon my honour," cried the Colonel, "your daughter, Ma'am, is a girl to be proud of! Devilishly handsome!—uncommonly well made!—all her points in damned good order!"

"Pretty creature!—dear Amy!" cried her Ladyship. "But is she sensible?—I hope she's sensible!"

We have already heard the Colonel's opinion of a woman's sense; "not worth having according to his idea," which perhaps proceeded from a consciousness of his own defi-

ciency, and his objection to see one of the sex from which less is usually expected, excelling himself, who was one of the genus in which its want is not so easily overlooked: this is no uncommon instance with human beings of his description, and therefore we take the liberty of supposing that it was his case.

“My opinion,” said Maurice, “may perhaps be considered as a prejudiced one, since from what I have already mentioned to you of my being equally with herself the object of her present protector’s benevolence, I have been accustomed to regard her as a sister; a point of view which naturally throws a favourable light upon the objects contemplated through it: but I think I can venture to pronounce myself free from that prejudice, and still to declare her very superior in understanding and accomplishments of every kind.”

Lady Buckhurst’s joy was uncontrollable: and though her definition of *sensible* proved upon farther conversation to be a knowledge of the art of drawing flowers, and netting purses, and such *genteel pastimes*; still we must do her the justice to declare that she felt

towards her daughter as it became a mother to do: that she had very frequently passed hours in solitude, upbraiding herself for having left the child alone in the garden at the fatal moment of her disappearance; and that she had resolved, if ever she were restored to her, to make amends for what she had suffered from her apparent neglect.

Sir Benjamin was one of those human beings who always pretend that necessity is choice; who cannot bear the appearance of bending to any obligation, and therefore always affect to meet unpleasant contingencies with a smile: a circumstance of this nature did he regard the present, and accordingly he resolved to affect a participation of his wife's joy.

The Colonel was better pleased than his father, although he said less about it. Amica we have already heard from his own lips had inspired him with sentiments of admiration; and he felt highly gratified at the idea of having her an inmate of his father's house, where he might without restraint enjoy her society whenever he pleased; and this knowledge filled him with rapture, though he had not yet resolved what use to make of it.

Poor Maurice was of all the party the most depressed in spirits. He knew enough of the Colonel to judge what was passing in his heart: he knew enough of Amica to be certain, that however she might from duty respect the author of her being, there was no other consideration to conciliate her to her new protectors and her new home; and for himself he felt as if heart and soul were about to be rent from him, as he dwelt on the removal of Amica into a family where he could never be received but on the formal terms of an occasional visitor.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Suspense.*

SIR Benjamin must have departed from his plan of professing to share in the joy of his wife, if he had not ordered his coach to be ready at ten o'clock on the following morning, to convey her to Richmond; at an early hour the Knight himself retired to rest; but her ladyship could not be prevailed upon for some time to go to her chamber: "she could not sleep," she said, "if she was in bed, she must talk about Amy, she wanted to know if she was tall or short, brown or fair, ruddy or pale," and a million other questions of the same nature: for replies to which she referred to Maurice and the Colonel; who remained chatting with her till one in the morning, and then begged leave to retire to their respective apartments.

Maurice passed the greater part of the night in reflection: he considered that circumstanced as he was with regard to Mr. Leuwitzer, it must be his duty to forewarn him of the surprise which was preparing for him; it would touch him less sensibly he believed, if communicated by him, than if it burst suddenly upon him from the lips of lady Buckhurst:—He was convinced that Mr. Leuwitzer would experience more pain at parting from Amica, than Lady Buckhurst would receive pleasure from clasping her to her breast; and for this reason.—It was his opinion, that true affection can be alone the result of a long acquaintance; of a thorough knowledge of the excellent qualities of the object who calls forth the passion; and of gratitude for the many little filial services received at his hands;—all these causes united to ally the soul of Mr. Leuwitzer to Amica:—To lady Buckhurst, her child was now an utter stranger; there could be no existing tie between them, but the knowledge of their affinity to each other:—it is indeed the first claim which nature gives us to affection; and the first cause for

which it exacts gratitude; but these can alone be preserved by a continual intercourse; when the parties thus allied are separated for a very great length of time, they may, on meeting again, be prompted by a sense of duty to believe they feel them still, but reality only exists in the support which it receives from concomitant ideas, and recollections.

Amica too, he considered would not less accutely feel the change of her benefactor:—It was possible that although Lady Buckhurst was to travel with her own horses, she might reach Richmond in the evening, before Mr. Leuwitzer was returned home from London.—How unpleasantly would Amica be situated to be alone at the moment of her receiving information of this material nature to the happiness or misery of her future life!—He had no means of reaching Richmond himself before Lady Buckhurst could arrive there, and accordingly as soon as he heard some of the servants of Sir Benjamin's family stirring, he rang his bell, and having requested a candle, he sat down to write to Mr. Leuwitzer.

With much caution he penned his epistle, and having concluded it, he directed it for Mr. Leuwitzer at his mercantile house in London, where he was certain of its reaching him in a few hours; and as he hoped in sufficient time for him to return to Richmond before Lady Buckhurst could arrive there; he gave the parcel which contained his letter, himself to the coachman of the first coach that left Rochester, and having done this, he returned with a little more composure to breakfast than he had gone to bed the night before.

On rising in the morning Lady Buckhurst found herself extremely at a loss for a companion in her ride; Sir Benjamin excused himself from attending her, by saying that he had some important affairs of business to transact, in order to be present at which he had summoned his son from London; this apology rendered it equally impossible for her to expect the Colonel would be her companion;—she accordingly inquired whether Maurice, whose intimacy with Mr. Leuwitzer she remarked would prove so excellent an introduction for her to the protector of her

daughter, would do her the favor to accompany her?

Maurice readily replied in the affirmative; but the Colonel declared that he could not part with him; he had engaged him, he said, to dine with the hunt of which he was himself a member, that day; and could not think of appearing alone, after he had promised to bring a friend with him.—The Colonel, it may be easily understood, had perceived Maurice's predilection for Amica, and thinking it most conducive to his own views to keep him just at this critical moment of her fate, as much as possible from her sight; as also from the long *tête à tête*, with her mother, which the ride from Rochester to Richmond would afford; judging that at the moment her ladyship's heart was open with her joy at the recovery of her daughter, she would possibly admit into it any one who spoke in that daughter's praise; an admission which in the case of Maurice Stanton might in the course of time prove of disagreeable consequences to himself; he exerted that authority which was never contended against in his father's

house, to withhold him from acceding to her Ladyship's proposition.

Miss Withers, therefore, whom we have already seen her Ladyship was accustomed to resort to, as a last resource upon many occasions, was invited to go the journey with her; and at a little after ten o'clock in the morning they set off.

During their ride her ladyship's conversation consisted of the same wonderings and guessings relative to the shape, size, accomplishments, &c. of her daughter, which had composed it the evening before. From Maurice Stanton she had procured a letter of introduction to Mr. Leuwitzer, and this she kept constantly in her hand, conning over the superscription, that she might, as she expressed it, "get as perfect as possible in the *Jarman* gentleman's name, for the W in the middle of it made it a very difficult word to speak."

Mr. Leuwitzer received the letter written by Maurice that morning, just as Maurice had desired he should, at his counting-room in London. The idea of parting from Amica was to him the severest stroke which

fate had ever levelled at his happiness; still it was an event for which he had ever kept himself prepared, how much soever he might have wished it never to happen; and as he had never been one of those men who suffer themselves to be violently moved to pleasure or pain by occurrences of little weight, he had preserved an habitual strength of mind to support him under matters of real importance.

Still was self always so secondary a consideration with him, that at this moment his greatest concern was for Amica: he feared that she might suffer severely from the necessity of being separated from him, and from being denied any longer to consider him in the light of a parent; he conceived that she might not be happy in the mother whom she was now for the first time, since the influence of reason had filled her mind, to behold; that the change might affect her health, her temper, her happiness; and he now almost wished that he had kept the story of her first introduction to his protection a secret, and thus have avoided the possibility of ever losing her; but this was only the thought of a moment, when feeling was wrought to inconsiderateness by

affection; and with the next returned to his mind a due sense of the injustice which such a step might have rendered him guilty of to those who had the first claims upon such blessings as the society and smiles of Amica could bestow.

These were his reflections during his return home from London, which he left immediately on receiving Maurice's letter.—Amica met him with her usual affectionate welcome, and a tear started into his eye as he received it: she observed his emotion, and hastily inquired the cause.

Maurice's letter had said, that Lady Buckhurst would reach Richmond that evening: it was now nearly six o'clock; there was probably therefore little time to be lost in anticipating her Ladyship in that discovery, which even, unknown as she was to Mr. Leuwitzer, he feared would not proceed from her lips with all the gentleness and caution requisite for it to be conveyed with to the delicate soul of Amica; and accordingly placing himself in a chair next to her's, and holding her hand in his own as he spoke, and with many a gentle pressure adding strength

to the affection of his expressions, he informed her of the visitor she had that evening to expect.

It may easily be imagined what were the sensations of a heart like Amica's, at being informed that she was required to tear herself from one who had in every respect more than fulfilled to her the obligations of the tenderest parent, and to transfer her duty to a stranger. To this purport was the first sentence which escaped from her lips, and which interrupted by her tears, fell from them in scarcely audible accents.

“But stranger as she appears to you, my dear child,” said Mr. Leuwitzer, “she is still your mother, the author of your being; but for her you had never known the blessing of existence.”

“Upon that consideration,” replied Amica, “I owe her a most material obligation; for had she not given me life, I had never felt the happiness of being indebted to your benevolence.”

Another intrusive tear started into the eye of Mr. Leuwitzer, and a pause ensued.

Amica broke it: “I fear,” she said—“I must fear, however well-intentioned a woman

my mother may prove; however well disposed to love me as her child; that under the protection of any other person whatsoever, I shall feel an abatement of the tenderness, of the goodness which I have experienced from you."

"Justice," replied Mr. Leuwitzer, "demands that you suspend all judgment of your mother till you see her; and remember, my dear Amica, that should she prove the very reverse of the woman on whom you could bestow your willing affection as a mother, that it will be your duty to shew her the same reverence as if she were the amiable character you could desire her to be. Always bear in your mind, that whatever the conduct of a parent may be, it is no excuse for the undutifulness of a child; and that where parents are really as good and as indulgent as they ought to be to those to whom they have given life, the children who have received it at their hands never can do too much for them in acquittance of such obligation."

"Promise me," rejoined Amica, "that you will not withdraw your love, your advice, your friendship from me, and I will endeavour to be all I ought to be; and to do credit

to the instructions I have received from you."

Unable to reply, Mr. Leuwitzer clasped her in his arms, and at the same instant the rattling of wheels, and a thundering knock at the door, announced the approach of Lady Buckhurst.

