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WITH AN

ESSAY, AND PREFACES

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,

BY

MRS. BARBAULD.

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THE

OLD MANOR HOUSE.

BY CHARLOTTE SMITH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

THE

OLD MANOR HOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

SUFFICIENTLY punished by the alarm he had been in for his indiscretion, Orlando no longer ventured to appear where any of the tenants or servants of the hall might probably meet him; but, as he was afraid of returning to the house of his father till the whole family were assembled, lest he should hear more of the reproof he could so ill bear, he lingered about the coppices; and as a chain of them led to a sharp eminence clothed with wood, that overlooked a part of the park, where, among the venerable trees scattered around it, the Hall-house appeared, he sat himself down on an old seat which had been placed here for the prospect afforded by this woody knoll, and indulged reflections which, though far from pleasant, were mournfully soothing. He recollected that, in this copse, but a few years before, he had once been permitted with some other children to accompany Monimia in gathering the nuts with which it abounded—How gay and happy they were then! how unconscious of evils to come!—Under that tuft of hazel Monimia sat, while he threw the fruit into her lap; and there he pursued a squirrel for her, which escaped up that old beech tree!—The letters carved by the rustics, whose Sunday's walk in summer sometimes led them to this bench, remained: he remembered them well: and, for the first time in his life, felt disposed to

take his share of this species of fame*; and, with his knife, he engraved on that part of this covered seat which had suffered least from

> ..... "The sylvan pen
> "Of rural lovers," †

the words—"ORLANDO, 9th December 1776"—flattering himself that this rude memorial might be seen by Monimia, and draw from her soft bosom one sigh more of tender recollection, in his absence.

Thus passed the time till the hour nearly approached when he believed the whole family would be together, and when he should therefore escape any farther conversation with his father. He made his way towards home, over hedges and through the most pathless part of this woody country; and, entering the house by the kitchen, he inquired for his mother and sisters. The servants answered, that their mistress was ill, and had lain down on the bed; but that the young ladies were in the parlour.

Concerned for his mother, whom he fondly loved, Orlando hastened into the common parlour, where he saw Isabella leaning her head on her hand, in which was an handkerchief, and Selina hanging over her, her eyes streaming with tears. Orlando, imputing all to his mother's illness, inquired eagerly how she did, and how she so suddenly became ill? Selina, in answer, exclaimed: O dearest Orlando! how glad I am you are come back! we have been wishing and seeking for you.

* So admirably described in Cowper's exquisite poem of The Task, where he speaks of the alcove.

> ..... "Impress'd
> "By rural carvers, who with knives deface
> "The pannels, leaving an obscure, rude name,
> "In characters uncouth, and spelt amiss."

† THOMSON.

But my mother! cried Orlando, my dear mother!

She is only very much agitated, replied Selina, and I hope will be better presently: but Isabella—

What, for God's sake has happened to you? said he, interrupting one sister, and addressing his hurried inquiry to the other. Tell him, Selina, said Isabella, and ask him how he would act if he were situated as I am?—I will go to my own room.

What is all this, my dear girl? said Orlando, as soon as she had left the room: Isabella seems less affected than you are!

Selina then related to him, that soon after breakfast her father and General Tracy had walked out together, at the desire of the latter: where the General had opened his intention of offering himself to Isabella as an husband—of making very great settlements if she accepted of him—and, in short, said Selina, he made the proposal appear so advantageous to my father, that the disparity of age seemed by no means a sufficient objection against accepting it:—he therefore referred the General wholly to Isabella herself, with whom he conversed as soon as he returned home, representing his own situation, which certainly affords us all but a melancholy prospect, Orlando. He even told Belle, in regard to our circumstances, some particulars which have been owing to Philip's expenses, that my father says he has not ventured to tell even to my mother, because they would half kill her.—It seems that we shall not have any provision in case of our poor father's death, as Philip has stripped him of all he had saved; and as this estate would be Philip's, we should not have, to support us all, above fourscore pounds a year, my mother's settlement; which, as she had so small a fortune, was all she would let my father settle upon her.—This, you know, is not

twenty pounds a piece for us; and Isabella would not certainly be happy with such a pittance, if it were possible for her to live upon it: only, therefore, consider what a contrast the General's offers make —Besides the power such a match would give her to make our dear parents easy (which I own is the only circumstance that would shake my resolution were I in her place,) she would be raised so much in rank; and have such a large fortune!—so much splendour round her! things which you know Belle has no dislike to, that I believe she will consent, though she has a hundred times ridiculed the General; and when he has been making love to her.

Making love to her! said Orlando; has he long made love to her?

I *think* he has, replied Selina. I know very little how people make love; but I am sure if that was not making love, I cannot guess what is. Belle at first only laughed at him, and used to say such rude things about his wig and his false teeth, and the art he used to make himself look young, that I have wondered an hundred times how he bore it: but afterwards he grew more importunate, indeed I thought impertinent, and Belle threatened to speak to my father. As for my mother, we agreed to tell her the sort of language he held whenever he could get my sister alone, or with only me and Emma; and my poor mother, afraid of disobliging a man who she thought had been such a friend to you, and might be to the whole family, desired we would not tell my father, who would certainly have resented such behaviour, and contented herself with keeping us out of his way, and never suffering us to be out of her sight. So the poor General, not being able to succeed in carrying away Isabella on his own terms——

Curse on his insolent presumption! cried Or-

lando passionately; he never could dare to think of it.

My mother, answered Selina, believes he did:—but you see he repents of his evil intentions, and is determined to be generous and honest at last.

And does my sister Belle accept of him then?

That is the matter now in debate. My father has represented the situation she will be in, if he dies and leaves her unmarried. She knows all the pecuniary advantages that attend such a situation as the General offers her: and the question only is, whether, as she has no attachment whatever, the charms of grandeur, the chance of being a Countess, (for the General's elder brother has but one son, a poor puny boy,) and being called the honourable Mrs. Tracy, are not sufficient temptations to make her forget that the husband who is to give her all these advantages, is a good deal older than her father.

And how do you think the debate will terminate? said Orlando.

Isabella has been crying about it, as you see; and my mother's being so extremely affected made me cry: but I believe, Orlando, that the General need not despair. Isabella, however, has desired till this evening to consider of it; when she is to give him her answer herself. He said that he could not go to town and leave undecided a matter on which the whole happiness of his life depended: nor could he bear to be in the presence of the adored object, till the hour when this decision was to be made: so as soon as he had made his fine speeches, he mounted his horse, and is gone to dine at Stockton's.

Selina, inquired Orlando, tell me honestly, my sweet sister, what you would do, were you in Isabella's place.

I am very glad I am not, Orlando; but I will tell you honestly as much as I know of my own heart—Were my father to say to me, as he has said to my sister Belle, that to see me so opulently married would make his latter days easy, and save him from those hours of anguish that now torment him about the future fate of us all, I should certainly marry this old man, if he were ten thousand times more odious to me than he is. To make my father happy, Orlando, whom I now see often sinking under a weight of anxiety that is destroying him—to secure to our dear indulgent mother the comforts of affluence, if we should lose him—and to promote your interest, Orlando, and poor Philip's, and my sister's, I would throw myself alive into the fire; or, what would be to me much more hateful, I would marry a man whom I abhor.

The fine blue eyes of Selina, on which those of her brother were tenderly fixed, filled with tears as she said this—her voice failed her a moment—but her brother did not interrupt her, and she went on———

But were only myself in question: then, were I to see poverty and even servitude on one side, and General Tracy with his brother's coronet in one hand, and a settlement of ten thousand a year in the other, I do assure you that I should refuse him.

Generous, charming girl; cried Orlando; I do believe you, my Selina; and I rejoice that you are not exposed to the alternative. Belle, though I love her dearly, has not, I know, quite your heart; and I hope does not so much dislike this man, if it is indeed so probable that she will accept of him—Besides, the situation in life which he can offer, has charms for her gayer and more ambitious mind, which my soft Selina cannot taste.

What shall I say to my sister is your opinion, Orlando?

That she must consult her own heart, my dear; for I cannot, in such an affair, give any opinion. But now, Selina, as we shall not have half a moment longer together, tell me, could you contrive to go with me this evening to meet Monimia for the last time? Selina, at first, started some objections—If they both went out together, their design in going could hardly be concealed; and she should perhaps incur the displeasure of her father and mother, who would not be well content that Orlando, whom they probably wished to consult on the important affair in agitation, should quit them immediately after dinner. It was, however, after some debate, settled that he should go first; and that Selina, to whom every thing was soon rendered easy that could contribute to the happiness of her beloved brother, should follow him; for she said that she might then perhaps not be missed; because it was often her custom to sit of an evening with Emma up stairs, as they had usually a great deal of work to do for themselves and their mother; and though this was not a day when they could make that excuse, yet their habit of doing so would make their absence little remarked on an evening when a business was in debate so momentous as Isabella's answer. The brother and sister had hardly settled their little plan of operations, before they were told the dinner was ready, and on their entering the dining-room the rest of the family were already assembled there.

