The younger brother

By

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1. THE YOUNGER BROTHER
BOOK V.
WHICH INCREASES LIKE A SNOW-BALL.

1.1. CHAPTER I.

CONTAINING A CONFLICT, SOME RETROSPECTION, A PICTURE, AN ATTEMPT AT AN ATONEMENT, AND ANOTHER AT AN IMPOSITION.

THOUGH Charles betrayed no symptoms of uneasiness in his face when he left the room, after the adventure at the inn, perhaps no heart ever was torn with more poignant distress. Love, prudence, and disdain assailed his heart at once, and he went to bed absorbed in a conflict of wretchedness, compared to which his last sleepless reflections in the prison at Lyons were rapture.

At that time his conscious innocence and the [Page 6] wrongs that were done him roused his honest fortitude till it towered superior to all possible consequences. Now mark the difference: After taking the resolution, upon the most laudable grounds, of never holding communication with those who had traduced him, after fortifying himself against all the bewitching power of Annette's charms, after sustaining a long illness, caused and continued by those fond and importunate whisperings which would fain have stimulated him to clear himself, and reap the glory of obtaining his wishes by the defeat of his rival, after at length congratulating himself upon the full establishment of his health, and in that his staunch determination to abide by what he had resolved, to fall into the most effectual means of opening a wound that had been all but mortal, and, at this time only cicatrized, was a trial one would think, under which his whole resolution must forsake him. It would certainly be a trait of perfect nature if the reader found him the next morning familiarly at breakfast with Sir Sidney and his family. The very reverse however happened, which I shall contend is fairly as natural, upon the principle of two

vessels, which standing upon different tacks, may yet meet each other with the same wind. In short, had his down been points of needles, he could not have shifted, twined, and turned himself about with greater pain, nor at every new position have met with a more novel torment.

The charms of Annette, coupled with the mortifying difficulties which stood between him and his hopes, wounded him on one side in a thousand places, which shifting to avoid the saucy familiarity of Gloss, and the humility into which he was thrown by Sir Sidney's injurious suspicions and ill judged pride, gave it him home.

He saw, he felt, he found himself conquered by Annette. Her lovely, modest, speaking, soul-dissolving perfections stood confessed, and he found himself their certain, evident, unequivocal victim: but was this to overcome so reasonable a system of independant integrity?—to throw down a structure of honest, hopeful tranquillity, which it had taken him so much time and pains to rear?

In short, tossed about between such violent and contending passions, he raved, sighed, swore, wept, execrated his fate, and blessed his stars, till at length, his valet interrupting him with an account that the horses were ready, he collected himself, rose, mounted, and rode away before any person got up who could possibly stagger his now inviolable resolution.

He made for Paris with every possible expedition, where he endeavoured to lose, in that stream of pleasure, those irresistable bars to his happiness which, spight of all his resolution, presented themselves: so very difficult is it; in some cases, for reason to establish tranquillity.

After a month's stay at Paris, he returned to his native country, where he will now be seen in the character of an independant young man, without a single friend or adviser.

Here it will not be amiss to recount that strange train of accidents which brought about so extraordinary a meeting between Sir Sidney and our hero at Aix la Chapelle.

Emma, since she found it in vain to tamper with Charles, determined, if possible, to get at some intelligence of him through Figgins, who, contrary to her expectation—for she thought it a forlorn hope, as we may see by her last letter—not only informed her of his motions, but corroborated his information, by shewing her some passages in his letters.

No sooner had Emma heard of our hero's sickness, and danger of being taken off by a lingering consumption, than, mad as it may appear, she determined to carry the whole family to be witness to their handy work. This was certainly a trait worthy of her sagacity. She anticipated her success; and, enjoying her imaginary triumph, pictured to herself the dying lover revived by the gentle and tender attention of his mistress, and entreated to life and happiness by the returning indulgence of her relenting father.

The only difficulty was how to bring it about; but even this was no impediment to the genius of Emma. She revived the subject of Annette's mother, which, since the information from Mr. Ingot, had only been darkly spoken of through the medium of epistolary enquiry. Sir Sidney had, at times, talked of a trip to the south of France, and Emma pressed Lady Roebuck very hard to keep him to his intention: for which she offered many notable reasons. It would wear off the chagrin that had been caused by such an alteration in the family hopes; it would enlarge the ideas of Annette, and if any lurking wish remained behind in favour of Charles, by employing her mind on new objects, it would dispose her to receive with more alacrity the solicitations of Mr. Gloss—for every body but herself supposed Charles to be in Italy—whom, Emma was of opinion, they ought to take with them, for reasons best known to herself.

In short, this plotting jade had fairly formed a pretty feasible plan of finishing this history, about the very time when, and near the very place where, I, who knew better things, thought proper to throw it into a new perplexity.

With very little importunity, Sir Sidney consented to give the ladies this jaunt. They took the route through part of Artois, to Rhiems, and passed through Chalons to Dijon, near which city had lived the Count de

Gramont, who was an old intimate of Sir Sidney, and through whose interest he now meant to make his enquiries. At this house they called, and, to the great surprise and sorrow of the baronet, he found that the old count had, four years before, paid the debt of nature, and that his only son, whom Sir Sidney knew when a child, enjoyed now his title and his fortunes.

Sir Sidney was hospitably welcomed by the young count, who beguiled away a week of their time very agreeably. The family then prepared to continue their journey. No mention however would have been made of their intended enquiries, had not the young count previously, and luckily too, formed a design at this time to visit Province where he insisted upon making his father's friend welcome at a small estate in that quarter. The fact is, he ha fallen violently in love with Annette, and nothing could have kept him from soliciting her hand from her father but the evident certainty that Gloss was intended to be the happy man. Standing pretty well however in his own opinion, and being a man of family and fortune, he had but little difficulty to persuade himself he should soon outshine his rival, if he could contrive to be of their party a little longer. Growing, however, more and more enamoured every hour, and not being able to stay till they arrived at their journey's end, he had, on that very day the reader and I were witnesses to his disgrace at Aix la Chapelle, sustained a handsome, though positive, refusal from Annette, and another from her father. Raging with disappointment, he flew to wine for relief. This fired him ten times more, when coming to the inn, to bury his intoxication and his wretchedness in sleep, he was stopt by his valet de chambre, who, being the factotum of his amours, promised him the accomplishment of that which he never before had the temerity to think of, much less hope for. In short, after telling him a hundred lies, to inflame him, he had the address, by the help of the chamber-maid of the inn, to place him in a closet in the chamber where Annette was to sleep. He saw her enter with Emma, who having set down the candle, began to look over some linen and other things for Lady Roebuck.—As they laid across her arm, "Well really,' said she, 'there is no knowing what to wear in this same France; it is the strangest, motley place—"

"Nay,' said Annette, 'there is a great deal to gratify one's curiosity. The thing I like least in it is this troublesome count. If he and Mr. Gloss were where my poor Charles is, and he in their place, France would be a paradise to me."

"Come, come,' said Emma, 'do not despair.'—' "Despair,' answered Annette, 'why should I hope? Were he here, did he love me—and that I am afraid Emma he does not, be where he will—what would it avail me, designed as I am by the will of the best, though, in this case, the cruelest, father for another?"

"Don't be uneasy about that,' said Emma, 'I have a secret to cure your father and all the world of such a folly as that would be. In short I am much more pleased that Mr. Gloss should be intended for your husband than any man in the world, since it must not be Mr. Hazard. I cannot say so much for the count, for he has a thousand advantages over the other, and if Sir Sidney were not so attached to his parliamentary friend, we should find ourselves a good deal embarrassed to get rid of the other. A painter—and it is the same with an author, for words are figurative colours—can put that object in shadow which is a disgrace to the groupe, but he would be blamed for doing this by one that ornaments it. But come, my sweet lady, I hope you are nearer happiness than you think for. One thing is—but you must not betray it for your life—that Charles is not in Italy, and I hope it will not be long before you see him!"

"Not in Italy!" cried Annette, 'not long before I see him! Do, my dear, my kind Emma, explain yourself." "My lady waits for these things,' said Emma; 'I will tell you more when I return; till then be as happy in idea as the pleasing picture I have drawn can make you.' So saying, she retired, with a view of going to Lady Roebuck.

Seeing there was no time to be lost, the count, the moment this conversation was over, which he had listened to, but understood not a word of, came out of his hiding place, and surprising Annette at the door, locked it, and began, as we have seen, to be pretty free with her. He was however so awed by her beauty, that he had very little shocked her delicacy when she was relieved by our hero, whom she no sooner saw,

alarmed and confused as she was, than she could not help fancying—the foregoing conversation being strongly in her mind—that the whole was one of Emma's romantic schemes. This, when they retired to rest, she scrupled not to confess to Emma, laying before her very strongly all the consequences of any premature design to deceive her father, which she was sure, if he discovered, he would never forgive, and which could not fail, instead of mending their affairs, to leave them in a worse condition than ever. She thanked her with warmth, with tenderness, with tears, for the attention she paid to her wishes; declared that no one ever had a truer friend, but it was plain fortune determined to persecute her, and therefore all her kindness would be useless.

Emma was very much touched at Annette's good opinion of her, and thanked her for it in terms of sincere acknowledgment. She lamented with her the great probability that indeed there was of her fustaining more persecutions, but she said it was the lot of virtue to be essayed, but that, thanks to heaven, to those trials it owed its purity.

She said she knew well the implacability of Charles's temper, which she was convinced would not relax a tittle; but this, in some degree, she [Page 15] could not disapprove; for he had been very ill treated.

Our hero's conduct indeed was, in Emma's opinion, the noblest she had ever heard of; but then she knew to what it was attributable. To say the truth, she knew much more than the reader imagines; or perhaps knows himself.

Emma acknowledged that she knew of his being in the south of France, but that his coming there that afternoon was purely accidental: at least she knew nothing to the contrary: for that she had not expected to see him till they came to Montpelier, where he had been for many months at the point of death, though it was plain he was now not only happily recovered, but much handsomer than ever.

Night alone beheld those blushes which suffused Annette's cheeks at these words. They were excited by a flattering hope, but were as instantly dissipated by intruding fear, which changed the carnation to a pallid hue,

and started two pearly tears, that trickling from her beautiful eyes, lost themselves upon her pillow.

Emma said that though Charles must now stand much higher in every body's mind than he had lately [Page 16] done, yet it was plain Sir Sidney had felt himself treated with indignity, which would operate, in conjunction with the insiduous arts of Gloss, to Charles's great disadvantage. They would see however the result of matters in the morning. In the mean time, she was glad the count's hopes were at an end; for as to Gloss, she begged her lovely young lady to make herself perfectly easy, for as he never could be her husband, which she would herself take good care of, rather good than harm would come of his hovering about her; for though a troublesome insect himself, he would serve to keep off others who were more so. She said she held it good doctrine to use evil agents to come at truth, and maintained that HOBBES is right where he says "that it is lawful to make use of ill instruments to do ourselves good;' and adds, 'If I were cast into a deep pit, and the devil was to put down his cloven foot, I would take hold of it to be drawn out."

The great object of Annette's concern was lest Charles did not love her; which doubt Emma undertook to dissipate. She said it was impossible; he was the best and most charming young man upon earth, as was she the most virtuous and lovely young lady; that she was as sure they were born for each other, as if she read their history in the book of fate; but that troubles, and many yet, they certainly were born to encounter.

"Come, come,' said she, 'my dear Miss Annette, you are very well off: our whole affairs are a novel, I confess, but yours are not the distresses in which young ladies so situated generally find themselves. Your father is not hard and boisterous, like Western; nor is Gloss bewitching and seducing, like Lovelace. I can dash his hopes in a moment, whenever I please. Comfort yourself then, my dear lady: you have in me a firm, and, though not very old, yet I will venture to say an experienced friend; and I shall as surely pilot the vessel into port, as that I am now conducting it with skill and foresight, in spight of all the adverse winds and beating waves that surround it."

Emma was now in her element. She soothed Annette with every kind and friendly argument her invention—which was pretty fertile—could supply. She instanced all the similar situations she had read of, and proved to a demonstration that happiness was as certainly the ultimatum of Annette's fortune, as that the interval would be filled with many trials of her virtue, her temper, and her fortitude.

Upon the whole, Mrs. Emma determined never again to give a hint of what she had in agitation to Annette. Young and timid as she was, who knew how far her prudence would be a security for her not betraying it. She plainly saw that though Charles could not be robbed of the palm he had so handsomely earned, yet, as Sir Sidney had expressed himself in terms of great warmth, after our hero had left the room, this was not the moment to press her present design.

After a variety of deliberations with herself, while Annette slept, she determined to see Charles early in the morning, and advise him to follow their steps, till she should give him a fit opportunity of declaring himself; and in order to induce him to this, she would lay him down the strongest reasons in her power, without trenching absolutely upon some secrets which she meant to make use of as a dernier resort, lest he, from rage, should make as bad an use of them, as Annette would from simplicity.

Having well digested this plan, she commended herself to the arms of sleep, where she continued locked so long, that when she came to enquire in the morning for our hero, he was some miles on his way to Paris.

I shall now recur to the scene of action, out of which Mr. Charles was seen just now to stalk with such conscious dignity.

When Sir Sidney and the rest first came into the chamber, they really did not know what to think of the matter, it was so sudden and unexpected; but as soon as they heard the Frenchman's handsome accusation of himself, and found it impossible that our hero could be any other than the champion of the lady, they really had the conscience to give him credit for one worthy action; and, as truth has the knack of dispersing falsehood in more ways than one, it all of a sudden struck Sir

Sidney, that Charles must either be strangely altered, or that report had not in all cases done him justice; for that it was impossible, or at least very unlikely, that any man should hold such a contrary disposition, as to be a devil to-day, and an angel to-morrow.

These were Sir Sidney's reflections. Lady Roebuck's were still kinder. Emma's were admiration, and Annette's tender, delicate, lively gratitude; and, feeling thus, they really made a very pretty group for a picture.

Against the chimney piece stood the musing baronet, with his hand to his forehead. His beautiful daughter, who had accidentally fallen into an arm chair, held also her hand to her face, which however did not conceal her tears of indignation for her ravisher, or those burning blushes full of love and thanks to her deliverer.

Lady Roebuck, though in astonishment too, by turns eyed her husband, Annette, and Charles, with regards plainly intimating her perturbed and anxious sensations; while Emma, firm and collected, searched every eye, and would fain have pervaded every heart, to furnish herself with arguments for that master-stroke she was now meditating.

Our hero, as I have already described, was transfixed like a statue; but it was rather like an inanimate body, whose soul had left it, and fled to that heaven on which the eyes seemed to bend with reluctant pleasure.

As to the count, he had his head against the wall, without daring to look any one in the face.

Just at this critical moment every thing seemed to depend upon the first word that should be spoken, which unfortunately coming from the mouth of Mr. Gloss, our hero's love gave place, or rather spur, to his resentment, and so threw him off his guard as to occasion that disrespect which he shewed to Sir Sidney, and his abrupt departure afterwards.

Sir Sidney never felt so sensible a mortification in his life. He was plainly upon the point of making such advances to Charles as very likely would have led to a complete reconciliation. He had balanced, as we have

seen, as to his deserts, from the first moment he felt that warm sensation of generous gratitude for his daughter's protection.

This prepossession in his favour, his person, which called to mind a thousand partial ideas, did not a little contribute to strengthen. How then must this fair prospect of engendering good-will be untimely destroyed, when such a blight as our hero's terms of rebuke were held out to one who expected solicitation instead of defiance! His kind thoughts immediately receded, and resentment filled their place; but, however, with so very little foundation, that he was obliged to search for a new object to gratify it, and immediately insisted upon a full explanation from the count of his conduct.

The count charged it very properly upon the rascality of his servant, whom he instantly called up, paid his wages, and kicked out of the room: an example, were it more imitated, would save the honour of many young gentlemen of pleasure.

The count then said his crime could not be palliated, otherwise he would never stir from Annett's feet till he had implored her pardon, nor from Sir Sidney's presence till he had consented she should be his. As it was, he would hide his disgrace in absence, and never again presume to appear before a family whom he had treated—instead of the respect due to strangers—with the ill manners and villany of a ruffian.

He further said, he should love the young gentleman as long as he lived who had prevented his design, and, were not his influence all gone, he should strongly recommend him to Sir Sidney's friendship and consideration.

With these words he took his leave, went to another inn, and the next morning left the town, about an hour after our hero.

A conduct so collected and uniform in one moment engendered a new plot in the imagination of Mr. Gloss. "My dear Sir Sidney,' said he, 'this is the most bare-faced business, I ever saw in my life: don't you see it?"

"Upon my word I do not even know what you mean,' answered the baronet.'

"Why, my dear sir, nothing can be plainer:—The count, whose overstrained complaisance induced him to accompany us to Province, did it to serve his friend, which you may easily see by the latter part of his fine florid speech. Mr. Hazard was not in Italy, but lurking about till you should come to France. For this was Miss Roebuck to be insulted!—for this was she to be rescued!—for this was the servant to be kicked down stairs! for this was the champion to behave with insolence to you!—and, finally, for this was he, by the repentant ravisher—just the last man in the world who ought to take such a liberty—to be recommended to your favour and consideration!!"'

Sir Sidney could not admit the entire force of this charge, though he could not deny but it was clear, connected, and ingenious; and indeed full of such apparent probability, that it might have naturally struck any body. It was however late, and as his daughter at any rate was safe, and peace restored, before they hazarded any further conjectures, he thought it would be but wise to consult their pillows. Thus Annette and Emma were left to themselves, where passed that dialogue and those deliberations already mentioned.

1.2. CHAPTER II.

CONSISTING OF JOURNEYING AND CASTLE-BUILDING.

WHEN it was known the next morning that both our hero and the count had left Aix la Chapelle, Sir Sidney, kept up to his belief by Mr. Gloss, began in reality to think that the whole business of the night before was a concerted matter between those two gentlemen. It wore so much the complexion of those tricks he had heard of before, and was in every respect so like what he had been taught to think of the genius of our hero, that it scarcely admitted of a doubt. But, were this the case, what did it infer? Why, truly, because all his friends would not believe him innocent of pranks that had been so substantiated, he must meditate an injury that ought never to be forgiven. Did not his haughty speech at parting confirm it? For even suppose that he had no motive for what he did but common justice, nobody would in so disdainful a manner refused to be thanked. No, the matter was apparently very plain, and if really what it appeared, it only proved that he whom they had hopes of a penitent, had now given proof that he was incorrigible. But were it allowed to be possible—which there was very little ground for—that all this strange business should have been the mere effect of chance, was it, even in that case, a proper thing to lie at the caprice and whim of an absurd young man? Was it through pride and disdain he meant to aim at conciliation? Did he expect to be begged and entreated to forgive? Had he so far forgot all the duties resulting from those motives which alone could worthily have excited such conduct as to think it ought to erect him into pride and haughtiness? And, lastly, had he the vanity to suppose that having left the town, be the motive what it might, any body would take the trouble to send after him?

Weighing all these considerations, Sir Sidney was determined to repay pride with pride, and though, if it ever came to his knowledge as a positive certainty that Charles had acted in this business disinterestedly, he should conceive himself under an obligation, he should nevertheless

look upon it as one of that sort which a vain supercilious conduct had completely cancelled.

Thus was the baronet at least as firmly set against our hero as ever he could be against the baronet, and fully confirmed in these sentiments, which Gloss failed not to extol.

Lady Roebuck, Annette, and even Emma, though not obliged to acquiesce, were at least prohibited from making objections.

To bring them to England as fast as possible, where I am impatient to attend our hero, it will be only necessary to say a few words.

They kept on their way for Province, where Sir Sidney found every thing very much altered. The former abbess of the convent where Annette's mother was supposed to have died, had been replaced some years, and her successor could give no more account of the matter than that she understood Miss Le Clerc had gone to England, with permission, some years before. In short, she told Ingot's story, with the addition of her having returned, settled her affairs, made interest to be of a new order, more suitable to her circumstances, to a certain convent of which order she had retired at a distant town, where it was said they might hear further tidings of her.

Sir Sidney, finding Lady Roebuck and Emma very anxious to get at the bottom of this business—for as to Annette, she was always taugh [...] to believe that her mother was dead—indulged t [...]eir curiosity, though this same town was out of their road to Paris. The scent however was soon lost, for Miss Le Clerc had shifted her place of residence one more, and they either could not or would not give the smallest information weere she was gone: they therefore got away expeditiously to Paris, at which city they arrived a few days after our hero had left it, and after passing away about five weeks very pleasantly, returned in safety to their own country.

Charles, in his way to Paris, to drive Annette from his thoughts, began to consider in earnest what he should do in the world. He was young, had a tolerable right to think well of his abilities, and would very shortly

touch a large sum of money.—He had all his life employed his time industriously, and thought he should now wrong his country and himself if he let his talents rust in indolence.

The sublimest wish of his heart was to patronise merit. He should not however, he feared, find himself rich enough. He must oke out his fortune then. To effect this, he hit upon fifty schemes, but was not able to pitch on any thing he thought likely to answer his purpose, till he met with an English nobleman in Paris, who initiated him in the mystery of preferment, and plainly shewed him all its devious and intricate paths.

Charles contemplated this road to fortune with eager pleasure. His booby brother was a lord; his supercilious rival a member of parliament and a popular speaker: should he then live a mere obscure private gentleman!

In short, he bargained with the peer for a borough. The peer, on their arrival in England, made the broomstick, who was then member, vacate his seat, by an acceptance of the Chiltern hundreds, and, at the expence of something more than eight thousand pounds, our hero found himself a member of the third branch of the legislature.

My lord, by convention, was to follow up Charles's initiation with his patronage, which had only the trifling condition annexed to it of always voting with the minister. A fortnight however did not pass before the impossibility of this was made self-evident.

He had consented to the purchase of a borough, because he had been told that such things are as openly sold as shoes and stockings, or any other article that a man chuses to appropriate to himself, upon paying its full value, or perhaps a little more, but to support that it was noon-day at mid-night—or indeed any of those many positions he was almost ordered to second—to hold forth for three hours to the great detriment of his lungs, and, what is worse, of his varacity, with a view, like legerdemain, of shewing a question in every possible point of view but the right, and then sanction this outrage on truth, this fraud on his own conscience, by voting that it might be carried into a law, and so be accessary to the multiplying of these outrages and these frauds to the detriment of his

fellow citizens!—this was a condition he could not prevail on himself to fulfil, and therefore—at which he wondered, without cause—the parliament being dissolved in about five months after he took his seat, our hero's borough, notwithstanding a fresh three thousand pounds which he laid out in contestation—though how it should be spent is astonishing, for the place had not above thirteen houses—received its former member, Mr. Stopgap, who, as complaisantly as before, in less than a twelve-month took again the Chiltern hundreds, that the borough might be purchased by a new bubble, who however bought it with better success than our hero, for, by always saying aye, he soon got a pension well worth the money he had paid for it.

By the way, Charles's conduct in parliament was the most curious thing in nature. Having no bias but truth, his opinions seemed to wear a very motley and strange appearance, to those who were hackneyed in the way of debate; but indeed he was, as Kiddy would call it, up with them; for even those who argued on the same side, by having imbibed a passion for rhetoric, a quaintness of expression, a vein of drollery, or some other quality of embellishing and flattering truth out of the very form they ought to wish it should wear, appeared to him the most unhandy handlers of an argument that could be conceived. In short, he was an innovator, and nobody was sorry to lose him; for, said they, a man who votes sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, can be of no party, and therefore ought not to be a member of the house of commons.

Sir Sidney, it is true, as an independant country gentleman, voted with his conscience, but yet this was generally on one side; for, by prejudice of education, he was pretty well fixed as to his sentiments concerning the government of this country. In short, every thing that promoted the blessing of peace, he supported; every thing that led to the desolation of war he discountenanced.

By the way, Sir Sidney and our hero considered one another as perfect strangers during the whole time they sat together as members.

Charles, when he returned to England, received of Mr. Balance the gross sum of twenty-nine thousand pounds. His borough and his private

expences had, in seven months, sunk this sum to nearly half. This nettled him not a little. To set out with the laudable intention certainly of exalting himself, but with the purest motives of public integrity, and sustain in so short a time so much disgrace!—it was not to be borne. He had given proof, on many private occasions, that he could wield a pen; he was determined to try whether he could not do it, and to effect, on a public one.

He lost no time, but immediately brought out a pamphlet which he called "Parliamentary Consistency." It was pithy, sensible, and severe, and laid bare all the manoeuvres of making and garbling acts of parliament; shewing that as chicanery was engendered with law, no wonder if it grew up with it.

Nothing however was gratified in this business but revenge. A few sensible people found a great deal of merit in the publication; the booksellers declared that the young man touched in pretty, smart, round periods enough, and that when his fortune should be spent, they would be glad to employ him at per sheet.

The active mind of our hero would not let him sit down quietly under so heavy a reduction of his fortune. He thought every hour an age till he should be engaged in something to redeem his loss. Had he remained in parliament for any length of time, he had no sort of doubt but he should have completed all his wishes, without the interference of the minister.

He had, with great accuracy, noticed where the laws were deficient in relieving the poor and oppressed, and indeed all descriptions of mankind in helpless situations. He had expected, upon pointing out amendments in these laws—which he conceived could easily be done—he should erect himself into such popularity, that he could command assistance from that state to which he should thus have been so useful.

As it was, he had made but little progress in this desirable pursuit; nevertheless, what he had done was a beginning, and it actually had raised an alarm among forestallers, engraters, and other enemies to the lower part of the community.

He had also a plan of inducing a parliamentary attention to the liberal arts, and he meant, as a preliminary step, to try at a regulation of public amusements.

Many other benevolent ideas occupied his thoughts, tending both to public accommodation and private convenience; but the scheme that most delighted him was one by means of which he had flattered himself he should be able to curtail the privileges of lawyers, whose emoluments drained from the necessitous, he proved by computation, amounted to a third more upon any twenty given causes, than the damages given in those causes by the jury; and were the aggregate account of expences and damages come at for seven, or seventeen, nay or seventy years, he had reason to think the proportion would be just the same.

This clearly proved that a man, with ever so just a cause, had better put up with a first loss, let it be what it might, than seek the only redress the laws of his country had permitted him to have recourse to. Yet no step had been taken to cure this evil.

His catalogue of such abuses as came under the cognizance of the courts was immense. Those abuses of which the courts had not the smallest idea were a still larger list, and proved that the sole mode the legislature had provided to decide those two grand articles by which all the ties of good-fellowship are cemented, by which ranks are distinguished, property ascertained and secured—In short, right and wrong;—instead of holding out security, and being a blessing, was a curse, in a land of freedom, that the most oppressive tyranny had never equalled in any country.

This last enumeration of abuses, he said, was the most grievous thing that could be conceived to people of middling life. These abuses consisted of processes that went no farther than arrests and accommodations, in which the attornies, though adverse professionally, were privately intimate friends.—These erected themselves into judge and jury, and the result was nine times out of ten that the defendant, to avoid imprisonment, was forced into terms impossible to be complied with.

Could any provision take in all it was meant to comprehend which failed of effect in any particular? The laws of England did in a very essential particular: they precluded the poor from any benefit from them, while the rich could use them to oppress that very poor for whose defence—if by law is meant human security—benevolent reason says they ought in an especial manner to provide.

"How can this be?' says the lawyer; 'the poor may sue in forma pauperis." What do they gain by this? Why truly they are allowed the stamps, but who will allow them an attorney that will manage their affairs for a single farthing less than his full fees?—which always include three-fourths of his bill.

These, as I have said, were some among the many resources from which Charles hoped to draw much public benefit; nor did he, o [...] these subjects, appear to have a superficial judgment, for he had such sweetness of manners, and was so void of any pride, except that which results from conscious integrity, that he did not disdain to search for information among those where alone he could demonstrably find it.

To say truth, in conjunction with a few other worthy members of parliament, he bent his time to a full consideration of cases, entirely among the poorer part of the community; and it was not rare to see him at work-houses and prisons, where his purse secretly following his generous heart, bellowed on him as much satisfaction, by relieving a widow or an orphan, as some men—his brother perhaps for one—would have received in distressing a tenant, or seducing his daughter.

Finding however all his hopes no more than a dream—from which he had been so disagreeably awoke—he had now no ability but to pity those whom he could no longer assist!

He might, to be sure, have purchased another borough, but he now saw the fallacy of such traffic, and well knew that if he could ensure a feat as long as he should live, it would be utterly impossible for him to carry any one point, till he had previously sold his opinion, and then what

would he be but the echo of another man's will, without having a will of his own.

Determined however to do all he could—slender as his means were—he concerted several feasible plans, by which, while he reasonably improved his money, he fancied he should procure a most desirable relief to many who stood in need of such assistance.

1.3. CHAPTER III.

THE RATIFICATION OF ONE TREATY, AND THE INFRACTION OF ANOTHER.

WHILE Charles is digesting his liberal plans—that I may keep this history compact, and all its characters within view—I shall recur a little to such persons and things as may enable me so to do.

In the first place, I do not wish the reader should fancy that I made Charles all of a sudden so violently in love with Annette, at Aix la Chapelle, for no better purpose than merely to put him into a mad freak or two, and there an end. It is true, he swore a great many bitter oaths that he would sooner tear his tongue from his mouth, and his heart from his bosom, than suffer one to speak or the other to dictate a single syllable that could betray the folly of loving one whose family undeservedly despised him. But does not the reader know that this was rather what he uttered, than what it was in his power to put in practice. Was he not a lover? Did not the positive confirmation of that fact take its date from the business of Aix la Chapelle? And could any thing he afterwards said or thought be considered in any other light than as the declaration of a maniac, who, in the midst of a paroxism, tells you he is in his right senses? The injunction he laid upon his tongue was well enough, and I question whether the threatened mutilation, or something like it, might not have followed its infringement. But as to his heart! Lord help the poor man! It was about as much in his power to direct that, as it would be for a miser to prevail upon himself to give a poor wretch a guinea whom he saw expiring for want.

In short, we see him prancing about from one wretched object to another, and persuading, amusing, interesting, wheedling, and coaxing this same heart into all the amusements for which such kind of men directors are worthily formed; and to be sure I cannot deny but this master of his had much pleasure in this sort of employment:—but this made no difference: it repaid him with interest the moment it was unoccupied, and even

brought up these very actions to support its arguments, crastily suggesting that if there was such rich delight in lessening the burden of our fellow creatures's misery alone, how exquisitely would the delight be heightened by sharing that task with the object of one's affection.

It was in one of those moments that his heart had been dictating to him in this arrogant style, when Emma stood before him. His astonishment was excessive. "Good God,' said he, 'Emma'—and then recollecting himself, 'what brought you here?"

"I come Mr. Hazard,' said Emma, 'ambassadress from the court of love, upon busiress of importance, and I am determined to carry away with me a catagorical answer."

"Stay,' said Charles; 'if the investigation of Sir Sidney's conduct, and my family concerns are, in the smallest degree to make a part of what you have to say—though I confess I should be very ungrateful not to give you credit for the best intentions towards me—I will not hear a single syllable."

"Indeed sir,' said Emma, 'I would not affront you by investigating any such ridiculous subject. APOLLODORUS, the architect would not yield in opinion to the Emperor ADRIAN, and was put to death. FAVORINUS however yielded to him in every thing, for which conduct, being reproved by his friends, he said, "'Shall not I easily suffer him to be the most learned and knowing of all men, who commands thirty legions?"' 'Now, Mr. Gloss may be FAVORINUS as much as he pleases, but I, in spight of all consequences, shall be APOLLODORUS; for if Sir Sidney commanded three hundred legions, instead of thirty, I should never subscribe to his absurd opinionss, whatever may be my fate: so you may be perfectly easy on that head. My business at present is confined to one subject, and you will find it necessary, upon the footing I mean to put it, that you should give a reasonable and decided answer. Void of passion, void of revenge, void of any thing but what you honestly and truly feel, nor do I wish to humble you, or make you deviate from your pride, which I declare is the truest I ever read of. I look upon you, for your years, as a prodigy. Your fair, chaste, penetrating understanding is remarkable,

and though any one may see your great aptness for predelection and first-sight prepossession, yet, when once deceived—till when you cannot have the meanness to harbour suspicion—decided wariness succeeds to ill-placed confidence, and I am sure no man will ever deceive you twice. Your first complaisance you think due to the world: your second to yourself."

"Why my dear Emma,' said Charles, 'you speak with the gravity of an oracle." "With the truth of one, I know I do,' said Emma.' "But to what,' returned our hero, 'does all this tend?" "You shall hear,' said Emma. 'I want to know how far you will meet me upon the ground of a union with Annette?" "It is impossible,' said Charles.' "Do you love her?' returned Emma.'

"Come, come,' said Charles, 'I see your drist. If I tenderly loved Annette, there would be nothing but I ought to sacrifice for her; nay there could be no attention however arduous, no affection however violent, sincere, and unalterable, in the remotest degree comparable to her deserts.—Her duty to her father is the first sentiment of her soul. At the feet of this duty I ought to lay down that victory which my honour well fought for, and won. If I love her, I sa [...], I ought to do all this: but I will speak plain. I cannot shrink into nothing, Emma. The first and dearest wish of my heart—should my father's grief fatally prevail—was to find a father in Sir Sidney; but, thanks to his sincerity—which was rather of the rudest—the same line that told me I had lost my father, that I might not flatter myself with any thing that might console me, told me also that I had lost my friend!"

"My dear sir,' said Emma, 'I want none of these arguments to believe that your resolution is laudably taken, or that it ought to be unbroken. I want only this, that you will not estrange yourself from a subject that once gave you the dearest pleasure; but so far keep your heart free, that should the veil that at present hides your truth and innocence from Sir Sidney be withdrawn, not by your contrivance, but by his own conviction, through the evidence of his senses, you will, in such case, agree to that reconciliation which he shall propose."

"Agree!" said Charles, 'I am more hurt for Sir Sidney than for myself: for of him I am ashamed." "And I too,' said Emma.' "But to manifest,' said Charles, 'that I only stickle for a just punctilio, sacredly due to my honour—and the more as I am my own protector, as I am the general and the army that must fight the battle alone—if I were assured that Sir Sidney would believe me an injured man, upon my own single word and honour, I would take him by the hand to-morrow, and esteem that moment the happiest of my life."

'That he will not then,' said Emma; 'therefore it is a folly to talk. I know however that in time he will do more: for he can be just, and he will then believe he has wronged you. My business relates to what is to be done in the interim.—You will one day or other have justice, and the farther it is put off the more complete it will be. In the mean while, will you keep a hope in your heart that Annette may be yours."

"Emma,' said Charles, 'it is a joke to talk in this manner: the matter should be one thing or the other."

"It cannot,' said Emma. 'There is a certainty that every thing will be right, but it is as certain that every thing is wrong at present. The only thing I am now certain of is that Annette loves you."

"Loves me!" said Charles.' "Tenderly, ardently, gratefully loves you,' said Emma. 'Nay sir, if you will have a heroic propriety in your conduct, so will we in ours. We will be proud, like you! We will hide what we feel, like you! We will be unhappy, like you! Nay, if you provoke us, we will go into a consumption!" "Like who?" cried Charles.' "Like you,' answered Emma.'

"Nay,' said Charles, 'can my Annette love me so dearly?" "She does,' said Emma; 'I am her ambassadress, and my instructions are to tell you so."

"Then take your catagorical answer,' said Charles. 'Tell her that when I saw her at Aix la Chapelle, every resolution I had formed before left me. I was from that moment her's unconditionally; and this induced me to

retire; for if I had not, I should, the next morning, have fallen at the feet of Sir Sidney."

"I am very glad you did retire,' said Emma, 'for the breach would, by that means, have been so widened, that you could never have been friends. As it is—"

"As it is,' said Charles, interrupting her, 'let her rule my fate: I will do whatever she commands."