Amica, who fully comprehended the meaning of these sounds, almost fainted as they struck her ear. Mr. Leuwitzer immediately led her into the adjoining apartment, where having committed her to the care of the female servant who attended upon her, he returned to the parlour which he had just before quitted, and where he now found Lady Buckhurst and her companion Miss Withers.

As the emotion which swelled Mr. Leuwitzer's breast could not escape even the eye of a stranger, he resolved not to conceal from her Ladyship the letter which he had that afternoon received from Maurice Stanton; accordingly when she put into his hands the one which he had written for her introduction to Mr. Leuwitzer, that gentleman immediately made known to her his acquaintance with the occasion of her present visit to his house.

Lady Buckhurst expressed neither disapprobation nor the reverse, at hearing that he had been forewarned of her coming; she burst forth without a moment's delay into the warmest expressions of gratitude for his kindness to her child. "Oh, you angel of a man!" she cried, "I never, never, can say enough to thank you for having rescued my child from the vile wretches who stole her from me! Heaven knows that my only wonder is, that she ever lived for you to see her where you did, brought up as she was, the veriest *cosset* in all the world! Oh, how wretched and miserable she must have been with such raggamuffins and good-for-nothing people! But you have been her saviour: yes, that you have; and I will bless you for it, and God will bless you for it, and we'll all bless you for it."

Mr. Leuwitzer replied, that he had only performed towards the child who had been so mysteriously thrown upon his protection, what he had conceived to be his duty, and that the consciousness of his having done so, carried a blessing with it.

"Only your duty!" exclaimed Lady Buckhurst. "Oh yes, yes, that you have!—You

knew nothing about her!—she might only have been the child of one of those good-for-nothing people that she was with; and in such a case it could only have been your duty, Sir, to have kept her from want by sending her to the work-house, or something of that kind! But you see, Sir, Heaven gave you a kind of instinct, as I may call it, that she was not nobody, though she was found in a mean habitation.”

This declaration on the part of her Ladyship opened at once her character to Mr. Leuwitzer: the instinct of which she spoke displayed to him the ignorance of her mind; and the distinction which she had made between the wants of children of different degrees in distress, and the treatment due to them under the pressure of calamity, gave him equally an insight into the mean and vulgar prejudices of her heart.

He sighed to discover that such was the mother of his Amica, and whether her Ladyship judged that the sigh proceeded from the recollection of the trouble and expence that Amica might have been to him is not absolutely ascertained, but it appeared very much as if she did suppose it so, for she immediately

said, "Well, Sir! well, I am sure any expence in the way of moderation that you have been at for her maintenance, and to give her accomplishments, I shall be very happy to reckon with you about; however rich and generous folks may be, they have no right to suffer the expence of bringing up other people's children, when their parents are once found to pay off the score."

Mr. Leuwitzer replied, that what he had done for Amica had given him so much delight in the performance, that had the expence been an hundred times greater than it was, it would richly have repaid him; and that the excellence of her disposition, the quickness of her talents, and the goodness of her heart, rewarded him for every exertion he had used to render her an ornament to society and to herself.

"And is she really so very clever and accomplished?" cried Lady Buckhurst.—"Oh my dear, charming, good Sir! how wise a man you are to have given her such an education; for what, as I often say, is a person without a little *larning*?—And she is handsome too, very handsome; is not she, Sir?"

Mr. Leuwitzer replied in the affirmative.

“ Oh, the dear beautiful creature!” exclaimed her Ladyship. “ Pray, Sir, let me see her: I am dying to see and embrace her, and give her my blessing.”

“ Grant me first a moment’s delay, Madam,” said Mr. Leuwitzer: “ let us I beg of you, before I introduce her to you as your daughter, be assured, from your own sight of the trinkets, upon which you ground the opinion of her being your lost child, that she is really so;” and as he spoke, he drew them from his pocket, and laid them upon the table before Lady Buckhurst:

“ Oh, Lord bless me! Aye,” said she, “ I could swear to this toothpick-case any where: Mr. Dimick gave it me the day after we were married, and a bunch of citron-wood tooth-picks along with it, and charged me never to use pins for the purpose of picking my teeth again; and I promised him I never would, for I did every thing he desired me to do to make him happy. Oh, I remember all about it!—It is lined with blue velvet, and the looking-glass in the lid is cracked down the middle.”

She opened the case, and the inside verified her assertions. The tea-spoon and the thim-

ble she declared she was equally well acquainted with; and no doubt now remaining of her being the mother of the child left in the same apartment in which the articles had been found, Mr. Leuwitzer desired her Ladyship to be seated whilst he went to bring Amica to her.

The many excellent precepts, both religious and moral, which the good German had inculcated into the heart of Amica had been sown in a happy soil, where they had thriven with the utmost luxuriance; and of the various lessons which had flowed from his tongue upon her listening and attentive ear, one of the moral obligations upon which he had laid the greatest stress had been that of filial duty: he had ever foreseen the possibility of her being called upon to acknowledge a tie of the most intimate nature with some being whom the refinement of her ideas, the delicacy of her enlightened mind, might, without much caution on his part in preparing her for the contingency, lead her to consider in a light of horror and disgust; on this account therefore, not less than from a conviction that filial obedience is one of the most prominent of the virtues, he had ever laid

upon it the greatest stress in those admonitions which he had constantly been in the habit of giving her for the regulation and happiness of her life.

During the half-hour that he was absent from her in conversation with Lady Buckhurst, she had used her utmost endeavours to collect her fortitude, solely from the joint ideas of an appeal being at the moment made to her duty, and to her exemplification of the excellent instructions which she had received from her benefactor: accordingly he found her more composed than he had expected he should do; and informing her that he had received an incontestible proof of Lady Buckhurst's claim being a just one, he took her hand to lead her to the apartment where he had left her Ladyship expecting the appearance of her daughter.

He felt her hand tremble as he took it into his.

"Why should you tremble, my dear Amica?" he said. "Lady Buckhurst appears very eager to see you; and seems a very good-tempered woman."

Mr. Leuwitzer wished to say something in her favour to Amica. He had seen little to

admire in her, therefore selected what had appeared the least offensive points in her character to hold up to her daughter as inducements for her to go fearlessly into her presence.

"I do not fear to meet her," returned Amica: "what I fear is the being torn for ever from you."

"But you can have no reason to fear that," replied Mr. Leuwitzer. "I think, without any vanity, that I have rendered you such essential services, that no one who loves you can ever wish to with-hold me from seeing you, whenever it is any gratification to my heart or yours for us to meet."

"I am sure," returned Amica, "that whatever fate mine is hereafter destined to be, you will never desert me."

"I should expect Heaven to desert me at the same instant," replied Mr. Leuwitzer. He held her a moment in silence to his breast, and then led her towards the apartment he had just quitted.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*Duty.*

AMICA had formed no opinion respecting the kind of person she was to behold in her mother, and therefore her expectations could not be deceived.

The moment the door of the apartment in which was Lady Buckhurst began to move back upon its hinges, her Ladyship burst forth into those exclamations which by the greater part of man and woman-kind are considered as marks of feeling, and which in reality only display a deficiency in those nicer sentiments of affection for which these wild expressions are made the substitutes.

Amica approached her, and with her hand still in Mr. Leuwitzer's, she sunk upon one knee before her: Lady Buckhurst immediately fell upon her neck, exclaiming, "Oh, my dear child! Oh, my dear daughter! Are you

restored to me? Is it possible that I see my dear Amy once more? Oh, Heaven be praised!—Heaven be praised!” She continued thus to express her extacy for some moments, till her voice growing gradually fainter, she proved herself possessed of more sensibility than Mr. Leuwitzer had given her credit for, by actually falling almost senseless into the arms of Miss Withers, and requiring the assistance of salts and cold water to revive her.

She was by no means so fashionable a lady as to have been able to act an emotion of this kind; her struggle had been unaffected, and a flood of tears gave her relief and enabled her, when they were dried from her face, to address her daughter with composure.

It may naturally be imagined that the first topic of conversation which engaged the assembled party, was the history of Amica's disappearance from the garden from whence she had been stolen, and which Lady Buckhurst related in the most verbose and particular manner; and Mr. Leuwitzer then proceeded to the recital of his adventure in the chamber in St. Giles's, which had first intro-

duced her to his knowledge, and hence to the recapitulation of every event of moment in her past life.

The opinion which the first hour passed by Amica in the society of her mother had given her of her mind and manners was not by any means prepossessing, but she endeavoured to tempt herself into the belief that her aversion to be taken from the protection of Mr. Leuwitzer, had led her to view with a prejudiced eye the person in compliance with whose right that separation was to take place; and she strove by every means in her power to compel herself to consider Lady Buckhurst as amiable.

Mr. Leuwitzer, on the first moment which was given him for recollection, ordered beds to be prepared in his house for Lady Buckhurst and her companion; and, finding that they had scarcely given themselves time to stop on the road for any refreshment throughout the day, ordered tea to be brought in immediately.

During the intervals in which the servants were not in the apartment, Lady Buckhurst addressed Amica with the questions of, "Do you think you shall love me?—Do you think

you shall like me for a mother?" and a variety of others differently worded, but all to the same purpose.

Amica replied to them, "That it would ever be her study, as she considered it her duty, to endeavour to merit the kindness and affection of her mother: and my dear Madam," she added, "had I no other reason for loving you, I could not forbear returning affection to those who bestow it on me."

"Oh, we shall be so happy!—I know we shall!" cried her Ladyship; and casting her eyes towards a piano-forte in the room, she added, "I am so pleased to see you can play upon the *pianny*: my husband will be so delighted with that, he's so fond of a tune! I don't mean your father, my dear, when I say my husband. Your father has been dead these many years: his name was Dimick; but I am *Lady* Buckhurst now—and the Colonel that you are already acquainted with, is, as I may say, your brother, for he is Sir Benjamin Buckhurst's son: only think of that!"

This was a circumstance which Amica did not feel much satisfaction in reflecting upon; but she forbore to indulge a look or breathe an accent which might offend a parent with

whom she was so recently become acquainted.

"How often have you played with this tooth-pick case and thimble!" went on Lady Buckhurst, taking them in her hands as she spoke; "and how often I have bewailed and bemoaned your loss, and quarrelled with myself for leaving you, though it was only for a minute, in the garden alone; but you forgive me—I know you do! Don't you forgive me?"

"Yes, indeed I do!" replied Amica, and she spoke from her heart; for there appeared a sincerity of affection in her mother's feelings which made great compensation for the manner in which it was expressed, and for the many other peculiarities which even at a first view presented themselves to observation in her character.

"But, Madam," said Mr. Leuwitzer, "give me leave to ask you a question, which had till this moment almost escaped me; have you never before seen that sword which hangs over the chimney-piece? Did it not belong to your former husband, and was it not lost with your little girl?"

“ Oh no, Sir; no !” returned Lady Buckhurst: “ poor dear Mr. Dimick never had any sword, but the one he wore when he was a lieutenant in the Devonshire militia, and he went out of the army when his regiment was ordered one summer to Plymouth: it did not suit him to leave a good trade at home to go a *soldiering* abroad, and so he gave it up, and sold all his *accoutramentals*; and that was a year and more before Amy was run away with.”