Mrs. Somerive, though she had collected resolution to appear at dinner, could not conceal the agitation of her mind—Orlando so soon to leave her, and the fate of her Isabella in suspense! Her dread lest her daughter should sacrifice herself and be unhappy, opposed to her wishes that she might be established in such high affluence, made her mind a chaos of contending emotions; while Somerive

himself, reading in her countenance all that passed in her heart, and knowing, even better than she did, how necessary such an alliance was to the preservation of all the family, was even more affected; but he had yet strength of mind enough to conceal it better, and to appear calm, though thoughtful and melancholy, frequently turning his eyes on Isabella, who seemed in a kind of elegant languor, the effect of her debate between duty and indifference; though, in fact, it had been held much more between aversion and vanity, in which the latter hardly needed the aid of any other consideration to come off conqueror.

In a family party so situated, there was not, of course, much conversation, and the dinner passed without any body's eating, though each pressed the other to eat, and affected to eat themselves. Orlando hardly spoke three words, and those were addressed to his mother, the interesting concern of whose still beautiful countenance wounded his very soul. Distracted between the fear of adding to that concern by his abrupt departure, and of a failing in his appointment with Monimia, he believed this dinner, useless as it was, was the very longest he ever sat down to. Just as the table-cloth was removed, he heard the clock strike five; and, looking at his watch, which went by the great clock at the Hall, he found their own was ten minutes too slow. Monimia then was waiting for him in the wood, listening to every noise, and accusing him of cruelty and delay! Before this idea, every other consideration vanished; and, starting up, without even attempting an excuse, he hurried away; nor had his father, who called to ask whither he was going—nor the more tender voice of his mother, who cried, Orlando! my son! surely you will not leave us! power to detain him a moment. He rushed out of

the house, and ran, with the swiftness of an Indian, to the great-pond wood.

By the time he arrived there, it was almost dark; but he discerned between the stems of the tall firs the figure of Monimia sitting on the seat he had marked to her as the place of their meeting. Never before did he seem to love her so ardently as at that moment; his heart was softened by the thoughts of their immediate separation, while oppressed with the occurrences of the day, it seemed ready to burst. Breathless from the speed with which he ran, and hardly knowing what he did, he threw himself on his knees before her, and, seizing her hands, bathed them with his tears.

The trembling girl, who had been there even earlier than her appointment, and who had, amid an hundred other fears, despaired of his coming, alarmed, and unable immediately to weep, hung over him, as with frantic gestures he spoke to her; and when she would have reproached him for the apprehensions in which he had left her, her words were inarticulate; and it was some time before either of them were able to congratulate the other that they thus met once more!

Alas! the bitter certainty that a long, long separation must soon follow, poisoned the pleasure of their meeting: neither knew how to speak of it, yet it was impossible for either to think of any thing else.

You go to-morrow, Orlando? said Monimia. Yes, answered he; and then relating what had passed in regard to Isabella, he added, that perhaps if his sister determined to accept the offers of General Tracy, as he believed she would, it might be in some respects advantageous to him; for I understand, said he, that the enamoured old beau means, if his love is successful, to return in a few weeks—

perhaps three weeks or a month, in order to carry off his young bride; and that he has hinted to my father, that from thenceforward, considering me rather as his brother than his protegé, he shall not only procure leave of absence from the General of my regiment—(for I am not in his, but in that where his nephew, Captain Warwick, has a company)—but use his utmost endeavours to procure me immediate promotion. I own, Monimia, that though I think this marriage most preposterous, and that my sister Isabella is marrying merely for money; yet I am so weak, and I am afraid so selfish, that the idea of gaining by this alliance the advantage of seeing you, which I could not often do otherwise, makes me half forget the disparity of the ages, and overlook the absurdity of a man of sixty-five marrying a girl of twenty-one: indeed, whether I approved or disapproved it, would in this case make no difference; therefore, as I could not prevent the evil, if it be one, there is, I trust, no meanness in my availing myself of the good.

Monimia felt a weight, heavy as the hand of death, taken off her heart, when he told her they were, in consequence of this new family arrangement, likely so soon to meet again. Her mind, which had dwelt with horror on the idea of a separation for months, perhaps for years, was now relieved, by supposing it might not be for more than three weeks; and knowing nothing of military rules, she supposed that after the first forms of entering on his profession were gone through, he might return to the Hall; and that if she could not, from that active watchfulness which her aunt might then renew, see him every day, she should at least know that he was under the same roof, or within a few miles of her; to know even that he was in the same county, was a satisfaction; she should hear Mrs.

Rayland speak of him, if she was herself deprived of the happiness of meeting him; she should see him in the park, and hear his voice speaking to others, if he was not allowed to speak to her. Perhaps Mrs. Lennard, convinced by this absence that her suspicions had been groundless, might less vigilantly oppose their future intercourse. All these hopes—for the hopes of a young and inexperienced mind, are sanguine and easily received—served so far to assuage the pain Monimia had felt on their first meeting, that she became soon able to converse with calmness; and not only quieted her own troubled spirits, but endeavoured to sooth and compose those of Orlando. Her voice had upon his heart the power of magic—deliciously soothing as it was, it excited that sort of painful pleasure which is only expressed by tears. From this state of tender sympathy they were soon awakened, by a voice calling at a distance for Orlando. Monimia started, in terror; but her lover immediately appeased her fears, by telling her what his haste and the tumult of his mind had made him before omit, that he had appointed Selina to meet them. They now therefore (as it was so nearly dark that they could hardly distinguish their way) hastened together towards that part of the wood from whence the voice came; and they soon met the poor terrified Selina, who, almost speechless with fear, on finding herself so far from home alone, and in a night that threatened inpenetrable darkness, trembled like a leaf, and said to Orlando, as he took her arm within his, that the whole world should not have bribed her to venture what she had now done for him.

He led again towards the bench by the boat-house, though Selina pressed him to return home as soon as he could.—I tremble, said she, and am terrified

to death, lest I should be missed: my father indeed is never very angry; but just at this time I would not for the world add to the many causes of uneasiness which he has about the rest of us.—

Nor would I, replied her brother; no, Selina, there is not in the world any sacrifice I would not make to both or either of my parents, except that of my affections for Monimia. He then, though both urged him to put an end to this interview, which seemed indeed only productive of needless pain, insisted upon their sitting down by him; and, holding their hands, which he kissed as he united them, he besought them to love each other when he was gone, and to consider each other as more than sisters! He told Monimia, it was in cover of his letters to Selina he proposed to write to her, and not by the means of the under gamekeeper, as he had once proposed; and he then inquired if they could not appoint some one day in the week when they might meet in that spot: I shall then be present with you, said he, mournfully, at least in imagination—yes, however distant my person may be, my soul will be here! I shall, in fancy at least, enjoy the delight of seeing together the two beings whom I most fondly love, and of knowing they are occupied with the thoughts of their poor Orlando! There is a story in one of the popular periodical publications, I believe in the Spectator, of two lovers, who agreed, at a certain hour to retire, each from their respective engagements, to look at the moon; the romantic satisfaction they enjoyed in knowing that the eyes of the person beloved were, at the moment they were gazing on it, fixed on the same planet, will by this means be doubled to me; for I shall know that at such an hour on such a morning my Monimia and my Selina will be just in this place; I shall

see them—I shall see the eagerness with which Monimia will ask for news of me—the pleasure with which Selina will give it.—Every object round this spot will be present to me; and wherever I may be, however occupied in my duty, my soul will at that moment be particularly here.

Selina, not less anxious to gratify him in this romantic fancy than Monimia herself, now named Monday, as the morning when this innocent assignation should be made; and gave as her reason for it, that on that day her mother was less likely to miss her, from her being then particularly engaged in settling her domestic concerns; and that as they did not always certainly receive letters from the neighbouring post town, except on Sundays, the morning of the following day of the week would be that, in which it would be most likely she should have those that were to be sent her for Monimia.