"Her commands then,' said Emma, 'will be that you continue to love her, and write to her under cover to me. In every other respect do not bait an inch of the conduct you have laid down for yourself."

This proposal was so consonant to our hero's sentiments, that he accepted it with delight. In short, the preliminaries were adjusted and agreed to, and Emma marched off in triumph, with the ratification of her treaty.

Though Emma was well contented with her negociation, yet her tongue itched to enter upon another subject; but she knew too well with whom she had to deal, to let her curiosity get the better of her prudence. It was this: she had heard—nay she knew it beyond doubt, or nothing could have induced her to believe it—that our hero kept a mistress, that he had a private lodging for her, and visited her as often as his leisure permitted.

This indeed was true; and though she thought nothing of now and then a random intrigue, in a young man, yet an engagement of this kind might, especially as he was surrounded with enemies, prove of dangerous consequence to his interest in Annette.

This fact, as a historian of veracity, I am obliged to admit. Charles certainly in his commerce with women of indifferent reputation—to which his youth and the warmth of his constitution too much addicted him—had met with one who had something more decent in her manners than the rest, and, upon her promise to detach herself from her abandoned companions, he had made her comfortable at that time, and intended afterwards to provide for her.

It was impossible for Charles to have the least degree of intimacy with any person, and not be attached to their interest. This girl had many attractions, which her lover was not insensible of. Nay his word might have been deeply engaged, had not her levity checked his hand. As it was, he stood engaged in an intercourse pleasureable enough, and which he could put an end to when he pleased, without a breach of honour.

The moment therefore Emma went away, this he determined to do, for he swore that Annette should in future engross all his amorous thoughts. He called immediately at the lodgings of Miss Newton, where, without ceremony, he entered the bedchamber; but what was his astonishment when, in so doing, he saw her in bed, at twelve o'clock at noon, with the waiter of a bagnio.

Charles made the gentleman jump up, very coolly kicked him down stairs, and threw his clothes after him. This done, he waited on the lady, who would first have brazened the matter out, but finding he was absolutely bent on parting with her, she dissolved into tears;

Seizing this opportunity, he said he did not chuse to be made a dupe of; that he had conceived the comforts she had tasted would have made her better consider her own interest; but he plainly saw that she could relish no pleasures that were not tainted with vicious ingratitude. He should not however upbraid her: perhaps he himself had been to blame, in supposing that one so utterly abandoned should retain a spark of shame or decency.

He added, that her furniture, watch, and indeed all he had given her—which was no trifle—she might keep: to this he should now add a hundred pounds, which he hoped she would make a good use of.

The lady attempted at a reply, but fell into hysterics, at which our hero recommen [...]ed [...]er to the maid, and walked off; saying he should send a person the next day to supply Miss Newton with some money he intended her, as she was not then, in a condition to receive it.

The lady, when she came to herself, and understood her lover was gone, and, what was worse, without leaving the hundred pounds, stampt, raved, sighed, swore, danced, laughed, and sobbed, all in a breath, and after

playing fifty curious passionate antics—which she concluded by fairly kicking Betty out of the room, because she had not the precaution to shut the door, and so prevent the discovery—she breathed nothing but revenge and defiance.

Mr. Gloss had been among the number of this lady's admirers and had actually conferred on Charles a favour equally complaisant with that of the waiter before mentioned.

From this same Mr. Gloss had Emma, at second hand, received her information, backed with such circumstances as it was impossible she could disbelieve.

Thus was our hero slandered for an attempt to d [...]tach [...] abandoned woman from her evil life, by the very man who not only shared her crime, but the wages of her iniquity; for Mr. Gloss, with all [Page 51] his aversion to Charles, scrupled not to partake of his bounty—as Mistress Dye has it—at second hand.

1.4. CHAPTER II.

FULL OF INEFFECTUAL BENEVOLENCE.

HAVING seen in what state were Charles's pleasures, I shall now look after his affairs. It has been already said that had fortune made him very rich, he would, through the influence of his own proper philanthropy, certainly have given the poor and oppressed worthy cause to bless him, and have been a MACAENAS, nay a little AUGUSTUS, in the opinion of many neglected men of abilities. But this good will towards men failed, as we have also said, for want of a certain ingredient in that sort of work, called the means. He therefore tried whether, by lifting himself into power, he could not put himself into cash, and thus accomplish what he had so set his heart upon. In this also he was as much to seek; and what now could he do? Why resolve to embark the small remains of his fortune in the most feasible way that presented itself, making general benevolence the outline of his conduct.

First he purchased a share in a place of public amusement, which was coming to the very mart where genius was the traffic. With what delight did he contemplate the pleasure he should receive in taking neglected merit by the hand, and patronizing those productions which the modest timidity of their author kept from the public because he had no patron! How rejoice when he should rescue music from boorish barbarism, and reconcile it to reason and nature!—when the heart should receive no impression but through the ear; and when the sensations of the soul should fix the criterion of sound! How be charmed when theatrical painting, instead of monstrous, should be natural!

None of these desirable ends, however, was he fortunate enough to attain. He found his partners too refractory, and too much attached to their own ignorant and conceited measures to listen to him, who was but an inconsiderable member among them. Vainly did he represent that English amusements, were they thrown into a right channel, might very easily be made, with alternate and never-ending variety, to charm, expand, unbend, instruct, improve the mind; and, in short, disperse a most extensive and valuable fund of entertainment, rich, delightful, and exhilirating, as well as sensible, useful, and moral. Vainly did he shew this source, [Page 54] this mine: they, poor creatures, were strangers to its value. To speak plainer, they knew of no merit which came not to them through the medium of flattery, or was not generated in their own dullness, and foisted on the town by ostensible blockheads, who estimated their works by the quantity of manual labour.

Not content with this, our hero visited several gentlemen of undoubted and undeniable genius, to whom he lamented the great want of their public exertions, and entreated the advantage of their assistance. These he found had long retired in disgust: impossible to bear the affronts and humiliations they had sustained from men to whom—though unable to judge of any thing worthy public notice—they must implicitly submit, or retire; while supercilious coxcombs in science, only by dint of cringing and patronage, were to set the pattern which the enlightened were to follow.

Not to dwell longer at present on a matter self-evident to every man of sense in the kingdom but our hero, he found, greatly to his

disappointment, that if he had wished to commit to destruction every trait of real merit, he had hit upon the very way of all others to effectuate his purpose. He therefore—in imitation of those men of genius whose disgust against managers, and pity for themselves and the degenerate age in which they lived, had been so worthily excited—soon determined to retire. To do this he farmed out his share for an annuity, which—finding it would be ill paid—he afterwards sold for an inconsiderable sum: and thus his failure of raising the glory of the arts in Great Britain, cost him only about eighteen hundred pounds!

He was not however dismayed at this. His intentions were the best in the world; and how could he prevent either the vitiated taste of the public, or the imposition of its purveyors.

His second scheme was to give a temporary relief—all he could do—to debtors, during that intermediate detention between the capture and the commitment to prison. He had, as I have noticed, paid a very nice attention to arrests in the earliest stages. He had come at instances of men who, by being brutally dragged out of their shops, for a paltry sum, to a spunging house, and kept there under various illegal pretences for several days—though ultimately released—had, in the interim, totally lost their credit, and were never again able to hold up their heads. He had found that bailiffs, in consequence of such scandalous practices, and extravagant charges, at their houses, had realized large fortunes; nay he learnt, beyond all contradiction, of one who had, for a great length of time, amassed annually three thousand pounds, and was sure that some others were not much behind hand; yet this intolerable expence and shameful disgrace was nothing to the barbarous want of feeling and diabolical unconcern which tortured the poor debtor in this legal purgatory.

To remedy this evil, at least in some degree, our hero hit upon a plan that promised good success. He took the lease of a large house, had it partitioned into a number of convenient apartments, stored it with every proper article for his purpose, procured a victualler's licence, and placed a man in it of whom he had the best opinion, but whom he obliged to bring a responsible person to be joint security with him to the sheriff.

To this hotel debtors were, by advertisement, advised to go the moment they were arrested—for it is then in their power to insist upon being carried where they please—and there for one-fourth, perhaps one-fifth, of that sum for which they would be served with food and liquor they could neither eat nor drink, and huddled promiscuously among filth and nastiness without a retreat, unless perhaps by paying a still more exorbitant price, where they could consult their friends—they were neatly accommodated, well served, and, in short, provided with every pleasurable convenience and humane attention that could at such a moment be most agreeable to them. Added to this, an attorney of abilities had a salary to attend every inmate of that hospitable mansion, with advice according to each man's different case.

This liberal plan, though it was a little mad and eccentric, in something less than two years, which time it lasted, saved, in the aggregate, at least the sum of nineteen thou [...]and pounds in hard money to a set of unfortunate men and their families, besides a world of humiliation and disgrace; and, what was a still greater advantage—by a fair appeal to the humanity of the creditor, shewing him the impossibility of getting his money by sending a man to prison, conjuring him to commiserate the sufferings of his fellow creatures, and other arguments likely to disarm his anger—at least three hundred of those unfortunate men who would otherwise have gone to confinement, and who, it they did not die in it, might almost as well do so, for their credit would have been totally lost, and their families reduced to poverty, were given back to society, mildly warned not to be guilty of future indiscretions, instead of thrown into a situation where strong necessity, in spight of the best intentions, must have inevitably plunged them into ten times worse.

Our hero had a particular pleasure in being instrumental towards healing those meum and tuum breaches. He very often accompanied the house attorney, and was peculiarly happy with the creditor in that kind of argument which shewed him that he was like an angry school boy, throwing one marble to find another, and at last losing both. In short, he saw his benevolent institution thrive every day, though it must be confessed, to keep-up its credit, orders were now and then obliged to be given, that no notorious swindlers, or other well known sharpers, might

be admitted; and this was pretty well managed by enquiring whether the debtors brought there were tradesmen, or men of liberal professions, or members of the church, the army, the court, or of those other descriptions which would make it probable they were such objects as the spirit of the plan went to relieve. Yet is it not astonishing that the world received this spirited innovation on official tyranny as a most unbecoming attempt to destroy the common usuage and sanctioned progress of the law! It was called a mad scheme, and one that would finish by converting the house into a receptacle for lunatics, where the founder would be the first person admitted.

One very curious thing that our hero came at through his researches was that many of these cases originated from the folly, and frequently something worse, of the creditors themselves. An overgrown tradesman would coax a neighbour of the same business into his debt, and then arrest him, to destroy his credit, that so the coast might be left clear for himself. Others would fasten upon minors, whom they would supply upon long credit with bad goods, at a high price, and then arrest them the moment they became of age. Many were the instances where booksellers, music-shops, and picture-dealers had conferred obligations on those artists who had no medium but theirs through which to give their works to the world, and who were arrested at the moment their creditor knew it was impossible to get any thing, merely that they might make over some valuable work for a trifle.

Charles strenuously exerted himself upon these occasions; but he generally found the creditor inexorable, and the poor devil o [...] a debtor obliged to submit to terms which must still further involve him with his hard task-master.

Our hero saw the folly of persuasion, and still more of proposing any accommodation through his own means. Indeed it was out of his power to give way to the dictates of his philanthropy in any case, which Emma, when she heard of, greatly approved; for she said that Dean SWIFT, rigid as he was, could not bring his excellent plan of lending money in small sums to the perfection he wished it, without endangering his fortune. To which she added, by way of comment, "that very few but

men of indifferent fortunes thought liberally, which was a dreadful business, since none but those of ample ones had it in their power to act so."

Charles nevertheless found means of remitting to the wife or daughter what a strict attention to the plan demanded from the father, which was however always managed so discreetly, that nobody could tell from whence it came, but by guess. Gratitude, however, constantly gave the act to its right owner, and thus was our hero frequently slandered for his benevolence; for was it not plain that the person so befriended might have starved in prison, but for the beauty of his wife or his daughter?—though, for aught they knew, one might be blind, and the other deformed.

Charles foresaw that he should incur a good deal [Page 61] of this slander, and indeed he was obliged to take an extraordinary step at the outset to avoid the impossibility of carrying on his scheme without the total ruin of his reputation. This was, to admit no women who were arrested, lest wretches, void of honour, should be sent there, upon either real or imaginary actions, to the discredit of the house.—It is true many of these things were attempted, but when they were peremptorily informed that there was no sort of accommodation, they soon desisted; and this, as much as any thing, kept away sharpers: for they can herd only with women of the above description.

Thus was this asylum appropriated, according to its original institution, to men under misfortune only. It wore a sober, decent appearance, and instead of riot, extravagance, gambling, and profligacy, it exhibited a society of people in distress, it is true, but profiting by each other's advice and assistance. Women of credit and reputation were not ashamed to be seen there, and the consolation of near and tender relations was never interrupted by rude and brutal intimidations; nor was any opportunity ever lost of cheering the wretched, and softening the sufferings of the unfortunate.

In the mean time a number of unpleasant attempts were made to destroy this desirable asylum for the afflicted. Bailiffs make fortunes in two

ways; by either carrying a man to their houses, and so spunging upon him till he is drained of all his money, or else by taking a compliment, as they call it, in proportion to the sum for which he is arrested, and then taking his word: that is to say, letting him go. Now it happened that our hero's plan so trenched upon this first method, that they were obliged, oftener than had been their custom, to have recourse to the second. Thus, being obliged to trade upon an unusual risk, several of them, who did not properly know their men, came into scrapes, and nothing among them was talked of but motions of court, suspensions, and other unseasonable matters, which made them look about them in earnest; for they plainly saw that if Charles's asylum was found to be of public utility, and taken up upon a larger plan, bailiffs might even return to their former vocations of knights of the post, bullies to bawdy houses, thief-takers, and runners to gaols.

With a number of such low enemies against him, no wonder if our hero met with a thousand insults. It will not however be so necessary for me to spin out trifling matters, as to enumerate them. He never failed to put the law severely in force against them, whenever they infringed their duty; and as to any thing else, he held it beneath him to notice it.—But now a matter of serious consequence indeed happened to him. He was one evening arrested for three thousand pounds. Supposing this some manoeuvre that he could easily get rid of to the confusion of the tribe of the catch poles, he insisted upon going to his own house of security, but this favour was peremptorily denied him, with an information that the officer who kept it was suspended; for that he had connived at the escape of a person who had been confined there for a debt of three thousand pounds, that the sheriff had been fixed for the debt, and now came upon him as one of the securities.

In short, the fellow who had so long kept his credit with our hero, in the execution of his trust as sheriff's officer—a post, as we have seen, that may be filled with reputation—after having been a long time tampered with, and yet resisting every temptation, was at last overcome.

A swindler owed virtually to one man a thousand pounds, but literally three thousand. The circumstance is worth attending to. This one man

was a rascally attorney, found out by a set of as rascally bailiffs, who were determined to knock up Charles's plan. He sent for the swindler, asked him the amount of all his debts, and was informed they were something more than three thousand pounds. He was then desired to inform himself whether they could not be paid with a thousand..

This enquiry was made, and it was found they could; for he had no creditor but would be glad to take a third for the whole, seeing they stood no other chance of getting any.

Before any further step was taken, the security of Charles's factotum was tampered with—at first distantly—who appearing not very shy, as they called it, was at length plainly informed how he might touch a thousand pounds. In short, finding him apt, they proposed, if he could prevail on the officer to connive at an escape, they should receive a thousand pounds each. The affairs of the security were going down, and he had no doubt but he should induce his friend to consent. In short, the scruples of both were at length overcome.

This being accomplished, the swindler's debts were paid with a thousand pounds, the attorney received documents which made him appear to stand in the shoes of the creditors to the amount of three thousand pounds. For this sum was the swindler arrested; for this sum was the sheriff fixed, in consequence of his escape; and for this sum—after the factotum and his security were paid their money, and fairly put into a post chaise—was our hero four days in custody: at the end of which time, rather inconveniently, he paid the money, and procured his enlargement.

Thus did the attorney, who was ostensible for the bailiffs, receive the original money they had advanced, bribe their agent with double that sum, procure the swindler's liberty, and all at Charles's expence;—who now saw it would be utterly impossible for him to carry his humane plan any farther.

Bigoted however to his project, and having seen the best effects from it, he waited on men of larger fortune, with a view to advise with them how to perfect an undertaking of such material utility.—He exposed the

conduct of it with the minutest nicety, and shewed how much money, as well as happiness, he had been the instrument of restoring to his fellow creatures in distress.

Unfortunately he was disappointed in every application!—for finding, after a critical statement of the accounts, that he had at no time made seven per cent. of his money—indeed he did not make more than four, for he inserted none of those expences to be laid to the account of his benefactions—he could not find a single creature to engage in it.

His last application was to the sheriffs, but their answer was that they had no notion of putting the business out of the common channel; and indeed they were no friends to the scheme, for it had injured the emoluments of their office, by preventing the accumulation of arrests. Nay they had heard men in power hint that it was an idle, meddling scheme, and, among other public inconveniences, it had decreased the stamp duty.

As the limits of our hero's fortune would not permit him to become security again for a person to manage the house, and as it would answer no end to let it to a thorough bred sheriff's officer, he was obliged to drop the affair: lamenting that his circumstances were so straitened, that he could not carry it to that perfection he wished; and feeling severely for the dignity of human nature, when he reflected that in all his researches he had not been able to transfer benevolence upon the easy terms of good pecuniary interest, sweetened with the benedictions of the unfortunate.

1.5. CHAPTER V.

MORE SCHEMING UPON A SANDY FOUNDATION, AN UNJUST TRIAL AND CONVICTION, AND ONE EXULTATION QUASHED BY ANOTHER.

THAT I may carry our hero the whole length of his tether while I am about it, I shall proced to plan the third, though it must be observed that these schemes were all in agitation at once: so full of vivacity were his actions when he panted to succour his fellow creatures.

This third scheme went to the relief of the poor at large, and indeed so did the fourth. One was a plan to sell them bread under the standard price, and the other meat.

To carry the first into execution, a water-mill was built, and a bakehouse annexed to it. The matter was found very practicable; the original money yielded at least six per cent. and the poor, even then, were served with better bread, and saved at least a penny out of every sixpence. Nothing could be more simple, nor more effective. The sparring of the bakers was more easily kept within bounds than that of the bailiffs. Indeed, as our hero meant to make his expences the ground of a memorial for the better regulation of so material an article, his competitors were rather inclined to conciliate than aggravate matters.

The scheme for regulating the price of meat could not be conducted in a manner so within himself as the other. He therefore could not avoid connecting himself with a grazier and a butcher. In the choice of these he used every precaution his most watchful and diligent prudence could suggest.

At length, having settled the matter to his mind, the plan was began and carried on, for some time, with astonishing success, though he could not restrain his partners from making more interest for their money than he wished: yet, with these and many other clogs upon it, the advantages to the poor were considerable. The forestallers however at last

so harassed and inconvenienced the concern, that in about seven weeks after the hospitable asylum was put down, our hero had the mortification to see his name in the Gazette, as partner of Daniel Driver and Anthony Garbage, graziers, butchers, dealers and chapmen.

We have seen the young gentleman in a state of astonishment before; how he felt at this intelligence we can the readier conceive. But still his situation varied a little from the rest. He never saw himself before upon the brink of poverty. However, after the first shock, he received great consolation from the consciousness of his own good intentions, and he contented himself with only adding to the first transport of his indignation—which was pretty violent—that men were wolves and vultures, and that the greatest act of madness a man could be guilty of, was an attempt to civilize them.

The first step he took was an endeavour to supersede the bankruptcy, as far as related to himself; upon a plea that he was able to satisfy his own creditors, by paying twenty shillings in the pound.

Poor, inexperienced young man! He little knew that was the worst plea he could offer. It availed him nothing. His effects were overhauled, his mill was sold, and, after obtaining his certificate in form, he found himself possessed of no more than between three and four hundred pounds.

Thus were overthrown all our projector's hopes! which, though they certainly were a system of reform utterly beyond his ability to mature, yet he surely merited no reproach for having made such a laudable attempt.

As I have already observed, there never was perhaps an instance of a well-disposed young man who was in so trying a way let alone entirely to the bent of his own disposition. That disposition evidently led him to alleviate the wants of his fellow creatures. If in this he aimed at more than he could accomplish, let it be attributed to a liberal, expanded propensity to confer benefits; a noble, giving, beneficent principle of action, which must be endowed in an uncommon degree with courageous

generosity, to risk, in supplying the wants of others, the existence of that source from which those wants were supplied.

As to the vehicles through which this benevolence was dispensed, they certainly wanted riper experience, more consequence, and a larger fund to manage them; for, as it was, our hero's conduct—especially as to his two first schemes—was a sort of Quixotism in liberality. But yet, had the folly been ten times more egregious, it was still but folly; whereas the intention in so young a man, so unadvised, so left to his own propensities, requires a word to express its deserts much stronger than any dictionary will give us, and which one might have an idea of by fancying—if one could do so without violating language—something that implied a meaning about ten times as expressive as the superlative degree of admirable.

Nine out of ten however reviled Charles's conduct in the most humiliating terms. He had a hundred nick names. He was the infant Hercules; the mad projector; the opulent beggar; the beneficent catchpole; Timon in tatters; and ninety-five other things, all as good as these. But in the midst of this, it must have mortified his enemies to death, and raised the praise of all good men to that very unspeakable degree of admiration I mentioned in the last paragraph, had they accompanied the gradual decline of his circumstances with remarks on his becoming conduct, and then seen how he sat himself down in adversity!

When first he returned to England, he had an elegant house, and kept his carriage. The moment he was out of parliament, he sold off his carriage, took a smaller house, and lived more privately; till, step by step, we now see him only decently lodged, with an old gentlewoman, who had been his housekeeper, for his only attendant. Yet did every sixpence of those superfluities he curtailed go to relieve the distressed; for it was his constant method to retreat in time, that so nothing might be spared to accomplish his great and liberal purposes.

There is something also beautiful, and I hope it so strikes the reader, in reflecting that when Charles was driven to the necessity of discarding all his servants but one, he should retain the oldest and most helpless among

the number; and, to finish this picture, if it has so far interested the reader, let it melt him into friendly generous sympathy, when I heighten it by bringing on a grateful honest group of now happy objects, through the means of his beneficence, lamenting the state to which alone his compassionate generosity had reduced him; venting their admiration of a mind so charitable, yet so young; invoking benedictions on his head, for the benefits they had themselves, through him, and from his hands, received; and conjuring him to accept their thankful mite, for his present assistance.

I can only say that no glutton ever sat down to a banquet with half the satisfaction that Charles felt at this sight. He thanked them with tears; assured them that his situation was a trifling concern, since it had mended theirs; that he had resources, and so little repented of what had past, that had he again fifteen thousand pounds, he would give it with pleasure to have the charming satisfaction of enjoying such another moment.

During all this time our hero's correspondence with Annette went on variously. Sometimes Emma was obliged to be extremely cautious, and, at other times, all caution was altogether as unnecessary.—This happened just as Charles rose or sunk in the opinion of Sir Sidney, who had really—finding him such an original—watched his conduct with great attention.

In parliament he had remarked that though there was great singularity in it, there was also great consistency, and, what was better, great integrity:—and much about the time when Emma adjusted the correspondence between the lovers, was really inclined to think that he had been wronged, or that he had the strangest mixture of good and ill qualities in him that ever was heard of, when Mr. Gloss contrived, while Sir Sidney's sentiments were in this equipoise, to make our hero's virtues kick the beam with a single fillup.

In short, he had then, as usual, an opportunity of turning one of his good actions into the appearance of a very bad one, and he had no doubt but,

by this means, he should be able to make the baronet's dubious thoughts preponderate on the side that would be least to Charles's advantage.

Gloss took the very first opportunity that he heard Sir Sidney say any thing tending to Charles's praise of remarking that good men were always the most easy to be imposed upon; and in this he said very true, for he was then going to impose upon Sir Sidney. He followed this declaration up with another, expressing his great reluctance that it should fall to his lot to bring forward accusations continually against Mr. Hazard, and, in particular, lest the censorious world—for he was sure Sir Sidney would do him more justice—should think he had a farther interest in such conduct than mere impartial justice, and a desire that a gentleman so dear to him, and indeed to the world in general, should undeceive himself in an opinion undeservedly entertained of one who not only plunged himself every day into some fresh vice, but indeed seemed to set shame and even decency at defiance. He insisted that benevolence extended to bad objects was a sort of crime; it was a tacit admission, though not approval, of their conduct; and might, in men to whom the world looked up, as it did to Sir Sidney for example, be so construed. He took the liberty to add, that if his dear friend had a foible—though to be sure it was amiable in the extreme—this was it.

In short, after a proper dose of gilded flattery, he informed the baronet that it was then a week since our hero had turned a poor wretch, whom he had seduced from her friends, into the streets, with all the shocking circumstances of shame and wretchedness. The way he came to the truth of this was, the miserable creature, hearing he was one of Mr. Hazard's friends, had called upon him, and related the whole shocking business with such simplicity and apparent truth, that he had been induced to relieve her, and intended visiting her father, to try if he could not prevail on him to receive his repentant child into the bosom of her family.

Sir Sidney seemed greatly shocked with this story, and, upon Mr. Gloss's repeated entreaty, consented not only to see this unhappy girl, but to use his interest with her father, who was, it seems, a substantial tradesman, to take her back again.

Not to let the matter cool, the baronet saw the young lady, was afterwards introduced to a person who kept wine vaults in Petty France, who confessed himself her father, and had the good fortune, after using a variety of arguments, first to prevail on him to see, and afterwards forgive, the reclaimed sinner; to whom Sir Sidney presented one fifty pounds, and Mr. Gloss another, accon panied with good counsel, in some men's estimation, to fifty times that value.

The story the young lady told Sir Sidney, was briefly this: that Charles had taken uncommon pains to seduce her, but being tired with possession, had now turned her off: that she verily believed, dearly as she loved him, and ever should, his principal motive in a connection with her was interest. This the gentleman in Petty France believed too; for he assured Sir Sidney that when she went off she carried two hundred pounds with her. But, the lady said, had he found his account in this expectation, she did not think she should have kept him long, for she soon found that he had fallen in love with a girl whose mother he had taken out of a spunging house; and this she said was so true, that the mother lived with him at that time, in quality of housekeeper, and the daughter was put out to a milliner, in a house where she was to be taken in partnership, when her apprenticeship should be expired.

Many circumstances were adduced to prove the truth of these allegations, and as far as it related to our hero's protestations, though they were but in general terms, there was enough under his handwriting, which Sir Sidney knew, to corroborate his connection with her, and parting from her, particularly the latter, in which the baronet thought he discovered a remarkable vein of cruel and insulting levity.

I believe it is scarcely necessary to add that the lady was Miss Newton; that she had been tutored by Gloss; that the man at the wine vaults was occasionally a convenient friend of hers; that these two divided Sir Sidney's bounty, and gave Gloss's back again. This admitted, our hero's letters will not appear extraordinary, especially the last, at which the baronet was so incensed, which accompanied the hundred pounds he sent her the day after he had detected her; and as it happened, according to the partial construction now put upon it, to apply so directly in favour of

the lady, by exhibiting a want of feeling in the gentleman, I shall here insert it.

The reader will keep in mind that the gentleman's name was Nantz who kept the wine vaults.

TO MISS N—.

Being so well set up in a business by which, as long as your youth lasts, you can get a good maintenance, you will the less regret my leaving you. I dare say I need not advise you to make your market while you can. Do so and welcome; for there is no future comfort I do not wish you, so it be not procured at the expence of

CHARLES HAZARD.

The reader, who is with me in the secret, will find this letter quite delicate. It laughs off a very great injury; it is, besides, in a style well adapted to the person to whom it is addressed; and there is something very delicate in the circumstance of taking no notice of what it enclosed. We however must commend Sir Sidney, and had we been, as he was, ignorant of the real truth, we should have thought as he did.

It must be confessed that, in spight of Gloss's moderation, Sir Sidney exulted a little at this story. He came home full of it, and as he had seen Charles's hand-writing, and besides nobody could think of doubting his veracity, even Emma herself was, for the present, unprepared, or at least appeared so, to defend her favourite, which indeed vexed her not a little; because she had just got the correspondence in such a nice train. She contented herself therefore with saying, that it had been said there were two ALEXANDERS; one invincible, the son of PHILIP; the other inimitable, the production of APELLES. At present it might be said there were two Mr. Hazards: one good and benevolent, represented by the world; the other vile and diabolical, painted by Mr. Gloss. That for her part, she did not approve of premature condemnations: they were generally repented of. They had not yet heard both sides of the question, except in one instance, where Mr. Hazard was cleared greatly to his honour. She said she should not have scrupled to disbelieve the whole of

this business, but for the circumstance of the letters. With that proof she should rest contented; for Sir Sidney had the evidence of his own senses to go upon. She wished most truly he would never credit any thing but through that medium.

She allowed the young gentleman had failings, nor was it to be wondered at. TELEMACHUS, though with Minerva for his guide, fell into the errors of his father. What must this young man do, helpless and alone?—who never had occasion for his friends till he had lost them:—and how lost them? It was not then a moment to investigate that. She should therefore say she acquiesced in the truth of our hero's faults, but it should be upon this condition, that if he had weakness, it was the weakness of an angel.

Sir Sidney begged she would retain her good opinion of Mr. Hazard: it was perfectly consistent with her romantic notions: but desired she would not so far make a novel of the business, as to let her friendship interfere with her duty.

"Sir,' said Emma, 'if to have your interest tenderly at heart be to neglect my duty, no duty was ever so neglected."

"Come, come,' said Gloss, 'you need not vaunt your fidelity, Mrs. Emma, till it is disputed:—we see what you are."

"It is easily seen,' answered Emma, very mildly, 'what I am, and it will one day sir be seen what you are, and—Mr. Gloss—WHO you are."

Sir Sidney would certainly have rebuked Emma very sharply for this strange freedom, but that he saw, at the instant it was uttered, the strongest marks of confusion in the countenance of Gloss.—These, to be sure, he endeavoured to pass off, by hinting that the liberty Mrs. Emma had taken was very extraordinary: but this he did so slightly—fearing probably a few more of those choke pears—that the baronet was assured so significant an expression would not have been levelled by Emma, or received by him in the manner it had, were there not something of an extraordinary nature couched under it. He thought however the wisest way at present would be to break up the conversation. He therefore told

Emma he was assured she had the best intentions, and begged Mr. Gloss would forgive her, if any thing she had said in her haste offended him.

Gloss took him at his word with great eagerness, totally unlike himself, and this augmented Sir Sidney's suspicions.

1.6. CHAPTER VI.

CONTAINS, AMONG OTHER MATTER, A HISTORY WHICH THE READER WILL NOT IMMEDIATELY SEE THE DRIFT OF.

Now it happened that had Emma found it convenient she could have consuted the whole of this calumny, and in a way greatly to our hero's honour; but this would have brought up matters which, in spight of all her diligence, were not yet ripe enough for investigation. The fact is that she had made herself not a little uneasy at this very circumstance before, which she had first learnt through some invidious intimations from Gloss, and had very carefully watched the matter, till at length her fears were at an end upon our hero's leaving Miss Newton, owing, she had no doubt, to the more agreeable commerce in which she had now engaged him; and this roused in her a reflection greatly to his credit; for if the bare mention of a correspondence with a woman of honour could induce such a youth to give up a guilty connection unsolicited, what might not have been expected from him had his other pursuits been sanctioned by the advice of sensible and respectable friends. And yet prudence had whispered to Emma that it was certainly, but yet barely, possible for Charles to have given up Miss Newton in compliment to his housekeeper's daughter. This business, therefore, she made a point of coming at; to do which, she visited the old lady one day when our hero, as she knew, was engaged at his mill, about five miles out of town.

There was something in this old lady that had before strongly prepossessed Emma in her favour, and as the latter came not out of any improper curiosity, to make an advantage of any thing she should hear to the other's disadvantage, and as the former had never made a secret of the story, but, on the contrary, though against our hero's will, taken every opportunity of singing forth his praises, by repeating the circumstances of it as far as he had been concerned in it, to every one who asked it, it will not either surprise the reader to hear that Emma got out of the old gentlewoman the particulars of her whole life, or that when she had done so, she admired the extraordinary goodness of Charles

more than ever:—and here the reader will reflect with double pleasure that this was the very domestic, or rather companion, he retained in his circumstances of adverse fortune.

The old lady having first, like Othello, told her story in parcels, Emma begged to have it from her youth up: the which to hear did she most seriously incline. What she told at length, I shall give the reader briefly; for I have no time for spinning out narratives.

She was the daughter of a gentleman, who had a life place in a public office, and had been thrown very early in life, with a small fortune, into the protection of an aunt, who unfortunately being a woman of intrigue, connived at her ruin. Her seducer, by whom she had a child, was a clergyman; but as he soon left her, she was compassionated by another relation, who took her home, obliged the father to take the child, which was a boy, and got her fortune out of the hands of her aunt.

It was not many months before a respectable tradesman paid his addresses to her, and, in spight of her misfortune, offered her his hand; nay, he was the warmer on that account. He knew she had been betrayed by a wicked woman and a sinner in the garb of a saint, and therefore wanted a protector. In short, they became man and wife, and had lived in great credit five-and-twenty years, when falling into difficulties, through the villany of some notorious swindlers, and innocently getting the ill will of a pettifogging attorney, her husband, whose name was Marlow, was one of those whose reputation had been totally ruined by vexatious arrests, in the way I have already described.

Our hero strenuously exerted himself in the poor man's behalf, and with great difficulty—but not till all his connections, scared by this temporary misfortune, had deserted him—obtained his liberty from a spunging house, where he laid thirteen days in a most cheerless condition, during which time he was witness to the riotous profligacy of some of those very men who had wilfully caused his misfortunes.

The loss of his credit, added to a severe cold he had caught by lying in a damp bed, threw him into a fever, which, in spight of every caution,

hurried him out of the world in a very short time. He died recommending his widow and her daughter to the protection of our hero, now the only friend he had in the world.

The old lady, as it has been shewn, was appointed Charles's housekeeper, and the young one, who was the only remaining child out of eleven, was put into business exactly in the manner Mr. Gloss related, who always made it a rule to keep truth as much in view as he conveniently could in all his stories.

This was the account that Emma, had she found it expedient, might have opposed to the other; to which also she was prepared to add, that so far from his having seduced Miss Newton, she was not only a notoriously abandoned character, but that Mr. Gloss knew it. She contented herself however with the few hints she had given, which she was pleased to find had told just as she wished they should.

If Emma was however satisfied for the present, I cannot say so much for Sir Sidney, who, the first time he was alone with his lady, asked her freely her sentiments on this subject, and, in particular, how she could account for the freedom of Emma's conduct.

Lady Roebuck said he might be assured there was not in existence a more faithful creature; that, however, no duty could induce her to be what she conceived ungrateful, or unjust; that she had certainly the highest opinion of Mr. Hazard, and had set her heart upon his union with Annette; but that as his fortune daily diminished, and the pretensions of Mr. Gloss were daily more and more established, she trembled for her favourite, of whom she would not credit any ill, till every thing could be established by a fair investigation; which, for her own part, seeing neither side was willing to make the first motion, she thought would never take place.

One great proof, Lady Roebuck said, both of the attachment of Emma, and the delicacy of those sentiments by which she supported it, was, that though her predelection in favour of Mr. Hazard was evident, yet she had never used any unbecoming arguments to Annette on the subject; but,

contrary to this, had always held out that the commands of her father—which only urged her to make an effort to overcome that affection which to be sure the whole family had formerly sanctioned—were very lenient, and truly characteristic of the charming mind of a parent, who had, upon every occasion, been remarkable for his indulgence towards his daughter.

In this however Lady Roebuck neither told nor knew the truth; for Emma privately kept up her affection for Charles, and increased her aversion to Gloss.