Mr. Leuwitzer returned, “ The reason why I ask this question is, that the sword which you see there was in the same place where I ~~found~~ the spoon and the thimble, and so I supposed that might also have belonged to you.”

Lady Buckhurst again asserted its not having been a part of her's, or her late husband's property; and Mr. Leuwitzer thence concluded that it had been placed by the depredators who had inhabited the chamber in St. Giles's, in the box where he had found it, till an opportunity should offer for converting it into money:—It had however been so long a fixture over his chimney-

piece, that he did not immediately resolve to take it down; especially as he reflected on the notice which had been taken of it by the man of the name of Robertson, who had swindled him out of the bank notes; he had never mentioned the circumstance to Amica, as it was his constant rule, never to give any individual a subject for painful reflection; and he judged that from a combination of circumstances, that knowledge might have proved so to her; within his own mind he felt, he knew not why, a prepossession that this sword would still one day lead to the explanation of some mysterious occurrence.

Fatigued into perfect debility by the exertions of the day, Lady Buckhurst about two in the morning retired to her chamber, to which Amica accompanied her; and in undressing, and assisting her into bed, she united all the services of an attendant, with the attentions of a daughter: her Ladyship was extremely warm in her commendations of her goodness, and having bade her an affectionate good night, late, or rather early as the hour was, Amica could not for-

bear returning to the parlour for a few minutes conversation with Mr. Leuwitzer.

That delicacy which cannot be dismissed from minds of a certain education and feeling, withheld them both from expressing with freedom their sentiments of Lady Buckhurst; Mr. Leuwitzer almost hoped that Amica did not see her mother in the same point of view in which he beheld her; and Amica could not bear to confess even to him, that she observed any thing reprehensible, or unconciliating in a parent. Mr. Leuwitzer ventured to hint at Amica's sentiments in these words, " You have ever been a good girl: you have this day displayed yourself eminently so. Never fear therefore that you will be a happy one too: there is no perseverance in that which is right without a reward both from God and man. Good night, my Amica, and God bless you; though you have now a mother, there can be no offence to her in my calling you still mine, and bestowing on you the blessing of a father."

Amica kissed his cheek, as she had done every night for years past, when she left him

to retire to her chamber; but she did not at this time accompany her action with her usual return of his wish to her for the peacefulness of her slumbers: she felt that if she spoke, her tears were resolute to force themselves from her eyes, and therefore she preferred to hasten out of the room in silence, and suppress them till she had reached her own chamber.

When she reclined her head on her pillow, she experienced a second sensation, new to her within the last few hours; she felt what it was to love! Whilst she had considered herself the equal of Maurice Stanton, she had had regarded him only as a friend; now she was exalted into the daughter of Lady Buckhurst, she began to fear that impediments might start up to their present happy intimacy; and as she began to feel the dread of being debarred his society, she began to analyze the nature of the affection which she bore him.

This however was a feeling which like those that her first introduction to her mother had inspired her with, she wished to conceal from Mr. Leuwitzer. Till this day she never had a single thought, wish, or inclination

which it had been her desire to withhold from him: these are sensations which arise as our acquaintance with human beings expands, and as we are thrown into connections in society beyond the bosom of the domestic circle in which we have been reared, this is therefore of all others the most critical and dangerous period of life; for the moment we begin to feel that we have any thing to conceal, it requires the utmost strength of mind to guard against our concealed ideas carrying with them any sentiment which would tend to our disgrace, if they were laid open to the eye of the world. It is the business of youth to fear itself as much as it could do the most severe judge of its opinions; that is, it ought to be as careful of not admitting subjects of immorality and impropriety to its own private contemplation, as it would be of exposing them to the world as the theme of its reflections: it is alone by maintaining this strong guard over its own ideas that it can ever preserve its purity of mind; for the origin of committing evil actions is usually the having suffered our thoughts to dwell upon them till their familiarity with the senses has divested them of their heinousness and criminality.

In the morning Amica again went to the chamber of her mother, and performed for her all those little services in her rising, which she had rendered her on her retiring to rest. When they were assembled at breakfast, her Ladyship's first question was, "When Amica would be ready to accompany her to Rochester?"

Hesitation would in Amica's opinion have appeared undutiful; she therefore immediately replied, "Whenever you please, Ma'am."

"To-morrow morning then w'e'll set off," answered Lady Buckhurst; "I'll give you the whole day to pack up in, that you may not be hurried, and crumple and spoil your clothes in your haste."

Again her Ladyship talked to Mr. Leuwitzer of a remuneration for the expence he had been at for the maintenance and education of Amica; and finding him resolute in not suffering her to entertain the idea that he could upon any terms be brought to accept it, she said that the only way by which she then could return him the obligations which she and her child stood indebted to him, must be for him to pass as much of his time as ever he could make it convenient to himself to do,

at her house; and eat and drink with her, in return for Amica having done so for years past with him.

He could not forbear smiling at the idea from which her Ladyship gave him so pressing an invitation to be her frequent visitor; and from a far different motive to her's, he declared that it would give him the utmost pleasure to be considered one of the intimates of her family.

In the evening her Ladyship, for the first time, remarked the name by which her daughter was now called: "She supposed," she said, "that it was a *Jarman* name, for she never heard it before; it was, however," she declared, "a much prettier one than Amy; and she thought that, out of consideration to the fashion, which was now prevalent of calling young ladies by *genteel* names, she should continue the appellation; for as it began with an A, she thought it might very well pass for her real one."

The last night which Amica was to pass, for the present at least, beneath the roof of her benefactor, granted her little more repose than the former one had done. She rose at an early hour, and cold as was the season of the

year, she could not forbear going to bid farewell to some favourite spots in the garden behind Mr. Leuwitzer's house, where she had passed so many happy hours of her life. Under the tree where she had sat at work on the first day of her becoming an inmate of his family, she paused for a moment, and a tear stole down her cheek. There are, perhaps, some human beings of an insensible nature, who may call sensations of this kind both weakness and folly; but we must venture to assert, in opposition to their doctrine, that the sensibility which is excited by the sight of an inanimate object is frequently the most sincere expression of the excellence of the soul; it is the tribute of recollective gratitude for the happiness which has been enjoyed on the various spots where such objects are placed, and which flows from the heart when it has no observers of its emotions, nor can expect any return of sensibility.

As we have already recorded the strict propriety and forbearance of conduct with which Mr. Leuwitzer and Amica both compelled themselves to act in the present trying instance of their separation, we shall not dwell

upon their parting, but merely say, that what a sense of rectitude with-held each from displaying in their words or actions, passed with double force in their hearts.

Lady Buckhurst desired Mr. Leuwitzer would come and see them soon: he bowed in reply to her invitation. "Pray come soon," said Amica.—"I will see you in the course of a week," he returned; and her Ladyship's coach drove on.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*Much matter in short compass.*

THE reception which Sir Benjamin Buckhurst gave Amica, was much more kind, than she had feared it would have been; when the mind is not at ease, it dreads that every fresh person, or circumstance, will add to the unpleasant feelings it is already experiencing; and such was at the present moment the state of Amica's.

Lady Buckhurst had sent home intelligence of their approach, and accordingly a late dinner was ready against their arrival, at which they were joined by the Colonel, and Maurice Stanton: no circumstance in which self was not the principal, could derange the feelings of the Colonel, accordingly after the first slight acknowledgment of Amica as his mother in law's daugh-

ter, he proceeded as usual to talk of himself, his dogs, and his horses. His egotism was at the present moment a very happy circumstance for all parties ; as no one but himself felt inclined to converse ; Sir Benjamin feared to be too remiss from regard to his wife, or too familiar from regard to himself, with Amica ; and therefore in considering what to say, said nothing : Lady Buckhurst, uncertain what were her husband's real feelings upon the present occasion, wished to conduct herself in such a manner as to conciliate both him and Amica ; and being unaccustomed to express herself where any finesse was required, her conversation was so awkward as to strike herself that it was so, and to render her rather uneasy upon her seat. Maurice and Amica could only think of what might be the subject of each other's thoughts ; and thus the Colonel was compelled both to address and reply to himself.

Thus passed the evening ; on the following morning the Colonel left Rochester, and took with him Maurice Stanton ; at parting the former addressed Amica, with, " You'll cut out all the women here, you may de-

pend upon it; you must make the old girl lug out the rhino, and buy you a horse, and I'll ride out with you when I come to Rochester again; and damme we'll breathe it over the course; Good bye, mind you are mounted against I see you again."

Maurice merely pronounced, "Good bye Amica," but in a tone that conveyed a thousand good wishes.

By their departure, Amica was relieved from a part of that restraint which the presence of both the Colonel and Maurice had inspired her with; but still she could not by any means feel herself the daughter of the mistress of the house in which she was living; when she conversed in private with her own heart, she constantly drew cause from her reasonings with it, to apprehend that Lady Buckhurst was not the woman whom she could ever really love; nor Sir Benjamin the man for whom she could feel any degree of respect; they both at the present time conducted themselves to her in a manner consistent with the situation in which they were placed towards her; but their habits did not assimilate with hers; this she considered they might as well, object to

in her as she in them; it was undoubtedly her duty to study a compliance with theirs.

Her mother was extremely fond of calling upon her to display her accomplishments, and of directing the attention of Sir Benjamin towards them; but they were gratified in so very different a mode from that in which she had been accustomed to reap amusement from the same acquirements, that to herself they now became rather a labour than an enjoyment.

If she were desired to go to the piano forte, she must either sing old ballads, or play country dances, or Rule Britannia, or God save the King, or something of the kind with which their memories claimed acquaintance, and in which the skill and taste of which she was mistress had no opportunity of exertion. If she were disposed to pass an hour in painting, Lady Buckhurst either wanted a rose-bud drawn on a paper for her watch, or her favourite cat's portrait sketched, or something of that frivolous nature, which left her no time for that serious application she had before been gratified in giving to the art.

Her Ladyship was very fond of being read to, but then only from the newspaper, or from a novel, in the perusing which she constantly desired Amica to skip every digression from the main plot; especially if those digressions contained any reflections a degree beyond common place morality and argument. "Those kind of sentences," she affirmed, "were dull, and spoilt the story."

At Mr. Leuwitzer's, Amica had been accustomed to an apartment where her musical instrument was left open with the notes upon its desk; and her paintings, her work, and her books scattered about upon the tables and chairs, had been regarded as additions to the comfort of its appearance; in her present habitation, all these were considered in exactly the opposite point of view. "Books, and such things," her Ladyship said, "ought always to be cleared away, especially before meals, they made a nice parlour look in a litter, and she could not bear to see them." Amica of course complied with her orderly rule, and was tempted to think that she was afraid any other object in view at the time of dinner should draw the attention of the guests,

or the family themselves, from the calls of appetite; of which the gratification was always considered as the most important of all important affairs in the house of Sir Benjamin.