Poor Monimia, with a deep sigh, reflected, that if all this was necessary to soften a separation of only three weeks (for Orlando had again assured her it would not be more), a longer would be quite insupportable to them both. The deep sound of the great clock at the Hall tolling six, sullenly conveyed towards them by the water, roused her from her momentary dread of future sorrow to a perfect sense of that which was immediately before her. It was necessary to hasten this dreadful parting; there was not a moment to lose; for at a quarter past six she was to be in the parlour to make the tea for Mrs. Rayland and her aunt, and the nearest way was near a mile to the house.—Falteringly she spoke to Orlando of the danger of her stay—he heard her, but he could not answer.—Selina, who was almost as fearful of being missed as she was, repeated it.—Come, then, cried Orlan-

do, dejectedly, since it must be so, let us go.—He took one under each arm, and was moving towards Rayland Hall, when Selina cried, Dear brother! you will not go to the Hall?—No, answered he; but I will not suffer Monimia to go so far alone; therefore we will see her safe in sight of the house, and then return.—We must be very quick then, said Selina.—As quick as you can walk, my sister; answered he, still in extreme agitation: for I care not how soon the pain I endure at this moment is at an end—I suffer the tortures of the damned! The poor girls, terrified at the vehemence with which he spoke, and the wild way in which he hurried on, made no reply, and only exerted themselves to keep up with him. In silence, they ascended an high stile, which in one place separated the park; and in silence ascended the hill which arose behind the north front of the house.—Monimia then desired him to stop—We are now, said she, within sight of the house, and there can be no danger for me.—Within sight; How is that, my Monimia, when it is so dark that we are hardly within sight of each other?—No, replied she; but what I mean is, that there is nothing to fear in my crossing the park alone. —I shall go with you, however, said Orlando, to the old thorn in the dell below.—At the hazard, said Monimia, trembling, of our being met by some of the servants at the Hall, or people going home from their Sunday's visits to them?—At the hazard, added Selina, of terrifying and displeasing my father and mother?—At the hazard of every thing! replied Orlando, with a degree of impetuosity which neither of them had courage farther to oppose. They again became silent; and as they continued to walk very fast, or rather to run, they presently reached the place which Orlando had himself named for their parting; where Monimia

again stopped, and disengaging her arm from his before he could prevent her, she said, faintly, And now, Orlando, God bless you!——dear, dear Selina! she was quite unable to finish the sentence; but, turning, would have left them, when Orlando, throwing his arms round her, wildly pressed her to his bosom.—Be not so much concerned, said she, trying gently to disengage herself, remember you have told me we shall meet soon—very soon again: Orlando! if you really love me—if you pity me, do not, I implore you, detain me now.—I will not, said he: God forbid that I should injure you, dearest, loveliest——! She was gone—he stood a moment like a statue, while her white clothes made her distinguishable through the gloom.—Selina then intreated him to hasten home—No! he said dejectedly; No, I must stay here till I hear the door, by which I know she will enter the house, shut after her; and then I shall be sure she is safe. Selina could not oppose this; it could indeed take up but a moment—Hush! cried Orlando, do not speak! let us listen—ha! the door shuts! Well, Selina, I will now go back with you; and a thousand and a thousand times I thank you, my best Selina, for your indulgence to me.

They then hurried back the way they came, and with as much haste as the darkness of the night would permit: it was above three miles by the nearest path; and Orlando, occupied solely by the anguish of having parted with Monimia, uttered not a syllable; while Selina, excessively alarmed lest her mother should have missed her, felt her heart beat so much with apprehension, that it was with the utmost difficulty she could keep pace with him.

CHAPTER II.

On their arrival, however, at the house, Selina was agreeably surprised to find, from little Emma, who was reading in the room they shared above stairs, that she had never been inquired for; that the General had arrived just before, to tea, which was, on his account, ordered later than usual; and that Isabella, who had been below ever since dinner, with her father and mother, was now, she believed, alone with the General, to whom she was to give her answer.

The palpitating heart of Selina then became quieter: she took off her hat and cloak, adjusted her hair, and prepared for the summons she expected to have to make the tea. Orlando, a moment afterwards, glided up to them; he said there had been no inquiries for Selina, and all was right.—I went, said he, as is my general custom when I come home, into my father's study, but I found nobody; and, from what I can gather from the servants, this important answer has been given, and our old brother is with his papa and mamma, and with his future bride; they are all settling the ceremony together.

How can you laugh, Orlando, said Selina, at any thing so serious?

Nay, replied he, assuming a levity he was far from feeling, you would not have me cry, Selina! If Isabella is happy in this match, surely her family have reason to be glad of it; but one cannot help thinking of January and May! Selina had read but little, and knew not to what he alluded; nor had she time to reply, for at that moment Mrs. Somerive looked in upon them; she smiled, as it seemed, through tears—Orlando, said she, I am glad you are

returned—Why did you leave us so abruptly after dinner? But come, my children, we wait for you below.—And are we to find there a new relation, Madam? said Orlando. Is the General to compose hereafter a part of our family?—Your sister has decided that it shall be so, replied Mrs. Somerive, stifling a sigh; and you, Orlando, will be pleased to see how much pleasure this alliance (notwithstanding there is certainly a too great disparity of years) gives to your dear father. The difference of age is indeed the only objection: in every other respect General Tracy is a match infinitely superior to what any of my daughters could have pretensions to. Mrs. Somerive then led the way down stairs, and her children followed her.

During supper the General assumed, as well as he could, the triumphant air of a young successful lover. Isabella was silent, and affected resignation to the will of her parents; while her father looked at her with eyes in which doubt and concern were mingled with hope and satisfaction. It seemed as if he at once rejoiced in having his daughter so well established, and yet feared that to the dazzling advantages of rank and fortune she might sacrifice her happiness. None of the party seemed much disposed for conversation; and as the General and Orlando were to depart early the next morning, they separated sooner than usual: Mrs. Somerive in better spirits than she would have been, if the General had not assured her that he would himself bring Orlando down with him, when he returned to claim the happiness of becoming allied to her, and might call himself the most fortunate of men.

Calmed by these promises, of which she saw nothing that should impede the execution, she beheld her son depart on the following morning, without any of those paroxysms of grief which Orlando

had so much dreaded, and which he was so ill able to bear. Before the travellers got into the chaise, in which they were to go post to London, the General demanded an audience of his future bride; and Orlando was at the same time closeted by his father, who enjoined him to preserve his morals, to attend to the cultivation of that good opinion with which the General honoured him (points which a little experience proved to be incompatible), and lastly, to make inquiry after his brother, and if he could find him, to endeavour by every possible means to persuade him to return home.

Orlando promised to obey all these injunctions, to the utmost of his power; and glad to escape hearing any other charges, which he might have found it impossible to obey, he received the summons now sent him to attend the General with pleasure; for nothing is more painful than the sensations which arise at the moment of separation from such friends, even though the absence be but transient. The General had paid his compliments all round, and Orlando now embraced his family with tears in his eyes. His father wrung his hand, and once more gave him his blessing.—His mother could not utter the last adieu! but went back into the parlour with her daughters; while Orlando, seated by his military patron, left his paternal mansion as fast as four post-horses could carry him.

He was not disposed to talk; but as the distance increased between him and Monimia—between him and his family, all he held dear in the world! the depression of his spirits increased also; while his companion, as he approached the scene of his former habits, and thought of the raillery he should encounter upon his new system of reformation, became more silent and contemplative: the clamours of his mistresses, of whom he had now three upon

his hands, and the ridicule of his friends, arose to his imagination in a very formidable light: but then the beauty, youth, and vivacity of Isabella Somerive seemed excuses for a much greater folly than he was about to commit. He recollected many of his acquaintance, whom he was willing to suppose much older than himself, who had married young women without half her attractions. He fancied, that he was weary of the dissipated life he had hitherto led; that as he would soon be no longer a young man, but be *declining towards* middle age, it was time to have somebody who should be truly attached to him; while his being married did not at all preclude him from gallantries, which he saw every body else pursue whether they were married or not. The greatest inconvenience he foresaw, was what arose from the precipitate affection he had shewn towards his nephew, Captain Warwick, the orphan son of his sister, whom he had taught to consider himself as heir to his fortune, who would be much mortified at the disappointment. However, he reconciled himself to this objection, by reflecting that it would be very hard indeed if his kindness to his nephew should prevent his gratifying himself; and by resolving to make young Warwick an immediate present of a thousand pounds, and to settle a very handsome income upon him after his death, that he might not be quite thrown out of those expectations to which he had been brought up, when the General should have a family of his own.

Nothing was farther from the General's intentions than to marry Isabella Somerive, even when he had first changed his battery, and pretended to her honourable love; but he found so little prospect of succeeding with her, even if all was to happen in her family as he had foreseen, and he felt it so im-

possible to live without her, that what he had begun with the most insidious designs, concluded at last in an honest, though an absurd one: and having once taken the resolution to commit matrimony, he endeavoured to reason himself out of every objection that pride, libertinism, or the fear of ridicule, continually raised against it. Isabella, whose heart was perfectly free from every impression in favour of any other man, had so behaved as to make the enamoured General believe, that only her charming reserve, owing to her rustic education, prevented her avowing her attachment to his person; though, on a thousand occasions previous to his serious declaration, she had placed his vanity and affectation of youth in the most ridiculous point of view, and had shewn him that she did not care a straw for him.