"But,' said Sir Sidney, 'what meant that strange side accusation of Mr. Gloss? What did she mean by saying it would be known who he was? Had I not been averse to lower the consequence of a gentleman before a dependant, I would have insisted on an explanation of that expression."

Lady Roebuck went on in these words. "My dear Sir Sidney, you know with what reluctance I have ever ventured to say a word on this subject. I own I have been myself greatly prepossessed in favour of Mr. Hazard. We all, at one time, esteemed him as a most amiable young man, and though we have had what has been thought strong proofs against him, yet, as Emma says, only one side of the question has been heard, and I confess, from some internal impulse, which may perhaps be the effect of my sanguine wishes for this young gentleman's welfare—which wishes were inspired by the dying and pathetic request of his mother, for whom we had all a tender friendship—I cannot yet consent to pronounce him, from my own conviction, guilty of such very enormous offences, which could not be perpetrated but by a mind capable of the most hardened and incorrigible wickedness: a disposition which is rarely produced suddenly, and of which his, by what we have seen of it, promised exactly the reverse.'

"While I say this however, continued Lady Roebuck, 'I will not contend how far these feelings are right. They may be falsely entertained, perhaps, impelled by the motives I have mentioned, while your riper judgment and better knowledge of the world have enabled you to form a truer and more decided opinion of the truth; in which case it would be strange vanity, however right my intentions, in entertaining these

sentiments, if I did not, as upon all other occasions, implicitly submit to yours."

Sir Sidney kissed her, perhaps for her obedience; said she was a charming creature, and desired her to go on.

"As to Annette,' added Lady Roebuck, 'I shall there be still more backward to give either advice or opinion, for very many reasons, necessarily delicate; but one is, which is the most pleasurable, that never was advice to a young, tender, sensible creature so little needed: she is all you can wish from inclination, or hope from duty: yet I honestly believe she regards Mr. Hazard more warmly than any other person in the world. Not however that her prepossession in his favour has made her sentiments to Mr. Gloss otherwise than they would have been had she never seen him. She deports herself, upon all occasions, with that sweet native dignity in which pure, unaffected loveliness is sure to be seen, and therefore Mr. Gloss has had no reason to complain of receiving that portion of her favour which all those command from her who come sanctioned with the partiality of her father; but, be assured, that at present he is almost the last person in the world she wishes to think of as a husband. Yet I will not say, that were you so far to exert the authority of a father, as to insist upon her marrying him, she would refuse; for I sincerely believe she has so singular a sense of implicit duty, that she would give up her own happiness to promote yours.—This allowed, every thing remains well: you will never exert so rigorous a duty, and she will never take any steps to disoblige you."

"Upon my soul,' said Sir Sidney, 'it is impossible to hear you without being charmed: you have so the knack of smoothing every difficulty. It is not wonderful there should be such perfection in Annette, when she can look up to you for her example."

"My dear,' answered Lady Roebuck, 'whatever little my assiduity and endeavours have effected in the blameless and admirably-regulated conduct of your daughter, Emma's care and attention have performed a great deal more. That good, that astonishing creature, makes virtue the most endearing thing in the world, and contrives to give its attractions a

winning cheerfulness, that induces its performance not more as a duty than as a familiar and enchanting pleasure. Much more yet however is owing to Annette herself, the sweetness of whose unaffected manners, the gaiety of whose angelic dsposition, and the unsullied purity of whose charming mind, anticipate every attempt to inspire goodness; for where should we find virtue but in its abode?"

"All this only convinces me,' said the baronet, 'that I ought to consider myself the happiest husband and father in the world. As to Emma, I readily believe her a prodigy of honour and integrity. All I have to find fault with is, that she is often unnecessarily zealous, and that her virtue is now and then a little too outrageous. One instance of this we have recently seen, and I should be glad to know if you can possibly give a guess at what she would be at; for I must confess I have an anxious desire to know, and yet am very unwilling to resort to her for intelligence: therefore, as you saw, I put an end to the conversation."

"My dear Sir Sidney,' said Lady Roebuck, 'I own I am not sorry for this opportunity of saying what I think is Emma's opinion of Mr. Gloss; on the contrary, I shall take the liberty of following it with my own.'

"Emma thinks Mr. Gloss a man of great talents, but having discovered in him a specious plausibility, which she says men of independant circumstances or principles are never under the necessity of having recourse to, she will insist upon it he is not an eligible match for Annette.'

"There is a mystery, an obscurity, in the very best accounts we have learnt concerning him, that leaves his qualities with Emma in a very negative situation, and inclines her to think he will, one day or other, be found an impostor. It has been urged that your correspondent at Madeira gives him the character of an able man of business, says he was a merchant first at Lisbon, and afterwards at Madeira, and that he profusely spent a large fortune. He himself since says he received a handsome sum on account of his father's affairs, and that a much larger remains unpaid, but that India matters are slow and insecure. But Emma opposes to this quaintly, but smartly enough, that suppose they

were fast and certain, would they tell in his favour against his monstrous debts? On account of which, she insinuates, it was well he secured himself a seat in parliament. At the same time, she does not deny but his external conduct is perfectly blameless, and that he has openly a number of engaging and valuable qualities; but she suspects that half these are put on, and accounts for this suspicion under an idea that it is his study to render himself agreeable by administering to that passion he sees most predominant in the person he would play upon. Thus he knows with you he cannot have a recommendation like generosity and benevolence, and in the exercise of these, though but in appearance, he insures himself a place in your esteem. And these truths, for truths she will have them to be, are the more strongly rooted in her mind by a firm belief that all we have heard against Mr. Hazard originates from him.'

"Now I grant there is an air of extravagance in these conjectures; nevertheless, though chequered by strong predelection, and being but one conjecture hazarded againd another, probability is not one moment neglected. The very best accounts of him call him a man of unbounded extravagance, which surely has close relation to profligacy. Then if he is in debt as much as the world says, were he to-morrow out of parliament, he must be totally without fortune: in which case would he be an eligible husband for Annette?'

"As to his accommodating disposition, which Emma is so angry at, he will not practice it with much success upon you, who know the world, or it would be very hard, full as well as Mr. Gloss; and for the article of his practices against Mr. Hazard—which I confess I hardly know how not to admit—it would be an ungentlemanlike advantage, which I am sure you would be the first to resent.'

"In short, Emma thinks him an impostor, who will one day or other be found out; and, for my own part, I wish his condu [...] was a little less equivocal, though under these, or any other circumstances, I fear no surprise from him, or any other, while you are upon your guard."

Sir Sidney having heard his good lady to an end, thanked her for her very kind, sensible, mild, and considerate speech, which he said had

nothing new or uncommon in it from her, but was only one of those innumerable instances which he had received of the sweet benevolence of her gentle nature. It seemed however to demand something on his part, and he should answer it, he hoped, perfectly to the purpose.

He began by admitting that Mr. Gloss's account of himself, at first sight, was equivocal; but, however, we must not say a thing is false because we could not prove it true. Mr. Gloss's father appeared to be an obscure character, but there was nothing new in that among people who made fortunes in India. The young gentleman had certainly been extravagant; he had now however retrenched, and lived within bounds. That there was to be sure something in the report of his being in debt, for he had himself given him a faithful account of it, but the money coming from India would satisfy all those matters, and leave a handsome surplus. That as to his good qualities, they were something more than external: the assistance he had given to Castlewick, which was richer, and much more extensive, through his advice and exertions, was a proof of it. But he had other qualities, other talents, which, among liberal men, were paramount to either birth or fortune, and ranked him pre-eminently among those whose names were transmitted to posterity. He had all that was necessary to make a consummate statesman, and he had no doubt but the period was not far distant when he would be seen to adorn one of the first situations under government.—When this should be the case, no objection could possibly lie against him, and he owned he should then be sorry to hear his daughter refuse him for a husband.

As to any practices of his against the reputation of Mr Hazard, they certainly existed only in Mrs. Emma's imagination; for it had been his uniform practice to defend that unfortunate young gentleman as long as truth and reason would permit him; but when proofs came so thick that a man must be blind not to see them, he, like every body else, was obliged to yield to conviction.

As to Mr. Hazard, every thing he did was absurdity and ill-judged profusion. He was at that moment engaging in schemes which could not be effected by men of immense fortune and immense influence, and, what was worse, under the colour of munificence, the view was profit. In

short, with a few thousands, he was in more ways than one new modelling customs, which had been long cordially received, and well established, and that the consequence of this dream of riches and popularity would be his waking probably in a few months a beggar: in which case could he be called an eligible husband for Annette?

As to the variety of crimes laid to his charge, he would agree that but one side had been heard, but whose fault was it? Why did he not, if his cause would bear it, defend himself? Why truly he chose to take the matter in dudgeon; to look highly, and feel himself offended because people chose to believe what they heard! This might be a good cloak to hide a weak plea, but did not at all look like innocence, which so far from fearing investigation, he said, always sought it.

Had any thing like this been seen in Mr. Hazard? So sar from seeking the smallest explanation, had he not industriously shunned all such opportunities? Nay, was he not so conceitedly proud, so ridiculously vain, when he had been supposed—for to this moment it was not a certainty—to have behaved generously, as to reject with contempt the acknowledgement of this imaginary kindness? and disclaim the friendship of the man he would fain be thought to have obliged!

Upon the whole, he said, these were his ideas: that, in a worldly point of view, Mr. Gloss was infinitely a preferable husband for Annette. His talents were brilliant, he was himself very popular, and would most probably one day be in a most elevated situation. On the contrary, Mr. Hazard—whose talents also were very conspicuous, and whose accomplishments were not inferior to any man's—by a perverse pride and false consequence, would every day become lower in the world's opinion, till he found himself starving with independant principles. "However,' said Sir Sidney, 'you have named yourself the compact, and I subscribe to it: while I find Annette obedient, I shall not be unreasonable. In the interim, as I sincerely believe that Mr. Gloss will certainly be possessed of both honour and fortune—more perhaps than I have a right to expect in a son-in-law—I desire he may be considered in the light of one whom I have chosen to fill that character."

This retrospective chapter shews how matters stood in Sir Sidney's family about the time Charles began to be a projector, from which moment, to that in which his name appeared in the Gazette, he gradually sunk in the opinion of the baronet; for, through the connivance of the forestallers of law and beef, his name was bandied about in the newspapers like a tennis ball; in which inoffensive amusement Mr. Gloss was not idle; but when the Whereas made its appearance, and the title of butcher was added to our hero's name, I sincerely believe, had there been no such man as Mr. Gloss, or indeed no other than Charles, Annette might have died a virgin, or married without her father's consent.

As to Emma, she entered into all the spirit of our hero's schemes with enthusiasm. She declared it folly and ignorance to condemn them; that the very enemies they begat were the strongest proofs of their utility; that they evinced a nobleness of soul beyond all example in so young a man; and that if Castlewick was a mole-hill in the scale of liberality, Charles's projects were a mountain.

In short—and I cannot help thinking with her—Emma saw so large, so benificent, so admirable a system of general good in them, that nothing but the envy of individuals, and the degeneracy of the public could prevent their arriving to that maturity which would perpetuate the projects and the projector.

Emma greatly feared, however, the success of that scheme that went to cure the abuses of the law; ' 'for well,' said she, 'did Pope Pius the Second observe, that those who go to law are the birds, that the court is the field, that the judges are the net, and the lawyers the fowlers.''

1.7. CHAPTER VII.

CONTAINS LOVE LETTERS, CHIMERICAL SPECULATIONS, AND SOME HINTS CONCERNING PROFESSIONAL CAMELIONS.

I shall now return to Charles, who, that he might understand the extent of not only his possessions, but his expectations, received the day after he became a free man, an account that his noble brother was blest with an heir to his title and estate.

As our hero had long accustomed himself to look up to no one for assistance, he now saw the absolute necessity of sitting down without embarrassment to consider in what way he should make his talents turn out to his advantag. To do this, he looked his situation full in the face, and immediately with a sigh of affection and regret, blest the remembrance of that provident father, who had seemed to have foreseen this moment, and armed him against it. His pen had already been celebrated in the highest terms of panegyric. His pencil had procured him very lavish encomiums, even from the most flourishing artists, and his talent for music was allowed not to be inferior to either of the others. He therefore thought it hard if he could not live independantly, when he had three such resources. At the same time he knew that to become a public man he must condescend, and, in order to do so, all former high prejudices and perspective notions of situation and opulence must be conquered; for though the public was a noble and liberal master, yet his would be at best a situation of mental servitude.

His next idea was how he should render his abities worthy of such an illustrious patronage; and the result of this reflection became naturally a resolution to produce works of general utility, such as would promote the cause of genius and literature, and were dear to the interests of virtue and morality.

And now to wean himself from all vain expectations. His first effort was an adieu to Annette, which would have been poetry but that there was too much of the heart in it to be dressed in the garb of fiction. There was so

much pure feeling, indeed noble self-denial, and exalted love in it, that it took but a few minutes to write it. The anguish of that short time could scarcely be repaid by an age of happiness. It was like tearing the vitals, and Emma, when she read it, declared that the agony of the young Spartan was nothing to it; for the reader sees the difficulty was to bear the torment, yet give the consolation. This was the letter:

TO MISS ROEBUCK.

THIS letter, best of creatures, is supported by the strongest proof I ever yet gave you of my love. I am no longer in a situation to look up to you, and therefore must think no more of that happiness which can never be mine. Let our resolution to part be mutual, and worthy that affection which has no example, but which fate will not indulge.

Your love, charming Annette, equals mine; but your task is easier. You have a thousand consolations to which I am a stranger, yet I readily set you an example which it would diminish the glory of your sentiments not to follow. Imitate me willingly. Let your love—which had made up the perfection of your character—in the very moment while your heart yields to the dictates of your duty, approve the noble resolution. Ours were fond expectations: providence has thought fit to disappoint them. Let us not murmur then, but retain those mutual good wishes, as friends, which we must not cherish as lovers.

Adieu. Fail not to let your resolution be, like mine, cool, calm, and collected: so shall my Annette be additionally lovely to the soul—though fortune has denied her to the arms—of her

CHARLES HAZARD.

I will not say that these lines cost so little trouble to the mind of our hero as they appear to express; for indeed he felt in proportion as he endeavoured to conceal his feelings. This was the process:—Mrs. Marlow brought him pen, ink, and paper—he sat down—wrote his letter—read it over—enclosed it to Emma—directed it—kissed it—gave it to a porter—assured Mrs. Marlow he never was so pleased in his life—and then fell off the chair, upon the ground, in a state of insensibility!

In short, all the tricks of his French delirium, and perhaps consumption, would probably have succeeded this event, had he not received, the next morning, the following letter from Annette.

TO CHARLES HAZARD ESQ.

To induce my admiration of the excess of your love, and the delicacy of your sentiments, the terrible, though tender proof you gave me yesterday was unnecessary.

Ah Charles! have you no other argument to cure me of affection? Must I forget you only because you prove yourself every day more worthy to be remembered?—and can honour be so cruel as to require a sacrifice of my happiness at the shrine of what the world calls justice? But your virtue should be more resolute than mine, which is feminine, and has, and ought to have, its weakness; therefore learn, I cannot obey you in this one hard injunction, though it would be the pride of my life to submit to every other. I will never cease to love you, command me how you may. I will be faithfully, affectionately, uniformly yours; and as my father has promised me he will never insist upon my marrying any man I cannot love, so you will plainly see I can never marry any other than yourself. So far however I agree with you, that, at present, it will be improper to continue our correspondence: for what length of time fortune knows best. This however I know, that it is both to my interest and my happiness to declare, even to the whole world, as firmly as I do to you, that, be your fortune what it may, I shall ever be, unalterably,

Your own, ANNETTE.

The reader may judge what sort of cordial this letter proved to a lover, who had been alternately shivering with low spirits, or raving in a fever the whole night. The faithful Mrs. Marlow saw the progress of this medicine with tears of gratitude, and our hero, after reading it ten times, kissing it five hundred, and imploring all the angels in heaven to bless and protect so much beauty and goodness, mustered up spirits enough to turn his mind again towards his affairs.

Charles had, upon two former occasions, sent pictures to the royal academy, as an honorary exhibiter. When he attended the dinner, upon St. Luke's day, he received from the president and several of the members, the most extravagant marks of applause. He thought therefore he could not do a more eligible thing than to begin his scientific career by sending a couple of pictures to the next exhibition, with a modest price affixed to them, by way of advertisement, that he meant in future to resort to painting, among other things, for a maintenance.

The pictures were accompanied by a respectful letter to the president—who, he doubted not, would do him justice—intreating to be considered in future as a common, and not an honourary, exhibiter.

This done, he waited with impatience for the success of his stratagem. The exhibition was adadvertised, our hero received his ticket of admission, and repaired to the place, where, for twenty minutes, he could not find either of his pictures. He tumbled over the catalogue, which eased him of half his fear—for he had fancied they were both rejected—by informing him that one of his performances was certainly in some part of one of the rooms. Vainly however did he search for a considerable while, till at length, being upon the point of giving the matter up, elevating his sight, in a nook, close to the sky-light, he fancied he had discovered the object of his perquisition.

The picture however was scarcely known to him, though he had painted it; for one single streak of light fell upon it at the right hand corner at the top, which gleamed towards the centre, where it rested in a speck; while a sudden shadow, occasioned by the projection of the chimney piece, cut it across from the left hand corner at top to the right hand corner at bottom, forming an angle with one half of the frame. In short, it had exactly the effect of a looking glass, badly painted, in a chamber scene for the theatre, which idea must occur to every reader.

This was not all: Had either of the pictures been seen alone, it could not possibly have had the smallest effect, for they appertained to each other like question and answer. Charles therefore saw it was an affront, and was more strongly confirmed in this when he found his other picture

tossed about with a hole in it. Upon an application for redress, he was told he might take away his daubings, if he disliked their situation.

Charles could not conceive how it could happen that professors of a liberal art knew so little of the manners of gentlemen; but, since he found it so, he resolved to shew them he could right himself, even with the very tool for which they seemed so to despise him.

To effect this, he painted a picture to which was annexed this explanation.

A sovereign prince, in a certain country, had built a palace; to decorate which various potentates contributed many costly presents. One, among the rest, sent a collection of pictures, all the works of eminent artists. That these might be distributed in advantageous situations, the prince sent for the heads of the royal academy, to perform that task as their judgment should direct them.

After fixing several according to their distinction, which indeed gave but little trouble, for they were all, as it appeared, labelled, they came to one about which they could not find this mark of distinction, and therefore, concluding that the picture was of no value, they condemned it to be placed in the temple of Cloacina.

Our hero's picture represented the academecians marching with the picture, in solemn procession, to put the above sentence in execution. The most active among them were those with whom he had the greatest reason to be offended, and the likenesses were so strong, that it was impossible to mistake them. But, to crown the joke, he introduced a portrait of himself, in the foreground, holding up the label they had vainly searched for:—on which was written GUIDO.

This picture he exhibited in an auction room, hired for the purpose; and, for a time, it actually drew away the company from the exhibition of the artists.

He became immediately known, and might have had some practice at portrait painting; but, finding it impossible to make people handsome

enough, he forewent this most servile of all mental drudgery, and declared altogether for pieces of thought and fancy, in which he found his genius more gratified. These however nobody understood, and they remained unsold. A picture dealer or two offered to treat for them, provided he would smoak them, and varnish them repeatedly, till they were all over cracks; for, in that case, they would give them new names, and pass them upon the public: especially if there were a few holes burnt in the drapery, or an eye poked out of the principal figure.

This kind of servile imposition, however, our hero did not chuse to submit to, and his pictures went unsold.

Charles had become slightly acquainted with a young artist, who appeared very anxious that he should push his fortune, and informed him there was but one way, which was portrait painting—Charles told him he had practised it without success. "Ay, but you did not go the right way to work,' answered the other 'It is not painting a lady's likeness will do: you understand me:—you must favour a lady with a living likeness, if you wish to do any good. In short, if the painter be young and handsome—and dam'me if I think either you or I frightful—a lady sits to him with a view that he should make love to her! And then such opportunities! Please my dear ma'am to look at me:—more full if you please:—your eyes more languishing:—now bite your under lip to pout it:—smile, if you please:—very well! Pray don't you think, as this is a fancy dress, that shoulder should be bare?—a part of the neck seen?—the rest throbbing, as it were, through the handkerchief? Permit me to adjust it. Heavens! what a skin!—what roundness!—what tints! The Venus of Titian was plaster to it! In short, in adjusting her handkerchief, her bosom throbs in good earnest, she takes you to her arms, and your labours become real nature, instead of imitative."

Charles laughed heartily at this description, and then resuming a more serious air, asked if there were any instances of these sort of amours.

"Indeed there are,' answered the other. 'Genteel young fellows never need be without them, and it is their own faults if they do not snap up fortunes. But they are a set of stupid blockheads, without manner or

address; and when they conceive an idea of that sort, they generally come into disgrace. It was but the other day a foolish brother of the brush made his declaration too prematurely—for you know my dear sir there is a manner, a delicacy in such matters—and was kicked out of the house for his pains. Master Musquito though was a little too cunning. Ay, he is a dry hand!"

"Musquito,' said Charles, 'What Musquito?" "Why you know well enough,' said the other,' 'Sir Sidney used to invite him to his house. Don't you know what has happened to him. Upon second thoughts it must have happened while you were in France. Only married to a woman of seven thousand a year; that is all. Ay, ay, they may talk of poets writing themselves into a lady's good graces, or a musician tickling their ears, but I say the painter is the man to succeed. He situates the zones of his Venuses, he festoons the petticoats of his buskined Dianas, he—in short, no man except a footman or a dancing master is so sure of success, if he minds his hits."

"Well I hope you will mind yours,' said Charles, 'but this you tell me of Musquito is astonishing." "It is very true I assure you,' answered the other. 'That sour crab, that sloe, that green medlar, that cut-lemon of a fellow, has made a handsome woman's mouth water to the tune of seven thousand a year. But Lord you know nothing of what our old codgers are. Do you think the nymphs who are drawn every evening come merely for the improvement of the young students? No such thing. They are procured for the recreation of the old ones, I promise you. But this is all well enough. Let them live in luxury and abuse the royal bounty as much as they like, but do not let them, now they are past it themselves, check the fair progress of young fellows like us, who are endeavouring to push ourselves forward in the world, by the laudable exercise of our industry." "And all its adventitious consequences,' said Charles, 'among which you reckon, of course, our chance with the ladies."

1.8. CHAPTER VIII.

MORE EXPECTATIONS, AND MORE DISAPPOINTMENTS [...]

WE have seen the same mind in our hero as to revenge ever since we first noticed him. If he aimed at punishing others, it was with a view to general justice. Certainly there could not be any thing more unhandsome than for a set of men, established in their profession, and established only for the purpose of giving novices their countenance and support, to neglect the productions of a young man who was likely to ornament a liberal art, and not only artfully conceal his merits, but disjoint its effect, so as, had it been seen, it could not have been understood.

Their comment on his satirical picture was, that matters were come truly to a fine pass if a young, inexperienced dauber could dare to attack a royal corporation in such an audacious manner, and then have the insolence, by implication, to call himself a GUIDO.

[Page 117] Our hero however defended himself against this, by saying that he did not profess painting; and very likely should never take up a pencil again; but as the picture told well with the public, through the medium of those striking likenesses it contained, he might modestly enough take to himself some little merit; and as to the name of GUIDO, it was evidently a stroke at their ignorance, and not a mark of his own vanity: for it did not say they are hiding my picture in a certain place, though it has the merit of GUIDO, but they are hiding GUIDO himself; and this also says I forgive you for that neglect which originated from your ignorance; for if you have served GUIDO in that manner, why should I repine at being coupled with so great a painter?

From the moment Charles set out as an artist, he guarded against all consequences, by supplying himself at his leisure moments with materials for forwarding his interest in every branch he professed. Thus, he had scarcely sent his pictures to the exhibition, but he considered how he might make music turn to account. He could not buckle to teaching music any more than to portrait painting, for he plainly saw that none but the

packhorses of music stood a chance in this branch. Such as could exalt claws into a fine finger, find sweet tones in a dissonant squall, in short, submit to all the ignorant conceited airs of wire-breaking young Misses, flatter their mammas, dandle the younger children upon their knees, deliver written appointments for assignations, which were sometimes directed to themselves, and such other kind of drudgery as appends to the duty of these under servants, these scrubers and scullions of the muses.

As to the theatre, he had gained some little experience of that before, and if, in quality of master, he was obliged to retire, what chance did he stand in quality of servant?—for as servants he well knew all those must expect to be treated who wished to give their productions to the public through that medium. Then as to publications, the country was inundated by Italian and German compositions, which obtained patronage through the medium of some man of distinction, to whose pleasures the composer administered sometimes in a way that an Englishman would starve rather than submit to.

In the midst of a variety of cogitations on this subject, he was called on by his old friend Toogood, who had lately put himself very forward in the musical world.

This son of Apollo told Charles, that as he understood he had thoughts of devoting himself to the muses, for a livelihood, he should be happy so serve him in so meritorious a determination. He flattered himself, he said, that as he had got into a conspicuous situation, by making his profession subservient to his interest, he, of all others, had it most in his power to point out the only way in music to profit and reputation.

Mr. Toogood professed a great opinion of our hero's professional abilities, and still more of his good sense and knowledge of the world, and doubted not, as he had smarted severely for his follies, that he would now take up, and consider that men's talents were given to work out their own advantage.

Charles, seeing his drift, encouraged him to open his whole budget, through which he learnt that, from his youth, he had made it a practice of levying contributions on people of no taste, by which means he was become the Apollo, or rather the Orpheus, of the day; that he was looked up to as the regulater of style and leader of fashion in music; and all this he laid open in a plain narrative of his life and principles, without omitting a single circumstance of either his own duplicity, or the credulity of his patrons.

Having heard him to an end, this was our hero's answer. "And so Mr. Toogood, because you have all your life, under the appearance of cringing, trimming, and many other truckling and wretchedly accommodating shifts, vitiated the public taste, and scandalized a beautiful and useful art, you would have me copy your creeping servility!—Sir you affront me both as a musician and a gentleman, by your unworthy and contemptible proposal. It is such as you the world has to thank for introducing mystery and difficulty into the plainest system of rational pleasure the soul of man can receive; for setting up an inexplicable standard to judge of that which is the essence of ease and simplicity. No, Mr. Toogood, I despise the servility of your mind as much as I reprobate the fallacy of your doctrines; and, much as I value popular esteem, I should disdain to accept it otherwise than as a tribute to exertions intended to convey rational pleasure and solid advantage."

Charles however did nothing by this sort of conduct but invite enemies. But this did not stop him. He really could not bridle his resentment. To see men pervert the very end of nature's gifts, and endeavour to confirm others in error, instead of leading them out of it, deserved, he said, reprobation of the severest kind, and he was determined at least to drag such monstrous impostors into open day, and expose their deformities, after which it would be the world's fault if such counterfeit coin was suffered to pass current.

Charles had yet done but little in the way of profit. Indeed he did not see how he could; for it was so dirty a road, that he had not the resolution to follow it. It became however necessary that he should think of something in good earnest. For this purpose he completed an opera, which he had

had long in contemplation, and which he had been repeatedly requested by one of the managers to put the finishing stroke to. He sent it, and as he knew pretty well the trim of this sort of business, his compact was that he would stand or fall by its merits, without the interference of any other person. This was charming, it would have a prodigious run, and every attention should be paid it.

Our hero called on the manager to consult on the necessary steps to bring it before the public. He was still received with great warmth. He wished however he would be advised. "In what?" Why suppose he waited upon the editors of the different papers, to bespeak favour. "Why? If it deserved applause it was to come from the public, not the newspapers. If it did not, their purchased favour would be a satire on the performance, and an insult to the public." This was good theory, but not practicable. Charles said it should be practicable in his case, or nothing should. It was material to him to come at the truth. If he falsely flattered himself, and had not abilities for what he had undertaken, nothing could be kinder than to undeceive him. If he had, let his reward come spontaneously from those who he was sure would pay it with interest if it was his due. He spoke charmingly; it was a pity he did not know what stage conduct was. Charles said it was a pity the manager did not know what it ought to be. The manager rallied Charles, and Charles did not spare the manager, who however did not wish to lose the piece, of which he had a great opinion.

After some necessary matters were settled, they parted, agreeing that the opera, like an act of parliament in a certain stage, should be copied for the use of the members.

Charles that very evening received a summons to breakfast with the manager the next morning. He went, and had he not known his man, must have been astonished at seeing himself treated with a distant coolness. He had been thinking; some of the passages did not strike him as at first: A friend of his—. Our hero gave him, in a few words, to understand that, by agreement, no friends were to interfere. It was very true, but the expence of a first piece was a large stake. Very likely, our hero said, and if he felt his promise hang awkwardly upon him, he was

ready to acquit him of it. Oh by no means. Well it should be as he pleased:—but did not he think a few alterations— "Not one,' said Charles. 'If you say a word more about it, I will put the piece in my pocket." In short they parted but barely civil: the piece was however left.

A few days afterwards they had another meeting. The manager was all rapture. He begged our hero would not be offended at what was done, but indeed it was impossible to be offended. He should see.

A new copy of the piece was then produced, with alterations in the hand writing of four different people, whom he knew to be retainers to the house, and were the very men and women—for this was the fact—who at that time kept away those real geniuses to whom I have said Charles formerly paid visits of solicitation, and nauseated the town with their own insipid trash.

Charles cast his eyes over the copy merely to ascertain this fact, and then said "Sir, independant of theatrical business, I know no one more a gentleman than yourself. Upon theatrical business I never knew a man so pitifully mean. Supposing it would answer any good purpose in your wise politics to make a shew of my piece, to invite whatever dunce thinks proper to come and blot it, do you think sir so contemptibly of me as to suppose I will bear it. But, putting that out of the question, can any thing so strongly evince your ignorance both of theatrical performances and your own interest? If I submitted to these alterations, would not every individual who made them claim his own feather, while I must quietly stand to be plucked? and, for God's sake, what feathers are they? Have they made me a bit handsomer? So far from it, that which was, if not superb and magnificent, yet neat and decent, is now altered into a motley fool's jacket. But, sir, you may take the materials and make them into a cap for your own wear. In short, I shall trust to your honour not to make use of my ideas to your advantage, and as for any thing else, I am your humble servant."

The manager however would not let him go. He begged him to consider that the scenes were painting, that he had engaged a singer at a high salary.

"I do not care for that sir,' said Charles; 'it is dishonourable not to abide by your agreement; you had the evidence of your senses prima facie: you can have no more now. What have they decided? Why truly that the meanest scribbler in your house is to give laws to me. But, as I said, letting alone that see-saw, your ownjudgment, you have done a thing totally against your interest; for these poor creatures, whose trash certainly never shall stand a part of the piece, losing the merit of having made these alterations—which by this time they have vaunted to all their friends—will become enemies both to the piece and me: so, for your caprice, I am obliged to wage war with a set of poor reptiles, who have not offended me, and whom I have no more inclination to tread upon than any other worms, which, searching for food, are unlucky enough to come under my feet. In short, bad as it is, for this last time, I will overlook this strange conduct, since you talk of losses which certainly I do not wish you to sustain; but I insist that every word shall be expunged which I may not justly claim as my own." This was at length agreed to, and a morning for the first rehearsal was appointed.

The day came, the words were read, during which some of the actors, as they were instructed, yawned at particular passages. These were afterwards to be objected against by the manager, which Charles well knowing, anticipated, by taking him aside, and telling him that he saw what he was aiming at, but it would not do, for that every passage at which the performers had so ill acted the part of yawners, should remain without the smallest alteration. He said, however implicitly the manager might pin his faith upon the sleeve of such opinions, he would not wish a better omen of success than an actors entertaining an indifferent opinion of a dramatic entertainment; for that, in general, they were men of very slender intellects and mean education, who had no opportunity of making worldly observation but at the porter house, or in the green room, who had now in tragedy destroyed what was meant for a representation of greatness, by stalking like puppets, and braying like asses, and who had no idea of comedy otherwise than by grinning like apes and chattering like parrots. Besides, in the present case, poor devils, it was a repetition of the same miserable farce which had so recently been performed by the authors. They were bid to feel as the others were. He wondered therefore

that the manager would attempt at treating him so unworthily, when he knew how ill such former illiberality had been stomached.

The patentee was certainly nettled enough at this spirited conduct of our hero. He however thought proper to suppress what he felt, and they proceeded to the music-room, where every thing was ready for a repetition of the music.

The moment Charles entered the room, he was surrounded by the females. "Lord, Mr. Hazard, cried one, 'don't you think this here round o is monstrous frightful? You ought to have given me a song full of divisions, and runs, and shakes, to shew my powers." "Let us hear it played, Miss Forward,' said Charles.' "Oh Lord,' replied the lady, 'there is no occasion for that, I have played it all over myself with one finger, and I tell you it will have no effect."

She was going on with remarks on her other songs, but Charles turned from her. He was however as badly off, for he found the principal singer in high words with the manager, because the puppy of a composer had truly thought proper to restrict her in her cadences. What did he mean by such insolence? Had any body ever attempted to point out to a mistress of her profession any limits to her candenza?

"I know madam,' said Charles, 'that it is almost as vain an attempt as to prescribe limits to her impertinence; but, in one word, those who sing for me shall sing what I have written, and nothing else. It is my music, and not yours, I chuse madam to give to the world; and, to tell you the truth, what little abilities I have shall be exerted to explode the candenza which has lately obtained to the scandal of taste, and the total exclusion of every characteristic by which music ought to be distinguished. As it is, singing is become a vehicle to convey every thing that is extraordinary, and nothing that is pleasing. Nature, feeling, expression, and, above all, a conveyance of the poet's ideas—beyond which every thing in vocal music is impertinence—all these are disregarded. The lady who sings highest, lowest, longest, and loudest is the best singer; and thus all you principal performers stand squalling and stretching out your necks like the crow in the fable, forgetful of the fox underneath, who not only laughs at your

folly, but stands ready to snap up the cheese, the moment it falls out of your mouths."

"Yes,' said the lady, 'but we take care not to let it fall out of our mouths. No, no, there is no fear of our getting cheese, when you poets cannot get bread."

This witticism was echoed by a loud ha, ha! throughout the whole room; after which, an understrapper coming up familiarly to Charles, cried, "Why I say, they gives it you home brother Bruin: but never mind it: this is nothing at all when you are used to it."

Charles, turning to the manager, who also heard this, said,"you are very kind, and no doubt find it much to your interest to tolerate this: for, were not that the case, this fellow would not dare to add so much impudence to his ignorance."

The manager made some trifling apology, smiled a sneer, and desired the repetition might begin.

Many of the songs were now performed, to every one of which its respective singer was suffered to make some ignorant objection. At length they came to a sort of bravura song, in the midst of which the leader of the band laid down his fiddle, with an exclamation of "Oh my Gad, my Gad! I vome play dis." "What is the matter now?" said the manager.' "Sir,' cried the enraged fiddler, 'it is no good, no raight, no arminny." He then proceeded to a string of reasoning, which, as it was unintelligible to every hearer, so it must be of course to every reader.

He had scarce done this when Charles said, "and pray sir how long have all the laws of music acknowledged you as their Lord Chancellor? How long has the supremest pleasure of the soul submitted to an arbitrator sullen, envious, and malignant?—without taste, genius, or intellects!—a dreaming law-giver to sound, a mad mathematical musician! How long have the social enjoyments of the mind been estimated by measure and tale?—by niggardly scanty, constrained portions? Go and pore over an ox's eye, study optics, measure vacancy, and thus get at the dimensions of your own brain. Go and exist, but dare not think of the enjoyment of

those that live."—And then turning to the manager, "Please sir to give orders that the repetition may go on." This the manager thought proper to do, and it was finished with no further interruption worth mentioning.