A day before the time Mr. Leuwitzer had appointed for seeing Amica, she received a letter saying that he would be in Rochester that evening, and mentioning at what inn he should lodge.—Amica, immediately communicated the contents to Lady Buckhurst; and her ladyship having held a consultation with her husband, sent a note to the inn to be delivered to him on his arrival, stating in the most polite manner in which the united efforts of herself and Sir Benjamin had been able to compose it, that they hoped, and desired that he would make their house his home during his stay in Rochester, and always consider it as such when he should visit the place.

Mr. Leuwitzer was gratified at reading it, and accepted the invitation it contained: he had brought down with him Maurice Stanton as his companion, and to him the

invitation was extended in equal terms of politeness.

There are two things which are always insipid in the relation; the one is a circumstantial account of common-place occurrences, and common place conversation,—and as these alone composed the scenes wherein Amica was an actress for the first twelve months after becoming an inmate of the house of Sir Benjamin Buckhurst, we shall only notice, that such a period of time passed over her head, without altering her ideas either of the mother, or the knight her husband;—that Mr. Leuwitzer frequently visited her, that Sir Benjamin rather liked him as a companion, and pressed his visits, and that he accepted the invitation given him, for the sake of being in the society of his Amica.

The other insipidity is a verbose detail of that exchange of affection, sentiments of respect, and a great many other tender things, which are very delightful to the parties whom they concern, but which even upon the stage, with the aid which they there receive from the expression of

features, and the variations of tone, are still very patience-trying to the hearers, and of course must be doubly so in a narrative where they have none of these adventitious support, and advantages ; we shall therefore content ourselves with saying, that on Maurice's first visit to Rochester with Mr. Leuwitzer, the confession of reciprocal affection escaped from the lips of both Amica and himself ; and we will take it for granted that like all lovers they vowed eternal constancy and honour ; because all lovers are in some degree deprived of reason by the power of love ; and if they see at all, those obstacles which other eyes behold standing in the way of accomplishment of their desires, they believe them surmountable ; let them be very precipices of difficulty to climb over.

In the course of these twelve months we must also not forget to remark, that Mr. Leuwitzer purchased Maurice a company in a regiment which he joined in Cheshire ; and that Colonel Buckhurst forgot the attractions of Amica, or at least for

a time gave up the pleasure of beholding them, in order to gratify a whim which suddenly seized him of seeing France.

And here if we were desirous of swelling our volume, we might follow him in his tour through that land of new liberty; and we doubt not but we could furnish some of our readers with amusement by so doing; but as others might be disgusted with a man, whose only employment in a foreign country was to abuse the natives, because they do not speak his language; and to practice such vices, as he need not go abroad to learn, or to follow; we shall wave the digression, and meet him at his lodgings in London, in the first week of October.

Here he found a letter from his father who had been daily expecting his arrival, saying that one of the members for Guilford was just dead, and that he had a most flattering prospect of succeeding him; the letter ended with an exhortation to him to come down to Guilford as soon as ever he received it, and assist in the manifold business and exertions which were requisite to secure his father's election.

Colonel Buckhurst loved a row full as well as his father did parliamentary honours; and accordingly he posted down to Guilford as rapidly as a chaise and four could wheel him thither.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Buckhurst for ever ! Huzza !*

ON arriving at Guilford, the Colonel found that although his father appeared much more certain of success here than he had done at Exeter, still much pains, experience, and address must be used to ensure him the victory ;—however there was yet a fortnight before the day of election, and the Colonel resolved to make the best use of it.

The chief dependence of Sir Benjamin's opponent for success, was on the votes which a Mr. Sweetwort, one of the leading men in the place, had promised his interest should bring him :—This gentleman was a brewer who lived at the distance of about three quarters of a mile from the town, in a very handsome house which he had lately built on one side of the

road; and on the opposite side stood his brewery, which was in itself very extensive, and had a variety of buildings attached to it.

The Colonel set his wits to work, for they were not bad wits when cunning only, and not judgment, was required of them, to invent some plan for counteracting the friendly intentions of Mr. Sweetwort towards his father's opponent.

Men like Colonel Buckhurst, with full purses, are always certain of being attended by servile flatterers, who will readily undertake any office of which the reward is to be the rich man's favour; accordingly from the train of parasites whom he had brought down with him to swell his consequence, he selected one, who was to represent a freeman of the place, just arrived from London, to vote on the side of Sir Benjamin's opponent; by which means he would be admitted into the enemy's quarters, and be a spy upon their actions for the benefit of his own party.

The Colonel mean while employed himself in writing electioneering squibs which

abounded with the wit and humour for which those compositions are notorious ; though there are human beings fastidious enough in their opinion of them to say, that they serve only to disgrace the abilities of those who have any, and to shew the deficiency of such as have not ;—that they are most frequently ill told falsehoods, and lame witticisms ;—at best molehill truths, magnified into mountainous abuses ;—that they are a great expence to all candidates, and of no service to any.

The Colonel's friend in his assumed character had already conveyed many pieces of serviceable information to the Buckhurst party.—Principally the Colonel had gathered from his packets of intelligence how many votes the opponent of his father reckoned upon as certainties ; and having balanced them against those which Sir Benjamin had of the same nature in his favour, he found that they at present stood upon nearly equal ground.

Of the voters in the interest of Sir Benjamin's opponent, upwards of sixty were under the immediate sway of Mr. Sweetwort ; these men he had for some days

past been feasting, without any intermission of the toils of eating and drinking, in a malt-house, which formed a part of his own brewery, where they were actually *locked up*, that they might not run away and disappoint him of the pleasure of leading them up in a body of *free voters*, to the booth of his friend ; which he intended to do towards the close of the poll, in order to make his interest appear the clincher in support of the cause which he espoused.

The morning was ushered in as usual upon those occasions with the ringing of bells ;—ringers are the happiest set of people in the world, they enjoy the peal which they jingle to every body's good fortune and feel no part of the death toll, but the fee that accompanies it ; and they display their unconcern by instances like the present, wherein they prepare a salute of joy before they know for whom it is to be fired ;—which proves our assertion of their happiness : as people who are violently interested on one side or the other, must feel some pain, as well as pleasure ;

while they on the contrary, determine only to laugh with the winner.

The contest proceeded vigorously, the natural hopes and fears of a business of this important nature filling by turns the hearts of the candidates; however about four in the afternoon, Sir Benjamin was known to have much the best of the day, and his opponent began to call loudly for Mr. Sweetwort, and his corps de reserve to appear and turn the tide of fortune in his favour.

Mr. Sweetwort was not to be seen any where about the busy parts of the town, and accordingly was supposed to be waiting for a summons at home; and messengers were dispatched to his house from his friend's party to inform him that the appearance of himself and his voters was becoming highly necessary at the poll-booth, as Sir Benjamin was considerably a head.

On arriving at the house, they found it entirely deserted, all the family being gone to the town to be spectators of the election:—They crossed the road to the malt house in which the brewer's depen-

dant's were feasting, and found the door locked; but the clamour within informed them that the place was not without inhabitants:—They rapped, and called loudly for admission, but none could be obtained; at last a man, so drunk he could hardly make himself understood, thrust his head out of a shutter in the upper part of the building, and inquired what they wanted;—"You must come directly and vote," cried one of the messengers, "or it will be too late."

"Where is Mr. Sweetwort?" asked the man, "let him tell us so, and we will come directly."

The envoy replied that they could not any where find Mr. Sweetwort, and that on this account he was come to beg that they would hasten to town immediately.

"Aye, it won't do," exclaimed the freeman with a grin, "I understand trap as well as you; you want to get us away from Mr. Sweetwort, do you?—but I'll tell you again it won't do;—He locked us up here himself this morning, and we promised him solemnly not to stir till he

came to fetch us ; and stir we will not you may depend upon it."

This declaration was followed by a shout from all his companions within the place.

It was in vain that the friends of the candidate remonstrated ; nothing but the sight of Mr. Sweetwort himself could induce them to proceed to Guilford ; the messengers ran back with all speed, hoping now to find him there, but no one with whom they could fall in had yet seen him.

Sir Benjamin and his opponent had in the morning agreed to close the poll finally at six o'clock in the evening ; scarcely half an hour was now wanting to that time, and still Mr. Sweetwort was not to be found ; his friends were thrown into confusion by his non appearance ; some dispersed various ways in search of him ; others ran back to the malt house, and endeavoured with as ill success as before to prevail on his adherents to suffer themselves to be let out, and proceed to Guilford to vote:—To the consternation of the party the clock struck six, and the Colo-

nel insisted on the books being closed, as had been agreed upon between the candidates in the morning; his demand was obliged to be complied with, and in course the returning officer declared Sir Benjamin Buckhurst duly elected.

The friends of the victorious member were now all employed in rending the air with shouts of exultation, while his joyful body was tossing up and down in the chair of triumph; which is upon the whole a dangerous practice, for it is confidently asserted that many a man's brain has suffered a derangement by riding in it, from which he never recovered all his life after.

The allies of the unsuccessful candidate were either stealing home in the fret of disappointment, or assisting Mr. Sweetwort's friends in their search after him whose disappearance was so strangely unaccountable; one of the maid servants recollected, that about eleven o'clock in the morning two gentlemen had inquired for her master, and that he had taken them into the great brew-house, which led to his counting room, and

since that time they could gain no account of him.

“ Surely,” cried one of his friends, “ he has not tumbled down there in a fit! He has harrassed himself a good deal about this election, and it is not impossible that it may have produced such an effect on his constitution.”

On this surmise being started, three or four of them went to visit the counting room; the way to which was through the great brew-house.

They found the door of the brewhouse shut; they opened it and went in; and scarcely had the party entered, before the sounds of, “ Here I am! help! help! thank God you are come!—here!—Oh Lord, here!” assailed their ears in the well known voice of Mr. Sweetwort;—but though his voice was audible, his person was invisible.

A few moments however discovered to them from whence the sound proceeded; it came from the largest copper in the middle of the brewhouse; one of the nimblest of the party ran up a ladder which stood against it, and on looking down into the inside, perceived

Mr. Sweetwort in the same situation as a mouse which had been lured by a tempting bait into a glazed earthen pot, and slides down again to the bottom at every effort it makes to escape from its prison.

Our readers will easily imagine that Mr. Sweetwort's trap had been baited by Colonel Buckhurst; the two gentlemen with whom the maid servant had seen him in the morning, were two others of the Colonel's convenient friends, who had visited Mr. Sweetwort under pretence of shewing him some samples of hops, saying that they were merchants out of Kent, who could not possibly call again; and who accordingly in their way with him to his counting-room for the purpose of business, executed the mandate of their employer, by snatching him up in their arms, and popping him into one of his empty coppers, which was so deep as to render it impossible for him to get out of it again unaided; and the Colonel trusted to the business of the day for keeping every one who might lend him assistance from going within hearing of his cries.