But such power has vanity in obscuring the best understandings, that her ancient lover really supposed he could inspire her with sincere affection for him. Still, however, he felt an awkward kind of sensation when he thought of the numberless gay young men with whom his blooming Isabella would be surrounded when she was his wife. Above all, he reflected with disquiet on his nephew, who was reckoned one of the handsomest men of the times—he was three-and-twenty; and the General felt no satisfaction in being called uncle—Uncle! it sounded so antique. Warwick, indeed, was never admitted to live with him; and he now repented that he had procured leave for him to come home from America, in consequence of a wound he received there, and heartily wished him back again; but his return thither was not, according to the General's own account, very likely to happen. If the presence of Warwick at his own house in Grosvenor Place was not agreeable to him,

that of Orlando was as little so; and though not for quite the same reason, for another very similar. Before the last conquest made by Isabella Somerive over the susceptible heart of General Tracy, at least a third of it had been possessed by a young woman, whom he had purchased of her mother, and whose assumed virtue and great attractions had induced him to admit her into his house, where she had reigned ever since very despotically. As he had not yet settled whether he should part with her or not, or acquired courage to tell her his intentions, she must, till he could make up his mind on this point, remain where she was; and, whatever might be his future resolution, he did not greatly like that the handsome young Orlando should be introduced to her acquaintance. As he could not give this reason to Mr. Somerive for not asking Orlando to take up his abode in his house, he had sedulously avoided mentioning it at all. Orlando had never thought about it; but occupied solely by what he had left, he considered not a matter so inconsequential as whither he was to go when he got to town. Tracy had once or twice led the conversation to topics which he thought would engage Orlando to say what he intended in this respect; but Orlando took no notice of it, till, at length, just as they crossed Fulham Bridge, Tracy said, Mr. Somerive, shall my chaise and horses put you down in London?—You know I stop on this side the turnpike, at Hyde-Park Corner; but the chaise shall go with you wherever you please.

I am much obliged to you, Sir, answered Orlando, who never till that moment recollected that the General had not invited him to his house—but there is no sort of occasion to take your carriage. —I shall go, added he, this evening to Mr. Woodford's.

That was a plan that the General did not quite approve of; he knew that, if his intended marriage was once known at that house, it would be instantly spread among his friends by means of the communication Woodford had with many of their families, which was a circumstance he was not yet prepared for. The ambition of Woodford himself, and the malice and disappointment of the two young ladies, would busy them all in circulating the report; and the General, in love as he was, and determined to marry, had not yet prepared himself to stand the ironical congratulations of his male or female friends, but particularly the latter, on his resolution of uniting himself in holy matrimony to the niece of his wine-merchant. These thoughts made Orlando's intentions of going to Woodford's, which however he might easily have foreseen, very unpleasing to him; and he remained silent some time, considering how he might guard against the inconveniencies he apprehended.

His reasons for not giving him an apartment in his own house kept their ground; but he would very fain have prevented his going to Woodford's, at least till he had himself taken some means to parry the first burst of the ridicule he so much dreaded. He could not take one very obvious means to prevent the circulation of the news of his intended marriage; by requesting Orlando not to speak of it; for he had often remarked that he was quick-spirited, not without a considerable share of pride, and affectionate solicitude for the honour of his sisters; to affect, therefore, making a secret in London of what he had so openly avowed in the country, could hardly fail of awakening the high-spirited Orlando to some degree of resentment, if not of doubt in regard to the reality of his intentions. After a long debate on the subject, the General at last recollect-

ed that it was impossible to suppose Somerive himself would not write to a brother-in-law, whom he was so much accustomed to consult, on a subject so interesting and important; and that, therefore, any precautions he might take in regard to Orlando would be useless. It is true that his being by his intended marriage allied to his own wine-merchant, had before given him many severe qualms, which a glance from the arch and bright eyes of Isabella had at once dissipated: but now, as he approached his town-house and saw those bright eyes no longer, these fits of half repentance, originating in pride and prejudice, recurred with more force; and when he arrived at his own door, he started from one of the reveries thus brought on, and again said to Orlando, Shall my servants get you an hackney-coach?

There was something in the abrupt manner of asking this, which suddenly convinced Orlando that the General had no inclination to ask him into his house. Piqued by this observation, he answered coldly, that there was no occasion to trouble his servants, for that he should walk to the house of his uncle, and would send a porter for the small portmanteau he had in the chaise.—By this time the General's valet de chambre had opened the chaise-door, and Orlando, who was on that side, got out. He stopped; and the General, as he followed him, asked, in a low voice, some question of one of the footmen who had been left in town, and who came to the chaise-door also: to which question the man answered aloud, No, Sir, she is gone out. The General, turning to Orlando, who was coolly wishing him a good evening, said—You will certainly do me the favour to walk in.

Orlando by this time comprehending that there was some lady usually resident with him who was not to be seen, and that he was only asked in be-

cause she was at this time absent, answered, that he would not then intrude upon him:—but as I shall want the advantage of your instructions, Sir, said he, on many things of which I am totally ignorant, I shall be obliged to you to tell me where I am to receive your orders.

There was a coldness, and indeed a haughtiness, in the manner of Orlando's saying this, that convinced the General he saw and was offended by the evident design he had himself formed of evading to give him an invitation. More disconcerted than he had almost ever felt in his life, he had again pressed him to go into the house, which Orlando again refused; and then saying he hoped to hear from him at Mr. Woodford's, when and *where* he might attend him for the purpose of receiving those instructions relative to his future proceedings which he had promised his father to give him, he again wished him a good evening, and walked away.

Orlando had never been in London but once when he was about sixteen, and had then only attended his mother on a visit for about a week in the spring, which she had passed with her brother. He remembered that he never was so happy as when they left it, and, on a fine evening of May, returned from the smoke of the Strand, in one of the streets of which Mr. Woodford lived, to his dear native county, where only there seemed to be any happiness for him. Since that time he had never felt a wish to revisit London; and in a melancholy mood he now proceeded along the streets, recollecting little more than his way from Piccadilly to the Strand. Every object wore a very different appearance from what they did when he saw them before. It was now a dreary, foggy evening in December, and just at the hour when the inhabitants of the part of the town he was in were at their desserts, so that

hardly any carriages but a few straggling hackney-coaches and drays were rumbling over the pavement. As he approached Charing-Cross the bustle became more; and the farther he advanced, the throng of coaches coming out of the city, and going towards the play-house from other parts of the town, deafened him with noise: but it was a mournful reflection, that, among all the human beings he saw around him, there was not one interested for him. While the dirt through which he waded, and the thickness of the air, filled him with disgust, his mind went back to the dear group at home: he saw them all assembled round the fire in the little parlour—his father trying to dissipate with a book the various anxieties that assailed him for his children, now and then communicating some remarkable occurrence to his wife as she sat at her work-table:—he saw Isabella employed in making some little smart article of dress, and fancying how well she should look in it—and Selina, while she and Emma were assisting his mother in completing some linen for him, more attentive to her father's reading, often asking questions and soliciting information.

But when he had finished this picture, his fancy, with more pain and more pleasure, fled to the lovely figure of his Monimia in her solitary turret, sighing over the tender recollection of those hours which would never perhaps return, sometimes wishing she had never known them, but oftener regretting that they were now at an end.—He saw her stepping cautiously into the library, whenever she could find it open, to take or to replace some book which they had read together—she shed tears as she read over the well-known passages he had particularly pointed out to her—she dwelt on the pages where he had with a pencil marked some peculiar beauty in the

poetry. He fancied he saw her take out the lock of his hair which he had given her in a little crystal locket, press it to her lips, and then imagining she heard the footsteps of her aunt, return it hastily into her bosom, and place it near her heart. A thousand tender images crowded on his mind; he quite forgot whither he was going, and was roused from this absent state of mind only by finding himself at Temple-Bar. Recalled then from the indulgence of his visionary happiness to the realities around him, he recollected that he had passed the street where his uncle lived: with some inquiries, however, he found his way back; and, on arriving at the house, he heard that Mr. Woodford was out, having dined in the city; and that his wife and her daughters were gone to the play with a party of friends who were to sup with them. He was told however, by the maid-servant who let him in, that he was expected, and that a bed had been prepared for him by direction of her master, who had received notice of his intended arrival by a letter from the country the day before. Orlando could not help remarking to himself, that he was likely to have but a cool reception in an house, the inhabitants of which could not one of them stay at home to receive him; but he was new to the world, and his heart open to all the generous sympathies of humanity. He thought that relations loved one another as well in London as in the country; but he soon saw enough of these to make him resign, with perfect composure, a too strict adherence to old-fashioned claims of kindred.

CHAPTER III.

A MOMENT's reflection recalled the confused and dissipated thoughts of Orlando back to the transactions of the day. He had never liked General Tracy much; and he now liked him less than ever, and regretted that Isabella was to be his wife. He almost doubted whether he ever meant to make her so; and the idea of any deception raised his indignation. But he had nobody to whom he could communicate his thoughts: and it was perhaps fortunate for him that he had not; for his open, unguarded temper, incapable of dissimulation, and despising it wherever it appeared, was very likely to have betrayed him into confidence with his uncle which would have hurt his father.