As soon as it was over, Charles said to the manager "Sir, I must beg, before your people leave the room, that they may hear my declaration to you. With great earnestness you invited me to this task; you took ample time to deliberate on the merits of what I produced you; and we had settled a convention that I am convinced would have been a mutual convenience to us. It was the duty of your people, according to my conception, to receive their instructions, and implicitly to observe them. For my part; had any person represented to me, in reasonable language, that any particular alteration was necessary either for his or her convenience, or the advantage of the piece, I should with willing pleasure have paid such observations every attention they could possibly merit; but, sir, evidently by your connivance, I have sustained affronts from many of your people, who, poor wretches, mean me no ill-will, by doing that which your frequent permission has stampt into a duty. Your drift then appears to lower me to the abject, contemptible humiliation of those authors and musicians, who depend on you, and who administering to your ignorance and caprice, insult the public with nonsense and barbarism, to the disgrace of letters, and the total perversion of science. Keep these at your beck and call and welcome, but let me warn you not to expect again that you can with impunity make a tool of any man who has ground to think worthily of himfelf, and virtue enough to be independant, lest an exposition of your arcana rouse the offended public to support the cause of injured merit, and oblige you to restore those men of talents, for whose encouragement your theatre was given you in trust. Others may be roused; for my part, I shall content myself with smiling on you with contempt."

So saying, he walked out of the house, no one attempting to interfere; for the performers looked on one another in astonishment, to see an author who refused to be a foot ball, and the manager, who saw it would be to no purpose to detain our hero at present, was meditating how he might keep both the piece and the author at his own disposal.

1.9. CHAPTER IX.

ONE NEGOCIATION FINISHED, AND ANOTHER BEGAN.

As soon as our hero got home, he sent for his piece. Instead of it, however, he received the following letter.

TO CHARLES HAZARD, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Your warmth this morning prevented you from seeing how much I wish to do you every justice. I think some of the performers were right in their objections. The piece wants cutting, and really I think it would be of use to you to admit a few Italian songs. You know those capital women will give themselves airs. Upon the whole, as the necessary alterations will take up some time—and, besides, I have an after-piece to bring out immediately—I would wish [Page 134] you to revise your opera before its next rehearsal [...] In the mean time you may call upon the treasurer for fifty pounds.

Yours, &c. —

Without a moment's consideration, Charles wrote the following answer.

TO — ESQ.

SIR,

I have declared my sentiments plainly enough already, and I will not trouble myself more about this pitiful business than to say that I now demand my piece, and that I am perfectly indifferent as to yourself, your actors, your capital women, your after-piece, or your fifty pounds, which last article I do not believe I am more in necessity for than you are. The bearer has directions not to come away without the opera.

I am, sir, Your humble servant, C. HAZARD.

The piece was not sent, and it was with some difficulty he got it back again, two months afterwards. Thus ended his connection with the theatre.

Our hero's next effort was among the booksellers. Many offers were made him to work by the sheet, but these he rejected with contempt; at which he was given to understand that haughty demeanour would totally destroy all his expectations; for though to work for the theatre might be very humiliating, to work for the trade would be still more so.—Could he submit to estimate his work as they sell poetry to the chandlers shops, by weight? Could he watch publications as they fell in, and became universal property, mutilate them, and make an unconnected jumble out of them, under the title of 'Beauties of an eminent Poet?' Could he take the old magazines and newspapers, and make out of them a new periodical publication? Had he a knack of criticising authors that never existed?—Was he expert, without plan or necessity, at poetic ribaldry, which dealt about the faeces of satire against all ranks and distinctions, without either its truth, its elegance, or its point?—and especially against that high character whose heart is the seat of goodness and mercy, whose private worth is the criterion of domestic virtue, and whose public excellence is not more distinguishable by the splendour of his situation, than by the gracious beneficence with which he adorns it.

Could he feign epitaphs? Anticipate parliament speeches? Make men of abilities write nonsensical odes?—or invent dull good things, spoken by a dead doctor? Could he one day pull down the fabrick of the constitution, and the next build it up again?

If he could not do any of these, he had better be hackney writer to an attorney, clerk to a lottery office, or any thing than an author. Where was the use of any thing new? Had not every thing that can be said on all possible subjects been exhausted time out of mind? Was there a single idea that, at this time of day, could be put in a new point of view? How many histories of England were there? How many histories of other countries? How many general histories? And yet could any body say which should be credited? No, no, the mystery of writing was now at an end; the whole business was compiling; and it was the extreme of

arrogance in any person to expect payment but as a compiler. In short, if he would quietly put on his apron and sleeves, take the scissors, the wasers, and the paste pot, come contentedly into the garret, and sell his labour for as much as it was worth, he might get pretty bread enough; but if not, he had better take a pickaxe or a beetle, and dig graves or thump the pavement.

This was the sum of his reception with several to whom he applied. At length however he thought he had nicked the very chance that would make his fortune. He was recommended to a bookseller of the name of Alley, who he was informed dealt largely and liberally. To him he went, and very candidly told him that, as he had the reputation of a man of worth, an extensive publisher, and a liberal dealer, he should be glad to treat with him for some things he had by him.

"Sir,' replied Alley, 'Mr. Hazard, I shall say in answer to this here proposial, that I am a man of fortune, and I spends what I gets freely: ben't afraid dam'me of a few shiners: and when I sees a work that's a work of merit, I deals upon the nail, and as a gentleman should. Here, harkee in the shop there. Did the lady in her chariot call this morning?" "No." "No! dam'me you always say no. But my lord did though, or else Sir Peter. In short sir—I say, one of my people, bring me the keys of the warehouse. Stop now—look at this drawer: full, chuck full—all novels—I supply every library in the kingdom. Going to bring out a fine, new, novel edition of Thomas Hickathrift, for schools. Oh the keys, you shall see my warehouse."

So saying, he lugged our hero into another street, where he introduced him to an immense number of publications, in sheets. "There,' said he, 'did you ever see any thing like this? Here is a grand edition of Mother Goose's Tales, purceeded with a wooden frontispiece, for the Christmas holidays; all titivated up, out of other things, by gradivates from the two universes of Oxford and Cambridge. I pays them well; one has had seventeen and sixpence before hand. Yes, yes, every body knows my generosity: but then its a damned fine thing to be charitable."

Thus he ran over all the rooms in the house, pointing out, upon every shelf, some new book of equal importance with those already mentioned, till at length he convinced our hero he was conceited, ignorant, and purse proud, and alike a stranger to taste and liberality.

Charles, seeing this, determined to cut the matter short. "Pray,' said he, 'Mr. Alley, do you read all these things before they come out?" "Read!" said the other, 'I read! Dam'me, you think that I can read! No, no, I got other guess work to mind I can tell you. My gradivates, and my parsons, and them there fellows read. No, no, I can't do every thing. I can only say if you'll favour me with any of your works in the novel way—novels you see are my forte—they shall be read, and, if they meet approbation, money, dam'me money is no object. In short, as I say in my advertisement, to such ladies and gentlemen as favour me with their manuscripts, that I flatter, supported by their patronage, to render in future what has been esteemed frivile, of standing merit, entertainment, and general improvement." "There's epitaphs for you!" "They are very extraordinary epithets indeed,' said Charles.' "Ay, ay, epithets,' returned Alley, 'you are right: dam'me my head is always a wool gathering. Well sir, shall I be favoured with your manuscript?"

"Why sir,' said Charles, 'I will be very plain with you. I have a thing something in the style of a novel, which I will send you. It will make two small duodecimo volumes." "Ay twelves, I understand you,' returned the bookseller, 'that's right, I like twelves.' "But I premise,' added our hero, 'that if your graduates find any merit in them, I expect to receive a handsome gratuity for my labours." "That's enough,' said Alley, 'send them; we shan't disagree."

They parted: Charles sent his book, and, after repeated attempts to get it back again, or an answer to his terms, he at length received the following letter.

TO CHARLES HAZARD ESQ. THESE PRESENT.

SIR,

I received yours, and I am sorry my absence, being out of town, deprived my answer.

Your book, unfortunably, does not meet approbation; as such, is returned. You may send for it to my house, in Leadenhead-Lane, when convenient; only please to say which it is, as I have so many, otherwise you may not get the right.

I am, in great haste, Your very humble servant, WILLIAM ALLEY.

This letter, as well it might, gave our hero a surfeit of booksellers. Heavens! how he pitied Mr. Alley's parsons and graduates. It was a sensible satire upon an enlightened age. But was there really no trace of that liberality among booksellers which formerly characterised them? How freely had hundreds, nay thousands, been paid for books; and surely books were then bought with as much avidity as formerly. He would try again: it was to no purpose: and yet he knew not why. His former publications had sold rapidly. The difference was they were written for amusement: he now wrote for bread.

In this situation he was determined to have recourse to his old friend Ego, who, to eke out his poetry, enjoyed the comfortable consolation of a snug annuity.

Ego was very glad to see Charles, and said, after shaking him heartily by the hand, "Ay, ay, I am the man to come to for advice. Who have you applied to?" Charles told him to all the booksellers without effect. "Dam'me, that's a shame,' cried Ego; 'if I were a bookseller, I would treat authors with such liberality!" "But as you are not, Mr. Ego,' said Charles, 'what would you advise me to do?" "Faith I don't know,' said Ego, 'every body is neglected: would you think now a man of my merit would lay dormant as I do?—Stay, zounds let me think—I am the man for expedients. Have you any money left?" "Not much I assure you,' said Charles.' "Well, well, said Ego, it must be raised. I have it: I am the

man to serve my friends: it will make your fortune better than bailiff's business. Lord, Mr. Hazard, how could you think of being a merciful bailiff! If I were a bailiff, I would be the cruelest rascal that ever existed." "And, in that case,' said Charles, 'you would be more in character than I was; but what is your expedient?" "I will tell you,' said Ego: 'you will laugh: I am the man for making people laugh: I would have a new newspaper. There is a plan!" "A very good one,' said Charles, 'if a man had a thousand pounds to spare, and could stand in the concern without partners." "Yes, yes,' said Ego, 'but people must not, now a-days, stand upon niceties. Do you know any thing of editing? I am the man for an editor: I would have my paper full of good essays: I would stick to my party: I would maintain tooth and nail the principles of that side I decidedly took. If it was the ministerial side, I would not, like some papers I could name, creep, and cringe, and be fulsome. I would chuse that part of their measures that could be deduced from meritorious motives; for all conduct has its favourable sides. In short, there is nothing but may be represented upon some principle or other apparently worthy, without the wretched necessity of having recourse to spatter and vilify others. On the contrary, if I decidedly took up the part of opposition, I would expatiate on the noble passion of patriotism, and let the generous disinterested dictates of that glorious inducement tell generally against ministers, without handing up their names to the public, and call upon my countrymen to execrate them in the lump."

"Nobly distinguished,' said Charles, 'but in my opinion, Mr. Ego, you are yet wide of the mark. Why take a decided part at all, unless indeed the part of truth. What do you think of a paper that should watch the impositions of all the rest; expose them to public view; detect all their misrepresentations; strip them alike of adulation to ministers, and factious cavilling against them; expose the source from whence the corruption flows which poisons public peace?" "Zounds, the very thing in the world,' cried Ego; 'and so not spare one's very brother, hey, as a body may say, if he deserved to be treated severely; and, on the other side, shower down encomiums upon the virtue of one's bitterest enemies?" "Exactly my idea,' cried Charles.' "Zounds, give me your hand,' cried Ego. 'Why don't you thank me for thinking of it? Well I do think I have the readiest

brain. En't I the man for a scheme?" "Yes,' said Charles, 'and I am the man for improving upon it. For my part, I like it so well, that if you will breakfast with me to-morrow morning, and consider the matter between this and then, perhaps we may consolidate something that will be of mutual advantage."

1.10. CHAPTER X.

CONSISTING OF TEMPORIZING.

THE reader will think it a little strange that Charles, who had disdained to sue to Sir Sidney, should now seek out Ego, who, he had been informed, was one of those who did him ill offices with that very gentleman. The fact is, that in the most consistent human heart there is a sort of alloy, a kind of instability, which indeed, if it had not, our being would imply a perfectness which it is universally allowed does not fall to the lot of those bipeds called human beings.

Charles then raged with love more violently than ever:—for I would not have my readers think that because I do not take up their whole time in expatiating upon his amorous vagaries, that he is only in love by fits and starts, and at those times when I find it necessary to treat upon that subject, by way of varying others. On the contrary, I desire it may be understood that, let him appear how he may, he never ceases to be in love with Annette, sleeping or waking—which indeed, were it necessary, I could shew under his hand, both in poetry and prose—for one single minute, from the business of Aix la Chapelle to the end of his life: nay, were I to antidate the business, and start from the summer before he went to France, I dare say he might then boast as large a portion of that passion, at least, as many who have declared, ay, and sworn to it, that they were dying with it.

Oh this love! What will it not do? But I believe I may as well leave rhapsody to those who have no necessity to attend to narrative, and instead of saying what it will do, content myself with recording what it did.

I have mentioned our hero's detention of Mrs. Marlow, and his motive for it, which I remember I had the good fortune to find perfectly approved by the reader; for I saw him, in my mind's eye, smile as he read the circumstance. Indeed Charles's partiality to her was such that, after what has happened, it is almost a wonder his enemies had not by this time

made a handle of it to his disadvantage; for, to say truth, while other young men of his age and complexion were sacrificing to Bacchus and Venus—let it be observed I do not mean Astarte—scouring the streets, and getting into broil, our spiritless youth pored over a book, made a drawing, or set a sonnet: all which amusements were only interrupted by the harmless prattle of an old woman. Indeed he has often declared that he never passed moments of more substantial pleasure than these with Mrs. Marlow.

To shew however that self can never be out of the question with us, the subject of their conversation was nine-tenths of the inducement. Charles had now heard nothing of Annette for several months, and, in all that time, his love had nothing to feed on but the letter inserted in the fourth chapter of this book. The more distant his prospects were of an union with the idol of his soul, the more violent was his passion; for this again is the nature of love. Nothing seems to be impossible to it in theory, yet in practice it does not work miracles. He knew the soul of Annette; he knew her incapable of change; he knew, if cruel fortune ravished her hand, nothing could dispose of her heart: She had given it him: it was his; indissolubly his. Then was there ever such a prodigy of fidelity and zeal as Emma? No; he was secure. He could not more firmly rely on his own resolution than theirs. No attachment was ever so sure, so grounded, so permanent. What had he then to fear? Nothing from love, but every thing from fortune. Sir Sidney was more likely to be implacable now he was rich, than when he was poor.

All this ground did he and Mrs. Marlow go over every evening of their lives. Upon these occasions she would represent to him that indeed he was not the kind of man to live in this world; that it would not do upon all occasions to let the unqualified truth appear; that now a-days people did not open their hearts every time they opened their mouths; and she could plainly shew that all his miscarriages had been owing to ingenuousness and honesty, which, as he would never find it in the dealings of other men, so he might lay his account to its injuring him in all his concerns. She said he loved the truth, and she knew he would thank her for speaking it, and she would therefore tell him that she took the liberty to disapprove his conduct in relation to Mr. Toogood. He had himself, it was

true, shamefully abused those talents which he really possessed, and had made them scandalously subservient to his interest; but if the world chose to be so imposed on, was any one equal to the Herculean task of removing its prejudices. Mr. Toogood was in possession of a very comfortable independency. This alone, in the opinion of the world, would counteract all that could be said against him; and this being the case, she did not wonder that his conduct, worthy as it was, had been looked upon by one half of the world as envy, and by the other as illnature. In short, Mr. Toogood, she said, had it in his power to have served him, and it depended on himself whether he was to make an unworthy use of advantages so procured.

Upon the same ground, if he had paid a visit to Musquito, and given a little into his humour, he would doubtless have interested himself with the academicians, and, as he was now a man of very great consequence, there could not be a doubt but it would have turned out a matter of profit to him.

As to the business of the theatre, it was certainly too humiliating, and therefore he could not, in that instance, be too much commended. But, in short, if he chose to get his bread by his talents, it must be in the way others did it: there was no alternative: and she had no doubt, if he would seriously lay himself out for eligible employ, but he might yet acquire a fortune sufficient to satisfy Sir Sidney, who, she was sure, would consider every guinea that was earned as twenty.

Convinced by these sort of arguments, our hero, as we have seen, lost no opportunity of trying his utmost to get forward; and, having taken a great deal of trouble with the booksellers to no purpose, he and Mrs. Marlow were one evening turning all matters seriously in their minds, when she said, "My dear sir, it is wonderful to me you have never thought of getting about some real friend of Sir Sidney, and making him your confidant. If it did nothing else, you would know from a channel of that sort what were his private sentiments of you, and, among other matters, it would furnish you with some particulars relative to Miss Roebuck."

This last consideration bore down every other, and Mr. Balance was thought by both the properest man in the world for this purpose. He was however at that time out of town. "But,' said Charles, 'a thought has struck me, and it will convince you that I mean in future not to quarrel with people quite so much for their vices. What do you think of Ego? I have told you all his particularities, and really he has not very much prostituted his talents: perhaps indeed because he has but few to prostitute; for the pension he has was given him more from ostentation in the donor, than through any servility in himself. Indeed he has too good an opinion of himself to be very solicitous; for he takes as much care as he can that, in all his affairs, Ego should be the first person."

"This is charming,' said Mrs. Marlow, and I will warrant something comes of it; for, as he loves tittle tattle, he knows of course all Sir Sidney's family affairs, and it shall go hard but I will worm some of them out of him: and so you see, without asking a single question I shall get at every intelligence you wish to receive.'

It was then agreed that Ego should be sounded; but it was to appear that our hero knew nothing of the business. Thus was the first duplicity he ever practised occasioned by love. Indeed he could not live any longer in this state of uncertainty; and if this method had not been hit upon for the present relief of his anxiety, he certainly would have been put upon playing some mad prank or other, which might have induced concessions on his side, for which he never would have forgiven himself.

On the other hand this business was a lucky hit for Mrs. Marlow, who, just at that time, was upon the point of forging some sort of intelligence, to soften the edge of our hero's unhappiness. It was now however unnecessary; for as Charles was not to be supposed to know what passed between her and Ego, so there would be no occasion to relate more of their conversation than such parts of it as would relieve his fears, which again, if they were not strong enough, might admit of a little heightening; whereas, she resolved to sink whatever would be likely to augment his chagrin: for she was not one of those friends who unnecessarily aggravated matters, but, on the contrary, admitted that a

little laudable deceit was pardonable, when the proposed end was meritorious.

Many good purposes, Mrs. Marlow flattered herself, would derive from this commerce. Ego, she had no doubt, would retail what passed in the presence of Emma, whose wit and ingenuity would not fail to take hold of such an occasion to supply Charles with every thing he wished to know, even, probably, without the conscious concurrence of Ego; for it might be conveyed in such ambiguous terms as none but the lovers themselves could unriddle; and, come what come might, she resolved to invent consolation, where it really did not present itself, for she could not bear the idea that our hero should be so afflicted.

This was the first time his obstinacy towards opening a negociation with Sir Sidney seemed to give way. She hoped in time he would be wholly subdued, and had no doubt when her well-intentioned scheme came to have the assistance of Mr. Balance, that a perfect reconciliation would take place between them; and then, as it was in the power of Sir Sidney alone to place our hero in a very conspicuous professional light—which this foolish woman thought even more eligible than the possession of an inherited fortune—she contemplated, even with tears of joy, that moment when she should see him happy, equal to his deserts.

Big with this project and these hopes, Mrs. Marlow waited with impatience for the morning, and that she might employ her time to as much advantage as possible, entreated Charles to leave her for half an hour with Ego, before he came down to breakfast.

Mr. Ego came very punctually to his time. He was shewn in by Mrs. Marlow, who told him she was very sorry, but Mr. Hazard was a little indisposed, and therefore she had not disturbed him; but, however, he should be immediately called.—To which Mr. Ego made answer, "Ah, up late last night I suppose: this is the consequence: ah these young men! If I was a young man I would be the mirror of sobriety."

"Then,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'you would be exactly like Mr. Hazard, for I never saw him otherwise than sober in my life."

"Indeed!" said Ego, 'I am glad on't: it is very commendable. Always sober! Quite an altered man I suppose since he came from France. It is a lamentable thing that young men cannot make the tour of Europe without getting into so many scrapes. If I was to make the tour—"

"Sir,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'he only made the tour of France, which I do not believe either you or any body else could have done to better purpose."

"There, my good lady, you must excuse me,' cried Ego; 'the whole world rings of his shocking doings there. Why don't you know he robbed a banker, knocked down his brother, stole a nun, spent her fortune, turned sharper, killed a man, and then made his escape out of prison?"

"No indeed I do not, nor does any body else,' said Mrs. Marlow.' "Nay but zounds madam,' returned Ego, 'you must excuse me there: I am the man for knowing the truth of things." "You are not the man for knowing the truth of this,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'for every word of it is false; and I dare say by false reports like these, which Mr. Hazard has too much pride to contradict, Sir Sidney's ear has been abused, and he has lost that good gentleman's confidence."

"Faith,' said Ego, 'like enough, 'for there is nothing like absence for injuring people in the opinion of their friends. Yes, yes, I see how the thing has been: I am the man for seeing how the cat wags her tail. And so it was all lies ha!"

"Did not you see it at the time, Mr, Ego?" said the good lady, 'since your penetration is so keen."

"See it,' said Ego, 'Oh yes I—that is to say I had a glimpse, but that damned unmerciful teazer Musquito, and that cursed lamenter of his friend's misfortunes, Toogood, would insist upon it in such terms that you know I was obliged to run a little with the pack; else you know what chance had I for a continuance of Sir Sidney's patronage? Must mind the main chance you know, my good lady: I am the man for keeping a friend,"

"That,' cried Mrs. Marlow, 'one may easily see." "But stop a little,' cried Ego, 'Can you acquit him of this? Did he write one single word to any individual soul?' "And pray,' answered Mrs. Marlow, 'was there no friend had charity enough to allow the possibility, at least, that his letters had been intercepted; and, if that were the case, was it not also possible that he who did him that injury, would not stop at others?"

"Gloss, Gloss.' cried Ego; 'zounds I see it: I am the man for putting the saddle on the right horse. And yet do you know he had the address always to appear Mr. Hazard's friend. But he has such a way with him: sure, steady; never brought up the subject but when he had made Sir Sidney charmed with himself, on account of some act of generosity performed by the baronet himself, or his great grandfather. Yes, yes, it is plain. He is a devil of a fellow to be sure.—Why he bewitches people. Not that his praise of my poetry was any such great matter: common fame does me justice: I am the man for poetry: but, the devil of it is, who is this fellow that makes such a plaguy noise in the world?" "Who,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'a great man, a member of parliament." "A mighty great affair indeed,' cried Ego. 'In your ear, if he was out of parliament he would be in the King's Bench." "Indeed!" cried Mrs. Marlow, pretending great astonishment.' "Owes seventy thousand pounds,' continued Ego; 'you may depend upon it from me: I am the man for knowing how the world wags." "Well, but if this be the case,' cried Mrs. Marlow, 'how is it possible that Sir Sidney can be so blinded as to intend his marriage with Miss Roebuck?"

"I will tell you how that matter stands,' said Ego. 'If the ministry goes out, and they say it totters at present—for you see I am the man for being a bit of a politician—if, do you mind me, they go out, Mr. Gloss will be a made man, and then he will certainly marry Miss Roebuck.'—' "With the young lady's consent, no doubt,' said Mrs. Marlow.' "Not a word of that,' said Ego: 'she will obey, if you please, but never consent: I am the man for distinctions." "What has she any new lover then?' said Mrs. Marlow, 'for surely she cannot have kept herself heart-whole for Mr. Hazard, in the midst of such ceaseless persecutions, and against so many reports to his disadvantage."

"My good lady,' said Ego, 'such truth, such innocence, such sweetness, such sense of duty as Miss Roebuck possesses I have often read of, and indeed described, just as one describes in poetry, sylphs, gnomes, or flying dragons; children of fancy, offsprings of the imagination—I am the man for a choice of words—in short a thing without literal existence, but I confess I never saw it before.—Why I have seen her receive a command from Sir Sidney with a smile, while her heart was bursting. In short, she will become a voluntary sacrifice to her duty as soon as the ministry changes."

"This then is the arrangement,' cried Mrs. Marlow, 'and the poor lady and the nation are to turn about together."

"Even so,' said Ego. 'I wish we could say with truth that, in either case, turn about would be fair play: I am the man for a pun."

"But pray,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'what part does Mrs. Emma take?" "Why that, that,' said Ego, 'is what I am just now astonished at. Until very lately she had been a most strenuous advocate for Mr. Hazard, but I think now we may call her the armed neutrality. But, upon my word, my good lady, the young gentleman may thank himself if his friends grow cool to him. Can any thing be so mad as the way he has spent his money? What the devil had he to do with bailiffs, and charity, and beef, and bread? Nobody does it. So you see his conduct is a satire upon the world, and now I only ask you, does any body like to be satirized? I am the man that understands propriety. And then you see to brag of his actions, and try to depreciate the benevolence of Sir Sidney, in his favourite scheme of Castlewick!"

"Ay, has he done that?' said Mrs. Marlow.—' "It has lost him the baronet for ever, that's all,' replied Ego. 'Now I would not have done that: I am the man that never flies in any body's face." "But I assure you Mr. Ego,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'he had not done this." "What,' said Ego, 'did not he boast of having served more people in real distress in six months, than ever Sir Sidney did in all his life?" "Never,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'I will answer for him." "And did not he try to prove, by several instances, that there was no sort of comparison in his charity and that of the

baronet?—for dam'me, said he, one day when he was drunk—" "But I tell you he never gets drunk,' said Mrs. Marlow.' "Well,' said Ego, 'sober then: so much the worse: if he had been drunk he would have been excuseable. Dam'me, says he—"

Here Charles interrupted them. "Ha! my good friend Hr. Hazard, I am glad you are come: I want my breakfast devilishly: I am the man for the hot rolls and butter. Here have this good lady and I been battling about you. Upon my soul she is a strong advocate; a staunch friend: never saw such an instance of attachment and fidelity. But, come, 'ent we to see Miss?" "Miss!" said Charles, 'what Miss?" "Why Lord now how strange you make of it,' said Ego; 'I mean the old gentlewoman's daughter: they tell me she is temptingly handsome: I am the man that is a judge of beauty." "I wish,' said Charles, 'you were a judge of good manners. I gave you a hint yesterday that, if we were to be friends, you must not attempt to glance at my actions in any way; for as I shall not think it worth my while to explain my motives for what I really do, so I give you warning you will not find me in a humour to pass calumny by quietly."

Here Mrs Marlow brought in the breakfast, and the conversation became general.

1.11. CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH MATTERS SEEM TO DRAW NEARER TO A CRISIS.

CHARLES having taken an opportunity during breakfast of going out of the room, Mrs. Marlow begged Ego not to hint a single syllable of the conversation that had passed between them. She said Mr. Hazard was so tenacious of those resolutions he had taken of abiding by the truth of his intentions, without stooping to an explanation with any body, that she was sure he would break off for ever with any friend who should be unwise enough to stagger his determination; "and as I am sure, Mr. Ego,' added she, 'he has a regard for you, it would be pity you should lose one another's friendship in the moment of coming together." She hinted also thatshe should be glad to have some more private conversation with him, and cunningly pretended to wonder what could have caused this alteration in Emma? To which he answered he would learn the next day, if possible; for he was to dine at Sir Sidney's: and added, "Oh bless my heart—I am the man for recollection—Mr. Figgins is in town; pray has he called on Mr. Hazard?" "I fancy not,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'but why?" "Nay nothing,' replied Ego, 'only they say he has been like the rest of the world—got it while it was going, hey, you understand me: fools and their money—hey—I am the man for a proverb." And then seeing Charles: "but mum's the word: don't be afraid of me."

After breakfast our hero and his friend Ego resumed the conversation of the day before, which they had both duly considered. Mr. Ego said, that as far as his advice or interest went he was heart and hand at Charles's service, but, as it was both unnecessary to his circumstances, and improper at his time of life, he begged to be excused from having any immediate concern in it; "for I am the man,' said he, 'that knows how to take care of myself."

Charles, who was determined if he did any thing it should be solely his own concern, did not dislike this declaration, and after some further consultation, it was agreed that about eight hundred pounds was enough

to start the paper: two hundred of which our hero could muster, and it was proposed to raise the rest by shares of fifty pounds each. In short, Ego, in company with Charles, beat up the quarters of all those who, from disappointment, an adventurous spirit, or other motives, were likely to come into it; and, after several meetings, many regulations, and other pro and con, it was at length agreed that Charles should be the sole conductor of the paper, have four shares for his two hundred pounds, and a salary of two hundred a year: but, as its failure, if it did not succeed, must naturally be attributed to his want of abilities to conduct it, he should be obliged, on its being proved to be a losing game every day for a fortnight together, to take all their shares back at the original price; and, on the other hand, if it succeeded beyond expectation, he should be made a proportionable amends.

These terms were extremely well relished, and our hero took the field as generalissimo of diurnal criticism. He detected the fallacy of other papers, reprobated their venality, resuted their arguments, and shewed the futility of all their proceedings; and, though the concern sustained a loss almost every day, the world's eyes began to be opened, and probably the matter would have been handsomely taken up, if internal divisions had not convulsed the whole plan. The fact was this: four of the other papers had each sent a purchaser of a share, whose instructions were to kindle as much strife as possible among the partners. Thus, upon separate grounds, they began to split this little community into factions. One said a newspaper was not worth a farthing that did not take a decided part; another that they ought to have secured advertisements before they had started; a third was beginning, when our hero begged leave to remark that no partner had a right to interfere with the conduct of the paper. Let him then take up the shares, according to his agreement, was the answer. His was immediately at his service. Charles now too late saw the drift of this. He said if he had known he had embarked with a set of men who were afraid of a little risk, he would have set his face to the business alone at first; but he was willing nevertheless to abide by all his agreement. He had certainly ran himself out of ready cash, but if any gentlema would take his note, at a short date, for the amount of his

share it was heartily at his service. Three took him at his word, at that meeting, and, by a week afterwards, he was left with but four partners.

Had the paper been dealt by honestly, it would have done wonders; but the proprietors of the rest, who had not the courage to defend their measures openly—for indeed they were indefensible—tampered with the news-carriers, and were guilty of a thousand other paltry shifts and tricks, to prevent its circulation. They also brided the printer to insert such words as rendered the writing nonsense, after the correction of the last proof, and when it was impossible to prevent its going in that state into the world.

There was a dirtiness in these proceedings which Charles could not stoop to a detection of. He doubled his satire, and they their arts, till at length every partner had begged to be off, and he was left alone to stem the torrent. He now found himself playing at a losing game, almost exhausted of all his cash, and engaged for the payment of six hundred pounds; so that, driven into every possible corner, he was compelled to send this scheme after the rest, and sell the materials for a supply.

Now it was that Charles discovered who had been his partners in the paper; for, their end being answered, they published his disgrace in the most triumphant language their virulent and low malevolence could suggest. They recapitulated all his former miscarriages, gave an invidious turn to his whole conduct, misrepresented him in regard to his opera, and warned the public how it encouraged a man who, instead of being avowedly its servant, had the arrogant presumption to set up a standard of taste, and the vanity to suppose that all the world must bow to his ipse dixit.

Charles avoided, with every possible industry, all chance of getting into a personal quarrel upon this occasion; knowing that he could reap no honour from a contention with men of no character, and that they would, in their report of him, so pervert his motives of resentment, as to throw a public stigma on him, let his conduct be ever so right.—Indeed his notions upon this subject were a little heteroclite, for he maintained that duelling was not only a very barbarous, but a very dishonourable custom,

and that it served more to assist the views of cowards and assassins, than to support the dignity of such as possessed true courage.

In defence of this opinion, he certainly advanced a great deal of persuasive reasoning, which unfortunately nobody listened to; for people, however they break through established customs—whether by stealing your purse, or your peace of mind, or cutting your throat—never appear publicly to disapprove of them.

This very opinion was taken advantage of by Gloss, who negociated a quarrel so well, that our hero received a challenge from a rascal, and refused to meet him. His pusillanimity was immediately the public topic, and though he was a short time after under the unpleasant necessity of kicking the fellow out of a coffee-house who had had the impudence to traduce him, yet, in the next company he went he scarcely was spoken to.

Charles, securely wrapt up in his own conscious honour, certainly held all this in ineffable contempt; yet fearing lest accumulated provocation should induce him to depart from that forbearance which his rectitude had pointed out in his case to be necessary, he wisely resolved to read none of the abuse written against him, lest he should be provoked into a reply that would make his competitors of more consequence than he wished. He relied on the candour of the public for a tacit refutation of all calumny whatsoever, and, instead of involving himself in more troubles, began seriously to consider how he could get rid of those with which he was already surrounded.

He had about seventy pounds, and the furniture of his house, which was decent and convenient, but no more. The earliest of his notes was within five days of being due, and a fortnight more would bring the rest upon his back; in consequence of which, all the horrors of a prison, and the merciless severity of bailiffs, who owed him so much ill will, would be inevitable.

To avoid these unpleasant circumstances, he resolved to go to France, which determination however he imparted to nobody but his faithful

housekeeper, whose success had been upon a par with his; for Ego had brought her intelligence that there was no knowing what to make of Emma, that the ministry was changed, and Mr. Gloss now filled a high and conspicuous situation, and, in short, that every thing in that quarter menaced our hero's affairs with ruin and total destruction.

Though Mrs. Marlow, when she had fancied things wore a brighter complexion, had determined to put the best face on the matter to Charles, finding them in this desperate way, she saw there was no time for trifling. Besides, Mr. Gloss's situation was a public town talk, and all the rest would be known of course. Indeed the good creature could not dissemble; her very heart spoke in her eyes, and he saw his wretchedness before she uttered a syllable.

Another circumstance greatly perplexed Charles, and made him wish to seclude himself from all the world. Mr. Figgins had certainly been in town, but had not called upon him. Indeed a mystery had hung over that gentleman's conduct for some time. When Charles conferred on him the annuity, he received a letter thanking him in terms of such enthusiastic warmth, that he thought it a little overstrained, and some suspicious matters had since induced him to believe that his old friend, finding he had got all he could, now turned his back upon him, which the reader, no more than Charles, will think an extraordinary conjecture. But what were now his sensations, when he found, beyond all doubt, that this very friend who had sworn so heartily never to desert his interest, who knew all the secrets of his soul, who, in short, had more power than any man in the world to shew his enemies how to take advantage of him, had gone over to Mr. Gloss.

Charles had all his life wanted a friend; he had been very often plunged in misfortune, but this was the first time that he saw himself on the brink of actual poverty, without a single resource. The brute Musquito was master of an ample fortune, the pliant Toogood had a profitable place, and even that echo of his own praise, Ego, had sat himself down comfortably. These men had nothing for which they ought to be rewarded, but much that merited reprehension; while he, whose whole study had been to benefit the public, who had, in spight of all the malignity that

had overwhelmed him, the testimony of hundreds to the purity of his intentions, which had been evinced by a strong worldly proof—no less than throwing down some thousands in the prosecution of his laudable plan—he, in an early period of life, must now learn the bitter task of bearing distress, and yielding to actual want.