We have already seen that this plan produced the desired effect, Mr. Sweetwort's friends having refused to vote, except led by him; we must now inform ourselves of the consequences of this manœuvre, which could not be sanctioned by any laws of honesty, or honor; even amongst Sir Benjamin's own friends, those who were possessed of any sense of the qualities just mentioned, were not extraordinarily well pleased at having been parties concerned in a business so open to the tongue of honest sarcasm; and the adherents of his opponent, readily persuaded him to present a petition to the house of commons for setting the election aside.

When intelligence of this resolution reached Sir Benjamin, he for the first time in his life did not feel very well pleased with his son's exertions in his cause;—even in their opinion of the actions of those to whom they are the most attached, men who have not a reflective mind are principally governed by the event; and Sir Benjamin was angry at the idea that there was a possibility of his being soon

again despoiled of his new dignity; though at the same time convinced that the Colonel's stratagem had alone ensured him his temporary (if so it was doomed to be) possession of it;—and upon the whole better pleased at having it but a short time, than not at all.

However till the sense of the house should be passed upon the petition of his opponent, Sir Benjamin was entitled to take his envied seat in the joy-inspiring chapel; parliament was to meet in the course of three weeks, and it would probably be at least two or three weeks after that time before the case was decided;—Sir Benjamin therefore determined to enjoy his present honours, and to make the most of them, lest they should be as short as he feared they might.

To this end, instead of returning from Guilford to Rochester, he proceeded straight to London, for the purpose of hiring a house, and making many more arrangements, which he deemed it requisite for the family of a member of the British senate to be engaged in; employing the Colonel

to inform his Lady of his success, and of the preparations he was making to receive her in town.

The Colonel, whom nobody could persuade that his conduct with regard to Sweetwort had not been, “a most admirable hit; a capital hoax; a damned knowing go;” wrote to his Lady-mother in most excellent spirits, which communicated themselves to her upon her perusal of his epistle; and with the utmost gaiety and pride of soul, she bade Amica prepare to shew herself in London, as the daughter-in-law of a member of parliament. “Ah, my dear,” she added, “now you’ll be introduced in style! only think my love, a title, and a parliament man! rank and riches always command respect, and these are combined in the person of Sir Benjamin; we shall be very much courted I have no doubt!”

Amica smiled in silence at her mother’s exultation; she was indeed doubtful whether her prophecy would not be fulfilled; for she had already, even in the narrow compass of society in which she had moved, been witness of so many unaccountable examples of a

name and a purse being passports if not to the heart, at least to the reverence of the multitude, that she believed it very possible such might be the case with Lady Buckhurst and Sir Benjamin; and she had on the contrary seen so many instances of genius in rags, and learning disregarded, that she almost supposed the great world, of which her mother talked in praise, might have made it a fashion to exclude talent from their circles, for the convenience and facility of such of its members as were destitute of it.

## CHAPTER XX.

*An Introduction to the London Fashions.*

THE doors of an elegant ready-furnished house in Hanover-square flew open to receive Lady Buckhurst as its mistress, on her arrival in London.

She had never before been in the metropolis, except for ten days in her way to Rochester from Devonshire, on her marriage with Sir Benjamin; and she had then just seen enough of it to wish to see more: the only sights which he had taken her to, had been the bulls and bears—not over Exeter-'change, nor at the Tower, but—at the Stock Exchange; Saint Paul's on a Sunday, when it cost him nothing to gain admission; the volunteer reviews in Hyde-park; and the lord mayor's coach and sheriff's carriages, in their way to Guildhall on Michaelmas-day: and the only present which he had made her had been a lottery-ticket, which he had purchased for her,

and placed in his pocket-book, with one which he had at the same time bought for himself, without informing her of the number; which circumstance, had she considered it, we think she must have regarded as ominous of his intention to appropriate which ever might prove a prize to his own use; and that her only chance of being a gainer by the nominal present was neither of the tickets coming up a blank.

Now then she determined to enjoy herself: she declared, "That if it was not the time for people to spend a little money when they had got into parliament, it never could be; coach-hire would cost her nothing, as she had her own carriage and horses, and therefore she was determined to treat herself to the *shows*; she would go and see *Pizarry*, the first night it was acted; she would go to Astley's, and see the *horses ride*; and if there was any night something *English* at the *Italian opera* that she thought she could understand, she would go there too; just that she might have seen every thing."

Amica judged that it would give her much pleasure to partake in all these amusements herself, were she possessed of a companion to

whom she could communicate her ideas as they arose in her mind ; but without this advantage she thought they would lose a great deal of their value ; she would not however seem object to being her mother's companion ; and as a compliment is but half a virtue if not dressed in smiles, she so conducted herself that her mother believed her transported at the prospect of the pleasures which she had set before her, and began to imagine that her daughter was her chief motive for joining in them herself.

One thing however in their present change of residence was extremely pleasing to Amica, and this was the frequent opportunities which it gave her of seeing her revered friend Mr. Leuwitzer ; Rochester had been an inconvenient distance for him, though his affection for Amica had notwithstanding generally borne him to her once every week since her quitting his house ; now she was in London, his calls upon her were often repeated, and the knowledge of her being there gave a zest to his daily journies which any idea of the advantages resulting to him from his commerce had not the power of doing.

The first matter which occupied Lady Buckhurst's thoughts on her arrival in London, was the placing of her domestic concerns in a due form of arrangement: she knew that her style of living must be more expensive than it had been at Rochester; but still she considered that as the eye of the mistress had there saved a great deal, it might even in the prodigality and luxury of a London establishment save a little.

This business being settled, if not entirely to her mind, at least as much to her inclination as she found it practicable, she began to turn her thoughts towards the pleasures of which she had anticipated the enjoyment.

“Before we can appear as we ought to do in company, or at any public place, my dear Amica,” she said, “we must smart ourselves up a little; for though our clothes are all good, I see they are very differently made to those worn here by the fashionable people; and look, in our situation is a great deal. I shall take you to one of the first milliners in Bond-street: Miss Withers tells me it is never worth while going sneaking into Cheapside or Cranbourn-alley, or any of those cheap

places, as they are called; for that if they know who you are (and I should not like to conceal my title, or my husband's public character) they make you pay the same every where."

Her carriage was at this time at the door waiting to take them out upon the business of newly accoutring their persons, and her Ladyship ringing the bell, enquired of her footman, who had lived in town with Lady Freelove, which milliner her Ladyship, who was a woman of great taste and fashion, had been in the habit of employing.

James replied, that his last lady had been most *intimate* with Mrs. Flap, who lived in Old Bond-street.

The word James had used did not escape Lady Buckhurst; but she had no idea of milliners being serviceable to their employers in any character but that of hat and cap making; and therefore listening only to the general sense of the servant's reply, which indicated according to her idea that Lady Freelove had dealt principally for such articles at Mrs. Flap's, she ordered her carriage to drive thither.

On entering the shop, she was accosted by two or three young men, who desired to know whether she would like to walk up stairs, or into the back-parlour, or whether they could shew her any thing in the shop?

In the country, Lady Buckhurst had been frequently served at a haberdasher's by an awkward apprentice in his worsted hose, but not entertaining the remotest idea that the Jemmy Jessamies who now accosted her in their white silk stockings, were of the same genus, especially in a milliner's shop, where female customers only were, in her opinion, to be expected, she placed herself upon a chair by the side of the counter, saying, that she would wait till one of the young women came into the shop.

"We will shew you any thing you please, Mem," replied one of the knights of the yard. "We have no young women in our shop."

The other two were meanwhile attending to Amica, and displaying to her veils, fans, ribbands, &c. and she listened to them without any disturbance of her composure, till one of them enquired, "Whether she had seen any of the new corset stays?" This question from

a man was so unexpected and offensive to the feelings of Amica, that she turned away with an expression of disgust more eloquent than a volume of verbal indignation could have been, and moved towards Lady Buckhurst; who was again enquiring whether it was not possible for her to see a female to whom she might give her orders?

“Oh certainly, Mem, if you wish it!” answered one of the men: “you can see Mrs. Flap, or her mother; certainly, Mem!” and he left the shop, as Lady Buckhurst supposed, to require the presence of one of them in it.

In a few moments he returned, and passing Lady Buckhurst hastily, he ran to the shop-door at which stood her footman. He addressed him; and Amica, as well as her Ladyship, could not doubt that he had enquired who they were, for they heard the servant reply, “Lady Buckhurst and her daughter:” and as the dapper apprentice returned through the shop, with the first bow which he had vouchsafed to make to her, he informed her that Mrs. Flap would wait on her directly; and he now addressed her with, “Your Ladyship!” instead of the poor in-

significant title of "Mem," which he had before given her.

In a very few minutes arrived Mrs. Flap: she appeared about twenty years old; lusty for her age; a pretty face, of which the expression was vulgar and conceited; her cheeks highly rouged; a profusion of greasy black hair, curled into the shape of corkscrews, hanging over her eyes; and her dress so tawdry and fashionable, that she seemed laden with the patterns of the various articles contained in her shop.

"Pray walk up, my Lady!" she exclaimed, "into the millinery-room here above. We don't keep any thing genteel in the shop below. This way, ladies: pray follow me."

Lady Buckhurst and Amica complied; for by running up the stairs, which she had just descended while speaking, she gave them no opportunity of refusing.

The room into which they were conducted was covered with ornaments for the head and the body, and her Ladyship directly proceeded to give her directions for the equipment of her's. Amica wandered about the apartment,

casting her eyes first on one article of dress, then on another, till they fell on an open door which led into a second room, where on a sofa, by the side of an excellent fire, sat a lady in an elegant morning-undress, in a careless lounging attitude; and opposite to her stood a gentleman in black, whose arms were rested upon the top of a fire-screen, and whose back was turned towards Amica.

They were in conversation together; their loud laughs bespoke them amused with each other; and on a table in the apartment, not far removed from the fire, stood a salver with jellies, cakes, &c.

As Amica passed the door of the second apartment in her circuit of the room she was in, she heard the female break off in her conversation, and raising a glass to her eye, exclaim, "Who are those?—Who the deuce has Flap got there?"

Unaccustomed to meet the gaze of scrutinizing strangers, Amica directly turned away in order to spare herself those blushes which would have mounted to her cheeks, had she encountered the stare of the inquisitive lady.

“ *En verité*, I know not,” replied a voice which she immediately recollected to be Sidney Valmont’s.

“ Go, and ask Flap who they are?” returned his companion.—“ No, stay; I’ll call her here.—Flap, I want you !”

Mrs. Flap obeyed.

“ Who have you got there—Any-body ?” asked the lady. *Any body* and *No-body*, are terms of infinite importance in what is called LIFE: Any-body lives at the west-end of the town; has a box at the opera; gives a masked ball once in a winter; plays rouge and noir: No-body lives in the city; pays tradesmen’s bills; is not known in Bond-street; and sits in a front-box at the theatre.