The moment, however, he saw Woodford, he shrunk into himself; and instead of remembering that he had not yet been at home to receive him, felt only concern that he was come home at all.

Warm from a city dinner, the boisterous manners of his uncle appeared particularly disgusting to Orlando, who had lately been accustomed to associate only with women, or with his father and the General; the conversation of the former of whom was pensively mild, and that of the latter so extremely courtly that he seemed always to fancy himself in the drawing-room. Orlando, therefore, was almost stunned with the halloo of his uncle on receiving him: he shook him, however, heartily by the hand, crying—Well, my boy! I'm glad to see thee: though devilishly thou art bit, my little hero, to find that all that old Tabby's fine promises end in sending thee to carry a rag upon a pole, and get shot through the gizzard by the Yankies.—Aha! I was right, you see.—Take my word another time. I

know the world, and never saw that waiting for such chances answered—A young fellow may wait till he is grey on one of those hags, and the devil a bit find himself the forwarder at last.—They never die; for o' my conscience I believe they have each of them as many lives as a cat: and when at last they have the conscience to turn the corner, it's ten to one but they bilk you after all.—No, no; take my advice another time—never depend upon them; 'tis better to shift for one's self.

Well, Sir, said Orlando, whom this harangue equally tired and disgusted, you see that I have followed your advice, by embracing a profession——

A profession! cried Woodford with a contemptuous look; and what a profession!—To be shot at for about five-and-thirty pounds a year! Hey? or how much is it? thereabouts, I believe.—A rare profession, when a man ties himself down to be at the command of about a dozen others!—In this manner he ran on, nothing doubting the shrewdness of his remarks, and not meaning to be rude and brutal in making them: yet Orlando felt that he was both; nor was he much relieved by the change in the conversation that brought the General's intended match into discussion. Woodford was at once flattered by such an alliance, and mortified that his own daughters had missed it. He felt proud that he should boast of having *the Honourable* Lieutenant-General Tracy his nephew, but was vexed that he had not had any share in bringing it about; and this contrariety of sensations found vent in the coarse raillery he uttered to Orlando, who was once or twice on the point of losing his temper, before the entrance of the ladies and their party from the play put an end to a dialogue so very disagreeable to him.

Young Woodford, who, having quitted trade to study the law, was now a motley composition, be-

tween a city buck and a pert Templar, accompanied his mother and sisters; which he took care to signify was a great favour, and not owing to his wish to oblige them—but to see how he liked a young woman they had with them from the city, and who was the only daughter of a rich broker of the tribe of Israel, who had, however, married a Christian, and was indifferent enough about his own religion to let his daughter be called a Christian also. Her fortune was supposed to be at least seventy thousand pounds; and Mr. Woodford had long been scheming to procure a match between her and his Jemmy:—to which Jemmy declared he would condescend, if he could but bring himself to like the girl. But he thought her confounded ugly, and had no notion of sacrificing himself to money. The girl herself, just come from a boarding-school, her head full of accomplishments and romance, was in great haste for a lover. Mr. James Woodford was reckoned, by some of his young acquaintance, a very smart, fashionable man; and Miss Cassado needed very little persuasion to fancy herself in love with him.

The intended husband of Maria Woodford, and a young man who seemed to have pretensions to the other sister, were the rest of the party: who, preceded by Mrs. Woodford, now appeared. The ladies of the family spoke with cool civility to Orlando—the younger Woodford, with the air that he imagined a man of fashion would assume for the reception of his country cousin: but under this apparent contempt he concealed the mortification he felt from the observation that Orlando, who was always admired by the women, was much improved in his person since he last saw him.

With his two female cousins Orlando had never been a favourite, notwithstanding his acknowledged beauty; and that for no other reason, than because

he had never paid to their charms the tribute of admiration they expected from every body. Eliza particularly disliked him, because he had refused a sort of a proposal made by her father to give him her hand and a share of the business. But the young Jewess, who consulted only her eyes, immediately discovered, by their information, that this stranger was the sweetest, handsomest, most enchanting man in the world; and that James Woodford was nothing to him. She had her imagination filled with heroes of novels, and the figure and face of Orlando exactly corresponded with the ideas of perfection she had gathered from them; while the natural good-breeding which accompanied whatever he said, and that sort of pensive reserve he maintained in such a company, which gave to his manner peculiar softness, placed him at once among the dear interesting creatures with which her head was always full; and she either so little knew, or so little wished to conceal the impression he had made, that James Woodford and his mother perceived it, both with an accession of ill humour which did not sweeten their manners towards Orlando.

At supper every body talked together; though their eagerness to be heard could not be justified by the importance of what they had to say, which was chiefly remarks on the players, criticism on their acting, or anecdotes of their lives, of which the younger Mr. Woodford had apparently a great fund. Orlando, who knew none of them, and for whose conversation there was no vacancy if he had been disposed to converse, sat a silent auditor of this edifying discourse; now wondering at the importance affixed to people and events which appeared to him of so little consequence—now comparing the noisy group in which he sat, with the dear circle at home, and his delicious *tête-à-têtes*

with his soft and sensible Monimia—and not unfrequently looking with some degree of wonder on the rosy cheeks, disfigured forms, and disproportioned heads of the ladies—but especially on that of Mrs. Woodford, whose cheeks were as red, and whose plumage waved as formidably as that of any of the misses. He soon determined, that till he could finish his business about his commission, and prepare for his duty, he would take a lodging, and not remain where he was likely to find so little society to his taste, and where his reception was hardly civil.

Having taken this resolution for the morrow, he felt no other wish but that the disagreeable night would end; and totally neglected by every body but Miss Cassado, who now and then addressed herself to him in a sweet sentimental tone, he had disengaged his mind from the scene around him, and was picturing in his imagination the turret of his Monimia. He saw her sleeping; and her innocent dreams were of him! Every piece of furniture in the room, the books, and the work that lay scattered about it, were present to him. It was the image only of Orlando that sat at the table of Mr. Woodford; the soul that animated that image was at Rayland Hall.

But from this illusion he was startled by Woodford; who, giving him a smart blow on the shoulder with his open hand, cried, Why, Captain; you are in the clouds! Hey-day! what pretty plump dairymaid at the Hall is the object of this brown study? Never mind, my lad—a soldier finds a mistress wherever he goes; and though I dare swear thou hast broken a sixpence with her as a token of true love—she will not break her heart, I warrant her, while there's a sturdy young carter in the county of Sussex—Come, most magnanimous Captain,

cheer up! We are going to drink, in a bumper of such claret as thou hast not often tasted, Confusion to the Yankees, and that there may soon be not a drop of American blood in their rebellious hearts! —As thou art going to fight against them, thou wilt help us drink against them—Come; your glass, Sir; your glass! and when that toast has passed, I have another.

Orlando, who was more shocked and disgusted by every word his uncle spoke, now took his glass in silence; and Woodford, engaged in some of that conversation which he called roasting, with another of the young men, let him drink the wine without insisting on his repeating words, from which, almost ignorant as he was of the nature of the contest with America, his reason and humanity alike recoiled.

But he did not so escape from the future toast with which his insupportable uncle had threatened him. When the whole company had drawn round the fire (for their supper was now concluded), and every glass was again by the order of Mr. Woodford *charged*—he, who in dining out, and in liberal potations he had taken since he came home, had already swallowed more than was sufficient to elevate his robust spirits, stood up with his back to the fire in the middle of his family and his guests, and there gave a toast which had a very direct reference to General Tracy's marriage with his niece Isabella, in terms so very improper, that Orlando, to whom it was particularly addressed, felt every principle of personal honour or general propriety insulted by it, and positively refused not only to drink it, but to stay in the room while it was drank. Being once roused, and feeling himself right, the vulgar ridicule of his uncle had as little effect as the more serious and angry remonstrance of his coxcomb

cousin, who assured him, that only his little knowledge of the world, and rustic education, could cover him from the most serious resentment. A severe pang touched the sensible heart of Orlando, as he recollected that his beloved mother would be vexed at this difference between her brother and her son: but, when he related the cause, he was sure she would not blame but commend him; and conscious of all the dignity of an unadulterated mind, scorning to stoop to even an unworthy expression because it was authorized by custom, or insisted upon by a relation, he took his hat, and, wishing the ladies good-night with great politeness, was leaving the house, when Woodford himself overtook him at the door, and apologised for his unguarded proposal, by which, however, he protested he meant not to offend him. On this apology, and on an assurance that he should hear no more of such offensive conversation, Orlando returned to the room, though fully determined to leave the house the next day.