Charles, however, happened to have a mind not easily to be broken. "Come Mrs. Marlow,' said he, as they talked over his affairs, 'let us set our faces to the weather. They think that under such accumulated misfortunes I shall sink, and they will get rid of me; and indeed were I not of a different temper from any other man, it would be so: but I am not of a mind to indulge my enemies: we must not lie down in this world for want of resources; and, I thank God, my imagination flatters me I shall not be to seek for them, even though experience should, as usual, destroy all my hopes upon proof. At present certainly this kingdom is no place for me, and it has struck me that, by quitting it, I can not only turn my pursuits to advantage, but in that very way that, had I not been a fool, I should all along have preferred to the straight forward reprobation of duplicity, by which the world's good opinion is not to be gained. In short, I will tell you what I will do. I will get into Flanders, seat myself in an obscure lodging, and copy every thing I can lay my hands upon. HOLBEIN, or HEMSKIRK, TENIERS, or HOBIMA, WYNANTS, or VANDERVELDT; nothing shall come amiss to me; and when I have stocked myself with a sufficient collection, properly smoaked, varnished, and mutilated, they shall be put up to auction in the English metropolis, as the collection of a gentleman who died upon his travels."

Mrs. Marlow declared she had now some hopes of him, and begged he would set about it immediately.

"I will,' said Charles, with a profound sigh, 'and yet it is very hard to be cut off from every hope. I could have borne any thing, every thing, sustained torture, and called it pleasure, could I still have flattered myself with the hopes of obtaining Annette. Oh let no man place his happiness on the promises of a woman. I could have endured misery, beggary for her. Want and all its grim train, should have been my welcome companions. I would have blessed the moment that made me

wretched to prove my love. But, come, no weakness; let me feel, but not murmur; let me, since there is nothing else with which I can reproach myself, so forget the dignity of my love as to reproach her. No, however she may excel me in happiness and fortune, she never shall be my superior in truth and honour."

1.12. CHAPTER XII.

CONTAINS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, A VERY UNEXPECTED VISIT.

EVERY invention having been exhausted to ward off the coming blow, without success, Charles began in earnest to think of retiring to the continent: to which he was not a little stimulated by his new scheme. He was so closely pressed, that he was obliged to decamp in the middle of the night; for he had heard, that very morning, that a writ had been obtained against him, from one of his most inveterate enemies—though the note o which account it was issued was not due—upon a pretence that it was his intention to leave the kingdom.

It was eleven o'clock in the night that this scheme was to be put in execution. Our hero had just supped, and spoken these parting words to Mrs. Marlow. "Since I have lost every friend upon earth but you; since, in this country, men of honest principles cannot flourish; since my love and honour have been equally betrayed, and every worthy effort to gain the world's esteem and secure a faithful return to my hopeless affection has been attended with nothing but ingratitude, shame, and disappointment, I go to find a little recollection, and to shake off this strange dream of fruitless expectation in another country; and, since I have found to my mortification that here the whole world lives in a happy delirium, and enjoys no pleasure but through the medium of being cheated by their own consent, I will one day or other return and administer to their amusement in the only way any man can hope for success: the honesty of which I now fairly subscribe to; for how can it be said that people are imposed upon when they consent to the deception. Having made, by means like these, a competency, you and I, my dear Marlow, will retire to some snug retreat, where, as at a comedy, we will look at the world, and laugh, but never venture again to have any thing to do with it, otherwise than as spectators, for fear of the humiliation that, as actors, we should be sure to meet with.'

"These are strange declarations in so young a man, but they are perfectly reasonable, perfectly honest, and I can set the point I aim at within my view as easily as Mr. Gloss, though perhaps I may not attain it by means so rascally. And now my good, my kind friend, adieu. There is an instrument by which the furniture of this house is become yours. It is a poor present, but perhaps it may assist you, through the medium of letting lodgings, to eke out the little I may be able to send you. At present I can very well spare you forty pounds, and, that you may not have a word to say in reply, I promise you, if I should be in necessity, I will as freely have recourse to you."

Charles then ran over all his former schemes, and shewed in what instances he would make them serve as a warning as to his future intentions, which he had strenuously at heart, and through which he doubted not he should one day be able to shew how greatly he could be independant, with barely a competency. He spoke of the treachery of Figgins, but still attributed that, as well as every other misfortune, to his own stupid credulity alone; for that he ought to have known what a world he lived in, and not have suffered himself to be imposed upon. "And yet,' said he, 'my dear Mrs. Marlow, there is a circumstance that I must complain of, though it is taxing perfection, arraigning heaven itself! But this is not the time to awaken any feeling; to stagger my resolution. Still I would wish you to see that false, that lovely creature; to see Emma too. Do not however upbraid either of them. Let them only know that they imposed upon a heart that deserved better of them; that it shall break, misery shall dissolve it, torture tear it, before it shall consent to a single murmur, though but a whisper. Tell my Annette to be happy; to be supremely blest, without an intruding care; and to think that I am too fortunate if I have secured her happiness at so trifling an expence as the loss of my peace. Tell her—but indeed it is dreadful; I cannot at present bear the conflict, and I must—heavenly powers!—but come, let me be a man, and keep my senses."

At these words he reclined against the wainscot, with one hand on his forehead, the other on his heart, and his eyes turned upwards, as if imploring those powers which, if we may judge of what immediately

followed, were as deaf to his calls as the hearts of his pretended friends had been to the calls of honour.

As he stood in this attitude, and as Mrs. Marlow contemplated him with ineffable complacency, and tender sorrow, a loud knocking was heard at the door. What could it be? At that time of night too! Certainly Charles's enemies had been apprized of his intentions, and were determined to prevent his escape. "Lord,' cried Mrs. Marlow, 'what shall we do?" "Do,' said Charles, 'why if they will have me, I must submit to it." "Not for the world,' said Mrs. Marlow. 'For God's sake, my dear sir, go up stairs: pretty high if you please: and if you find it is any thing of that sort, fairly go out of the garret window, and creep on three doors farther, to Mr. Lott's.—You can easily get along the gutter, and, after the coast is clear, I will go to Mr. Lott's, apprize them of the truth, and you shall stay there till a proper time."

Charles made some objections to Mrs. Marlow's expedient, but a second thundering at the door overruled them. And now Mrs. Marlow went boldly to demand who it was that paid them this unseasonable visit.

Before she would open the door, she called to know who was there. She was answered by a postillion—for she could see his dress and his whip through the key hole, by the light of the lamp—that there were some of Mr. Hazard's friends out of the country, in a chaise, who must see him even at that time of night.

Mrs. Marlow, overjoyed with the hopes that her friend's affairs might have taken some favourable turn, and, at any rate, guarded as we have seen against sinister consequences, made no scruple of opening the door, which she had no sooner done than two men handed a lady out of a chaise, and all together came within the door: one of the gentlemen desiring the lady might be shewn into a room. This Mrs. Marlow, who was greatly struck with the lady's uncommon beauty, scrupled not to do; after which, one of the gentlemen, taking her aside, begged Mr. Hazard would come to them immediately, for that the lady was Miss Roebuck.

At these words Mrs. Marlow flew up stairs, and, in less than a minute, introduced our hero, first having informed him that she would bring him to a friend whose presence would make him ample amends for all his former troubles, but who that friend could be, in spight of all his entreaties, she left him to guess.

If our hero's faculties were upon the stretch, to find who this extraordinary friend could be, who, contrary to the hard customs of the times, had generously sought the dwelling of the unfortunate, what was his excessive astonishment when a gleam that had started across his suspended thoughts, just as he arrived at the door, was presently realized by the sight of her who held his captive soul, who now sat in the very chair out of which, ten minutes before, he had himself risen.

He started much more naturally than I have seen a hero on the stage at the sight of a ghost, and exclaimed, "Heavens and earth! Am I awake? Is it possible that the divine Annette—"

"No sir,' exclaimed the lady, with great anger, 'it is not possible that she can come any where, by her own consent, into your presence, unless to tell you how much she disdains your low arts."

"For God's sake madam,' cried Charles, in an agony, 'what do you mean? Am I to be every way tortured? Is my whole life to be a dream? Am I to comprehend nothing?"

"Admirably acted,' said the lady; 'I wanted but this to be convinced." "Convinced of what, madam?' cried Charles' 'that my existence, my very soul is in your power, and therefore you can torture it at will."

"For shame,' cried Annette, 'I only want to ask you one question. Do you think, by this violent conduct, to accomplish your wishes. Do you not think by it that you have, and with reason, lost my father for ever."

"I know I have lost him, madam,' cried Charles; 'I was told too I had lost you; and now, lest I should doubt the truth of my being completely miserable, you are condescending enough to put me entirely out of pain,

by confirming it with your own mouth: in this extraordinary manner too, at this unseasonable hour."

"Wretch,' cried Annette, 'can you pretend to charge me with what you have caused yourself? Is not the whole your own doing? Has not your unhappy impetuosity undone you? And now, instead of defending yourself, you are determined I shall be no more out of doubt than the rest. In short, I am convinced that it is impossible to be on terms with you, and I declare to you, in so many words—though I will not so falsify my character as to say it does not pain me to make the effort—I will never be yours."

As this moment, as if in a violent flurry, in rushed Mr. Gloss. "And here,' cried Charles, 'is the happy man who is to witness my disgrace, and triumph over me; but, by all that is sacred, he shall not live to enjoy this happiness; for this hand—"

Saying this, he ran to his pistols, which he had loaded to take with him, at which both Annette and Mrs. Marlow screamed. Mr. Gloss told them not to be afraid; adding, with a sneer, that no harm would happen, which probably he knew, for another person who then entered the room caught hold of Charles's arm, and proclaimed aloud that he had an action against him.

"Then all is over,' said Charles,' and dropt into a chair. Annette, at this moment, was not in a better condition. Lest however she should discover her confusion to Charles, she begged Mr. Gloss would conduct her home, declaring she felt herself greatly indisposed.

"I don't doubt it, madam,' said Mr. Gloss:—'the gentleman however shall smart for it. You triumphed sir,' said he, 'when last this lady was in danger; now I think it is my turn."

"Thine!" cried Charles, starting from his reverie. 'Worm! Reptile! Thy turn to triumph over me! But I thank you madam,' said he to Annette. 'It is plain you wanted an excuse in the opinion of the world for the most inexcuseable trait of falshood and levity that ever disgraced your sex; and I may say now that you have well acted your part: and so madam adieu.

There is yet time, before you sleep, to glut the ear of your father with the information that my downfal is completed. And now sir,' said he to the man who had arrested him, 'I am ready for you."—Saying these words, he snatched up his hat, and left first the room, and then the house, in company with the bailiff and his follower.

The moment Charles had walked off, as we have described, Annette cried out, "Oh, Mr. Gloss, I am very ill," and fell lifeless on the floor. Mrs. Marlow was not idle: she produced some drops, which revived her in the course of a few minutes; but it must be confessed that good old lady's attention was of a very chequered kind; for though humanity had obliged her to pay Annette every possible respect in her then situation, yet her heart bled for the sufferings of poor Charles, to which she could not help thinking that Mr. Gloss, at least, had contributed, by this last unmanly business of the arrest, which she was induced to believe he had connived at through cowardice: lest, had our hero fair play, he must have answered to him this treachery, and that very severely.

Under this idea, when Annette came to herself, Mrs. Marlow did not spare to exclaim against the scandalous conduct of those who had, she said, by spreading the most infamous and injurious calumny, wounded the character of a young gentleman, who had no equal in the world.

"I believe so,' said Gloss, with an invidious leer, 'for egregious folly, intolerable pride, and unbounded profligacy. But come madam,' said he to Annette, 'I believe there is a coach at the door, and we want no advice from this good lady, who of course is partial to him whose bread she eats."

"I do eat his bread,' cried Mrs. Marlow, 'and heaven is my witness I would not eat it if I did not know him to be what I say. I know he is the worthiest, best, gentlest, noblest creature that ever did honour to human nature. I know his soul is above every thing that is ungenerous or unjust. I know, in short, he is the very reverse of you, from whom I have not been able to take off my eyes ever since you came into the room; and I will tell you why: I look on you with horror, and believe you capable of

every thing horrid and infamous; for you are the very picture of a man whom I knew to be the most villainous and despicable upon earth."

'I am much obliged to you madam,' said Mr Gloss, 'for your eulogium; and now I believe we have no further business here." So saying, he gave his hand to Annette, who had been drowned in tears for some minutes, and who now retired with her protector, as he called himself, without the power of paying her acknowledgments to Mrs. Marlow so warmly as the case required, or her wishes prompted her.

2. THE YOUNGER BROTHER

BOOK VI.

IN WHICH THE GREAT VARIETY OF FOREGOING PERPLEXITIES ARE REGULARLY WROUGHT UP, AND COMPLETELY UNRAVELLED.

2.1. CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH THE READER WILL FIND MUCH MORE THAN HE EXPECTED,

A MOST miserable night did poor Mrs. Marlow pass in our hero's absence. She did not know where he was gone, or by what means to get any tidings of him. In this exigence she would have waited on Mr. Balance, a step which she repented she had not taken before—but as all her cogitations terminated in a resolution to adopt no active measure of her own head, lest she should injure him she wished to serve, she even sat herself down quietly, and waited with the most tantalizing impatience [...]ill, by hearing from him, she should be released [...]om her anxiety.

Under these circumstances had she remained, like a timid hare in her form, dreading she knew not what, till about two o'clock the next day, when she heard as violent a thundering at the door as she had heard the night before. She immediately flew to the door, and let in not our hero, but a gentleman who said Mr. Hazard must be found, if he was above ground, for that his brother lay at the point of death, and that he was come post haste from the country, to consult him on some family matters, which were of the last importance.

Mrs. Marlow begged his pardon, but could not conceive in what way Lord Hazard's death could possibly affect his brother: that nobleman, she fancied, had nothing but the title and estate to give, and those would of course go to his infant son, who, she supposed, was not lying at the point of death. As to any legacies, she did not believe his lordship had lived so

frugal as to have any to leave; and, were not this the case, she could not be inclined to think his good will towards his brother extended so far as to have induced him to do any thing in his favour.

The stranger said she was perfectly right, but yet his business with him was of a particular nature.—In short, neither could make any thing of the other: what the strangers sentiments were we shall see.

As to Mrs. Marlow, she thought this chicken was of the same brood with the rest, and that he only wanted to get out of her what he could, perhaps to lay a detainer against Charles, or for some other purpose equally inimical.

At the end of four days—for till then had this poor friendly creature been tormented with alternate hopes and fears—she received a letter, by the post, on which she was astonished to see the postmark Ostend, but her astonishment was still hightened by noticing the hand writing of her friend and benefactor. This was the letter.

To Mrs. MARLOW, AT —.

MY DEAR MRS. MARLOW,

As I know you must be under the most torturing state of anxiety upon my account, I take the very earliest opportunity of relieving you from it, by informing you by what means I am able to date a letter from this place.

Sensibly as I felt at leaving that false deluded creature in the hands of her betrayer and mine, I had no sooner got into the street, than I began to think my pecuniary affairs, at that moment, demanded my first attention. I therefore prevailed upon the bailiff to accompany me to a tavern, rather than to any house of security, that, if possible, I might hit upon some terms of accommodation. This, after a short hesitation, he consented to. There, while I plied him with wine, a thought struck me that this should be my first attempt at imposition, which I the less hesitated at, as the fellow was a notorious rascal. This stroke, as it has been attended with success, I have no doubt but I shall hereafter follow it

up with others, till our competency will be secure, and then I promise you not all the Annettes upon earth shall draw from me a single sigh.

I begged his patient attention to what I was going to say. I then told him that when I was last in France I fell in love with a young lady of considerable merit and fortune, who would, without reluctance, give me her hand, as soon as I should arrive on the continent; that the amour in question had created a jealousy in the young lady he had seen; and that I was very sure the business of the writ had been connived at with a view of keeping me from quitting the kingdom; that I would, to come to the point, make him all the amends in my power, if he would, in any way, suffer me to escape.

To my great surprise—for I did not think this would half do with him—he appeared willing to treat, and, in short, after many scruples—such as that he should certainly have the whole debt and costs to pay, and others equally cogent—he agreed, late as it was, to knock up two of his friends, to be bail for me, who, to make short of the story, appeared, and I gave a bond among them, to pay a hundred pounds when I should return to England, provided that event took place in three months; a hundred and fifty if it exceeded six; and double that sum if I returned a married man.

As I know these fellows to be as voracious as pikes, you may easily guess I lost not a moment in making the best use of my time. Thus, of course, I did not come home, nor would I trust myself to write to you till I touched this ground, lest my next letter should be worse to you than the suspence I know you have kindly felt, by giving you an account of a second loss of liberty.

I shall wait in this place a week; I beg therefore you will write the moment you receive this, and I charge you, as you value truth and my friendship, qualify nothing; let me have the simple undisguised matter of fact; particularly as to Annette. If she consent to marry that rascal Gloss, though my first feelings will be a wish to come to England, purposely to cut her husband's ears off, my second, which will very soon succeed the other, will settle all other considerations into contempt, and then I shall

be in such a frame of mind as to make me obliterate a set of people from my memory, in whom I have been mistaken. Surely this will be moderate enough.

As soon as I get your letter, and have deliberated a little on my present affairs, I shall endeavour to get among the Flemings. Pray do not let a single soul at present know where I am. This country is not so safe as France. You will find enclosed the forty pounds which our extraordinary visitants prevented me from giving you. I have no present occasion for it, and you can lay part of it out to advantage in decorating my old apartments, for the accommodation of lodgers. If in that, or any way, they can be turned to your advantage, it will give me more pleasure than it possibly could to occupy them myself; but remember, I charge you not to attempt returning this money, or any thing similar to it, for I declare most solemnly, if you do, I will not let you know my route; in which case your intention will be defeated: for, beside the hazard, I can in that case return what you send; whereas you will be deprived of a similar advantage. At the same time, to make you perfectly easy, I will permit you to do what you can for me, if I should be in actual necessity.

You see, my dear Mrs. Marlow, I must still be proud; but ought not a man to be so who is determined to impose upon all the world? He ought to be a clever fellow, and therefore should be proud. In truth, one should not laugh at this, for I cannot conceive a more melancholy reflection than that the intellects of mankind are so very slender, so filmy, such a perfect cobweb, that nothing in nature is so easy as to dupe these lords of the creation, through their own connivance.

Adieu: write immediately, directed to the post office, but do not, upon any account, venture a second letter till I have answered the first. Another thing remember: put all letters into the post yourself. My whole downfal among the Roebucks is imputable, you know, to intercepted letters; though they, poor dupes—is it not true that people are easily duped?—do not even yet believe it.

Your affectionate friend, CHARLES HAZARD.

As I mean now to watch our hero's progress for some time, which, by the bye, is but fair—as he is deserted by every other friend—I shall say, at present, that nothing of any consequence happened to him at Ostend, but the receipt of the following letter, from Mrs. Marlow, in answer to the preceding one.

TO CHARLES HAZARD ESQ.

WORTHY SIR,

Before I received your letter, I had gathered a great deal of news for you. God be praised that you are in a place of safety. Here I believe the people are all mad. The madest of them is her you and I, a month ago, would have sworn was not to be changed. In short, what signifies hiding it, Miss Roebuck that was, is now Mrs. Gloss. I have seen her myself, and spoken to her; but indeed I am so flurried I don't know where to begin first. They have made me mad among them, but I have left off writing to cry a little, and now I shall have patience to tell you every thing in form.

You must know, the day after you left the house, a gentleman came in a violent hurry, with a strange story, that your brother lay at the point of death; but I took him for some enemy, and so sent him away with a flea in his ear. I have been vexed at it ever since, for the news about his precious lordship is true: nay, it is now reported he is dead. But what is this to you? You know sir there are two infant Lord Hazards in being. When he comes next however I shan't snap him up so short.

You are to understand that your brother's illness was occasioned by an accident when he was hunting. His horse plunged into a river, and he, for some time, was so entangled in the stirrups, that he had like to have been drowned:—but you saved him from the other fate in France, and his good stars from this in England. As he was however sometime in his wet clothes, and—being half tipsy—would, pig like, insist upon not changing them—saying that nothing ever hurt an English sportsman in the chase—he was taken the next day very ill, and, as I said before, the report now is that he is dead.

So much for him: God bless him, and send him better off in the other world than he wished people to be in this.

My next visitor was Mr. Ego, who, with a long face, and I think real concern—but there is no knowing any body—told me that Miss Roebuck had certainly consented to have Mr. Gloss; that the wedding clothes were bespoke, the licence purchased, and the day fixed.

I thought it now high time I should begin to look about me, and so put on my hat and cloak, and went directly to Sir Sidney's house. I saw both Miss and her very good, her very wise friend, Mrs. Emma, who has been bribed over to Gloss's side, or I will never pretend to judge of any thing again. Well I only begged to know from the young lady's mouth whether the report I had heard was true. She said it was. I asked if it was true that the wedding cloaths were bespoke? Yes was the answer again. If the licence was ready? Yes. And when was the happy day to be? The next day but one. And now, said Mrs. Emma, putting in her word, you may carry this information to your friend, and tell him—

Here she repeated some nonsense from a book, that I cannot remember; but it was something about taking your enemy in their arms. To make short of it, I came away. The appointed day was yesterday, and I have this morning, with my own eyes, seen an account of the wedding in the newspapers.

There—there is your tender, constant, Miss Annette for you! And now I can only say if it makes you uneasy one hour, you are not the man of sense I take you for. What the deuce are these people to plot together, and creep, and fetch, and carry, and destroy the health and peace of a young gentleman twenty times their betters?—for he, let them think as they please, would not break his word, no that he would not, for the world. I'll assure them! What would they have next? But I am getting mad with them again. Oh my dear sir, how I would be revenged if I was you. I wish the story was true that you told that nasty fellow, with all my heart. I sometimes think it is, only that the lady fell in love with you, for that is more likely; and, if she had, I am sure you would have

more honour than to tell. If it is true, do, dear sir, marry her, if only to spite them.

I don't know what else to say. As to the forty pounds, you have stopt my mouth: it is hard however that you will be so very proud. Lord how could you write about decorating your apartments for any body else? A king could not deserve to have them so handsome as yourself. I assure you if I had not cried heartily I don't know what I should have done with myself when I came to that part of your letter.

God bless you sir, and send you as happy as you deserve to be, and then you will be much happier than any of your Annettes could have made you. I have not patience with them. But come sir, keep up your spirits, for something tells me all is for the best. Go things how they will, you are sure of one true friend: for I will work my fingers to the bone for you.

[Page 197] Remember your promise, that if you should want you will apply to me. But why do I say remember your promise? Did you ever forget a promise? Besides, you know you are not to cheat me, though you do all the world. I wish all the world had not so cheated you.

Your most grateful friend, And humble servant, E. MARLOW.

Charles had so far cheated Mrs. Marlow, notwithstanding her opinion of his honesty, that he did not inform her of giving the bailiff five guineas, as an accommodation fee, nor his paying the costs; all which, together with the expence of his journey and passage, sunk his stock to nineteen guineas; but he had not the heart to curtail the old gentlewoman of a single guinea.

He was fitting in his lodging counting this sum, and considering what he should do with it, when the master of the house, who had called at the post office, by his desire, brought him the foregoing letter.

It is pity my time is now so precious that I cannot give an accurate description of Charles's reception of the news this letter contained. No mad hero in romance ever played over such a number of curious gambols;

no, not the madest copier of them all, in the madest of his curvets and caprioles, in the mountains of Morena. The Fleming at whose house he lodged, might have sworn he was a tumbler, or a lunatic. One moment he stampt and raved; the next, measured his length upon the floor; then starting up, he, for about ten minutes, took a fit of execrating all the world, but most himself. Next Gloss's throat was to be cut: in short, if all his incoherencies were to have been literally put in practice, he would have annihilated Gloss, pistolled Figgins, called Sir Sidney an old fool, upbraided Annette as the most infamous of her sex, kicked Emma to the devil, and then followed her himself; for so we may fairly construe his saying he would nobly fall in their presence.

When this storm had a little subsided, he called the affrighted Fleming into his presence, made an apology for his outrageous conduct, and desired that a surgeon might be sent for. At the same time he bid him take an account of some of the furniture, which he had broken in his rage, and which he observed his landlord to eye with tokens of grief and astonishment, as it lay scattered about the floor.

The surgeon being come, Charles told him, in the most placid manner, that he had heard some unpleasant news from England, of the death of a relation; that it had put him into that ferment which I have so imperfectly described; and, lest a fever should be the consequence, he begged to be bled. The surgeon perfectly approved of the precaution, and immediately proceeded to work; after which our hero went to bed, where a comfortable potation, advised by a physician, and prepared by an apothecary, who, seeing their brother professor enter the Fleming's house, from the corner of a street, where they were in deep consultation, about the different construction of syringes, dropt their controversy to follow him.

These precautions operating with some calm, undisturbed advice, which our hero had by this time whispered to himself, brought him into such a state of tranquillity, that he pursued his journey the next morning, and, in due time, arrived at the ancient city of Ghent. Here he immediately looked for a lodging, and, at length, fixed himself to his satisfaction, in the upper apartments of an upholsterer, where the first floor was occupied

by a French widow lady, who had been settled there about a year and a half. She was in but an indifferent state of health, and paid an extraordinary price for her apartment, that she might not be disturbed with the noise of a family over her head. This was however no objection to her landlord's reception of Charles, who, she was told, was a perfect stranger, and had no attendants. Nor perhaps was it a bar to his accommodation; for ladies, sick or well, never start at a handsome young fellow: that is to say, as they do at toads and beetles. The lady also first sighed, and then smiled, when her landlord added that the young gentleman seemed to be very unhappy, but that he was certainly a man of some consequence, and a most elegant and comely figure.

2.2. CHAPTER II.

CONTAINING, BESIDES A VERY EXTRAORDINARY CHASE, AND THE DETECTION OF THREE ROGUES, AN APPARENT IMPOSSIBILITY THAT THIS HISTORY SHOULD END HAPPILY.

CHARLES, as had been his intention, proclaimed himself to his landlord as a painter, and expressed a wish to copy a few pictures, if there could be any way of getting at them. The landlord told him that the very lady who lodged in the first floor had two very capital ones, and, he had no doubt, would lend them with great pleasure.

The request was made to her, and she returned for answer that the gentleman might see the pictures, and, if then they were found to answer his purpose, he was very welcome to copy them.

To say truth, both the gentleman and the lady, though neither knew why, were charmed at this incident of the pictures; for the lady had heard of nothing but the gentleman's parises, and particularly of the beauty of his person, ever since he had come into the house, and he had an irresistible curiosity to see a person as much sequestered from the world as himself, and for probably as extraordinary reasons. He therefore returned a proper compliment, and, at a time perfectly convenient to her—that is to say, when she had put on a new cap, and otherwise prepared for his reception—he took the liberty of paying his respects to her.

Neither Charles nor the lady would probably have made so much ceremonious preparation for this interview if they had foreseen how intimately they were known to each other; for they had scarcely met when she exclaimed—for women's perception, as well as their tongues, is always forwardest— "Good heavens! Mr. Hazard!"—which he answered as emphatically, with "God bless my soul, Madame Combrie!" And then recollecting that she was said to be a widow, he felt a singular mixed sensation of surprise and pleasure, which gave a strange embarrassed

awkwardness to his manner, and prevented him from following up his exclamation with a compliment.

Whether this proceeded from an inclination to enquire after Combrie, which the knowledge of her present situation forbid, I will not determine.—Certainly the lady chose to interpret it in this light, for she immediately said, "You look as if you would ask for poor Combrie, Mr. Hazard: he is no more. He had scarcely made me independant, when I lost him; but I am hastening after him, and we shall one day yet be happy together."

Charles softened the conversation, declared himself heartily sorry for her loss, but begged she would not dwell upon any part of those circumstances which brought up the recollection of any thing that pained her on remembrance.

She said she was obliged to him, but she had long since learnt to be perfectly resigned to all that could happen, and the conversation of such a friend as he had proved himself, would be as agreeable to her as it had been unexpected.

When Mrs. Combrie was in the communicative vein, our hero suffered her to inform him of the particulars relative to her affairs, after the recovery of her fortune. What Combrie had written of his going to England, was but a feint; for, embarking at Rouen, for Dunkirk, where he arrived in safety, he posted immediately for Brussels. From Brussels, which they considered as too public a place, they removed to Ypres; but, previous to this, Combrie took a journey to Amsterdam, and there lodged their money. At Ypres they lived two years and a half in perfect happiness, and were blessed with a daughter, who dying in the small pox, her father, who had never had that fatal distemper, and whose attention to his darling child was not to be prevented, also fell sick, and took that disorder in so dangerous a way as baffled every exertion of art. In short, in one week fortune left her deprived of a tender husband and a beautiful infant.

"At the first shock,' said she, 'I thought I should not have lingered long after them. My constitution has, however, been hitherto proof against the strongest grief that ever attacked a human heart: but I am gradually declining, and in a few months, perhaps weeks, shall follow poor Combrie."

Charles warned her against giving way to unnecessary melancholy; advised her not to seclude herself from the world; gave her every consolatory advice within his invention, and concluded with the most fervent offers of his services, in any way that she should think proper to command them.

She said, though she had good reason for supposing that her end was approaching, she knew her duty as a christian better than to accelerate it; and, to prove this, she had empowered a capital house in Ghent to receive her money from the Dutch bank, which, as soon as she had in her hands, it was her intention to pass over to England, where, perhaps, the change of climate might restore her to health: if not, she should have done her duty, and could then die contented.

Charles greatly approved of her plan, and as he really felt extremely sorry at the prospect of parting with a lady whom he had formerly so essentially served, and whose case made her stand so much in need of friendship and consolation, he manifested great anxiety in this business. For one thing, he determined to recommend her to the tender care of Mrs. Marlow; and, in short, though it was impossible to attend her himself, he so laid out for her comfort and accommodation, that it gave him no small pleasure to reflect that having once saved her fortune, he should now, in all probability, save her life.

This was the benevolent employment, in a strange country, of that horrid wretch who, in his own, was represented as a monster of iniquity; for all which he received numberless thanks, and many a grateful tear from the generous widow.

One morning, as he waited on her to communicate some new scheme of pleasure he had been contriving for her, he met on the stairs a man

whom he was confident he had somewhere seen before.—His surmises were presently realized into certainty, when Madame Combrie informed him that the merchant had been just with her, with information that he expected one of his partners every day with the money.

"You are to know,' said she, 'I ever was partial to the English; and these merchants, who are of that country, are the most sensible and feeling men I ever knew. They are men of business, and therefore have a blunt honesty about them that I ever liked; and then as to property and security, I need only again say they are English.—In short, I believe I could not have got into better hands than Bondham and company."

"Oh gracious God!" exclaimed Charles, 'what do you tell me? For God's sake answer me: Was that Bondham I met on the stairs?"

"It was,' said the lady.' "Then by heaven and earth you are ruined, madam!" returned Charles. 'Forgive me, my dear lady, forgive me. I would not give you a moment's uneasiness, not the slightest shock, but you have not an instant to lose. You are in the hands of villains. Stay, is there an attorney near at hand? Can a man be arrested in Austria by the plaintive himself, for a debt contracted in England?"

In short, without any further elucidation, our hero left the astonished Madame Combrie, enquired out an attorney, and lugged him along to the house of these merchants; but, alas! they came a few minutes too late, Bondham and Co having all decamped: and, after some fruitless enquiry, it was ascertained they had taken their departure towards the frontiers.

He returned to Madame Combrie, in company with the attorney; told her that his suspicions had been but too fatally confirmed; and begged she would instantly empower him to do her justice: in which case he would immediately follow these miscreants, whom he well knew how to make an example of.

He entreated the attorney to accompany him; to which he consented, first making an agreement that he should be well satisfied for his trouble: which only proves that attornies are attornies, all the world over.

The gentleman of the law then drew up a short instrument, to give Charles sufficient power to act, and the landlord, and indeed half the town—for our hero had dealt about his curses pretty handsomely in the street—accompanied post horses to the door, at which Charles entreated Madame Combrie to make herself as easy as possible; for, added he, "I once madam saved your fortune, and I will now retrieve it, or perish in the attempt."

He then huddled a few necessaries together, mounted his horse, and, with the attorney and the guide, galloped away in the very track of the fugitives. They lost them however for more than the last fifty miles; but, coming to Amsterdam, found that they had actually received all the money, and embarked but six hours before for Harwich.

"Never mind,' cried out our hero, 'we will follow them." So saying, he was directed to a skipper, who, at an exorbitant price, supplied them with a sloop, in which, by Charles's direction, they ran, with a fair wind, under the shore of a village, at the mouth of the Colchester river. Then taking the attorney and the skipper in a post chaise, they stopt short of Harwich, at the house of a magistrate, to whom Charles related his story; which was this: that these men had defrauded him formerly out of a large sum of money, for which transaction he had fairly hold of them in England; but, he only wished to make his claim an instrument to rescue from them a still larger sum, the property of a French lady, which, under false pretences, they had drawn out of the bank at Amsterdam.

The justice, who happened to understand something of the law, advised him to arrest them, as the first step; after which, he said, he would back our hero's pretensions with his whole authority; and as his presence, added to talking big, might facilitate the hoped for success, he ordered his carriage, and willingly set out to accompany our hero upon his laudable design.

The reader sees these men were the swindler formerly spoken of, the bailiff who kept Charles's asylum for the unfortunate, and his security. Against the security he had a fair action of fifteen hundred pounds, being the moiety of what had been forfeited. Against the swindler he might go

for the whole, and also against the bailiff; and as his business was to tamper with them as much as possible, he sent an express for three separate writs, which kept him, though the utmost expedition was used, upon the tenter hooks of fear and expectation, lest his prey, in the interim, should escape.

Before they had proceeded a single mile on the way, they saw a post chaise at an alehouse door, with a man watering the horses. Presently Charles recognized Bondham, by the side of a chaise. He now called to the postillion to stop, and pretend there was something the matter with the carriage: thinking it would be more difficult to surprise them separately than together. At the same time he begged the magistrate would drive slowly on, and pass them, so that they might be caught between two fires, for they had an officer behind each of the carriages. This was happily executed. Charles's speaking to those in the other carriage was not at all suspicious; for it only seemed mere curiosity from one, which the other satisfied. At the same time he hid his face, and otherwise kept himself completely from a discovery, which indeed was not difficult, for the others suspected no snare.

At length our hero had the satisfaction of seeing the three gentlemen enter the chaise; which done, he got out, pretending to assist in setting the carriage to rights. The Flemish attorney and postillion were also on their guard, and, as the other chaise drew near, the latter, with great dexterity, left his work, and unhorsed his fellow driver in an instant, and then ran to the heads of the horses, by which time the attorney at one door, and Charles at the other, held their prisoners in safe custody.

Pretending not to know Charles, they called out, "What do you mean to rob us?" "No,' said the officer, who was by this time come up, 'we want to prevent you from robbing other people: I have separate actions against you to the tune of seven thousand five hundred pounds."

Nothing in nature is so cowardly as a detected villain. If he have a pistol in his hand, he will fire it through desperation; but, if he be unarmed, no slinking cur ever tucked his tail between his legs in so dastardly a manner.

The swindler cocked his hat, but that was all; the security sweat, and the bailiff trembled from head to foot. By this time the magistrate joined them, who exclaimed, "God bless my soul, I find it is first come first served here. I have a demand upon these gentlemen. Come mynheer, stand forward."

The skipper began to jabber something that nobody understood but the attorney, who explained in French that he had a claim on them for defrauding the Dutch bank, which our hero, in a most insulting tone, translated for them into English.

Next came a mock dispute between our hero and the magistrates. Both claimed the gentlemen as their respective prisoners, who, in their turn, beginning to take a little courage, demanded to see by what authority they were detained.

The officer said, archly, he had no sort of objection, if they had a fancy for it, to expose them to every passenger on the road; but he thought, as they might be assured they were nailed fast enough, it would be the best way to go forward to his worship's, where every thing would be properly explained to them. "In short,' added he, 'here are the red tails, and you may depend upon it I shan't let you out of my sight till you are safely lodged in Chelmsford jail. I did my business first, and if his worship wants you up afterwards, upon other affairs, that's none of my concern: thousands are serious things, and my mind won't be easy till I have fairly shopped you."