Mrs. Flap replied in a whisper.

“ *Sacre Dieu!* you don’t say so?” cried Valmont. “ I know them both well! the mother is a most inconceivably comic old woman: the daughter there is a long story about, that I’ll tell you another time.”

“ No, no; tell me now,” cried the lady: “ I will know it now. What was it?—A *faux-pas*,—or an elopement stopped,—or what ?”

“Hush! hush! Let me introduce you,” returned Valmont.

“You must bring them to me,” the lady replied: “I could not get up for a duchess.”

Valmont returned her a significant nod; and coming into the room to Lady Buckhurst and Amica, he addressed them with congratulations on Sir Benjamin’s victory and the happiness he experienced at seeing them in town, which he concluded by saying, “Lady Dellaval wishes to have the pleasure of being introduced to you. Will you give me leave?”

“By all means, Sir,” replied Lady Buckhurst with a smile of exultation; while Amica, displeased at the manner in which the introduction had been produced, felt a reluctance to be included in it: she was, however obliged to follow the example of her mother. Valmont muttered a few unintelligible words, which were necessary to break the ice of ceremony between the ladies; and Lady Dellaval, still looking through her glass, said, “Hope you are quite well: I’m excessively rude not to rise, but I am really exhausted to death with walking almost the

whole way down Saint James's-street this morning. Won't you sit down?"

With one of her best courtesies, Lady Buckhurst placed herself on the sofa by the side of her new acquaintance; who immediately jumping up, said, "Valmont, call my servants—will you? I'll drive through the park." Then turning to Lady Buckhurst and Amica, with something between a bow and a courtesey, she pronounced, "Good morning!" in scarcely intelligible accents, and left the room: before, however, she had reached the stairs, her tones were sufficiently audible in a lengthened ha! ha! ha!

Lady Buckhurst knew not whether to consider that she had received a compliment or an affront. Amica had no hesitation in determining, what real good-manners would have decided Lady Dellaval's conduct to have been; nor any doubt that fashion would have sanctioned it as easy, elegant, and *very proper*.

Having made their purchases, they returned to the shop, where they were detained some minutes till the different articles were put up in papers and boxes, as her Ladyship

chose to have them home with her in her carriage. She whispered Amica, "That she had heard that things that were left after they were once bought to be sent home, were often changed for the same kind of articles made of inferior materials; and that she was resolved to be upon her guard against the tricks of the London shopkeepers, as far as she was able."

While they were thus detained, an elegant and beautiful young woman, very plainly dressed, whose person received from the hands of art no adventitious charms, entered the shop with a small box in each hand, and addressing Mrs. Flap in accents which immediately bespoke her to be French, though able to express herself in the English language, she requested to know "Whether they wanted to buy any feathers, or artificial flowers, as she had some to dispose of at a very low price?"

"No, not I," cried Mrs. Flap: "I always deal at the wholesale warehouses, and you are quite in the *little* way I see," pointing to her boxes as she spoke, and eyeing her from top to toe with a most repulsive expression of countenance.

“Could not you then employ me in your shop?” asked the young woman: “I am very well acquainted with the millinery business; that is, I never practised it, but I have been used to”——She hesitated. Amica guessed that she would have said, “to wear every thing of the kind,” had not the humiliation of rising confusion choked her utterance.

“No, we never employ women,” answered Mrs. Flap: “they are only more plague than profit. Young men suit our purpose best. We always engage young men.”

“Do young men make caps?” returned the suppliant: “they don’t do that even in France now; and I thought in England such effeminate employments for men had not been sanctioned by custom.”

“Then you thought wrong,” returned Mrs. Flap. “We don’t find any women able to please our ladies so well as the young men. You need not wait: we can’t give you any work.”

“Nor will you buy any of my flowers or feathers?”——

“I have told you so already,” answered Mrs. Flap: “why don’t you go about your business?”

The tears burst into the eyes of the young female; and, sinking beneath confusion and distress, she hastened out of the shop as fast as her trembling limbs could bear her. Amica followed her to the door, with an intention of saying or doing something to relieve her; but before she could determine in what words to address her, she was already mingling amongst the croud of passengers along the street.

Scarcely was she out of sight, ere Lady Buckhurst was ready to return to her carriage; the shopmen followed her with her purchases, and it was with difficulty that Amica could restrain herself from expressing the disgust which was excited against them in her breast, whilst she considered them as the unfair usurpers of a feminine employment, by their exercising of which such unfortunates as the French woman whom she had just beheld were deprived of the means of earning their subsistence.

And highly beneficial would it be to society in general, if this usurpation of right were more seriously regarded as the evil it really is, than it is accustomed to be. It is by men

being permitted to exercise these feminine employments, that so many unhappy girls wander in the path of vice over the streets of the metropolis: one-half, at least, of those who are seen in that pitiable situation, have been reduced to it by the cause just stated, and would probably been driven to depravity by no spur but that of hunger. Shame! that those beings, who are so expert in fingering ribbands and fans, are not furnished with a more suitable occupation, in being taught to handle a musket or haul a cable in the defence of their country; and those who have been excluded by them from their just employments, restored to the exercise of avocations consistent with their sex and their strength; and by being thus allowed to earn an honest subsistence be preserved from insult, from suffering, and from disgrace!

## CHAPTER XXI.

*Fashionable Friendship.*

**SENSATIONS** of a very opposite nature had been excited in the breast of Amica, by the cursory observation which she had that morning been able to make upon the gay, dashing Lady Dellaval, and the interesting French woman, whom she could not doubt to be one of those unfortunates, whom the mad change of politics which had lately taken place in France, had driven from her country, and her comforts; and reduced to the humiliating situation of becoming a rejected suppliant for the means of procuring herself bread, to a woman of the coarse and unfeeling sentiments of Mrs. Flap:—Amica's heart bled for her, and she expressed to Lady Buckhurst a wish that she knew where to find her, in order that she might administer to her relief.

“ I don't like to see young people with hard hearts,” replied her Ladyship, “ but there is reason in every thing; if we were to go about seeking for folks in want we might never keep a penny in our own pockets; all would be very glad to receive;—no, no, child, it is time enough to give when we are asked;—she did not beg for nothing you see, she only wanted to sell her things, and though they did not become her customers at that shop, I dare say she got quit of them somewhere else.”

Amica, had been accustomed to consider that the species of want which most merits, and most requires relief, is that which does not demand it; and the claimant for charity who pursues the heels of the passenger with ceaseless cries, the exerciser of a trade which ought to be checked: but she found Lady Buckhurst's opinion of a quite different nature, and she would perhaps have endeavoured to convince her of its fallacy, had she not, as Amica was on the point of beginning her explanation, said, “ And that there woman was a fo-

reigner too ; they can't expect us to do nothing for them while we have poor of our own ;"—This observation entirely silenced her ; she recollected that in Rochester, Lady Buckhurst had always refused her charity to such objects who did not reside in her own parish ; and she feared that an idea of this contracted nature upon a principle of the heart, could not be expelled by the arguments of a daughter, whom a mother like Lady Buckhurst, would, from the single circumstance of their affinity to each other, regard as inferior to herself in judgment.

When Amica entered the drawing-room a few minutes before dinner, she found there the Colonel who was come to honour his father's table with his presence, and who had brought with him Sidney Valmont : on perceiving the latter, she felt less at her ease than she had ever before done in his presence ; the idea of what embellishments he might have given to her history in the narrative of it which he had promised to Lady Dellaval, caused her to feel a disagreeable sensation at seeing

him, which he had never before inspired her with.

The conversation at dinner turned chiefly upon Lady Dellaval, who the Colonel informed them was a widow of the first fashion.

“Oh, a widow, is she?” exclaimed Lady Buckhurst.

“She deserves it, I promise you,” exclaimed the Colonel, “for the pains she took to kill Sir John.”

“Oh for shame,” said Valmont in a tone of satire, “I’m sure she had a great deal of advice for him in his last illness;—was not she so apprehensive that one physician would not be enough, that she called in two others about a month before he died?”

“Deep, deep,” answered the Colonel, “he might have got well with only one; and better with only two; but with three, she knew he must kick the beam:—Oh the widow’s a deep fish!”

Lady Buckhurst, although not already of high ton, was sufficiently fashionable to have a most decided relish for scandal; she laughed heartily at their account of

Lady Dellaval. "You say, she deserves to be a widow for her *pains*," she remarked, addressing the Colonel, "the *expence* of three doctors can have been ~~no~~ such little matter.

"Doctor C——— was handsomely paid, no doubt," said Valmont with a significant smile.

"Undoubtedly," replied the Colonel, "he attended her and her husband both at the same time."

Again the laugh burst from all lips but those of Amica; she felt disgusted at the hypocrisy of the age, of which she had a most glaring proof in hearing Valmont thus bitterly ridiculing the very woman whose most intimate friend he had appeared in the morning; and whom he had then been entertaining with a story about her, which she judged had probably been as replete with scandal, as his present remarks upon her Ladyship.

When they had for some time indulged their ardour for the scandalous, Valmont gave them an account of Lady Dellaval's family. Her Ladyship, he said, was the

only daughter of Sir Jasper Wormeaten, a Baronet of considerable estate in the county of Wilts. She had in her early youth been deprived of her mother, and from that time till her introduction into life, she had been committed to the care of governesses, who had not taken so much pains to inculcate any thing into her mind, as an extravagant opinion of her own perfections.—Thus irresistibly armed for conquest, she was brought out at seventeen; and the crowd of admirers who buzzed round her, was equal to the expectations she had formed; but their motive was different from what she believed it; it was to the substantial thousands of Sir Jasper, that the adoration was paid, which she mistook for homage to her own wit and beauty.—And the mistake was pardonable, for she possessed both; but still they would not alone have attracted to her the regards of the men; for it was too evident to them that having begun to exercise sway in the character of a spoiled child, she would extend her passion for governing over whomsoever should be

sufficiently unfortunate to be connected with her, and still wish to retain any opinion of his own.

Her vanity increased with the number of devotees who paid adoration at her shrine, and flattering herself with the idea that some man still better worth her acceptance than any of those who had as yet sought an alliance with her, would present himself as a candidate for her hand, she continued a voluntary life of celibacy, till she found herself upon the verge of thirty, and the moths who had buzzed round her infinitely decreased in number.

Upon this consideration she regarded it necessary to lose no time in becoming a wife, and accordingly gave her hand to the first man, who in decided terms asked for the happiness of possessing it, after her having come to the resolution just stated.

The husband thus blessed in her possession, was Sir John Dellaval; a puny and effeminate baronet, whose mind was as weak as his constitution, and whom she governed with a despotism which drew

upon them both the ridicule of the world; with this she was rather pleased than offended. To be considered singular in her opinions and manners, was one of her principal delights; she did not live, except she was *known* to live; *id est*, except she was the fashion; and as publicity can alone give notoriety, a taste for riding and driving was assumed by her, not from any predilection for those exercises, but because in their pursuit she could not fail to attract observation in places which she must else pass through unnoticed.