The licentious and vulgar mirth, however, which Mr. Woodford chose to call conviviality, was at an end after this incident. James Woodford, already detesting Orlando, could hardly be civil to him; the lady of the house beheld him with a mixture of envy, contempt and terror: the misses, his cousins, felt only resentment and contempt: but the little Jessica, gone already an age in love, admired his spirit, and adored his beauty; and when her father's chariot, with an old Hilpah who acted as a sort of Duenna in it, came to fetch her home, she made a tolerably confident advance to engage the brave pretty creature to escort her home. Orlando, however, either did not or would not understand her; and James Woodford, piqued at the preference given to Orlando, which the lady was at no pains to conceal, suffered her to depart alone.

The rest of the party immediately separated: the young barrister retired to his chambers, hardly deigning to wish his country cousin good-night—Orlando, whose trouble no kindness from this family had power to allay, as their neglect had no power to increase it, went to his room little disposed to sleep; fatigue of body and mind gave him up to a few hours of forgetfulness. At dawn of morning he awoke, and, as he knew it would be long before any of the servants rose in an house where night was converted into day, he dressed himself; and as the day was to be dedicated to business, and he wished to lose as little time as possible, he went to breakfast at a coffee-house, and left a note for his uncle, saying, in civil but cold terms, that, as he had so many affairs to transact in a very short time, he must keep very irregular hours, and therefore should be a troublesome inmate in a family; for which reason he should take a lodging near the part of the town where his engagements lay, and should only occasionally trespass upon him for a dinner.

From the coffee-house where he breakfasted he wrote to General Tracy, requesting his directions, as he determined not to call at his house. To this letter, however, he did not expect an answer till after one o'clock, as the General was seldom visible sooner; and he employed the long interval in writing to his family a short account of his safe arrival in London, and in pouring out his whole heart to Monimia in a letter, which he inclosed in one to his sister Selina.

General Tracy was in the mean time suffering on one side, all the apprehensions of what would be thought and said, when his intended marriage should be known, by those whose interest it was to keep him single; and, on the other side, from his

fears of losing Isabella, his passion for whom absence did not promise to do much towards curing. Warwick had been returned from his recruiting party above a week, and had been several times in Grosvenor Place inquiring for his uncle; and the behaviour of the lady of the house towards her ancient lover was such as gave him great reason to suppose that his intended reform was suspected, if not known. Of this, however, he had no longer any doubt, when, going late in the evening after his arrival in town to the house he usually frequented in St. James's-street, he was attacked upon this tender subject by all his old friends, and rallied without mercy. As he could not deny an affair of which they seemed so well acquainted with the particulars, he took at once the resolution to avow it; their ridicule then ceased, and Tracy returned home, glad that this first burst of laughter was over.

But much was yet to come of a more serious nature, against which he armed himself as well as he could, by reflecting that he had a very good right to please himself, and that neither Captain Warwick, nor any of those other persons to whom he had given a claim over him, had any other dependence than on his bounty. To the women on whom he had made settlements, he knew he must pay them; but whatever he had done for Warwick was entirely voluntary; and as his nephew had no other dependence, he would hardly, for his own sake, so behave as to cut himself off from a share of his future fortune because he could not have it all.

Armed with these reflections, he determined to end this disagreeable state at once, by telling Warwick what he intended for himself, and for him. And when his nephew, apprised of his being re-

turned to London, waited on him the next morning at breakfast, Tracy, though he would rather have mounted a breach, plunged at once into the subject—informed Captain Warwick of his intention to marry, and of the immediate present, as well as future provision he intended for him.

Warwick, who had always feared his uncle's very youthful propensities would, as he advanced in life, betray him into the very folly he was now about to commit, received this intelligence with more concern than surprise. He was himself of the gayest and most inconsiderate disposition. In the height of health, youth, and spirits, the admiration of every woman he saw, and the life of every company he went into, his vanity did not allow him to suppose that he owed any part of that admiration to the prospect he had of being heir to General Tracy's wealth; and, imputing it all to his own merit, he fancied himself superior to the malice of fortune. There were many possibilities which, on a moment's reflection, weakened the blow which this intelligence seemed at first to give to his fairest hopes—His uncle might change his mind a day before it was exectued—the young woman might jilt him—or, even if the marriage took place, he would probably have no children; and then he should himself be so little injured by this match, that it was not worth thinking about with any degree of concern—The thousand pounds too, which his uncle promised him, was a douceur that considerably abated the bitterness of such intelligence; and Warwick, rather through the carelessness of his nature than from motives of prudence or policy, received this intelligence so much more calmly than Tracy expected, that his uncle appeared to be in a better humour with him than ever. This uneasy subject once discussed, Tracy proceeded to inform

him, that the brother of his intended bride, for whom he had procured an Ensign's commission in his (Warwick's) regiment, though not in the same company, had accompanied him to London, in order to equip himself for the service, and to join that part of the corps that were in England. While he was thus speaking, Orlando's note was brought in; and on Tracy hinting that such were his wishes, Captain Warwick immediately offered to go himself to the young soldier, and give him every assistance and information that could be useful to him.

Instead, therefore, of a written answer to his note, Orlando heard a gentleman inquiring for him in the coffee-room; and on his appearing, Captain Warwick, whose figure and address immediately prejudiced every body in his favour, introduced himself as the nephew of General Tracy.

If Orlando instantly conceived a favourable opinion of Warwick, *he* was yet more struck with his new acquaintance. From his uncle's account, and from what his own imagination added to it, he supposed that he was to be a temporary bear-leader to a tall straight-haired cub just come from school, who wanted a drill serjeant rather than a fashionable acquaintance; but when he saw, and only for a moment had conversed with Orlando, he perceived that he was one of those beings for whom education can do little, and whom nature has so highly favoured that nothing can be added by art. The two young men, thus highly pleased with each other, soon entered into conversation, with that unguarded familiarity which accompanies generous tempers in the candid days of youth. Orlando spoke his mind very freely on the absurdity of the match meditated by the venerable General; and Warwick as freely ridiculed it, while he could not

help expressing some curiosity as to Isabella, whose charms had thus brought about what so many artful women of all descriptions had been trying at for the last thirty years at least. Orlando described his sister as he really thought her—a very handsome girl, full of spirit and vivacity, with a great deal of good humour—a good share of understanding, which did not, however, exempt her from being very vain, and somewhat of a coquette. It was on inquiries relative to her person, which he said must be extraordinary, that Warwick dwelt the most—Really, said Orlando, I have seen many women who are as handsome, some handsomer. For example, I think Selina, my third sister, infinitely more beautiful, though I own to you she is not generally reckoned so.—Upon my soul, replied Warwick, your family, Somerive, must be a very dangerous one—I suppose, though, I am pretty secure; for my good old uncle, or *young* uncle—I cry him mercy!—will not let me have a peep, for the world, at this future aunt of mine! Orlando was glad to see that Warwick received with so much *gaieté de cœur*, an event which would have raised in the minds of most other persons, so situated, inveterate enmity against his whole family. Warwick engaged him to dine at a tavern in Pall-Mall; and they then went out together, that Orlando might know where to find the tradesmen for whom he had occasion.

CHAPTER IV.

For a young man of the temper and disposition of Orlando, there could not be a more dangerous companion than Captain Warwick. Indulged from

his infancy, by his uncle, in every thing that did not interfere with his own pleasures, and having no parents to restrain him, Warwick never dreamed of checking himself in whatever gratified his passions or flattered his imagination. His spirit and vivacity recommended him to societies of men, where he learned to be an agreeable *debauché*, to drink without losing his reason, but not always to play without losing his money. His very fine person, and the softness of manners he could occasionally assume, endeared him to the women, among whom he was called the handsome Warwick, and with them lost his time—but hitherto without losing his heart. With all his acquired imperfections, he retained many inherent good qualities—He was humane, generous, and candid: his soldiers adored him; and his friends, amid all that fashionable dissipation in which most of them lived, were more attached to Warwick than fashionable men usually are to any body. Orlando, in the simplicity of his heart, thought him the man in the world most calculated to be his friend. Warwick was recruiting at Barnet; but, however, had obtained leave to be in London: and Orlando, who, after passing a few days with him, could less than ever endure the sort of society he found at Mr. Woodford's, took a lodging near Warwick's, and they became almost inseparable. The General, embarrassed between his love for Isabella Somerive, which he could not conquer, and his present connections, which he knew not how to break, passed in a state of mind by no means enviable the first week after his return to London; but the greatest torments he was to experience had not yet overtaken him, for the societies of fashionable women, among which he had been the oracle, were not yet assembled for the winter. He dreaded, when he met them, not only the loss of his con-

sequence, but the scorn and ridicule he should be exposed to. He wished to be once married, when common civility would repress those sarcasms to which he knew he should be otherwise exposed; yet as the preparations necessary for this important event, which he assured Mr. Somerive he would hasten, where to be begun, his resolution failed: he wished he had not gone so far, but had adhered to his former cruel plan, of waiting till the death of her father, and the distress and dispersion of her family, which that event threatened, had thrown her into a situation in which it was likely she might be tempted to accept less honourable proposals. While the mind of the ancient lover thus fluctuated between the fear of losing her quite, and the reluctance he felt to resign his liberty to obtain her, Isabella discovered no impatience for his return; but waited for her promised dignities with tranquillity, which her father was far from sharing. The painful idea of sacrificing his daughter to mercenary considerations, was not more supportable than that of leaving her destitute, together with the rest of his family, of a comfortable subsistence; but, above all, the cruel desertion of his eldest son, of whom he had now heard nothing for many weeks, corroded his heart with unceasing torments; and those torments were increased by the necessity he imposed upon himself, of concealing them as much as possible from his wife.