Several horsemen and others being seen at a distance, the prisoners consented to go to his worship's, where a very serious examination passed. The Dutch embassador's name, and many others of very high authority, were bandied about with great freedom. At length, there being, in fact, no possibility of exhibiting a just claim on the part of Madame Combrie, our hero contented himself with getting from them his original three thousand pounds, upon undertaking, by virtue of his power from that lady, that no further demand, on her account, should be made against them in England.

As I shall not be able to edge in a word by and by upon such paltry subjects, I will drop these three gentlemen in this place for ever, by saying that after this triumvirate came to Flanders, they entered into trade at Ghent, and, under the appearance of a considerable property, negociated money matters, which they resolved to carry on with scrupulous honesty, in order to beget them a character, till an opportunity should offer of striking one stroke for all. This they thought they could not more successfully practice than on a defenceless widow.

Having so laid their plot that it could not fail—nor indeed ever be known, had not Charles so unexpectedly come across them—they resolved to decamp, and, being arrived in England, avail them [...]elves of a fraudulent bankruptcy: first sharing the whole of their effects in equal proportions. This however they knew they could not do, unless they previously came to a composition with our hero—for, in his affair, there was evidently fraud, collusion, and conspiracy—which they had no doubt but they should be able to do, through a third person, upon easy terms. Fortune, however, ordained it otherwise, as we have seen.

As to what became of them afterwards, the swindler was one of the first of those who were transported to Botany Bay, the security died of poverty in a prison, and the bailiff, attaching himself to an infamous prostitute—who first ruined, and then betrayed him—at length followed his honourable principal.

After many sincere acknowledgments to the magistrate—with whom they stayed all night—for his uncommon attention and politeness, our hero and the attorney re-embarked, after agreeing with the skipper to set them ashore at Ostend, which would sooner bring them to the relief of Madame Combrie's suspense.

On the road, Charles let the attorney into his intention, as to the report he should make of this business to the lady; at which information, whatever it might be, he testified much surprise, and indeed began to think the young gentleman was turned fool; but, being convinced to the contrary, by Charles's following the discovery with a reward, he, from

that moment, certainly had a very great regard for our hero:—for he told him so.

They found Madame Combrie in a much weaker state than she appeared to be in when they parted from her. She listened however to the tale of their success with more unconcern than our hero expected, which—for the reader knows he was determined now to impose upon people—he explained to be this.

That they had overtaken the fugitives, as we have mentioned, and that being in England, where it was impossible to obtain any legal redress—for the matter did not amount to a robbery, they having received the money by her own order—he had been under the unpleasant necessity of coming to a composition, and of receiving three thousand pounds, instead of almost double that sum. "Thank God you have recovered it, madam,' added Charles, 'and let this narrow escape warn you in future how you trust to strangers."

He then displayed documents to the amount of two thousand eight hundred and fifty pounds; the rest, he said, having gone to defray different expences, and recompence that gentleman—meaning the Flemish attorney—for the extraordinary pains and attention he had shewn in the whole affair; finishing with a most florid eulogium on the generosity and disinterestedness of this benevolent lawyer, who had—still like his brethren in other countries—eaten, drank, and slept well, said yes and no, and rather puzzled matters than explained them.

Our honest attorney being gone, Madame Combrie made a very long and very grateful speech, by way of thanks, to our hero. Towards the conclusion she uttered these words.

"Seeing all this is the case, that your own situation is so straitened'—for Charles had told her every thing, except indeed that he was in present necessity—'that I stand in need of a protector, and that I sincerely believe there is not a man upon earth of such generous, such delicate, honour as yourself, let me offer you a right to call this money yours: a right I do not blush to tender: a right that should Combrie look down and

see us at this moment, he would cheerfully sanctify; for he was good and benevolent, like yourself."

"Take care madam what you offer,' said our hero: 'You do not however know all my situation. My debts in England would consume nearly one third of this money; but I own we might ornament a most smiling cottage with the remainder." "Lookee, my dear Mr. Hazard,' said the lady, I may not live, in which case, who can this money so worthily belong to as yourself? I hold it at present but as a trust:'—the poor lady however did not know how nearly she approached to the truth—'and as, were it fifty times that sum, were you without a sixpence in possession or expectancy, it should court your acceptance, so I can now only grieve that its insignificance reflects no merit on my offer."

"Madam,' said Charles, more seriously, 'you know my fatal devotion to a false and ungenerous young lady:"—for I must explain here Charles's delicacy never would permit him to name Annette. "I do,' said the lady.' "You know I can never love another as I have loved her." "This also I both admit and admire,' said the lady.' "You know it is not in my power to offer you more than the most servent friendship." "Which, in you,' said Mrs. Combrie, 'has for me more charms than the most violent love in any other man." "You know I have not a friend in the world, and that my fortune is ruined." "Talk of something that will enhance the value of my offer,' said the lady.' "Knowing this, if you will take me,' exclaimed Charles with the greatest warmth, 'I am yours; and heaven's my witness nothing shall surpass the fidelity and admiration of the best husband that ever devoted himself to the most disinterested and generous of women: and now, my charming, angelic creature—for nothing is so young and beautiful as goodness—let us first be married, and then to England, where our cottage shall be thronged with joys unknown to emperors."

It is almost unnecessary to add that the lady was charmed with this conduct, or that the very next day they became man and wife.

2.3. CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE PARSON IS OBLIGED TO GIVE WAY TO THE DOCTOR.

HAVING, at this ticklish period, married my hero greatly, I doubt not, to the disappointment of some readers, I shall leave him and his sick wife, who really seem to be fit company for each other, and return to England, from whence we have lately heard of a wedding in a very different style.

That I may be as succinct as possible, I shall take the matter up earlier than when Mrs. Marlow left Annette so highly in dudgeon, and so come roundly to that point which I must tell the reader happened to be a remarkably critical one.

The reader will readily recollect the conversation between Mr. Ego and Mrs. Marlow, which, of course, was only an echo of what continually passed at Sir Sidney's, and contained a very inconsiderable part of those manoeuvres which Mr. Gloss daily put in practice, to deceive the good baronet.

He had however a much harder task to perform; for Annette, and even Emma, must be shaken in their allegiance to this king of their hearts, before he could stand the smallest chance of moulding them to his purpose. To do this, he watched all our hero's actions, and, when he set on foot his newspaper, employed an agent to purchase—virtually for him however—one of the shares. This, it is not difficult to divine, was the man who arrested him, and from whom he obtained his liberty, upon the terms of his going abroad, which, had he not been so precipitate in proposing himself, would have been offered to him.

The person who held this share of the paper for Mr. Gloss, appeared to be a great favourer of the scheme, and was one of the last who seceded; both of which steps were good policy, because one enabled him to do the paper a great deal of private injury, and the other kept all its secrets within his knowledge to the last moment.

When the paper was put down, the other daily prints began, as I have already said, to bespatter our hero, who, after the business of the challenge, that he might not be provoked by them, read nothing they inserted. On that account, the following paragraph totally escaped his notice, which was given to the public about four days before Annette paid Charles that visit, the nature of which it is now my business to explain.

PARAGRAPH.

We advise a certain baronet, with that warmth and interest the nature of so extraordinary a case and his excellent character deserve, to look with every possible caution to the security of his amiable daughter's person, who, notwithstanding her exemplary devotion to the will of a tender father, may, nevertheless, be surprised by the machinations of a certain young newspaper adventurer, who, that his mischievous brain may be always at work—having given over attacking celebrated and established public productions—is now turning his thoughts to a scheme which, unless the parties are extremely wary, will destroy by force that domestic peace which he could not undermine by art.

This paragraph, in the usual pompous style, had scarcely appeared when two or three strange fellows were watching about Sir Sidney's house, and one was seen in the garden, but he made his escape over the wall before the servant could come up with him. To say truth, Sir Sidney was not a little alarmed. Indeed Annette herself could not help testifying some surprise; and, as to Emma, though her sentiments were perfectly decided, she kept them to herself; for some freedoms Mr. Gloss had, about that time, provoked her to take, drew from Sir Sidney what amounted to almost a declaration of dismissing her his house, upon a repetition of such liberties.

Until the upshot of our hero's villanous stratagem should be known, Sir Sidney proposed that they should all go into the country for a few days, and the place made choice of was Richmond, where they had been repeatedly invited by an old friend of the baronet.

Mr. Gloss having carried his point thus far, the accomplishment of his scheme waited only for its coup de grace.This was performed in the following manner.

As Annette was strolling in the garden, to enjoy the sweet serenity of a moonlight night, and, not to hide the truth, to reflect on her love for our hero, who now she began to fear would never be hers, and, what was worse, never deserve to be hers, two men suddenly came behind her. Having taken their measures like adepts in their business, she was completely prevented from either struggling, or alarming any of the family, and, in a very few minutes placed between the strangers in a post chaise.

These gentlemen told her, with many asseverations, to back the truth of their assertions, that no harm was intended her; that she was only to be carried to Squire Hazard's house, in London, who, Lord bless his heart, for he was a worthy gentleman, loved her better than he did his eyes, and who, this orator said, it was his belief, intended to marry her that very night, or stick himself before her face.

Annette, with prayers and entreaties, begged they would carry her back again. Her pride was deeply wounded at this poor, this paltry scheme of stealing her from her father; and I must own, and commend her for it at the same time, that she had, at that moment, a contemptible opinion of Charles.—At the same time she could not think that she ran the smallest risk as to her honour. She could easily see she should be pursued, and, as her father and Mr. Gloss were already upon their guard, probably overtaken before they should arrive at the end of their journey.

With these ideas in contemplation, Annette bore her misfortune with something like composure, which so won, in appearance, on her conductors, that they began to plead the cause of our hero very forcibly: not but they allowed it was a little hard to oblige a young lady to do any thing against her will, even though it was to please herself. One of them pretended to be so attached to her interest, that he would tell her, Lord love her pretty face, all how the thing was, that she might better know

what to make of matters when she should see young Squire Hazard. This well concerted fiction was nothing more than fancying what a man would naturally do who saw, as it were, a young lady fly into his very arms. He said, at first sight our hero would appear very much astonished at seeing her. He would then pretend to suppose the whole business was her act and deed. "Ay,' said she, 'but he shall not have time to do that."

Upon that circumstance they hitched their whole hope of success. If once Charles and Annette should begin to quarrel, every word must widen the breach; nor—that our hero might have as much embarrassment as possible—was the time pitched upon a slight article in this mass of contrivance. When could it be put in execution to such good effect as at that moment when his mind was perturbed, distracted, and broken to pieces, by reflecting on his successless attempts at independancy, and when he was—which is SHAKESPEARE's doubt magnified—flying from ills he had, to rush on others that he knew not of.

All these matters, so artfully conceived, so nicely combined, and so certain in their effect, could not fail of producing exactly what we have seen. It is needless to say that Mr. Gloss kept the post chaise in sight all the way, for he mounted his horse the moment they were fairly off, leaving word with a servant to tell Sir Sidney—who he had taken care should be at some distance—that seeking him and explaining matters would take up too much time, but that Miss Roebuck was stolen away by Mr. Hazard, and he was set out to follow them. He therefore advised him to come to town himself with all expedition, but not to be under the least apprehension, for he would restore the young lady, or lose his life in the attempt. There was something a little awkward in not taking the baronet with him; but there would have been risk in it, and the strong circumstances which would afterwards come out, must, he knew, completely cover any inaccuracy that, in a contrivance of so complicate a nature, was of course indispensible.

When Annette got home, and Sir Sidney heard her inveigh against our hero, and extol, in the highest terms of panegyric, the generosity and gallantry of Gloss, he ran over with pleasure. He almost pitied the poor desperate devil, who had been put to so pitiful, so unavailing a piece of

villanous folly, so ill contrived that it defeated its own end. He launched out into the most grateful flow of warmth and energy in praise of Gloss, and told his daughter that she could no longer refuse to give him her hand. Grant, he said, that this young monster had formerly made an impression on her heart, it was now as much a duty she owed herself as him, to tear from her mind all traces of a passion that could reflect on her only unworthiness and dishonour: an affection for an unprincipled villain and a paltry coward.

Indeed nothing had set Sir Sidney so much against Charles as his having refused to accept the challenge; especially after Gloss had reminded him that one of his ancestors, in the reign of one of the Edwards, had, at a tournament, fought a duel by the king's authority.

Mr. Gloss was not yet however contented. He would seek for more proofs against Mr. Hazard.—The affection of such a young lady as Miss Roebuck could not but be decided, let it be placed ever so unworthily. No pains ought to be spared to restore ease to so gentle a heart: a heart that it should be the whole devotion of his life to merit.

The next day he pretended to enquire about Charles, and found, to his great astonishment—for so he told Sir Sidney—that he had somehow or other got rid of the bailiff, and slipt away to France. Another day or two was taken to enquire into the particulars of this transaction. Every moment of all this time Sir Sidney was making preparations for the wedding: Annette being yet wavering and unresolved, till, on the morning of that day when Mrs. Marlow called at Sir Sidney's, by the greatest good luck in the world, the bailiff and the two bail were found out, and brought before Sir Sidney, to whom they offered to make oath that Charles was gone abroad to be married, and produced the bond as a corroboration of what they asserted.

Annette, without hesitation, now consented to the marriage; to do which she mustered up so strong a portion of resolution, and wore such apparent content in her features, that except now and then a sigh, she betrayed no sort of repugnance before company, as to what was going forward.

Emma however was not even yet deceived; but what could avail her feeble voice in a multitude?—that is to say in mere reasoning, for if she had spoken out it would have been in thunder—especially prohibited as she was from speaking. It was on this account she desired Mrs. Marlow, while Annette was at the other end of the room, to tell Charles "that his enemy was now an Antaeus in the arms of Hercules."

This the good lady did not understand, or could not remember, otherwise it might have made some alteration in Charles's conduct. And now came the moment, as Emma thought, for her to step forward. She gloried in the opportunity, and the more her adversaries approached to an host, the stronger she found herself against them.

Her grand coup de theatre, however, was for the present postponed; for, at six o'clock on that very morning Annette was to have been made a bride, it was the opinion of every one about her that she would never be married but to her grave. She was seized with so violent a fever, accompanied by so strong a delirium, that her father, Lady Roebuck, three physicians, and an apothecary, were fully of opinion she could not live till the canonical hour. Mr. Gloss however, to work as secretly as possible, did not fail to blaze in the papers with an account of the wedding; no circumstance being omitted to hyperbolize the splendid talents of the bridegroom, or the fortune, beauty, and accomplishments of the daughter of that truly patriotic and independant country gentleman, Sir Sidney Walter Roebuck, the oldest title of baronet in the kingdom.

Annette's illness, in compliment to Charles—though it was no more than what had happened to him, in compliment to her—had like to have had effects as dangerous as they were sudden. For a whole fortnight nobody expected she would recover. After that time however, though she certainly exhibited tokens of convalescence, yet her mind had been so rudely shocked, as to leave the recovery of her intellects a very doubtful business. They were at length so far restored as to sadden into a settled, placid melancholy, which left her a pale and mournful example of sensible and unshaken constancy.

Mr. Gloss began now to be afraid that providence had determined to defeat what he had defied the impuissant art of man to destroy. Yet, that nothing might be wanted on his part, he was indefatigable to procure intelligence of our hero's motions; when, at length, through Ego, he learnt of his marriage: Ego himself having been informed of it by Mrs. Marlow.

Emma, finding that this marriage was no counterfeit, like the rest, began in earnest to fear that all was over. To satisfy herself of the particulars, she called on Mrs. Marlow—for now she was determined to keep no measures—and was by her shewn the letters from our hero, by which she plainly saw he had fallen a victim to the arts of Gloss. Her heart bled for him. She perceived he had entailed misery on himself through the best pride and the noblest honour that ever young man possessed. His case therefore appeared to be desperate.

This however she conceived ought, for the sake of her young lady, rather to accelerate than retard her measures, which she was now resolved to go about fully and fairly: especially as, to give expediency to them, she had, through Mrs. Marlow, though unknown to that good woman, made a strong corroborative discovery of one of those facts through which she expected to carry her point.

Emma compared herself to General Monk; saying, she was determined to strike no stroke till she should be sure of success.

Having now, however, collected her whole force into one point of view, she marched forward, and, without a single hostile movement, obtained a decisive victory.

In other words, Sir Sidney no sooner heard what she had to alledge, backed with such convincing proofs, than no man upon earth ever took such blame to himself, or conceived such an inveterate enmity to another as he did to Mr. Gloss. Indeed had not the discovery Emma made involved matters of still greater importance, which were not yet quite ripe for public examination, nothing could have restrained the baronet from making of his quondam favourite an immediate and most severe example. As it was, he fairly inlisted under General Emma, who, though

she feared she should not put her King Charles in possession of that throne Annette's person, yet she was now sure of restoring the happiness of that kingdom Sir Sidney's family, whose interest she had so dearly at heart.

Poor Annette could enjoy none of this. A heavy languor pervaded her senses. She received every thing that was said to her with beautiful attention and solemn innocence, but gave no tokens of collected comprehension, except answering with a sigh any passage of tenderness, and now and then letting fall a pearly tear, with always—in a faint, but sweet accent—the exclamation of "I am sure poor Charles is not a villain."

2.4. CHAPTER IV.

CONTAINS A REPENTANT SINNER, AND AN EXPIRING SAINT.

As Emma's provident conduct, with her principal, General Monk, in view, seems to be an example worthy imitation, I shall here so far follow it as to bring into one focus such objects as will conduce to an elucidation of what to some may have appeared extraneous.

As however, early in this history, I disclaimed the idea of introducing any thing foreign to the subject—indeed I must have been very absurd if I had introduced any such thing, for I have full matter enough that honestly appertains to it—I will not give what I am now going to explain the appellation of extraneous, but leading circumstances.

To effect some part of this purpose, I shall now give a brief account of Mr. Figgins, from the time he bid our hero adieu at Lyons, to the period to which this history is advanced. The reader knows that the gentleman I am speaking of was heartily glad to quit Charles, and return to England. To this however he was induced by a motive, among others, of a better kind than has been yet explained. He was then doing, or rather professing to do what we are told, by the highest authority, is impossible; namely, serving two masters: and which, to keep that incomparable idea in view, was, literally speaking, God and Mammon. In short, his compacts with Charles and Mr. Standfast were very opposite things; yet, to the one he was obliged, and to the other willing to adhere.

Mr. Figgins had not sufficiently considered that however vice may have its allurements, there is yet something so pure, so winning in virtue and honour, that a man stands a chance of becoming a convert to it, even though—like an advocate who pleads a cause he has no opinion of—he should only maintain the subject by way of mere argument.

Thus it happened to Mr. Figgins, for he very often caught himself in the very act of seriously admiring our hero, when his agreement was to serve his enemies.

He did not flinch, however, as we have seen.—He discharged his trust to the very letter of it, and then claimed what had been promised him, a living of two hundred a year, to be added to his other income.

Finding however that Mr. Standfast's performance of this promise depended upon the interest of Zekiel, who, as we have seen, upon his accession to his fortune, left him fairly in the lurch, Mr. Figgins began to see he had been a rogue for no-nothing. He could not, notwithstanding, blame Mr. Standfast, whose loss was still heavier; yet he was determined to shake of that tyrannical yoke which—in consequence of a few favours conferred on him in his youth, out of which, by the way, the other had had his gleanings—Standfast had so heavily laid on his shoulders. To do this with perfect propriety was, however, no easy task, nor would he have been able to effect it, with any prospect of real satisfaction to himself, or advantage to others, if he had not thought of a coalition with Emma.

To this Mr. Figgins was stimulated by various motives. Mr. Standfast had unbent his mind a good deal before him, and particularly in an altercation one day with Mrs. O'Shocknesy, when such hints were thrown out as obliged him, in his mind, to take a decided part on the spot.

A few days after this he received intelligence from Mr. Balance of the handsome way in which our hero had settled on him a hundred a year.—This determined him to take an active part. The consideration that all his dirty work had been paid by a disappointment, and that the very man he had assisted to cheat had conferred on him such an unexpected and unmerited benefit, worked strongly in his heart. It reproached him with being a rascal; a despicable, low, shuffling villain. In short, like Harry Hotspur's starling, nothing, sleeping or waking, was dinned in his ears by his conscience but such opprobrious sounds, till, at length, the conslict abated, and he tasted the pleasure of feeling himself an honest man.

To do our hero any thing like justice, he saw was a most tremendous task indeed, and of this he soon convinced Emma, who said it was plain the attempt, and not the deed, would confound them.

The reader will admit that circumstances, half disclosed, lead to such a maze of apparently different meanings, that the chances are infinitely against coming at the truth, by pursuing any one of them. No wonder then they were frequently thrown out, and unable to proceed with certainty to any thing further than what Sir Sidney was now acquainted with, and which, as it related only to the downfal of Mr. Gloss, and our hero's reconciliation with the baronet, was but a trifle in comparison of what they were sure, by patience and perseverance, they might achieve.

Besides, to say the truth, they were willing to let Charles go the length of his tether. There was such redundancy of goodness in his mind, that it was absolutely necessary he should know the world practically: that he should feel experience. They thought they could marry him to Annette whenever they pleased: but here indeed they reckoned without their host, though it must be owned not without good sense; for nothing could be so unlikely as that he should take so extraordinary a step, though, as matters turned out, I hope the reader does not think it extraordinary at all.

Thus then their plot rolled on, like a snow ball, till Annette began to be actually in danger; for then it was found necessary for Figgins to act overtly towards Charles, in proportion as Emma observed the same conduct with Sir Sidney. For this purpose he called at Charles's house—for he was the stranger of whom Mrs. Marlow speaks in her letter—with the news of his brother's dangerous illness, which was no invention, but actually a fact; and, to confirm what is there imperfectly given, I now inform the reader that Master Zekiel—to use the landlord's expression at the John of Gaunt—began to rub off the rust of his ancestors, by leaving the world three days after the sporting accident, before spoken of; upon which Mr. Tadpole took possession, at the Lady Dowager's desire, for the eldest son, lawfully begotten by Lord Hazard, till he should arrive to the age of one and twenty: and, in case of his death, for the younger.

Mr. Gloss, however, who could see as well and as far as either Mr. Figgins or Mrs. Emma, took care, as we have seen, to defeat the whole end of this friendly visit. It was however repeated the day after Mrs. Marlow wrote to Charles, when Mr. Figgins explained himself as far as

he thought necessary, and, among the rest, told the good old lady that he had three hundred and fifty pounds belonging to the young gentleman, which he wanted to remit him: which money, to shew to what a degree Figgins was become honest, was the very identical annuity, as far as he had received it, which Charles had settled on him, and which he vowed to the Almighty, in the presence of Emma, he would not touch a shilling of till he had, like a man of honour, confessed his former conduct to Charles himself, implored his pardon, and, by some worthy atonement, merited his friendship.

Upon this subject he incessantly besieged Mrs. Marlow, and indeed so did Emma, till, finding they were real friends—for, as Emma told her, "he who gives money seldom feigns"—the old gentlewoman became as anxious to bring about this reconciliation, as Figgins to desire it. But how was this to be done? Our hero's proceedings had been so sudden and extraordinary, that he had no opportunity of writing till he was ready to come to England, and then he thought it unnecessary; for, lest his wife should become weaker, they packed up their alls, and began their journey in a day or two after their marriage: so that not one syllable came from Charles to Mrs. Marlow, till she received the following letter from Rochester.

TO Mrs. MARLOW, AT —

MY GOOD MARLOW,

I intended to have surprised you with my presence; but it cannot be. I am not however sick, except at heart; nor is my person in danger: on the contrary, the wished-for competency is already obtained. As however it is impossible to come on to you, you must come, and that immediately, to me, for I want you in a case where all your attentive tenderness and sympathy will be necessary. I am sure I need not urge you further.

I have volumes to tell you, therefore you can know nothing till we meet; only this, that I am married: so Mrs. Gloss has not so completely triumphed as perhaps she imagines; for you see I can even write her damned name with all the composure in the world.

Yours, most faithfully, C. HAZARD.

Call at the Bell.

Mrs. Marlow, who had, though innocently, been herself the cause of what our hero had done, was in a sit of distraction at the receipt of this letter.—She thought every door was now barred between Charles and that which could alone procure his happiness.

In this situation she was found by Figgins, who, in vain, administered every possible consolation to her. She said she was an ungrateful woman; a wrong-headed, impatient wretch; who, in return for saving her and hers from wretchedness and misery, had wantonly, though heaven knew not wickedly, heaped destruction on the head of her benefactor.

At length, however, they both considered that to lose a moment's time would be committing a real crime, while she was only accusing herself of an imaginary one. It was therefore determined that they should both set out in the same post chaise, and that Figgins should begin his attack on our hero's sensibility in the presence of Mrs. Marlow, who had so much to say in his desence. Indeed they most seriously promised to be each other's advocate, though both knew there was not a tenderer nor more merciful heart upon earth; and this was a greater consolation to Figgins than to Mrs. Marlow, for he well knew how sublimely our hero excelled in all noble and generous exertions, while she was convinced that this very sweetness in him would be her bitterest sorrow, for the readier he might be to forgive her, the more unwilling should she be to forgive herself; and indeed both of these reflections were perfect in their kind, for one had been guilty of crimes which, to procure peace of mind, must be pardoned and forgotten, whereas the other was only an error, which ought to be remembered, that it might not be repeated.

I shall now leave our hero's friend and housekeeper on the road to Rochester, and see how he himself came there, as well as explain why he could not reach London. The matter will be understood when I say that, having determined to visit England, immediately after the wedding, he and his lady set out, by short stages, to Ostend; for it was yet possible

that it might be dangerous for her to set her foot in France, and it was his business not to do any thing that could give her the smallest apprehension. This journey was also taken as soon as possible, for marriage had not, by any means, abated the good lady's disorder: on the contrary, she visibly became worse every day, which was not perhaps a little facilitated by a discovery of our hero's trick, as to the fortune.

In short, the attorney, looking upon the transaction as a kind of miracle, proclaimed it from one to another, till at length it came to the lady's ears, who finding that very generosity performed by another of which she hoped to reap all the glory herself, grew—so perverse is human nature—very unhappy at it. Not that she repined at being dependant on such a husband, for she spoke of his greatness of soul with a kind of adoration; but her tender heart melted to think that she could give nothing in return for such goodness, but trouble, uneasiness, and sorrow. That a perfect youth, rich in all the gifts of nature, and blest with heaven's best endowments, should be fated to drag on a life of sadness, and receive only the feeble endearments of unavailing gratitude, when the willing and inspiring love of the handsomest and best woman upon earth would be infinitely beneath his merits.

Some other female considerations perhaps lent these a little strength. Mrs. Hazard was many years older than her husband: her illness had not altered her person to her advantage—for she certainly hadbeen a very beautiful woman—and the consciousness that she could not render him that attention her wishes prompted her to, finished her wretchedness; a settled gloom pervaded her mind, and she pined at heart that she could only give thanks where it would have delighted her soul to have bestowed worlds.

There was however a stronger reason than any of these. Her disorder had taken deep hold on her before she saw Charles, and when she set out for England it had become a serious business. Our hero therefore, before he took this step, had a consultation of physicians, who privately assured him that whatever was done could be considered only as an experiment, for that her end, though it seemed at some small distance, evidently appeared but too certain. A voyage to England therefore was by no means

unadvisable, for certainly they had known change of air and a passage by sea bring about extraordinary cures, and that, if it should have the contrary effect, he would have the consciousness of recollecting the integrity of his own intentions in a business where fate at last was to decide.

Mrs. Hazard arrived at Ostend tolerably well, considering her situation, and Charles, after resting two or three days, to find a convenient vessel, and choose calm weather, handed her on board a sloop bound for Dover. Their passage however was rendered both tedious and troublesome, by an alteration of the wind, which suddenly chopt about, and blew almost a gale. Charles was himself very sick, but his wife's situation was dreadful; on which he was congratulated by several passengers, who said they were sure it would restore the lady's health. Those however who entertain this opinion are egregiously mistaken, for how can straining and lacerating the stomach be of service to it. I shall not, at any rate, pretend to say farther on this subject here, than that it had on this good lady an effect very different from that prognosticated; for she had scarcely landed at Dover, after a passage of seventeen hours, when she was seized with fainting fits, which followed one another, at different intervals, for three days; after which, she grew more equal in her symptoms, being neither so high nor so low in spirits.

In this equanimity of mind, she thought she could very well proceed on her journey, and both she and our hero flattered themselves that, after this crisis of her disorder, it would take a favourable turn. They therefore set out, making short stages; or, as the postillion from the ship, who had been a sailor, called it, trips.

At length the whole hopes of both Charles and his lady were frustrated; for she had scarcely got into the inn at Rochester, when she was again seized with her fainting fits, which continued in so long and so alarming a succession, that the worst consequences were greatly feared. Charles therefore wrote, as we have seen, immediately to Mrs. Marlow, till whose arrival he became—as indeed he had been all along—a tender and affectionate husband, a consoling and instructive companion, and, what was perhaps as much to his honour as either, a watchful and attentive

nurse:—and in this sentiment I will insist; for upon the same principle, in a state, that the bustle of war is only necessary in proportion as it promotes the blessings of peace, so he is the greatest man who can relish, after the exertions of his public duty, in a still more exalted degree, the felicity arising from domestic tranquillity.

2.5. CHAPTER V.

WHERE THE READER WILL PAY A MELANCHOLY VISIT TO ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

WHEN Mrs. Marlow arrived at Rochester, Mrs. Hazard was at the last extremity, so that the good old lady had little more to do than to close her eyes.

Mrs. Hazard's whole conduct, throughout her illness, had been touching and exemplary. Charles, though he did not love her with ardour, yet loved her with a better affection than do nine husbands out of ten love their wives. He found himself possessed of a woman capable of making any man happy, and with whom he had flattered himself he should pass a life of sober, rational delight. Again, she was a kind of outcast, like himself, and their fortunes, by a similar chain of circumstances, pointed them out as fit partners for each other. It is not justice then to say he barely regretted her loss. He mourned it; honestly, sincerely mourned it. Indeed so much, that had he been given his choice to have had her restored to life, or Annette unmarried, he would not have hesitated a moment: so much was generosity in him above self-interest.

All that he could now do was to pay what respect was in his power to her memory. He procured her to be buried in the cathedral; had a small, but elegantly designed, monument erected over her grave; drew the design and wrote the epitaph himself; in which was prettily introduced her maiden name, her name by her first marriage, and that which she owned when she died; concluding that he, disconsolate as he was, evidently deserved her less than either her father or her first husband: for she had fled from him, to join them.

This image, poetically put, had, as the reader sees, capabilities, and Charles so improved upon them, that his pen did not shame his conception.

These preparations took up nearly seven weeks; for Charles would not stir from the spot till he had seen them finished. The exemplary conduct of so respectable a young man, drew a crowd of friends about him, and his lodgings were thronged with a number of the first people in the neighbourhood, who called on him with compliments of condolence, all which he received with an unaffected dignity, peculiar to himself; till at length, having settled every thing to his satisfaction, he left Rochester with the title of 'The pattern for husbands.'

All this train of circumstances I thought it better to dispatch at once, than to introduce Figgins before I could give him a clear course.

When Figgins and Mrs. Marlow came within a mile of Rochester, it was agreed that he should get out, and saunter slowly on, in order that she might break the ice for him. When she came to the Bell, however, a waiter was sent with her to Charles's apartments, where being immediately conducted to the lady's chamber, and finding her in the condition I have described, all ideas of any other circumstance or person upon earth utterly fled from her. She thought no more of Mr. Figgins than of the man in the moon. On his part, when he came to the inn, and, upon enquiry, found how matters were, he felt that he could not have chosen a more improper moment than the present, and therefore determined to wait a day or two, or till he should hear from Mrs. Marlow.

The next morning, however, Mrs. Hazard's death happened, and when Mrs. Marlow had refreshed herself, after her fatigues, with a little sleep, it came into her mind that Figgins must be at the inn.

It will readily be seen that this event, sad as it was, had abated Mrs. Marlow's anger against herself; for, both our hero and Annette being at that moment single, the mischief she had done was, as she thought, not now irretrievable.

It was a sad moment to be sure, but still her tongue itched to inform Charles that Sir Sidney was his friend, and that there was no further obstacle, except poor Annette's unhappy indisposition, to the completion of

his wishes. She could not however help throwing out a few hints. This she took an opportunity of doing that very evening, while Charles was contemplating with sober awful attention the features of the poor lady, who was then lying in her shroud. After a long and silent examination of that dreary state of sad mortality; that state so much courted, yet so little desired; an involuntary sigh escaped him, and he uttered, "There certainly is a resemblance." "A resemblance of what?' said Mrs. Marlow, near whom he did not seem conscious he was then standing.'

"Oh!" said Charles, starting, 'I had forgot you were here. What did you say?" "Nay,' said she, 'I asked you what you said." "Upon my word I have forgot,' answered Charles, 'but I know I was thinking that poor Annette here—" "Annette!" said Mrs. Marlow, 'no, thank God, she is not here, nor in this shocking state. Annette! Lord sir, what made you think of Miss Annette?"

"Miss Annette!" said Charles. 'Is she not—" "No that she is not,' cried the good old lady, 'she is not married, nor has she been. It was a report, and a lie, circulated by that devil Gloss; and three days after I had written you word of it, I could almost have cut off the very fingers that held the pen which wrote such false news. No sir, thank God, that villain's reign is over; Sir Sidney will beg your pardon, and you will be restored to his friendship."

Charles stood in such astonishment while he heard these words, that he could not prevent her uttering them. The moment she had done so, however, he replied "I hope all this may be found true, but it would be indecent indeed, at present, to enter into it further. The most desirable expectation upon earth should not prevent me from doing my duty here."

'Ay, ay, you again,' said Mrs. Marlow. 'God bless you for it. Will any body make me believe you won't at last be perfectly happy? But I beg your pardon; I won't say another word; only this, that poor Mr. Figgins has repented of all his villany, and you have not a better friend in the world."

"Figgins?' said Charles. 'Impossible!" "Indeed sir it is not,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'for he is now at the inn, and dares not come into your presence, for fear you should not pardon him, although he would lay down his life to receive forgiveness at your hands."

She then produced the three hundred and fifty pounds, and began to enumerate so many proofs of his conversion, that Charles, in spight of himself, heard her to an end, and, when he had done so, was upon the point of dispatching a messenger to Figgins, to see him immediately; but Mrs. Marlow said it would be better to send to him that night, but not to appoint him till the morning, for he would be greatly affected at a proposal of being kindly received, and it would give a little time to prepare him for such a meeting.

This was well put in by Mrs. Marlow, for it ensured Figgins a kind message, which must inevitably be the harbinger of a reconciliation.

The next morning, the breakfast things upon the table, and our hero sitting thoughtfully, while he looked at a book which he could pay no attention to, Figgins was ushered in by Mrs. Marlow. He was beginning, with a low inclination of the body, to make a speech, when our hero, taking him by the hand, interrupted him with "Mr. Figgins, I beg I may not hear a single retrospective word. If it can be possible that you ever did me any ill office, it must have been through the blind influence of false gratitude. Sense of obligation to a rascal made you, perhaps, a little unjust yourself. It is not till lately I have seen this, nor did you, very likely, at the time. At any rate, my mind is now in no state for investigations; therefore, I beg our conversation may be on no topic that may divert it from that object on which it is fixed.—For the rest, I freely give you my hand; and as I am sure we ever had a regard for each other, let it in future continue without interruption."

"My incomparable friend exactly,' said Figgins. Oh God, sir, I wish you would permit me to give way to what I feel. But I suppress it. Yet I shall never be happy till, by shewing you what I have been, you shall see what I truly am. How could I?—but I have done. Only let me say that

this is the happiest moment of my life, because it is the most honourable."