But that satire which passed over the head of Lady Dellaval, like a feather, sunk like a weight of lead into the heart of her husband; principally because he felt himself a sufferer from the cause which gave rise to it, without the spirit or resolution to take the power into his own hands; and after seven years most uncomfortably spent in wedlock, he retired from the stage of life, leaving his wife in her new character of widow, a much happier actress upon it, than she had ever yet been.

“ Sir John,” he added, “ had now been, dead above three years.”

“ And ever since that time, I suppose she has been looking out for a second husband,” cried Sir Benjamin. “ Most widows are even more desirous of becoming wives again than those who have been always single, are of changing their condition.”

“ But the rule is reversed with her,” answered Valmont, “ she declares she is spoilt, by the sway her first husband suffered her to maintain over him, for becoming a wife to any one who would not grant her the same indulgence; and therefore she is resolved to die a widow.”

“ Perhaps Doctor C—— is resolved, to die a batchelor,” cried the Colonel, archly.

“ Perhaps he is married already,” replied Valmont, in the same expressive tone.

“ Devilish fair, upon my soul!” exclaimed the Colonel, “ then you do allow that.”

“ *En vérité,*” replied the divine, “ I will not answer another question;—consider, she is *my friend.*”

Lady Buckhurst was at this moment rising from table, and Amica followed her out of the room, lamenting the perverted use to

which she had just heard the most sacred title applied: but after a very short time passed in intercourse with the great world, she learnt that the same word had not the same meaning which she had been accustomed to attach to it; that by friendship was merely understood, a mutual and temporary utility; that it was neither supposed to include truth, respect, nor affection:—It was, she discovered, merely a nominal quality, of the same nature as the ideal value attached to the piece of paper which we call a bank note, and which by being known to represent ten pounds, is of infinite service to those through whose hands it passes, but of which the actual worth is nothing.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*A Comic Character at the Theatre.*

IN the course of a month's residence in London, the dropping of cards made Sir Benjamin and his Lady acquainted with two or three hundred people, whom it was very probable they would never see, and almost impossible they should know, if they did by chance ever meet them in a crowded rout or ball.

Amica had, on the following day to that on which the occurrence had taken place, informed Mr. Leuwitzer of the scene she had witnessed in Mrs. Flap's shop. He supposed the unfortunate female, as she had done, to be an exile from her changed country; and, with the accustomed benevolence of his soul, he used every method which he could devise for discovering her abode, and offering to her that assistance of which he believed her to stand so eminently in need.

The sentiments of Mr. Leuwtizer, with regard to the case of distress wherein the necessitous French-woman was involved, were entirely opposite to those of Lady Buckhurst: he considered the exile from his country, who is driven in innocence to abandon the soil on which all his hopes and affections have been placed, which has fed the parent-stock from which he is descended, and whose clay shelters their ashes in the tomb, to be of all human sufferers the most pitiable and most deserving of the active commiseration of the benevolent heart; it was therefore with no slight ardour that he set abroad inquiries after the unfortunate female whom Amica had represented to him in so afflicting a point of view.

Familiarized in some respect to the London fashions by four weeks' residence amongst them, so great is the sway of custom, that from example, Amica no longer felt the reluctance she had at first done to visit Mrs. Flap's shop; and being one day in want of a dress for a party which was to take place that evening, she assumed courage to go and purchase it alone, Lady Buckhurst being confined to the sofa with a bad head-ach, which

she was apprehensive if she rode out in the morning might be increased by the exertion of the ride, and render her unable to *chaperon* her daughter to the dance.

On arriving at the shop, Amica ran up the stairs leading to the room where the smart things were exhibited; for she had found that it was the custom for those who were known in the house to do so: and as she arrived within a few paces of the door, she was startled by hearing two or three violent kisses given within the apartment. It must be somebody she concluded playing with a child; so with scarcely a moment's hesitation she entered the room: the first object that met her eyes was Mrs. Flap, who was pretending to replace a cap upon a carved head with one hand, while with the other she was cramming something into her pocket which Amica fancied she heard chink like money; and just in the act of disappearing through the door leading into the adjoining room was a male figure, of which Amica saw sufficient to believe it Colonel Buckhurst.

Amica of course spoke only of the articles he wanted; and if there was any degree of.

surprise upon her countenance, Mrs. Flap's features bespoke her to be too much confused herself to have leisure to observe the emotions of any one else.

The moment she had made her purchases, she returned to the carriage; the circumstance just past rested a good deal upon her mind, but it did not escape her lips: she had never yet been able to ascertain what degree of confidence she might place in Lady Buckhurst's discretion, and therefore had never ventured to impart to her any circumstance which required secrecy.

Two days after this, Lady Buckhurst conceived a great inclination to be present at the representation of a new comedy at Covent-Garden theatre; but her obstacle to the witnessing of it was, that she had no gentleman to escort herself and Amica to it: to the Colonel she knew it was in vain to make the proposition of accompanying them; he had frequently before told her, upon similar occasions, "That he could not stand the bore of being stuck up a whole night at the play; that he would not give a curse for any thing there was to be seen in any part of the house but the lobby." Sir Benjamin was obliged to

be at the national house, or at least he conceived that he was; for the simple speakers of "Aye" and "No" judge their presence as important to the good of their country as that of those who are upon their legs for three hours together, which shews that in most matters self-love makes up to men of little minds the applause which the world withholds from them.

Yielding to these difficulties, her Ladyship had almost given up the idea of visiting the theatre that evening, when about four in the afternoon Mr. Leuwitzer arrived in Hanover-square, saying that he was come to take a family-dinner there, as he had business to transact in town early in the following morning, and did not intend returning to Richmond that night; upon this intelligence Lady Buckhurst eagerly seized, and pressed him into the service of conducting herself and Amica to Covent-Garden theatre.

They procured seats in a box which might be said to separate the side-boxes from the front. A few minutes after admission had been granted to the half-price, a fair, fat, vulgar, good-tempered looking man took his seat

in the box next to their's: at the end of the play, when conversation became general, their neighbour rose, and tapping Lady Buckhurst on the shoulder, with the full stare of his eye fixed on her countenance, exclaimed, "Lord have mercy upon us!—Only think of you and I being next-door neighbours here, at a London play!—Well, and how do you do, Ma'am?—I hope I have the pleasure of seeing you very well."

"Pretty well, thank you, Sir," replied the lady addressed, scarcely turning round her head; and with an air and tone of voice that fully implied that, so far from desiring the health of the person who had just accosted her, she would not have cared if he had been dead, so she had not seen him there.

"Why to be sure," returned the stranger, who was no other than Mr. Jarvis Block; "Why to be sure you can't have forgot me, Mrs. Dimick?—I remembered you directly as I turned my eye upon you, though I dare say it is nine or ten years, or perhaps a little more, since I have seen you; and you ain't grown younger to be sure; but I knew you for all that."

“ I never heard of any body that did grow younger yet, Sir,” replied the lady, in no very complaisant tone of voice.

“ No, nor I neither, I promise you,” replied he: “ we can’t change the ways of nature—eh, Mrs. Dimick?”

“ My name ain’t Dimick now, Sir,” answered the lady.

“ Why you don’t say so?” cried Block. “ What the dickens! have you got another husband?”

“ I have been married to Sir Benjamin Buckhurst these ten years nearly,” replied her Ladyship.

“ Whew!” cried Block, pronouncing the word in a kind of a whistle: “ What the deuce are you got to be my Ladyship?—You did not think of happening of such a chance, when you and I used to meet at your cousin Bloxum’s at Modbury-fair.”

“ It would not have been an out-of-the-way thought, Sir, if I had,” returned she; “ for you see it has happened.”

“ Aye, aye,” cried Block, “ to be sure—why not?—You had a large fortune in your own hands; and money brings about all manner of things, marriages and all.”

Lady Buckhurst drew up in silence.

“Well, I wish you joy with all my heart, I’m sure,” went on Block; “for we are quite old friends as I may say, meeting once every year at your cousin Bloxum’s, and I am sure all my acquaintance have my good wishes. I sha’n’t go out of town without giving you a call.—Pray, where do you live?”

“It is a hundred to one but you find me out,” replied Lady Buckhurst; “for I am always shopping all the morning, and at parties all the evening.”

“Ah, well, I can but go away again, if you are from home,” returned he; “but I should not think I had done the civil thing not to give you a bit of a call.”

Again he requested to be informed of the place of her residence; and, though with the most evident reluctance, her Ladyship was obliged to grant him the information.

Block put down her address in his pocket-book, and then said, “That’s a very nice young Miss you’ve got sitting next you there. Is she any relation of your’s?—Perhaps a daughter of your new husband’s?”

“She is my own daughter,” answered Lady Buckhurst.

“What! she that the gypsies stole?—at least that you supposed as much about.—You don’t say so?—I say, what was her name?”

“Amica, Sir,” answered her Ladyship.

“Was it?” returned he: “I thought it was something else—I can’t exactly remember what: “however I wish you joy of her too with all my heart,” and he then crowded himself past Lady Buckhurst, to shake hands with Amica, and tell her how intimate her father, and mother, and he, had all been when they used to meet at Modbury-fair.

From the moment Mr. Block had appeared to claim acquaintance with Lady Buckhurst, her Ladyship had sat uneasily upon her seat, and notwithstanding the ardour which she in general displayed for theatrical exhibitions, she was now all impatience to leave the house: at the end of the first act of the farce her carriage was procured, and repeating again to Mr. Block, “That it was very unlikely he should find her at home, if he troubled himself to call,” she parted from him, scarcely deigning to wish him a good night.

“What an impertinent man that Mr. Block is!” she said, as soon as they were seated in the

arriage; "as if I was to be hail fellow well met with him here in London, now I am the wife of a parliament-man, and a lady in my own right, because he may have met me once or twice in his life at my cousin Bloxum's at Modbury; and no such despicable connexion either I would have it known: my cousin was once mayor of Exeter, and Mr. Block himself was nothing but a sort of a corn-dealer at Dartmouth, and ten to one if he is any better, or so good now; but some people are so familiar."

"It is probably a gratification to him, Ma'am, to meet you again, not having seen you for the period of time he mentioned," said Amica.

"Aye, aye, child," returned her Ladyship; "but one must not humble one's self too much: there is no occasion to turn one's back on people, nor yet to hug them to one's bosom, if so be they ain't those that we have any reason to be over and above partial to. I shall tell the porter to say, 'Not at home,' whenever he calls."

During the whole of these conversations, Mr. Leuwitzer had not spoken a single word: it was his regular custom not to intrude his

remarks upon any one, when he judged that no material benefit was to be produced by his making them; and regarding it as a matter of very little importance how a point of *etiquette* was settled between Lady Buckhurst and Mr. Jarvis Block, he continued silent.