The letters he received from Orlando were his only consolation; yet even these were embittered, by hearing, in every one of them, that all his inquiries after his brother had hitherto been fruitless. Warwick, who found great pleasure in his company, had, very early in their acquaintance, learned the source of that anxiety which often clouded the open countenance of his friend; and in

hopes of meeting Philip Somerive, they had gone together, not only to public places, and to all parts of them which it was likely he might frequent, but to gaming houses and taverns of the second class, where, from Orlando's description of his brother's style of conversation, Warwick thought it most likely he would he found: but they gained no intelligence of him; and the very research was not made with impunity by Warwick, who could seldom help engaging in any thing that was going forward. But Orlando's affection for his family, and for Monimia, secured him effectually from the infection of such societies—he had strength of mind enough to consider how much he owed to them and to himself, and to reflect how unpardonable his conduct must appear to his father, if, in undertaking to recover his brother he should lose himself. These reflections, and an heart almost insensible of all pleasures but what were derived from the hope of passing the summer of his life with Monimia, were antidotes even to the influence of Warwick's example, who often gaily rallied his country prejudices, but never seriously attempted to prevert his principles—and sometimes, in their more serious conversations, was candid enough to own that he should himself be a happier man if he did not, rather than incur the ridicule of those for whose opinion he felt only contempt, plunge into vices for which he had no taste, and call pursuits pleasurable, which, in fact, had no power to bestow pleasure.

Orlando had now been three weeks in London; for the plan of returning to pass his Christmas at Wolverton, which had been once proposed, had been given up. The General, contented with having introduced him to Captain Warwick, had seen no more of him since than common civility required, and was now gone to pass that space of time

between the end of the old and the beginning of the new year, when it is very unfashionable to be in London, at the house of his brother, Lord Barhaven, who usually remained at his northen residence till the end of January. The General had originally proposed to return to Somerive's house at this time; but not having yet recovered the doubting qualms which he had since felt, he thought a fortnight at his brother's, where he hoped and believed no idea of his intentions could yet have been heard, would give his arguments on both sides fair play, which now were so equally balanced: he should be alike removed from the fascinating charms of the blooming Isabella, and from those rivals who, in London, had many established claims on his heart and his pocket.—He should not, on one hand, be delighted with the spectacle of family happiness and domestic comfort, which the circle at Somerive's house offered to him; nor, on the other, dread the ridiculous light into which the wit of his London friends threw his intended marriage with a beautiful rustic, young enough to be his grand-daughter. For these reasons he wrote to Somerive, lamenting the necessity he was under to change his plan; and alleging that it was family engagements alone that impelled him to do so, but that as soon as they were fulfilled he should hasten on the wings of rapture to West Wolverton, he set out for the north.

Orlando continued another month in town without hearing of his return, or wishing to hear it for any other reason than because it would, he thought, be the signal of their going down together to the house of his father.—At the end of that time he became impatient—he had been now above six weeks absent, and the letters he had from his family, but still more those he less frequently received from Monimia, irritated this impatience. The anguish

of mind that every week increased, while Mr. Somerive had no news of his eldest son, was by his letters forcibly expressed to Orlando, while his mother and his sisters gave him mournful accounts of his father's health. Mrs. Rayland's letters were, though very rare, the greatest alleviations to his uneasiness that Orlando received; for they were as expressive of kindness, and of increasing attachment to him, as the reserve of her manner, and the formality of her style, would permit them to be; and it was a great and very unusual degree of favour towards any one, that alone could urge her to write at all. The two letters he received from her, therefore, were considered by Orlando as being more unequivocal proofs of her settled affection for him, than any she had yet given.

Still the time that was to intervene before he should be permitted to return to the dear paternal spot, around which were assembled all the future hopes of his life, seemed insupportably long.—He was now in Hertfordshire with his men; and only occasionally obtained a few days to pass with his friend Warwick in London. In the tedious days he passed almost alone in a little country town, his resource was in books, and to such as he could attain he applied himself with more avidity than he had ever done at the Hall. Thus passed the month of February, and part of March. Mr. Somerive then believing, with great appearance of reason, that Tracy was trifling with his daughter, wrote to the General in such a way as must bring on a decision. In consequence of this, the General, still wavering, returned to London, from whence, and from his duty in Parliament, he had absented himself since the beginning of the session on pretence of ill health. On his arrival in town a circumstance awaited him, which called him back to his honest resolutions; for

the young woman, on whom he had profusely lavished great sums of money, who was established in his house, and whose settlement he had lately increased in consequence of his proposed marriage, had quitted his house the evening before that on which she knew he was to return to it, leaving a letter, in which she turned him, and all her former professions of attachment to him into ridicule. She took with her all the presents he had made her, to a very considerable amount—gave him the name of a person whom she had authorised to receive the annual sum he was to pay her—informed him she was gone to Italy with a young man of fashion, whom she named to him, and was his most obedient humble servant.

As the excessive vanity of the General had blinded him so far as to make him believe he was extremely beloved by this young woman, who had always laughed at and imposed upon him, he was thunderstruck by an incident so unexpected, and cruelly mortified to find, that while he was meditating how to soften to her the pain of parting, she was thinking only of flying from him with a younger lover. His resolutions in favour of matrimony, which pride and the dread of ridicule had at least suspended, now returned in all their force. He immediately wrote to Somerive, excusing, as plausibly as he could, his late apparent backwardness, and acquainted him that he only waited for the drafts of the settlements, which, as particular circumstances in his affairs rendered much attention to them necessary, his solicitor had promised to have drawn up and laid before two of the most eminent counsel—all which he was assured would not take up above a fortnight, at the end of which time he should lay himself and his fortune at the feet of his adorable Isabella.

The General however, though he was now really

in earnest, could not prevail on men of law to make a forced march in his favour; and the fortnight elapsed in queries and questions in which there seemed no other end to be obtained than that of increasing the fees of the gentlemen of the long robe, and the bill of attendance to the attorney. Somerive again thought himself trifled with; and the General, in order to convince him he was not, went down on a sudden to West Wolverton, where the charms of Isabella regained at once all their power; and after staying ten days, and renewing, in the most solemn manner, his engagements with Somerive, he returned to London, to make the last preparations for his marriage, which was fixed to be within three weeks. As it had long been settled that Orlando was then to return home to be present at the celebration of these nuptials, he heard that all was at length settled, with a mixture of pleasure and pain.—The delight he felt at the idea of returning to friends so dear to him—above all of seeing his Monimia, was embittered by reflecting on the sacrifice his sister was about to make in this unequal marriage; nor could he reflect without regret on the injury it would do to the interest of his friend Warwick, who, however, spoke of it himself with philosophic gaiety.

It was near the end of April before the General, who now remained steady to his engagements, could prevail upon the tardy special pleader, the puzzling counsel, and the parchment-loving solicitor, to complete their parts in this intended contract. At last however the General, attended by two of them, set out for West Wolverton, and in a few days was followed by Orlando.

The day after his arrival was occupied till it was almost dark, with the ceremony of hearing these endless settlements read; and, as he was a party to

them all, it was impossible to escape even on pretence of the indisputably necessary visit to Mrs. Rayland; but the instant they were signed he flew eagerly to the Hall.

The sight of the many well known objects on his way—every tree, every shrub, recalled to his mind a thousand pleasing ideas; and as he passed hastily through the fir wood, where in a dreary night of December he had last parted from Monimia, or at least passed a few agitated moments previous to their parting, he compared his present sensations with what he had at that time felt, and laughed at the superstitious impression given him then, and on some former occasions, by the gloom of the winter sky—when he fancied that, in the hollow murmur of the breeze, he heard, "Orlando will revisit these scenes no more!"

Every object, then wrapped in real and imaginary horrors, was now gay and joyous. It was a lovely glowing evening, towards the end of April. —The sun was set, but his beams still tinged with vivid colours the western clouds, and their reflection gave the water of the lake that warm and roseate hue which painting cannot reach.—The tender green of spring formed to this a lovely contrast, and, where the wood of ancient pines ceased, his path lay through a coppice of low underwood and young self-planted firs—the ground under them thickly strewn with primroses and the earliest wild flowers of the year.