After some hours, Charles began to be greatly pleased at having Figgins with him in this extremity. He had suffered much poignant uneasiness from reflecting that he was again without a single friend. Figgins had been the only man he had ever considered in that light. To him he had given his unreserved confidence. The lighter and more youthful of his pleasures had been pursued in his company, which, though perhaps not the most worthy, yet are unceasingly the most endearing. In short, Charles was melancholy, he was fatigued at heart by looking at nothing but unpleasant prospects, real pain, and certain disappointment. Not that his grief was of that very apparent kind which pained every body who witnessed it. He had no opinion of that sorrow which vents itself in cries and lamentations. His was ardent and honest, but it was decent and manly. Thus, no friend ever came more opportunely. With Figgins he could divide it: from him he could receive as much consolation as such grief was capable of admitting. There were collateral considerations also that weighed in this business. Figgins had known poor Combrie; had assisted in obtaining that very fortune, part of which Charles had now in his possession; and it gave him a melancholy pleasure to reflect that their returning friendship would be cemented by so awful a circumstance as Figgins's performing the last mournful rites to the poor deceased lady.

Thus consoled, Charles consulted his friend in every step he took, and they both became so fond of their solemn office, that no other subject intruded itself till after the day that hid the lady's cares within the silent tomb.

Into that tomb however I shall not descend, nor shall I say any thing more about it than that, from the moment it was completed to Charles's satisfaction, no stranger ever visited Rochester cathedral but was particularly shewn it, and told its history.

From the interment to the time of their quitting Rochester, Figgins took every opportunity of opening his grand battery, which he begged he might preface with a history of himself, that his friend might see what sort of

men there were in the world, and how easy it was to pass art and wickedness for wisdom and goodness. He assured Charles it would take a burthen off his mind that never could be lightened but by a free confession; that it was the only lurking uneasiness that remained; and, that once dissipated, he should never again suffer a single moment's care; but, on the contrary, if he were prohibited from the only means that could relieve his mind, his whole life would be imbittered with the recollection that his happiness was incomplete.

At length, Charles growing more and more composed in his mind, Figgins was permitted to say what he pleased, which favour obtained, he began as follows.

"My dear sir, let me premise to you, never take into your favour a man whose origin or education has placed him in the way of imbibing low or vulgar prejudices. In proportion as he has ability enough to think for himself, he will, from a captious consciousness of inferiority, fancy himself in as natural a state of warfare with his superiors, as the crow does with the eagle, and will supply in cunning what he wants in strength.'

"These being his affections, should an opportunity serve of mending his fortune, what are then his reflections? Why, truly, that superior talents have done that for him which ungrateful fortune neglected to do. He therefore transfers the obligation from himself to his patron, and, with all the low cunning of a tricking servant, he will do his utmost to undermine that interest it is his duty to promote. At the same time there are some few examples to the contrary. Very few, however; for he the world calls an upstart is very feldom indeed known to be grateful.'

"How must it be then when one lowly born, bred in a school situate in the midst of every species of wickedness, stimulated to all the licentious practices of broils and riots, and practised only in art and craftiness, meets, at his setting out in the world, with a man who makes a point of chusing him out for this very unluckiness, and who means to use no part of his qualities but those which are to disgrace him in the eye of every honest man.'

"These are the portraits of Mr. Standfast and myself! I think not my birth a disgrace, for my parents were honest. I think not my education an unavailing one, because I imbibed the same principles of learning as I should have done at the best school; but as, till I was almost a man, I mixed with none but the most filthy vulgar, what wonder if low cunning and subtle artifice made up my mind: for how, but by the use of such talents, could I ever hope to rise in the world? And then, as if a single spark of virtue—which God knows I honestly believed had no existence but in idea—was likely to check this worthy belief, in stept Mr. Standfast, who assured me that no man, not born to a fortune, ever rose to one without certain talents, which he called superior genius, but which I now denominate rascality.'

"In short, I was to be placed about you as a sort of evil genius, and to give me as much power as possible over you, that is to say, as much hold as possible on your generosity, you were to seduce my sister, and I was to overlook it; whereas I never had a sister, nor was that woman any more than a common creature of the town. In short, all you saw at my house was a delusion, calculated for the purpose of introducing you to me, and giving you fresh apparent proofs of Mr. Standfast's attachment, probably lest you should discover the villany he happened then to be practising against your father."

Here Mr. Figgins gave a copious detail of all the reader knows already, relative to the measures carried into effect by him and Standfast, both against Charles and his father; honestly stating how far he took shame to himself in this business, and shewing when he first began to feel repugnance.

In short, he did not omit a circumstance which I have already related; and having fairly opened our hero's eyes as to Gloss, Sir Sidney, and every one else, concluded with assuring him that the baronet was ready to take him heartily by the hand, make him a concession for his unkind and unmerited coolness, and beg to be admitted into his friendship with more warmth than ever.

Figgins wound up this period pretty warmly, and then added, "to which happy reconciliation it is needless to say will succeed your marriage with Annette, from which pleasure—due alone to two such hearts—may I ever be excluded, if I cease to be worthy its contemplation."

To this succeeded a conversation consisting entirely of remarks. The whole of Standfast's conduct was taken piece meal, and commented on, as far as it was consistent with Figgins's compact with Emma, and Charles plainly saw that, but for that viper, both his father and mother might have been alive, in all probability, at that moment.

As to Figgins himself, Charles did not choose to let his opinion of him take date earlier than his reformation, since which he was charmed with every action.

2.6. CHAPTER VI.

WHICH WILL BOTH PLEASE AND AFFECT THE READER.

Sir Sidney and his family were by this time in Warwickshire. Nothing however, hard as his inclination spurred him, could induce Charles to pay his respects to the baronet before he discharged his debts in London. He panted to find himself once more a free man in his own country. Sending Mrs. Marlow therefore before him, whose presence was particularly wished—for more than one reason—by Emma, our hero and Figgins visited all the quondam proprietors of the impartial newspaper, and paid off their demands; nor did they beget a little consternation among them by saying that the cause was now taken up in so spirited a manner, that a public print would shortly come out, which must be the inevitable destruction of all the rest; for it would expose their partiality, their bribes, their connections, together with all the names of those who were their supporters and abettors, and, in short, their whole arcana, from such authority as the whole world would know in a moment to be authentic.

So far did they carry this, that hand bills were immediately dispersed, holding out, in such feasible terms, a plan for the destruction of these diurnal locusts, that private terms of conciliation came to them from two or three of the most vulnerable, which they, to foment the matter still more, published in a second hand bill.

At length, having enjoyed a complete laugh at them, and been joined by the town, they went into the country, and left them sweating with suspense.

The meeting between Charles and Sir Sidney was truly affecting. The noble candour of the baronet, the manly honesty of his self-accusation, had in it a dignity of soul highly admirable. He thought nothing a condescension which could serve to assure his young friend how deeply he felt the recollection of his former slights and suspicions; nor did he spare

either his penetration or his justice, for having admitted them, for a single moment, to take place in his mind.

He declared he had ever held it as a maxim that the most glorious moment of a man's life was that in which he acknowledged and repented of an error; and so heartily was he, at that instant, ashamed of his conduct in relation to Charles, that he should never have forgiven himself if it had not convinced him, at the same time, of his valuable friend's unparalleled virtue: that it was the very fire out of which that virtue came pure from the trial.

Charles, who endeavoured in vain to prevent this declaration, had nothing for it but to palliate the blame Sir Sidney had so handsomely thrown on himself. He said, under such delusive influence, it was impossible but he must have fallen in with the opinion of others; for that the very goodness of his heart would naturally incline him to credit so many well confirmed circumstances. It was the business of those who had attempted his downfal to stick at nothing. They had their private motives, of which it was impossible he should see the extent; nay, as their villanies involved so many important circumstances, a nice investigation of which was necessary to effect their detection, it was extremely difficult, as well as dangerous, for a friend, though ever so zealous, to offer any thing in his defence; while, on his side, conscious of the integrity of his own motives, Sir Sidney must ultimately have condemned him as deficient in every delicate feeling if he appeared forward to deprecate anger which he had neither provoked nor merited.

He said much more to this purpose, and concluded with entreating Sir Sidney to believe that could he have satisfied his own susceptibility, there was no moment during the whole time he had the misfortune to labour under his ill opinion, that he would not have gone any length to have effected a reconciliation. That reconciliation was now, he thanked God, complete, without any conduct derogatory to the honour of either, and it should be the business of his life to preserve so valuable a friendship uninterrupted.

Lady Roebuck received Charles as the son of her deceased friend. She found him just what she wished, but not more than she expected. She thanked heaven that so perfect a good understanding had happily taken place, and declared, except a tinge of unhappiness at the situation of Annette, she had not now another wish to gratify.

Emma did no more than receive her king, and render him her allegiance. She told him he was welcome; welcome as the rain to MARCUS AURELIUS; though, like that, he came a little of the latest: but that it was not a time to talk, for, like that general she had mentioned, "'now they were refreshed, they had yet a battle to gain."'

A consultation on the measures necessary to be taken was now proposed; previous to which however Charles warmly entreated to see Annette, with whose melancholy situation Figgins and Mrs. Marlow had gradually acquainted him. He was told the sight of her would greatly shock him; that she knew nobody; that she was continually buried in profound meditation; and yet there was a distinction in her manner of noticing those who were near her: if it could be called noticing them; for she testified less melancholy when Emma was present than any other person, except Mrs. Marlow, upon whom she would sometimes look and sigh.

"Oh God,' said Charles, and shall such angelic sweetness be lost to the world! Does she never speak?"

"Never,' said Lady Roebuck, 'any thing but one remarkable sentence, which we will not anticipate: you shall hear it from herself."

Charles's curiosity was now whetted to its keenest edge, and he most servently entreated he might immediately see her.

Emma undertook to enquire if it was a proper time, and returned with information that she was then lying asleep, with her head on Mrs. Marlow's lap. Charles begged he might see her in that situation, which would take off, in some degree, the shock of his first interview, and afterwards, leaving her undisturbed, he should be more calm, and better prepared to bear a second.

This being agreed to, they all repaired to a drawing room, where the beautiful insensible lay on a sofa, reclined in sleep, in the exact situation that Emma had described.

Charles devoured her lovely form with his eyes. It was the Annette he had seen covered with innocent confusion at Aix la Chapelle; it was she who tore his heart with apparently unjust anger the night before he left England; it was she he had seen in so many delusive dreams; she for whom he had vented so many unavailing sighs; she his soul adored; she for whom alone he wished to live; she whom he was doomed—though now found—to lose for ever.

These were the glowing ideas which our hero felt, but dared not utter. It was Annette he beheld; and yet her pallid cheek—which spoke at once her distress and resignation—forced from him first a starting tear, then a profound sigh, and afterwards, in spight of all his efforts, an exclamation of "Oh heavenly God, do I live to see this!"

At these words Annette started from her sleep, looked wildly round her, then upon the ground. then sighed, then played with her hair, then starting from the sofa, walked towards the window, replaced herself on the sofa, sighed again, and then significantly moving her head, she exclaimed, "Oh no—I am sure my poor Charles is not a villain."

"And is this the sentence I was to hear?' cried Charles. 'And can my Annette think of me! In madness think of me! Kindly think of me! I cannot bear it. No my life,' cried he, throwing himself at her feet, 'your Charles is not a villain: he loves you tenderly; dearly loves you; and would give his life to purchase for you a single glimpse of returning reason. Look on me my Annette! Speak to me! She will not!"

"My dear Mr. Hazard, you have greatly agitated her,' said Lady Roebuck. 'Heaven sen it may be a fortunate symptom. At present I think we had better leave her. Mrs. Marlow will give us an account of the effect this interview has on her spirits."

2.7. CHAPTER VII.

LAUDABLE DUPLICITY AND A MAD SCENE.

WHILE these matters were carrying on at Sir Sidney's, Gloss was occupied, or at least appeared to be so, in discharging his public duty, and giving ministerial dinners. Nor did this great man dream, while he feasted upon muffins and paragraphs for breakfast, in London, that a stroke was meditating in Warwickshire which all his influence, backed with all his cunning, would be found ultimately insufficient to parry.

He knew of Charles's marriage, and therefore was not at all surprised either that he should return and discharge his debts—for no man had it more clearly in his power than Mr. Gloss to ascertain that Charles was a man of strict honour—or that he should threaten to take vengeance on the venal herd of diurnal scribblers; for he also well knew that our hero was both capable of planning such a castigation, and resolute enough to inflict it.

To say the truth, the necessity he should lie under, as he conceived, of learning our hero's measures, and being active in circumventing them, together with the pains he took to quiet those who feared they should smart under the lash that seemed to be preparing for them, and which their own fears magnified into something worse than that they richly merited at the cart's tail, induced Mr. Gloss to overstay his appointment with Sir Sidney, who, by the advice of Emma—without whose concurrence nothing of moment was now undertaken—wrote him a letter, and gently upbraided him for neglecting his private concerns, though, at the same time, it was impossible, the letter said, too much to admire that public virtue which was the cause of it.

"Stupid dotard,' said Gloss to himself, as he read the letter, 'I have infatuated the old blockhead." What however would he have said had he known that in return for the treachery by which he had influenced Sir Sidney to write that unjust letter to Charles, when in France, Charles himself stood at the elbow of Sir Sidney, and approved of the honest

duplicity contained in the letter now written, as a snare to detect his villany.

In order to this detection, and indeed to the detection of a great deal more, as it was necessary to tread on very tender ground, the confederacy agreed that Charles and Figgins should take up their residence at a distance from Sir Sidney's, that Emma should appear gradually to waver in her sentiments, on the representation of Mrs. Marlow, who was to tell a long story of having left him, in consequence of improper conduct to her daughter. This, in particular, was hit upon, as it would be taking the very tone Gloss had himself often sounded.

These resolutions, and a letter received from Mr. Gloss, informing Sir Sidney that he would wave all considerations of engagements with ministers, offices, councils, and levees, to attend the more welcome duties of love and friendship, induced the two friends to be expeditious in taking their departure; previous to which, however, Charles earnestly solicited one more interview with Annette.

She had manifested uncommon inquietude ever since she had been so agitated at the sight of Charles, nor could all their endeavours, though she continued perturbed and restless, induce her to utter a syllable, unless he was shewn to her at a distance, which he had been three or four times, by the advice of the physicians. Upon one of these occasions she cried, "It is false, that's not Gloss:" and upon another, she uttered in a scream, "Hide yourself, hide yourself in France: they'll put you in prison."

At length they kept him from her, and then she began to be inquisitive concerning him. In one of these moods he appeared before her, and, for a short interval, while she ceased her loquacity, and was lost in profound meditation, he looked on her with inexpressible tenderness, heaving an agonizing sigh, and sheding a burning tear. The sigh attracted her attention, and, as she vacantly regarded him, she cried, "Who are you? If you were not lovely, like my Charles, I should call you Gloss. He sighs, he sheds tears; but his sighs carry the contagion of a pest, and his tears are the tears of a crocodile. Sir I have the best father in the world. He

married me to one villain, to protect me, as he said, from another. Is the vulture a kinder friend to the lamb than the eagle? But see how people may be deceived! It was only a deceitful mirror; a false medium; for, sir, calumny is not content with wounding, but poison must follow the bite. But why wound me?—Pity that excessive tenderness should inflict misery. I must never smile again, else I could laugh out to think that the best wisdom will sometimes sink to the worst folly, for Sir Sidney Roebuck is my father. I have two mothers, yet no mother at all. They are both angels: one of them in heaven, as some think, and the other—Oh! No man but my father could deserve two angels. He is an angel himself. I was right then to marry Gloss. I was right to obey my father. I will sacrifice my life for him, but I won't sacrifice my understanding for any body. Sir unhand me; there is not a word of truth in all you say. You soar above him! Grovel, lay prostrate, like your soul, in villanous filth. You traduce him! Did all the fiends, your fellows, surround me, did a thousand deaths await me, were I obliged to give you my hand in marriage, I would abash you, I would strike you to the soul, I would chill you with horror, and say—that my poor Charles is not a villain."

Here she was seized with strong convulsions, and then put to bed; after which recourse was immediately had to medical assistance.

The next day she became more composed, and, at intervals, had some dawn of reason.—Charles however was carefully kept from her, especially as she appeared in imminent danger, which circumstance also, out of tenderness, was carefully kept from him.

2.8. CHAPTER VIII.

PROVES THAT THE LANDLORD'S OBSERVATION, AT THE JOHN OF GAUNT'S HEAD—THAT HUMAN CREATURES ARE LIKE BUCKETS IN A WELL—WAS WELL FOUNDED.

As there are a prodigious number of circumstances which I must now clearly, and therefore gradually, develope, I shall regularly bring forward such characters as may be useful to me in the prosecution of this task: and first, Mr. Balance, whom I certainly did not intend to celebrate as an honest lawyer upon the credit of one or two upright actions; for I must have been a novice indeed had I not known that the evidence ought to be very strong and convincing that could substantiate so uncommon a fact.

Let it be known that Mr. Balance began to entertain a tolerable good opinion of Charles earlier than many others of his friends; and it arose from this circumstance. When he received an order to grant Figgins that annuity of a hundred pounds, formerly spoken of, our hero was certainly in the worst disgrace with him, and this matter remaining unexplained for a considerable time, nobody was forwarder than Mr. Balance to blame his conduct in the presence of Sir Sidney; nay I question whether Mr. Gloss himself did him, as far as it went, more injury in the opinion of the baronet; for even Emma could not consider him as interested in his affairs: but as it is the nature of goodness to enumerate the errors of others with reluctance, so it is to feel the warmest anxiety to atone for its own.

So it happened with Mr. Balance. When Figgins called upon him, not more to receive his three hundred and fifty pounds, which were due to him, and which we have seen him so handsomely refuse to appropriate to his own use, than to solicit his hearty concurrence in Emma's measures, he was so charmed with Figgins's self-condemnation, and the brilliant character he gave of his friend, that he very naturally asked—and indeed the reader will ask too—why he had not come to him sooner.

It has been seen, however, that what Figgins and Emma were agitating was of two great a magnitude to be slightly touched on; but a

circumstance happening, just at that time, which gave them reason to believe that Mr. Balance would not only be a very useful, but a very willing assistant—for I have said that his foible, though an attorney, was to detect rascality—Figgins paid him a visit, and, after an hour's conversation, that gentleman inlisted under Emma's banners.

Had not our hero decamped to France in that precipitate manner, a few days from that period might have made him happy in the possession of Annette; to achieve which enterprize, Figgins, as we have seen, called at his house. The necessary steps however to bring about that desirable event, if it should ever take place, requiring his presence, they were obliged to be deferred. He is now upon the spot, and I beg the reader's attention while I trace out those steps one by one.

Scarcely had Charles and Figgins situated themselves in their new residence, when Mr. Balance called on them, with whom—in company with some necessary persons employed on the occasion—they proceeded to Hazard house, and knocked very peremptorily at the door.

Finding the Lady Dowager alone, Mr. Balance told her that he came vested with authority to restore the rightful Lord Hazard to his title and estate, which information the lady affected at first not to understand, and afterwards to treat with great contempt; but being told that Mr. Tadpole was in custody, and had made an ample confession, she seemed greatly shocked. Catching however at every straw, she endeavoured still to stem that torrent which seemed ready to engulph her, nor would acknowledge any thing; till at length, being told that the sum of Mr. Tadpole's confession was that he had been legally married to her ten years, that consequently her subsequent marriage with Lord Hazard was illegal, her children illegitimate, and, of course, that no bar stood between Charles and the possession of his title and fortune, she acted a part something in the same style in which we were sometime ago so amused with the vagaries of Mrs. O'Shocknesy.

Now the fact was that Mr. Tadpole was not in custody, nor had he made any confession. He was only kept out of the way by one of Kiddy's cute manoovres, as he called it, who, to be plain, having been sometime an

accessary, and at length a principal, in Emma's plots, suggested the properest mode of carrying this one into effect; for, said Kiddy, "if we attack the rum squire, he will be peery and prevaricative, but if we whiddle a little to ma'am, though she is as fly as Satan, guilt will fly in her face, the pearls will trickle, and we shall have her as snug as be damned.—Lord forgive me for uttering such a word."

Mr. Tadpole, as had been concerted, in due time made his appearance. He bounced and flew about, but being convinced, by incontrovertible documents, that he was completely discovered, became at length tame, and threw himself on our hero's mercy, who put a finish to the business, by assigning Mr. Tadpole and his lady, for the present, that residence he had taken for Figgins and himself, and assuring them that though he should enter into a severe scrutiny of all their conduct relative to the management of the estate, since it had been in their hands, yet, on account of his brother's children, the justice he should be obliged to use, should be tempered with as much mercy as the nature of such a case would admit.

Here let me, for the sake of truth, relate a most extraordinary trait of superior female cunning. I have said that Mrs. Tadpole—for we shall call her so in future—had her doubts as to who slept with her at Lisle, but that those doubts had subsided, and that at length she had fully believed it could be no other than Charles. Can it be credited that she was inspired with hope, from the recollection of this circumstance, and that she flattered herself, should she take a favourable opportunity of representing it privately, a repetition of the crime might give her a power over him! What a pity that Figgins, who thought, as Kiddy has it, ploughing with the heifer might work out something for the general good, should undeceive her, which he did, and so render all her schemes abortive.

The documents which were explained to Mr. Tadpole, I shall now explain to the reader. It will be remembered that Kiddy, on his return to England, called on Mr. Standfast, with an intention of giving up Mr. Tadpole, but that he suddenly altered his resolution, attached himself to that gentleman, and gave up his benefactor. Kiddy knew of the marriage

of Mr. and Mrs. Tadpole, and it must have been something of a very particular nature indeed, predetermined as he was to disclose it, that could prevent him from doing so.—The fact however is as I have related it, and it was not till the nice train of circumstances, conducted by Emma, carried into effect by Swash and his daughter, and at length supported by Figgins, had properly worked upon him, that he wavered in his attachment; but, even when he had done so, nothing could be adduced against Tadpole but Kiddy's ipse dixit, which was grounded upon a confession of the gentleman and lady, during a squabble, when they were in France, and when they thought Kiddy out of ear-shot.

Without collateral evidence therefore nothing could be done. This Kiddy contrived to procure, and it was not long before he suspected that he should get at it through a gentleman who, in a very importunate way, would sometimes call on Mr. Tadpole; for some hints that constantly passed between that worthy wight and his lady, after he was gone, convinced Flush that he knew something of their private affairs.

One day, as this gentleman was descending the staircase, after a long and pretty loud conversation with Tadpole, the latter followed him, saying, "You may make yourself very easy, for I will send to you on Wednesday by the post."

This was heard by Kiddy from the butler's pantry, into which pantry, on the following Wednesday, he coaxed the footman, who was entrusted with the letter, and, after giving him, as he called it, his dose, he contrived to get the letter from him, under a pretext of looking at the direction, and then exchanged it for another, which he had previously written, and which the poor footman, who, as Kiddy knew, could not read, carried to the post-office.

Kiddy's letter was as follows:

TO THE REVEREND Mr. FIGGINS.

WE begin to be down upon them, the Lord be praised. I shall tell you all how and about it to-morrow. Blow me, Mr. Figgins, if I don't think this repentance will be the saving of my precious soul.

Thy brother sinner, K. FLUSH.

As soon as Flush was alone he broke open the other letter, the cover of which was directed "To Mr. Skinks," and described his residence in London. It contained these words.

SKINKS,

I have considered the matter, and really think you are too peremptory. What I have promised is very handsome, and I will not consent to a tittle more. If you think it will better suit your purpose to turn about, do so, with all my heart. If you know my secrets, recollect that yours are also known to either—at your own option—your firm friend, or determined enemy

TIMOTHY TADPOLE.

This letter, by the advice of Emma, was immediately conveyed to Figgins, who, upon consulting with Mr. Balance, and putting different circumstances together, began to have a strong suspicion that he himself had lent a helping hand in the business of Mr. Tadpole's marriage.

Tadpole, as the reader knows, was an attorney's clerk. Be it now known that Skinks was an attorney's clerk also, but having been guilty, since the expiration of his article, of many nefareous practices, in the way of his profession, he became, among many other rogues of the same description, well known to Mr. Balance, who happening just at that time to have him under his thumb, told Figgins that he had no doubt but he should bring him to reason.

Figgins consented to use Mr. Balance's authority as a corps de reserve, but thought it a good thing previously to worm a confession out of Shinks himself. For this purpose he called on him, and pretended that he was commissioned by Tadpole to settle, once for all, their dispute.

As Figgins familiarly mentioned the business of the marriage, and ventured a few guesses at circumstances which might probably belong to it, the other entered into the business candidly enough, till at length

Figgins's suspicions were confirmed, and he was enabled to speak to it from his own knowledge; for he found it to be this.

When he was a bridewell boy, he was applied to by a gentleman to carry him and another up the river, in one of those barges which it is well known the bridewell boys are very expert at rowing.

This expedition was to Wandsworth. It was conducted in the night, and Figgins and another, who were let into the secret, understood that it was set on foot for the purpose of stealing a young lady from a boarding school, and that the friend of the gentleman who hired the barge was to be married to her.

Being at that time anxious to get at as much of this secret as possible— probably from as honest a reason as that which now impelled the conduct of Mr. Skinks, he took the proper methods, which he could do as cunningly as any body, to trace the conduct of the parties, and soon found where the marriage rites were performed.

This however accomplished, and concealment being no longer necessary, Figgins profited in no way, at that time, by the intelligence he had been so solicitous to procure. It being now however singularly serviceable to his friend, he rejoiced that it had struck him to use it.

The reader is now ready to ask why Mr. Figgins did not recollect all these circumstances at Lisle? To which I answer that Tadpole's real name was Poach, which, when he first conceived that very honest intention of marrying his wife to Zekiel, he warily changed, that he might be the less liable to a detection; and, as to their persons, he did not see either of them at the time of the elopement but very imperfectly, having never been in their company but between the hours of eleven o'clock at night and five in the morning.

Skinks however, who managed every thing, he recollected perfectly well, both as to his name and his person, and the whole business would long before have occured to him but for the change of Poach into Tadpole.

Pretending to leave the negociation open between Skinks and Tadpole, he hastened to Mr. Balance, who, first imposing the most profound silence upon Skinks, under pain of inflicting that punishment he knew he had incurred, procured all those documents, the sight of which, as I have said, so completely silenced Tadpole, consisting of a certificate of the marriage, an avowal of every thing under Skinks's hand—which he readily gave upon reading Tadpole's letter—and a few other necessary matters.

Thus, having made my hero a lord, and given him a noble estate, I shall proceed to see whether he stands a chance of ever possessing that content without which, in the opinion of many, grandeur and riches are only a substitute for happiness.

2.9. CHAPTER IX.

A GOOD DEAL OF BUSTLE, A HEROIC MOTHER, AND TWO OR THREE NOTABLE DISCOVERIES.

As I flatter myself the reader will give me credit for a complete knowledge of the power and effect of contrast, it will not be thought impolitic in me to bring forward our old friend Standfast, in opposition to Mr. Balance. But, exclusive of this artificial way of introducing him, I have now a very natural one; for, as this history is drawing apace towards its conclusion, it certainly could not have been complete had I neglected to record, in the fullest manner, what became of a character who had filled in it so distinguished a situation.

Mr. Standfast and his lovely partner, since their mortifying disappointment on Zekiel's accession to his fortune, had figured away with various success. At one time they were rolling in splendour, at another frightened at bailiffs, till, having been concerned in pharaoh banks, E O tables, lottery offices, and every species of gambling, either brilliant or contemptible, according as their circumstances varied, they were at length reduced to the most mortifying poverty.

Just at that time the change of the ministry, as I have already recorded, placed Gloss—who, be it known, had never turned tail on his old friends—in a responsible situation under government. They now resolved that Mr. Standfast should become a contractor, by which means they very soon re-established themselves in tolerable opulence; and here a very striking reflection presents itself, that just as the pupil, Charles, was compelled, by the loss of his fortune, to quit the worthy employment of dispensing benefits, and relieving the necessities of the poor and oppressed, the tutor, Standfast, should make a fortune by administering to folly and wickedness, and oppressing and grinding the unfortunate and necessitous.

In this situation had they for some time continued, when Charles's sudden advancement to a coronet gave them to fear that something was "'rotten in the state of Denmark."' What however they could not devise. Sir Sidney had certainly taken careful measures to appear perfectly indifferent as to what concerned Charles, but yet it was a moot point

with Gloss whether he was a friend or an enemy; for, as Annette was carefully kept from him, and Emma, in spight of all her caution, could not help occasionally a little exultation, his arts—especially as it was necessary to lay them on thicker than ever, and as every body knew them to be so many barefaced falsitics—were so apparent that it really became an irksome task to have him about the baronet's family, although they were under the necessity of doing so till they should be able to accomplish theircoup de grace.

About this time he received a letter from Standfast, which informed him that the ministry were again tottering. He therefore hastened to town, and finding that the intelligence was but too true, a scheme was concerted between these amiable friends to embezzle certain monies, which they well knew where to lay their hands on, and decamp into a foreign country.

This however could not be effected without the previous concurrence of certain men called clerks, in whose possession were books and tallies, and other documents, by means of which alone they could obtain a right to receive these said monies.

These documents they hoped to procure through the influence of our old friend Viney, who had held a lucrative situation under Gloss ever since he first came into office, but a younger clerk, who happened to be a youth of honour and spirit, and who had very nearly been put out of office because he had threatened to chastise this old sinner, for most scandalous conduct to his sister, a beautiful girl of thirteen, conjectured by circumstances what was going forward.

In short, in attempting to possess himself of the necessary papers, Viney plainly found, by the steps that had been taken to prevent his intentions, that he was discovered, and therefore, lest he should be involved in the guilt, went directly and gave information against his two friends, who, holding his conduct in equal distrust, got intelligence of his treachery in time, as they imagined, to ward off its consequences.

Neither Standfast nor Gloss had been idle, for though they could not accomplish their grand point, they nevertheless got together a pretty round sum, which was at that moment deposited in Standfast's bureau, and, as a coup de maitre, it was agreed that Gloss should force Annette from her father, with an idea that after possession, by means of marriage, or any other means, Sir Sidney would not only be glad enough to make peace with them, but give his daughter a fortune. These were his words when he proposed the matter to Standfast.

"As to the boy Charles, he can never marry her: but this is no time for investigation. As to Sir Sidney, he will be glad enough to come to terms, when the injury is in any other way irreparable. If not, she is the only woman I ever loved, and if possession should cloy that love, she is very beautiful, and will always fetch a good price."

I do not know that I have ever before made Mr. Gloss speak without disguise, and I almost hope, even now, that the reader will disbelieve that such a man could ever impose upon Sir Sidney. But nothing can be clearer than that such conduct is not only in nature, but that it is practised every day, and practised successfully. Goodness neither knows nor suspects the snares of villany, which covers itself in a veil so truly the hue of virtue, and which, in this instance, wore so completely that appearance to the eyes of Sir Sidney, that, till he saw, in his last visit, the soul of Gloss in its own filthy colours, so free was he from a practical knowledge of what qualities vice was formed, he did not believe so vile a human monster could infest the face of the earth.

The poor, fond, infatuated Standfast, on his part, was also determined not to leave his partner behind him, and therefore, having previously agreed with Gloss on a meeting place, hastened home, that, like an obedient wife, she might pack up her alls, and accompany him.

Reader, I do not think I have given thee a more sensible pleasure throughout this work than thou wilt now receive, when I inform thee that he found his house in confusion, his bureau broken open and stript of every thing, and the dear partner of his soul decamped with his kind friend Dogbolt!

Were I perfect in the duty of a historian, I ought here to describe that hell, his mind; but as no reader will be so unreasonable as to expect a description of what no words can express, I shall content myself with saying that no reprobate ever swore more volubly, no dancing-master ever capered more curiously, no bedlamite ever raved more incoherently. In the midst of this paroxism, he felt himself suddenly held down by two men, who thinking, probably, that a strait waistcoat wasnot strong enough to hold so violent a maniac, put him on a pair of hand-cuffs, and, with the assistance of several others, carried him away in a hackney coach.

Mr. Gloss, on his part, made the best of his way into Warwickshire, determined to carry off Annette, let what would be the consequence. He knew he must act very craftily, and therefore took care properly to instruct his emissaries, by one of whom—indeed the very same gentleman who accompanied Annette to town in the chaise—he received intelligence that the young lady was much better, and now rode out every morning, for an airing, either with Lady Roebuck, Emma, or Mrs. Marlow.

When last Mr. Gloss had been in Warwickshire, he had taken uncommon pains to insinuate himself into the good graces of this old lady, who also appeared to pay him extraordinary attention: to say truth, an attention that rather bordered upon inquisitiveness, and which he would have repulsed if it had not struck him that it might lead to the accomplishment of this scheme, which, as his dernier resort, he always had meditated.

He had now no doubts, could he get Annette at a distance from home, through the connivance of Mrs. Marlow, but he should complete his design. He thought he had discovered that the old lady's passion was avarice, for he knew that the whole story of her having quitted Charles on account of her daughter was trumped up; nay he had told her so, and had got from her a reluctant confession that her inducement to take that step was a wish to shelter herself comfortably for the remainder of her life, at a distance from a turbulent young man, who, though he had good qualities, would never do any good either for himself or any one else.

Possessed, as he imagined, of so much of Mrs. Marlow's private sentiments, he thought he might, without danger, tamper with her a little further, and, for that purpose, sent a servant on horseback to say generally, at Roebuck hall, that Mr. Gloss proposed to pay that place a visit in the course of a few days, to which effect he also wrote a note to Sir Sidney, but informed Mrs. Marlow privately, by another note, that he had some most particular business with her, which he must explain that evening, and would attend her wherever she should appoint. He took care however so to qualify that note, by introducing such circumstances relative to her, that it must have told against her had she either partially or generally shewn it to any one.

Mrs. Marlow made a great many difficulties, but at length consented to meet him at the bottom of the garden, which, in fact, she did. He lamented his situation, said he plainly saw that Sir Sidney would go with the stream, that she had herself allowed, in former conversations, that he was avaricious, and therefore she must see the temptation a coronet held out would not be resisted; that if he could be favoured with an interview with Miss Roebuck, without her father's knowledge, he was sure he could lay such convincing proofs before her of the propriety of his conduct, and the impossibility, even now, that she could honourably become the wife of that young upstart, as he had no doubt would conquer all scruples.

He promised Mrs. Marlow mountains if he succeeded, and at length it was agreed that he should come upon them, as if by accident, the following Thursday, at an appointed spot, before which time, Mrs. Marlow told him, there would be no opportunity, as Lady Roebuck would, till then, accompany her daughter, and, on that morning, she would have a particular engagement at home.

Those readers who are sorry to see this apparent desertior of principles in Mrs. Marlow, will be more so when they are told that, on the following Thursday, when she was to ride out with Annette, in order to keep the coast as clear as possible, that Mr. Gloss might put his design in execution—for, not to disguise the truth, he had, at a second interview, informed her of the whole—the moment Gloss appeared at a distance, she sent the footman, for some purpose or other, back again: so that there

was no one to oppose what was agitating but an old and almost helpless coachman.

This being the signal agreed upon, Gloss sprang forward, and seeing some horsemen on a hill before him, which he took for his myrmidons, he soon came up to the side of the coach. Mrs. Marlow pretended great surprise at seeing him, and, after some general conversation, asked if he would not walk in. This he eagerly consented to, and the coachman got down apparently to open the door.

Hearing horses, and seeing men in great coats, he now expected to find the coachman seized, as had been agreed on, and the coach box mounted by different men, to whom he had given such instructions. What then must have been his astonishment when he himself was seized, and told there was a warrant against him for murder.