Whilst they were on their ride home, Amica remarked to him, that the gentleman they had just parted from at the theatre, was no doubt the same Mr. Block, whom Maurice Stanton had known at Worthing; and he replied, "That he thought it very likely that this was the same gentleman whom he had seen there."

"Seen!" echoed my Lady: "Aye, I dare say there is not a town in the kingdom but what he has been seen in; such travellers are known every where."

"Has he then been so great a traveller?" asked Mr. Leuwitzer.

"Yes, Sir; pretty well for that," she replied: "it was a very respectable house in the corn and wine trade at Dartmouth that he travelled for some years ago."

Mr. Leuwitzer now understood that the meanings which himself and Lady Buckhurst

had attached to the word traveller were of very opposite natures. Mr. Leuwitzer had supposed that Mr. Block had been an extensive investigator of the beauties of nature and the works of art; the lady meant that he had ridden over the kingdom for the purpose of bringing home orders for the mercantile house by which he was employed—and it has been a doubt with some people which kind of travellers bring home information best worth having.

Immediately on reaching home, her Ladyship issued her strict commands to the porter, not to admit any person of the name of Block; and having done this, she sat down to supper with her usual composure.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*The second Act of the last night's Farce.*

ON the succeeding morning between the hours of twelve and one, as Lady Buckhurst was moving about the house in her daily visits to the kitchen, pantries, and store-room; she heard a confusion of voices in the hall, which arresting for a moment her attention, she soon distinguished that of Mr. Jarvis Block; "Lord bless us," he was saying. "I have known her these twenty years, and upwards."

She supposed him only to be endeavouring to assert a right of admittance to the porter; but in a few seconds more she was undeceived by hearing the voice of Colonel Buckhurst exclaiming, "The devil you have! well, come push up my fine fellow, and you shall see her in a crack."

"But this here man at the door," replied Block," says her Ladyship ain't at home."

"Phoo, nonsense ! stuff ! that is all jaw !" cried the Colonel, " what ain't you up to the cant yet ?—follow me, my boy, we will soon ferret her out I warrant you."

Their feet were now audible upon the stairs, and her Ladyship both surprised and mortified at the Colonel's conduct, made a precipitate retreat into the store-room.

In a few minutes a summons was brought her by one of the footmen, from her son-in-law, to come into the drawing-room, and see an old friend :—It was now in vain to make apologies for not appearing ; if the Colonel was resolved she should see Block, he would not, she knew, give up his determination.

Accordingly being compelled to receive a visit which ran so particularly against the grain of her feelings ; the only kind of recompense which she could invent for her pride under the present disagreeable necessity, was to strike Block with her rank, her consequence, and the style in

which she lived, that if he ever visited Modbury fair again, he might report them to her *ci-devant* acquaintance.

The intimacy which almost at the moment of her entering the drawing-room, she perceived to exist between him and the Colonel, in some degree reconciled her to his acquaintance ; she had at that moment no opportunity of inquiring into the cause, and judged that probably Mr. Block, like herself, was risen in the world.

After she had rung in his ears histories of her intimacy with many great and titled personages, the sandwich tray was brought in, which she expected would surprise her country friend by the elegancies which accompanied it to the table, and the profusion of good things that it contained ; but he surprised her infinitely more, by calling very coolly for Madeira, of which there was none in the room.

“ You’ll excuse me, ma’am,—my lady, I mean,” he said, “ but we are old friends, and I know you’d wish me to be comfortable in your house ; and I always take”

about half a bottle of that wine at my luncheon."

Her Ladyship immediately ordered the Madeira, and as she had not yet left off the vulgar custom of regarding what people could afford, as the criterion of the respect which ought to be shewn them, she judged that her opinion of his having risen in life must be a just one; and her complacency towards him began gradually to increase.

After about an hour's stay he rose to depart, saying, "that he must be in Mark-lane, by three o'clock; but that he should look in upon them again soon, for that he was now always popping up to London and down again."

The Colonel put on his hat when Block rose to depart, and attended him to the door, but just as they arrived at it, recollecting that Block was nobody, and himself somebody; according to the definition we have given of these terms in fashionable life, in a former part of this history, he pretended suddenly to remember some reason for returning back into the house, and wished him good morning.

It was with no small degree of satisfaction that her Ladyship heard him returning up the stairs, for she was all impatience to learn how and when he and Block had become acquainted; and by what sudden good fortune Jarvis Block was enabled to drink his half bottle of Madeira every day at his morning whet.

The Colonel briefly informed her that Block was now a considerable merchant at Worthing in Sussex; and that he had found him a devilish good kind of fellow in the way of an acquaintance, at the time he had been quartered with his regiment in that neighbourhood.

"Aye, aye, very likely," replied Lady Buckhurst, "but is it quite the *thing*," (for her Ladyship had already caught a few of the fashionable terms) "is it quite the thing for us to notice him here in our present situation?"

"Oh damn it, there is no harm in just being civil to the fellow," answered Colonel Buckurst;—"I must ask him to dinner once, and I'll thank you to let it be here,"

if you please ; for I should be puzzled to know whom to get to meet him at my lodgings ; and as you and he are acquainted, it will do very smoothly to have him here."

The Colonel, it will of course be understood, did not relish the idea of Block knowing where his lodgings were ; or supposing him to have any home but his father's house ;—it would have hurt his pride for the dashers to have observed their intimacy ; and he had reasons why he did not wish that intimacy to cease.

"Yes, that must be it," cried the Colonel, "we must give him his mutton here one day, and cut him in public ; nothing is so easy as not to see people when it is not convenient to own them for acquaintance ; it is done every day : " and with these words he left the room.

The Colonel passed very little of his time in Hanover Square ; and when he did visit it, Amica was beyond all doubt the attraction which drew him towards it ; although he was not in himself thoroughly sensible that such was the case, nor at

all satisfied with the idea when it entered his head.—He was undoubtedly attached to Amica's person; for with attachments to face and form he was alone acquainted—and when obliged to confess to himself that he did love her, dissatisfaction instead of pleasure, succeeded the confession:—unaccustomed to place restraint upon his desires, he was chaffed at the reflection of his heart being a prey to a passion which never could be gratified; for his present resolution was never to marry, at least for love; and libertine even as he was, he deemed the person of Amica sacred in the point of affinity by which she stood allied to him:—Thus pain and pleasure met with equal strength in his breast, when in her presence; and although he always found a difficulty in tearing himself from it, he never failed to repent having gone into it.

The Colonel was a man whom Amica could never consider without disgust; and consequently when such a prejudice is once taken up, the man against whom it is raised, only strengthens it in the mind.

of the female by his attempts to conciliate her better opinion of him ; as his attentions lead of course to a greater intimacy than his indifference would do, and create farther aversion, merely because they proceed from him :—Thus she only accepted his presents, because she was not allowed to refuse them ; and if perchance he squeezed her hand, she contented herself with returning for it a look of contempt, which would not have satisfied her, but from the considerations of the near connexion in which they stood to each other.

With Maurice Stanton she corresponded regularly ; and she had resolved thus far concerning him, that should she never become his wife, she would at least never consent to become the wife of any other man :—Mr. Leuwitzer, she believed to have penetrated into the sentiments of both their hearts, and to approve them ;—whether her mother suspected her to entertain such a predilection she was uncertain ; and she greatly feared that it was one which she would never countenance :—

Maurice Stanton had neither the claims of birth nor fortune ; of both these she considered that her mother would require the man who should seek her hand, to be possessed :—a deficiency in birth, she believed it possible that Lady Buckhurst might be tempted to overlook ; but never one of the purse :—It was indeed probable that Mr. Leuwitzer having taken Maurice under his protection, would make him some provision, should he ever enter into the marriage state ; but his sister, Mrs. Weimar, was already a mother, she might still have many more children, and it appeared beyond a doubt that they would at least share equally with Maurice in what their uncle had to bestow ; and though his division might be such, as would by her be deemed more than requisite for their happiness and comfort, still such as her mother might look upon with disdain :—She knew that her own father had at his death bequeathed to her a legacy, but to what amount, or when to be paid, she had never yet been informed :—Most of all she feared, that in her intercourse with se-

ciety, she might have the misfortune to attract the notice of some man whose addresses might meet the approbation of Lady Buckhurst, and compel her into disobedience to her mother, by rejecting his hand ;—earnestly she prayed that this trial might be spared her.

Amica was a female whose countenance if not composed of features regularly beautiful, was still of that fascinating kind, from which no man could turn without a second gaze ; and her attractive form would probably have appeared the most perfect ever viewed, had she been sufficiently fashionable to have dressed herself with indecency, and to have made wet drapery the apology for her garments being only coverings, and not concealments of her person.

A woman of this description is seldom introduced into the circles of fashion without attracting the regards of the men, and Amica received their homage wherever she went :—Thus acknowledged as being worthy of public admiration by having the voices of all the gay young fellows about

town in her favour, Amica immediately became the decided favourite of Lady Dellaval; and this assertion may probably want some explanation to such of our readers as are not accustomed to the motives and manners of a lady of high ton.

Lady Dellaval was at this time, at that woeful period of life, a widow turned of forty; with Lady Dellaval every thing that gave her delight must be upon the grand scale: she derived no satisfaction from any kind of moderation, and being therefore convinced that no grand coup was at her age to be struck in the way of conquest, she turned all her artillery towards making herself the fashion.

For this purpose she kept an open house for loungers of condition; suffered them to play in it rather higher than perhaps either the rules of decorum, or the authority of the law would have permitted, had it been publickly known; and for the grand bond of union which was to keep her male friends around her, she always took care to have her parties adorned with the prettiest young women she

could select ;—Amica was much more attractive than most, and thus became a principal favourite with her Ladyship.

Amica we have already seen had no predilection for the decided votaries of fashion ; but the numerous civilities which Lady Dellaval bestowed on her, were conferred in so pleasing a way that her free and unrestrained manners appeared but the overflowings of a gaiety of heart ; and led those whom she selected as her friends, to believe her unjustly treated by the voice of common fame, when it blew forth strains to the discredit of her heart or her understanding.

That her manners were *outrée*, was an undeniable fact, but Amica still could not forbear considering that there was a something about her to be liked, and that she was not half so reprehensible a character as many who decryd her.

The temper of Amica was of so generous a nature that when she saw no actual evil practised, she judged the mind to be free from error, and on this account she considered Lady Dellaval as only desirous of giving pleasure to those whom

she invited to her parties, without suspecting that any concealed motive for those repeated invitations lay hidden under the veil of good humour ; and not at all imagining that in the many tête-à-têtes which her Ladyship had at different times contrived to have with her in the midst of crowded apartments, her motive had been that of drawing around herself a crowd of men, who gathered to the spot for the sake of beholding and admiring her more youthful companion.

Lady Buckhurst delighted in seeing her daughter intimate with people of distinction, and therefore courted Lady Dellaval, as much as Lady Dellaval sought Amica.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.