"Who dares accuse me?" said Gloss very peremptorily.' "I dare,' said Emma, who personated Annette:' "And I,' said Mrs. Marlow, 'who prepared the snare that brought you into the hands of justice. You are my son, and I cut you off to cure my honour, as I would amputate an infected limb to preserve my life."

2.10. CHAPTER X.

A LITTLE RETROSPECTION, AN EXAMINATION, SOME HORROR, AND A MOST MORTIFYING DISAPPOINTMENT.

THE reader having seen that Mrs. Marlow, instead of acting the treacherous part of a faithless servant, had assumed all the dignity of a Spartan mother, it may not be amiss for the satisfaction of my readers to see how she became that mother.

It will easily be recollected that, in the second volume of this history, I gave a hint that Emma had made a very singular discovery, on hearing the particulars of Mrs. Marlow's story. This discovery was no less than that Standfast was the very clergyman by whom that poor lady had been seduced, through the connivance of her aunt, when little more than an infant.

She recollected to have heard that there had been a similar accusation against him when first he lived chaplain to Major Malplaquet, and now, having learnt the maiden name of Mrs. Marlow, she found that she must have been the innocent victim whom she had always understood he had treated with uncommon cruelty. For the remainder of her intelligence, she received it first from Figgins, and afterwards, through Swash, from Flush, who had lived with him at the time, and was in the plot; but, as her communication with Kiddy had been ambiguous and guarded, till some little time before the grand eclaircissement, she had only learnt that Gloss was the precious fruit of that illicit amour in time to make it the climax of her discovery to Sir Sidney.

The reader recollects—which will illustrate this matter better—that while that close intimacy subsisted between Charles and Gloss, Figgins was of the party, who, from some circumstances that came within his knowledge, learnt that Gloss did not go to the Cape of Good Hope. This induced him to think oddly of his connexion with Mr. Standfast, but he did not find it worth his while to investigate it till Emma went to France, at which time he undertook to gather all the intelligence he could for her at home, that, had it been necessary to make her grand discovery there, she might be in possession of facts of magnitude sufficient to have induced Sir Sidney to discard Gloss. Thus she learnt, by a letter from

Mr. Figgins, three days before the business of Aix la Chapelle, that Gloss was the son of Standfast, but she never divined the rest, as I have just said, till after repeated conversations with Mrs. Marlow, and Kiddy's confirmation of those suspicions that arose out of it.

Thus, in different stages of this business, she used as much of this fact as she thought necessary for her purpose. She told Annette, in France, she could blast Mr. Gloss's hopes whenever she pleased; she told Mr. Gloss, before Sir Sidney, it would be seen WHO he was; she imparted the secret to Mrs. Marlow; and, finally, through the proper and heroic feeling of that good woman, she now held him her captive, and was determined to give him up to that justice he had so studiously laboured to abuse.

This connexion of father and son will naturally account for the blended interest of Standfast and Gloss, and also for the congeniality of their sentiments: nay it will take off an imputation from me; for as I may be almost accused of representing nature in too odious a light, by bringing forward two characters so shockingly profligate, so the probability of their being so is considerably strengthened when it is found that the same blood ran in the veins of both; nay, such pains had been mutually taken that the emulation of the son might be worthy the instruction of the sire—for vipers and doves are equally fond of their offspring—that it is not astonishing Mrs. Marlow should be so shocked with Gloss, at the time Charles was arrested, or express that detestation which was inspired by the remarkable resemblance of both his person and manner to those of Standfast.

But, says the reader, did it never occur to Mrs. Marlow that this very same Standfast was her betrayer? There is great singularity in this circumstance. Mrs. Marlow did not know Charles till he was nearly ruined, and it cannot be forgotten that Standfast, giving up his situation as an actor in this play of human life, had retired and become a prompter long before that period. Therefore, not seeing him on the stage, she did not know that there was any such person employed in the theatre. Charles never detailed his affairs, and though she knew the sum of them, she was ignorant of many of the particulars till she began to converse with Emma, who, after all, was extremely cautious of letting

her into so much of them as might impede any of her measures. Therefore, it was not till after Charles went to France the second time, and she had had frequent conversations with Emma and Figgins, that she came at this truth, which, at that time, Emma was the more anxious to investigate: finding it would be a matter of infinite import to ascertain that Mr. Gloss was the son of Mrs. Marlow, by Standfast. And, on the other hand, that I may make this matter perfectly clear, as Standfast went to Flanders before the good lady in question was married, he never knew her by the name of Marlow. I could have strengthened this elucidation, by noticing that Standfast, like Atall in the play, had a different name, at that time, for every different intrigue; but, as Mrs. Marlow knew him by his real name, I did not chuse so to violate my historic veracity, as to make out a case by the insertion of a falsity.

It now becomes necessary to illustrate two or three points, that I may give a clear stage to some principal actors, who are presently to make their appearance.

I have said, in its place, and since hinted, that Kiddy had been very much shocked at some proposal or other made him by Standfast; so shocked indeed that it wrought in him an entire reformation, and attached him to the interest of his patron's declared enemy. I have also said that when Figgins went to expostulate with Standfast, he, in the course of that expostulation, became witness to such a scene of altercation, between that gentleman and Mrs. O'Shocknesy, as begat some suspicions in his mind of a very horrid nature.

I have all along represented Kiddy as a very weak, but not a very wicked character. He had, from his low origin, his mean education, his grovling propensities, been taught to consider Mr. Flush as a superior genius; or, as he called it, geno; and thus he firmly believed that the consummation of all human perfection was the accomplishment of a well-digested fraud: but Kiddy always took care, as he phrased it, to draw the line, lest, as he cunningly observed, the line should draw him.

Thus, were your wife or daughter to be seduced, your purse stolen, your reputation destroyed, by treachery and cunning, Kiddy would lend a

helping hand with all the veins in his heart—his language again—but as to going upon the highway, or being guilty of any other dishonest act, which the law denominates felony, in that case, no crown lawyer ever knew better how to discriminate than Kiddy. And this the reader, when he recollects his outset in life, will see he was taught by that first of masters, experience.

In short, seeing men of the first fortunes and abilities constantly employing them to impose upon their friends and neighbours, he only looked upon it as self-defence to arm himself with the same arts; for, said Kiddy, "In this here world I can't, for my part, see why a man has not a right to be as bad as his betters."

Having therefore such an aversion to a halter, no wonder that Kiddy should be so affronted at a direct proposal from Standfast to commit an act for which, had it been discovered, he must have been hanged; nor was it an unnatural transition, fond as he had been of that fun called human misery, to see, all of a sudden, that he had delighted in it a little too much; but as, turn which way he would, he was in such a situation that he could not help imposing upon somebody, he covered his hypocrisy with the veil of religion, to rub off slighter sins, and those that bore too heavy on his recollection, he drowned in a dram; for, said Kiddy, "though every coge is a nail in my coffin, if I do but repent before I am put into it, the grim jockies may screw me up and welcome."

To shew however the prevalence of custom upon human nature, Kiddy very little considered that in the midst of his repentance, he was accessary to a fraud of great magnitude, namely, the keeping Charles out of his fortune: nor would he, in all probability, ever have taken any steps to restore him to his right, had not this laudable conduct, as we have seen, been suggested to him by Emma, through Swash; nor even then, had not the measures to be taken involved in them a positive necessity of imposing upon Tadpole. This last imposition however, being on the side of honour and virtue, Kiddy began to feel, that however it might be clever to be a rogue, it was more comfortable to be an honest man.

The repentance of Figgins, as the reader knows, was better confirmed, though, as there is weakness in every kind of wickedness, so it was certainly assisted by finding, in consequence of what dropt from Mrs. O'Shocknesy, that Standfast had himself perpetrated the very crime which he had vainly persuaded Flush to commit.

One moment more, and the reader shall know what this crime was, and also that it has been very often hinted to him.

It will be recollected that Standfast did not accompany Mrs. O'Shocknesy into Warwickshire, probably as he was grown remarkably hipped, owing to his being led by his lady the life of a dog, as Jerry Sneak calls it; and, as he was eternally tortured with his own reflections, he might be afraid of ghosts. I have said they were driven to the verge of poverty, from which nothing could relieve them but the death of Lord Hazard. I then say "what joy to find Lord Hazard no more." The reader is upon the point of asking "By what means no more?" Again, I compare Standfast to Barnwell, who murdered his benefactor, which indeed did Standfast, or he must have been foully belied; for, just at the period to which this history is now arrived, he was, in company with his son Gloss, brought before Sir Sidney for that murder.

Here it will appear that there was good reason for managing so adroitly the delay, from the Monday till the Wednesday, of Gloss's pretended interview with Annette. It has been said that there is no snare for bringing a man into a scrape like a woman. This proved to be the case both as to Standfast and as to Gloss: differently however; one was betrayed by adhering to a fiend, and the other punished for aspiring to an angel.

Standfast was taken into custody in town, through the vigilance of Mr. Balance, but Gloss was not to be found; therefore, when Sir Sidney discovered that he was in Warwickshire, it required the intervention of a few days to procure the warrant that had been granted against him, as well as to bring Mr. Standfast to that spot where the crime had been committed.

Let us now suppose Sir Sidney upon the bench, Charles, Mr. Balance, and Figgins by his side, and Standfast and Gloss brought before him, on a charge of that murder for which we have seen them apprehended.

Flush deposed what has been related concerning the proposal made him by Standfast; Figgins explained the nature of his suspicions, and his consequent conduct; and Mr. Balance said, from the pains he had taken to investigate the business, there could be no doubt, as far as presumption went, but that the prisoners were guilty.

"And so presumption is all you have against us!" said Gloss.' "And this,' said Standfast, 'upon the evidence of a rascally servant, a false friend, and a meddling attorney!"

Here they became turbulently insolent, when the baronet, commanding silence, and addressing himself to Standfast, said, "Unhappy man, I have a witness that shall strike terror to thy very soul; that, presumptuously shameless as thou art, shall sicken thee with horror! See who enters at that door!"

Had Standfast seen a spectre, the spectre of Lord Hazard, he could not have been more appalled.— "By hell, it is all over!" said he to Gloss. 'I thought the rascal had been dispatched."

This witness was John, who was tutored, as we have seen, to refuse the half guinea from Dogbolt, who was placed about Charles, at the express stipulation of Standfast—not only that his ruin might be more certain, but that the conduct of Mr. Figgins might be well watched, lest, as it happened in the case of Kiddy, he should not be staunch to the interest of the confederacy—who intercepted all the letters, who returned expressly to murder his lord, who did not seem to arrive, however, till two days after the murder was committed, who then, though callous to the core, appeared to weep over his master's corpse, but who had since lived in such a state of agonizing horror and remorse, that he now came to make an ample confession.

John, after displaying a natural and pathetic picture of his own penitence, told a most horrid tale. By large bribes, and larger promises,

he had been prevailed upon to murder his old master. For that purpose he stole into the house, on the fatal morning, and took away the pistols which were hanging in Lord Hazard's bed chamber. He afterwards surprised him in the garden; but he declared that, when he looked in his poor, wronged, old master's face, which was now grown pale and ghastly, owing, he had no doubt, to that distress which he himself had caused, by so often falsely accusing his son, all his resolution forsook him, and he had not the cruel courage to perpetrate the deed. Standfast, seeing this, rushed from a shrubbery, where he had concealed himself, lest they should miscarry; and, as Lord Hazard flew to him for protection, and while he was in the attitude of lifting his hands and eyes to heaven, that had mercifully sent such a friend to his assistance, the unmanly, hardened, hellish monster cowardly murdered him!

To this he added, that after the murder was accomplished, but not till then—for Standfast was not fully satisfied with his sanguinary exploit till he had convinced himself, by a cautious examination, that there was no symptom of returning life—the murderer with great coolness placed the pistol that was discharged close to the body, and put that which was yet loaded into the coat pocket, which is the precise situation in which the reader will recollect they were found.

John also said that, fearing he should be hanged for the part he had taken in this shocking business, he did, for some time, whatever he was bid by Standfast, and consented to any wickedness that was proposed to him; but his conscience being at last heavily loaded—for which he was often ridiculed, and sometimes threatened, by Standfast—he was upon the point of giving himself up to justice, when it struck him to consult his old friend Flush, who, he understood, had repented, and then lived a religious life.

Flush, who, the reader knows, was at that time seeking for every kind of evidence to serve Charles's cause, had known, John said, a great deal of his former wickedness; and it was agreed that, at a proper time, he should be called forward to atone for it, by a true confession of all he knew concerning the murder. "That confession,' added John, 'I have now made, and it has taken such a load off my conscience, that though all

good men must hate me here, and I dare not expect mercy hereafter, my poor heavy heart will be something lighter, when I reflect that I have brought such a villain to justice, to revenge the murder of so good a master."

John's repentance Standfast all along had not only feared, but he had determined to guard against its consequences. He called him a half-bred villain; one who would certainly one day or other squeak.

Impressed with these suspicions, he consulted Mrs. O'Shocknesy upon the propriety of putting him out of the way. She, at a proper time, to quiet him—which accounts for his exclamation just now to Gloss—told him it had been done by Dogbolt; but indeed it was the last thing Dogbolt would have done, or she permitted; for as that gentleman and lady had, for some time, determined to get rid of Mr. Standfast, so it did not appear to be their interest to keep any witness out of the way who, should it be necessary, might facilitate his being hanged.

The evidence being closed, Mr. Standfast was committed to Warwick jail for the murder of Lord Hazard, and Mr. Gloss was told there was not sufficient proof against him to criminate him.

'Then I demand my liberty,' said Gloss, very exultingly.' "Not quite so fast sir,' said Sir Sidney. 'You must be remanded to London, to answer there a charge of fraud and perjury."

"Of which should I be convicted,' said Gloss, 'I shall still be happier than your intended son in law. The worst that can happen to me is to be sent to a prison, from whence, for the world wants talents, I shall soon be released; after which I shall cut as splendid a figure as the best, and drink the pleasurable cup of life by perhaps flattering the foible of some fool who, like you, may pride himself upon virtues attributed to his ancestors, which they probably never possessed, while his portion shall be bitterness and misery: for, to be completely happy, he must possess your daughter, which he cannot do, having already married—her mother!"

2.11. CHAPTER XI.

VEXATION UPON VEXATION, AND SOME PRETTY WRITING TO PROVE THAT CATASTROPHES OUGHT TO BE UNHAPPY.

NOT a single returning day had passed since the reconciliation between Charles and Sir Sidney but brought with it some new proof to the latter how egregiously he had been imposed upon by Gloss, and what noble firmness there must have been in the mind of our hero, who, though he panted for an explanation, scorned to capitulate for it dishonourably.

But what were Sir Sidney's feelings when he found that the knave who had thus practised upon his credulity, was the son of him who, by a long, cool, deliberate series of unexampled villany, had first ruined the peace, and then destroyed the life, of his friend and benefactor.

Oh how he was roused! His good sense, his friendship, his generosity, his every seeling seemed insulted! And then the taunting impudence of that insinuation concerning his ancestry, which, as Sir Sidney indulged it, was surely a right and laudable pride; shewing by what means he had led him into a belief of the most gross and palpable falsity. He felt affronted and ashamed, and was at a loss to account for the motive that could have induced him to admit such a creature into his conversation. He alike reproached himself for having communicated with the viper, and thanked providence that had rescued him from its fangs.

Yet, what was all this compared to that thunderbolt which Gloss, in his wanton, wicked lust of mischief, had now hurled at these happy friends! The pestiferous breath, as it uttered the terrible words, affected the hearers like a contagion, and it is but too true that he had the insulting, triumphant, unmerciful pleasure to see both Charles and Sir Sidney appalled and confounded.

As the reader is of course full of anxious expectation, I shall now proceed to a nice investigation of all that train of circumstances which led Mr. Gloss to the knowledge of whom our hero had married.

The reader will instantly recollect that Sir Sidney, at the latter end of the first book, speaks of a lady in the convent that Annette, when an infant, used to call Mamma Le Clerc. It will also easily be remembered that Mr. Ingot gave Lord Hazard an account of a Madmoiselle Le Clerc, who had some business with Sir Sidney, and that this account tallied so exactly with the story of Annette's mother, as to confirm both Lady Hazard and Lady Roebuck in an opinion that it could be no other than her.

This Lady, as we are informed by Emma, left some jewels at Sir Sidney's, but she refused, at the instance of one of the gentlemen who accompanied her, to leave a packet of papers.

I will now be honest enough to declare that this gentleman was no other than Combrie, and his reason for advising the lady not to leave the papers, arose from a sear lest Sir Sidney should actually know who she was, and discover what were then her intentions. The same reason induced him to prevail on her not to see the baronet in town.

The third person, who was, as I have said, deputed by the convent to receive the fortune, was our old friend Goufre, and it was from this journey Combrie became so well acquainted with all his affairs; nay he had attended the young lady with a view to have surprised the vigilance of the procureur, and have secured her fortune when in England, which circumstance I also hint in the second volume; but this, however, not being practicable, he had afterwards recourse, as we have seen, to other methods, which were attended with better success.

It has been related that, on Mrs. Hazard's monument, at Rochester, were placed her maiden name, the name of her first husband, and of that she owned when she died. This circumstance, superadded to some intelligence obtained from one of the firm of Bondham and Co.—indeed the very gentleman who afterwards went to Botany Bay—confirmed Mr. Gloss's conjectures. He had however a great deal of collateral intelligence: one of his emissaries having been constantly stationed by the side of our hero, who, had he attempted to return to England, had instructions to lay him by the heels, either in Flanders, or on his arrival, just as might be most

expedient to assist the purposes of Mr. Gloss. Finding however that marriage had barred every passage that could lead to the possession of Annette, he at first made himself perfectly easy, but when he heard of the death of Mrs. Hazard, and found that these impediments were removed, he was obliged to cast about in his mind for fresh matter, and, after straining his ingenuity, and putting a variety of circumstances together, taking a hint from the name of Le Clerc upon the monument, he found out what I have no doubt the reader will be heartily sorry for.

It will immediately occur to the reader that both Charles and Figgins must have been acquainted with all this matter, and yet it is very certain they were not. The history of Annette was known only to five persons; namely, Lord and Lady Hazard, Sir Sidney and Lady Roebuck, and Emma. Three of these did not know the whole truth. Thus, the name of Le Clerc was never uttered to Charles nor Figgins as the name of Annette's mother, nor toSir Sidney as the maiden name of Mrs. Combrie; or, if it had, it probably would not have induced any suspicion of so extraordinary and unlikely a circumstance as this: for Le Clerc, in France, is as common a name as Smith is in England.

It also looks singular that Charles should not know the private story of his wife, or that she should be ignorant of his; but she is mentioned early in life to have been engaged in an intrigue, and it is probable that she thought youthful folly was not a proper thing for a husband to be entrusted with, and as to him, I have already noticed his remarkable delicacy towards Annette, as well as that she greatly commended him for it. Besides, had there been no other reason, the state of Mrs. Hazard's mind and health must have been such as to have precluded the smallest likelihood of retrospective investigation between them on subjects which could only have been developed through the medium of great curiosity and long intimacy, neither of which, as the reader sees, obtained in the present case; and therefore nothing could be further from the mind of either than that their union involved in it so momentous and mysterious a circumstance.

During the journey that Emma persuaded Sir Sidney to take into France, it cannot be forgotten that every possible enquiry was made by

the baronet concerning Annette's mother. He however only learnt, as I there say, Ingot's story, and also that Miss Le Clerc had shifted her quarters to another convent, where they either could not or would not give any account of her. The fact was, that as the elopement of a nun from a convent in France is never, like a runaway from a boarding school in England, advertised in all the newspapers, but, on the contrary, kept as snug as possible, their enquiries were looked upon as little more than impertinent curiosity, which will indeed be readily believed when it is considered that the convent of our lady of the ascension at Nancy—which was the very place our travellers went to—had been pretty well scandalized by the business of Madame Combrie already, and therefore they were very little likely to gather any intelligence from thence. Indeed the matter was so taken in dudgeon, that had Sir Sidney stayed any considerable time, and repeated his solicitations, it is within possibility that he might have been considered as an accessary to the fact of Combrie's procuring the fortune from Goufre, and so have been accused of the very fraud which he had been so angry with Charles for committing.—Thus, as we have seen, he came away from France no wiser than he went there.

The reader will now see that, as the parties had no sort of communication with each other, it was impossible they should compare notes; consequently, no one of them, in such a length of time, had entertained the smallest suspicion of what now, in one moment, appeared to be beyond a doubt.

I have two or three times hinted—for I did not chuse to do any more—that Mrs. Combrie resembled Annette, and there are several passages in this work where the reader would very strongly have scented this game, if I had not opportunely put up some other to divert his attention.

The blood hound Gloss, however, has at length sound it, and, like all prey started by such sanguinary hunters, it leads us a tedious chase, only to bring us to the knowledge of mischief.

To leave every thing but plain narration, never was there apparent happiness so dashed by certain disappointment. Every comparative

circumstance served to confirm the fact, and misery seemed now to confound the innocent with the guilty, till at length Emma herself, after torturing probability by every ingenious and subtle investigation her invention could supply—all which, at an earlier period, perhaps I should have given at length—was compelled to confess that there was novelty in every thing relative to our lovers, for that, contrary to all established rules, they were born to be virtuous and unhappy.

I know not if I have introduced any thing into this history so truly pathetic as what it is now my reluctant duty to mention. The health of Annette was only completely confirmed on that very day when the whole family were convinced she could not bless him for whom alone she wished to live, and she was welcomed to reason only to be plunged into misery worse than madness. The delight that every one felt at once more beholding the angelic innocence of her soul conveyed by those benevolent smiles which now spoke her thankful joy, was dashed with a mixture of agony; sighs were mingled with congratulations; tears choked the utterance of pleasure; an universal gloom pervaded those faces that fain would have beamed with the willing smile of grateful transport; and every one, out of pity, advised a suppression of that wretchedness which no one could conquer.

Too plainly did poor Annette perceive the misery that these inexperienced dissemblers vainly endeavoured to hide. Did she ask if her father was well, yes was the answer, and a profound sigh followed it. One began to give her pleasure by an account of the reconciliation of Sir Sidney and Charles, and interrupted the relation with a flood of tears. From Sir Sidney, from Lady Roebuck, from Emma, from Charles himself, she found no better comfort; till, at length, her gentle mind was so wounded and distressed, that she seemed, like an innocent victim, recovered from one torture to be tormented with another, still more ingenious.

However I may be partial to sportive writing, I really think that, in this place, it would be both impertinent and unfeeling to tantalize the reader, who now begins to think that I have introduced a set of characters which I hold up as models of virtue and goodness, only to reward them with unmerited misery and hopeless wretchedness; but I flatter myself I shall

not be accused of this unnecessary wantonness. I do no more than my duty, and against all such censure I shall defend myself, by noticing that I undertook nothing in this task but to record facts, and if I leave the more amiable part of my groupe of characters as miserable as those whose practice has been knavery and villany, I shall not, even in that case, have deserted probability, nor have inculcated a useless lesson of morality, since to leave goodness in distress, is to enforce that highest of moral duties, resignation.

2.12. CHAPTER XII.

WHICH CONCLUDES THIS HISTORY.

Mr. Balance, who had been to town for the purpose of seeing that the prosecution against Gloss was properly carried on, was also determined to search as deeply as possible into the truth of this unhappy affair, and, while he was thus employed, it happened that he was called upon by a gentleman who said he had very particular business with Sir Sidney, on this very subject. With this gentleman Mr. Balance returned to Warwickshire, where he told Sir Sidney that, from what he could gather, he feared the wretched tale was but too true.

It will be remembered that Charles knew, in the south of France, a father Fitzgibbon, who told him that, in three years from that time, he should have some business in England, and would then call on him in London. Our hero gave him a direction to Mr. Balance, who, he knew, would be his man of business, and who, whether they were friends or foes, would, of course, forward any thing or person to him.

It will also be recollected that Mrs. Hazard's monument at Rochester, from which Mr. Gloss received some of his intelligence, was shewn to all strangers. It appears therefore feasible enough that Father Fitzgibbon, in his way from Dover to the capital, should have seen it.

Father Fitzgibbon was the person now introduced by Mr. Balance, who had scarcely exchanged the usual compliments with Charles, when he admired by what remarkable and extraordinary means the strangest discoveries are brought about. In short, it appeared that he was the intimate friend of Combrie, and had received the greatest obligations from his family; that he had known him the whole time he meditated the elopement [...] with Miss Le Clerc, and indeed was the very friend who had equipped him with the dress in which he so successfully personated father Benedict. He had also connived at the business of the keys, and lent him much other material assistance, which he was the better enabled to do, as he was well acquainted with Goufre's affairs, and then belonged to a convent at Dieu-le-war, about two leagues from Nancy, where all intelligent travellers to that part of France have been informed there is such a convent made up of English, Irish, and Scotch, and where they brew very good beer.

Fitzgibbon mentioned the business of Miss Le Clerc's journey to England, and of Combrie's preventing her from leaving the papers at Sir Sidney's; adding, that those papers had at length been entrusted to him, and that, as he understood they contained something of consequence, he had deferred "sending them by another,' to use his own words, 'till he had an opportunity of delivering them himself."

So saying, he gave the packet to Sir Sidney, who, in a moment, knew and proclaimed that the hand writing was that of Annette's mother.

"Then I am right, I find,' said Fitzgibbon.—' "Too right,' cried one.' "Fatal confirmation!" sighed another.' "Cruel destiny!" said a third.—' "Unheard of misery!" exclaimed a fourth.'In short, the whole company exhibited such tokens of wretchedness, that the Irishman cried "Why, by my soul, one would tink, by all these destinies, and fates, and long faces, that I had brought over the plague sealed up in a letter. Upon my honour and conscience I only discharged the promise I made poor Mrs. Combrie, four years ago, who desired me moreover to add that every syllable was authentic; for in that paper would be found the lady's dying words in her own hand writing."

It occurring in a moment to every one present that if Mrs. Combrie, four years ago, had given Fitzgibbon the dying words of somebody else, written in a hand which Sir Sidney knew to be that of Annette's mother, Mrs. Combrie could not be that mother, every countenance immediately underwent a total change, and what had been but the moment before certain misery, was now sweet expectation. This was immediately evinced by a volley of opposite exclamations; at which Fitzgibbon exclaimed, "Pray good folks is it Bedlam I am in? By my soul, you seem first to be crazy, and afterwards distracted."

By this time Sir Sidney having ran over a part of what the packet contained, found abundantly enough to convince him that there was no farther bar to the happiness of his daughter and our hero. To be brief, from the papers, backed by what Fitzgibbon had learnt from Mrs. Combrie, it appeared that she was certainly the Mamma Le Clerc formerly mentioned; for that Annette's mother had left her infant

daughter to her care, requesting she would contrive to convey her to Sir Sidney; which commission, through the medium of the nuns of St. Claire, as we have seen, she faithfully executed.

The sentiments, the distresses, the very names of Mrs. Combrie and Annette's mother bearing so strong a similarity, it is not at all extraordinary that there should be this strict friendship between them, or that this assimilation of circumstances should beget a likelihood that they were one and the same person. The conduct of the two fathers also is remarkably similar, and it would be extraordinary if it was not. They were both bigotted catholics, and both punished the disobedience of their daughters, by shutting them up in a convent; which is only two instances out of two thousand, or very likely ten thousand, upon the records of French nunneries, where the same crime has been punished in the same manner. We have heard that the father of Mrs. Combrie died in England. They now learnt that the father of Annette's mother died in Italy, after he had given the whole of his fortune to the church.

Fitzgibbon got the laugh completely against the company in the course of investigating all these matters. He said that, after all, they were sad bunglers at a discovery; for, added he, "though you have only just found it out, by my faith you knew it well enough long ago:" and really, if it were not highly indecent to get the laugh against the reader, I should be tempted to follow the Irishman's example, and indulge myself at his expence; for it certainly ought to have occurred to him that each of these ladies had a Christian name, and, if it had, he would have know that the Christian name of Sir Sidney's Miss Le Clerc was Annette, and that of Combrie's Miss Le Clerc was Araminta.

This very circumstance of the difference in the Christian names, accounts for the whole, and shews how much deeper fear impresses us than hope.—Araminta was the name placed upon the tomb, and had it been proper to have questioned Gloss as to where he got his intelligence, his answer must have developed the whole mystery: nay, lest it should be penetrated by the reader, it may be recollected that I took advantage of the mistake of Charles, who, absorbed in thought, called Mrs. Hazard Annette, by mistake, as she lay in her coffin.

Thus, I have gradually and naturally unravelled all that mass of entangled circumstances that stood between our hero and the possession of his wishes. I shall not offer on my labours a single comment. If they embrace any important purpose, if they inculcate any useful moral, or serve occasionally as objects of warning or imitation in the various pursuits of life, I shall have exercised a pleasing duty, and shall not fail to receive the thanks of every man of reason and honour as my reward.

As Annette was recently recovered from so severe an indisposition, and as there were some other very serious matters to settle, it was agreed that her union with Charles should be deferred till their approaching grand feast, which was to be celebrated in about a month.

I shall take that interval to give a very summary account of what became of the other characters which I have introduced into this work.

Standfast actually did what Swash pretended to do. He poisoned himself in his cell, to prevent his trial. The interval between his commitment to jail and his defrauding the hangman, exhibited a most frightful example to all villains. It consisted of alternate fits of intoxication. In some of these he execrated and blasphemed; in others he trembled with terror at the horrid images his fancy created to torture him. One hour he howled in an agony of apprehension, in another raved in a paroxysm of imprecation; till at length his son Gloss, affectionate and considerate to the last, prevailed on a common friend to visit him, who, well tutored for the purpose, induced him to save the disgrace that would be entailed on his memory by an ignominious death, and anticipate his fate by poison.

Gloss himself had the address to turn this circumstance to his own account, intimating that they had, among them, made away with his father, for fear circumstances not altogether so pleasant should come out on the trial. As to his own fate, it was this. He was put in the pillory, where he harrangued the populace to such good effect, that he persuaded them the constitution of their country was rotten; that the grossest abuses were practised by those who were entrusted with the public concerns; and, so completely did he, for the moment, work upon the people's credulity, that, when he returned to prison, the horses were taken from the

hackney coach, in which he rode, and the deluded populace, with one consent, yoked themselves in their place: exactly the same as if they were honourably conducting some patriot, who had done an essential service to his country!

In process of time he was liberated, since when he has lived in various circumstances, by depredations on the public; and, at this hour, goes about, like the arch fiend, his principal, seeking whom he may devour.

Mrs. O'Shocknesy, who had robbed Standfast, scarcely arrived on the continent when she was robbed and deserted by Dogbolt. After this, she herded with a set of contrabanders; and at length,—first being detected and branded—she finished her career diseased, loathsome, and a pauper, in the Hotel de Dieu.

As to Tadpole and his wife, as they knew that a retrospection would bring out every particular of their nefarious conduct, they thought it expedient to meet their examiners half way. Charles found the estate rather improved than injured by Tadpole's management, and therefore scrupled not to pay such bonds, and fulfil such other engagements, entered into by his brother, as did not strike at the terra firma of his ancestors. He also agreed to a handsome provision for the children; one of whom, at this moment, is the best horse jockey, and the other the best maker of nut-crackers, in the kingdom.

Tadpole, with this money, and what he had privately amassed, launched boldly into his own profession of attorney, to which he added that of money lender, and has accumulated an immense fortune, by administering to the necessities of young men of fashion, under age; not scrupling, occasionally, to lend the person of his cara sposa—on whom he doats to distraction, and who rules him with a rod of Iron—to bind an advantageous bargain.

The penitent John was put, by Kiddy, into the hands of a methodist preacher, to complete his conversion; but, the good man going the wrong way to work, by terrifying instead of soothing him, his brain was at

length touched, and he finished his life and his misery together, by a rash leap into Swash's mill-stream.

As to the sinner Kiddy, as he used to call himself, he lived for some time pretty comfortably on a handsome annuity that Charles had granted him; but having frequented meetings, conferences, and love-feasts, till his senses were a little deranged, he first slanged himself, as he called it, behind the door, and, being cut down, the shock so preyed upon his spirits, that, doubling his visits to the brandy bottle, he is said literally to have gone out of the world with a dram in one hand and a homily in the other.

At length came the day which was to unite perhaps the most elegant and accomplished pair that ever graced the altar of Hymen. The grand feast was conducted with prodigious splendour, which the reader will the more readily conceive, when he adds to the former description of this festival the additional exertions upon the present happy occasion.

Every friend within the knowledge of any of the parties was invited, and, among the rest, Ego, Toogood, and Musquito, who, spight of their jarring dispositions, united in an universal acknowledgment that wealth, worth, and happiness were never more emulously blended together.

A few words more will still be necessary. The good Mildman, in a very advanced age, yielded his breath amidst the lamentations of his parishioners, who sincerely mourned his memory, as they accompanied his remains to their last home, and who—all they had—as their only remaining tribute to his worth, dropt the tear of sensibility on the grave of virtue.

Figgins, who married the amiable Jude, succeeded Mildman. His reformation is perfect and confirmed, and his conduct honourable and exemplary. Blest with two such friends as Sir Sidney and Charles, his happiness is complete. His efforts at Castlewick, in conjunction with those of Mr. Friend, at Little Hockley, who is still alive, though very old, have rendered those industrious communities the emulation of each other.

Mrs. Marlow succeeded Emma as companion to Lady Roebuck, Emma herself having, at the earnest recommendation of the baronet, married the butler, now Sir Sidney's land steward. She had long before, as I hinted to the reader, a sneaking kindness for him, on account of his fidelity to his master in France. This had improved, to use her own words, into esteem, from her knowledge of him in the family, and had been confirmed into love, by his refusing to take a part against Sir Sidney in her grand plot, which, however worthy in her, would, in him, have been treachery. She has several children, who, instructed by her, are become excellent English scholars, for she does not chuse they should aspire to any thing more. She is universally beloved, and will be universally regretted. On a conversation with Annette, the other day, in which this topic was touched upon, she said, that as her book of life now verged towards the last page, it gave her great satisfaction to reflect that she should not fear to look at the word Finis, having inculcated, in every line, that goodness is the best security for happiness.— "The hour of death,' added Emma, for she is now grown rather sententious, 'is the hell of the wicked, the purgatory of the doubtful, and the heaven of the virtuous."

Mr. Balance is still alive, and as much respected as ever. Sir Sidney, who is Mr. Balance's senior by a year, being now seventy-five, is also living in all the vigour of health and strength. He can still play at cricket and quoits, and pitch the bar as well as ever; and it was but the other day he was requested to let his name stand in a tontine, instead of that of a fashionable young man of twenty. The venerable and amiable Lady Roebuck is also living.—Her employment is the care of our hero's children: out of seven, three of whom are alive: two boys and a girl. The baronet has long since given over his idea of augmenting his grandeur as to himself, but having recently "done the state some service," he is promised a peerage in favour of Charles's second son, by the name and title of Sidney Roebuck, Earl of Castlewick.

As to Charles and Annette, little more need be said. Complete in beauty, goodness, elegance, and virtue, no wonder they are completely happy. Nor is the goodness and virtue of this amiable community of friends selfishly consined. It transfuses its conscious blessings to all around. Charles's

darling passion for patronizing worth and merit, aided by Sir Sidney, flows now in its right channel. All are sure of encouragement who worthily apply for it, nor is there an individual in either Castlewick or Little Hockley that does not feel, and enjoy the generous influence of their wide-extended philanthropy.

These fortunate places are now equally reasonable and equally happy. Both know the advantages resulting from mild control and honourable obedience. In short, they are a type of the country at large.—Every individual is thankful to the power that secures his safety, protects his property, and succours his family; and there is not one among them, stimulated by these principles, and encouraged by their patrons, that would not nobly risk his life, were it necessary, in defence of the wisest of constitutions, and the best of kings.

THE END.