Hope and pleasure seemed to breathe around him,—Hope and pleasure filled the heart and flashed in the eyes of Orlando; and perhaps the moment when he reached the door of the old Hall, though he was forced to stop a moment to recover his breath and recollection, was one of the happiest in his life.

It had been the established custom, from his first admission to the Hall, never to enter the apartment of Mrs. Rayland but on permission; but now, as he had informed her from London, that he intended to be at the Hall in a few days, and had received an answer most cordially inviting him, his impatience would not permit him to wait for this ceremony; and he hardly felt the ground beneath him, as he sprang up the stairs that led to her usual sitting parlour, and opening the door, saw, by the faint light which the old gothic casements afforded at that hour of the evening, Monimia sitting on the opposite window-seat alone. He flew towards her, forgetting, at that moment, that the world contained any other being. Surprise and pleasure deprived her as much of her recollection as they had done her lover; but it returned sooner, and she intreated him to forbear those frantic expressions of tenderness which were so dangerous in such a place.—Where are the old ladies then? cried he—they are only walking in the gallery, replied Monimia, as Mrs. Rayland was not well enough to go out to-day—they will be back immediately.—That cannot be, cried Orlando impatiently, for you know how slow their progress is; but let us not lose a moment in talking of them.—Tell me, Monimia, can I see you at night as I used to do?—Are you still in your turret, with the same means of leaving it?—Tell me, Monimia, I must not—I cannot be refused.

Ah, Orlando! answered the faltering Monimia, dearest Orlando! how often have I repented of those dangerous, those improper meetings; with how much difficulty we escaped, and how impossible it would have been for any other circumstance than your absence to have quieted the suspicions of my aunt! And ought we now to renew this hazardous correspondence—ought we to incur again such danger? Orlando interrupted her: Ought we! ex-

claimed he. Is that a question Monimia would have made after so long an absence, if Monimia was not changed! Changed, Orlando! can you think me changed? Prove then that you are not, said he, again impatiently interrupting her: let me see you to night; my leave of absence is only for a few days, till my sister is married, and I must not—I will not be trifled with. Oh, hush! hush! whispered she, there is a noise! they are coming from the gallery! I had better not be found here with you. Promise then Monimia—promise me, and you shall go. I will hazard every thing, even an immediate discovery, if you refuse me. Monimia, trembling at his vehemence, then sighed her consent—and hardly knowing what she was about, gathered up the work that lay in the window-seat, and softly left the room, while Orlando walked to the other end of it, assuming, as well as he was able, an air of unconcern; but before he had made a second turn Mrs. Rayland entered—and started at the sight of him, though she had expected him either that day or the next.

He approached her with all that affection which is inspired by gratitude; and as he respectfully kissed her hand, she expressed her pleasure at seeing him returned. He then paid his compliments to Mrs. Lennard, whose eyes, he saw were thrown round the room for Monimia; she returned his civilities, however, with great good humour. Candles were ordered, and Mrs. Rayland invited him to supper, and to take up his residence at the Hall—favours which, with unfeigned pleasure, he accepted. The old lady, who had now long been accustomed to contemplate Orlando as a creature of her own forming, was pleased to fancy him improved, both in his person and his manners, during his short absence. He had acquired a military air—he was more easy, but not less respectful; and she fancied

that he resembled her grandfather's picture more than he used to do; but she expressed some surprize not to see him in uniform, which she said, in her time, all gentlemen of the army appeared in usually.

Orlando promised he would conform to what she thought right in that respect—not however without some apprehensions, that as he advanced in life she would propose to him, in order that he might be still more like Sir Orlando Rayland, whose portrait she wished him to resemble, to purchase a tye wig, and brandish a sword, of which the guard should be lost in an immense sleeve.

As Mrs. Rayland was not very well, having lately had an attack of the gout, to which she was in the spring particularly subject, she dismissed the young soldier early: and it was with inexpressible delight that Orlando took possession once more of his old apartments, which had been carefully prepared for him. It would not be easy to describe the subsequent meeting between him and Monimia, who suffered herself to be persuaded to renew that clandestine intercourse, which they had both so often condemned as wrong, and renounced as dangerous; but when Monimia could prevail upon him to talk less of his present happiness, and to be more reasonable, she related to him all that had passed during his absence. Her life had, however, afforded very little variety, but was rather amended in regard to Mrs. Lennard's treatment of her, who employed her more than usual in attendance on Mrs. Rayland, in order to save herself trouble, gave her more liberty, and was rather less harsh towards her than formerly. She related, that she was now often suffered to go to church, which had afforded her the opportunities she had snatched to meet Selina and correspond with him. Her aunt had apparently forgotten her suspicions and anger when he was

no longer near the Hall; and the disappearance of Betty Richards, who was said to have gone off (according to her own assertions) to Philip Somerive, and was reported to be supported by him in London, had been the means of eradicating entirely from the mind of Mrs. Rayland all those suspicions which the gossip of the country, collected and repeated by the jealousy of the old butler, had made on her mind; and she now thought better of Orlando than if those doubts had never been raised.

Orlando, in collecting all this from Monimia, saw too clearly the reason why his brother had so carefully avoided him; and amid all the delight of which his heart was sensible in this conference, it felt a sharp pang, when he reflected how great an accession of pain this intelligence, which did not seem to have reached him yet, would give to the already wounded heart of his father.

Day unwelcomely appeared, and it was dangerous for Monimia to stay a moment longer. Orlando conducted her safely back, extorting from her a promise that they should meet every night during the short time he was to stay. When he left her his spirits would not allow him to sleep. The morning was delicious, and a thousand birds from the woods, on every side the park, seemed to hail his arrival. Again all the enchanting visions with which youth and hope had formerly soothed his mind reappeared—never did they seem to him so likely to be realised. His sanguine imagination, no longer repressed by doubts of Mrs. Rayland's intentions towards him, which were now every thing but actually declared, represented to him the most bewitching scenes of future happiness. The only alloy was his brother's indiscretions and his father's health; but he believed he should be able to obviate the inconveniences of the one, and to restore

the other, when he should possess, what the course of nature rendered likely to be at no great distance, the property of Mrs. Rayland, which he meant to resign to his father for his life.

Happy pliability of the human spirit! Happy that period, when youth, and health, and hope, unite to paint in brilliant colours the uncertain future—when no sad experience, no corrosive disappointment, throws dark hues over the animating landscape; or, if they do, are softened into those shades that only add to its beauty! Orlando would not distinguish, in that his fancy was busied in drawing any but agreeable objects—Monimia infinitely more lovely, and, if possible, more beloved than ever, was the principal figure. He saw her the adored mistress of that house, where she had been brought up in indigence, in obscurity, almost in servitude; this gem, which he alone had found, was set where nature certainly intended it to have been placed—it was to him, not only its discovery, but its lusture was owing—he saw it sparkle with genuine beauty, and illuminate his future days; and he repressed every thought which seemed to intimate the uncertainty of all he thus fondly anticipated, and even of life itself.

The cool tranquillity of morning, the freshness of the air, the beauty of the country whithersoever he turned his eyes, had not sufficient power to sooth and tranquillize his spirits—he believed a book which should for a moment carry him out of himself would do it more effectually; and returning to the library, he took from the shelves two or three small volumes of poetry which he had purchased, and retiring to an elevated spot in the park, which commanded a view of Monimia's turret, he attempted in vain to read; but the sensations he felt were so much under the influence of fancy,

that they suddenly assumed a poetical form in the following verses:

HYMN TO LOVE AND HOPE.

TWIN stars of light! whose blended rays
Illuminate the darkest road,
Where fortune's roving exile strays,
When doubt and care the wanderer load,
And drive him far from joy's abode.

Propitious Love and smiling Hope!
Be you my guides, and guardian powers,
If, doom'd with adverse fate to cope,
I quit in Honour's rigid hours
These dear, these bliss-devoted towers.

Yet here, O still, most radiant! here
(Attend this prayer of fond concern)
To beauty's bosom life endear,
Presaging as ye brightly burn
The rapture of my blest return.

CHAPTER V.

THREE days, three happy days to Orlando, now passed rapidly away. Divided between his father's house and the Hall, and appearing to constitute the comfort of both, he was himself gay and cheerful, in the certainty that at night he should see Monimia. The charms of the season; the beauty of the country, to which he was attached as well from taste as habit; the tender affection of Monimia, which, though more guarded, was more lively than on their early acquaintance; the delight of knowing that his father's sorrows were soothed and suspended by his presence; and that his mother looked upon his attention to her as overpaying her for every other anxiety; all conspired to give

value to his existence, and to blunt the asperity of those reflections in regard to his brother, which now and then would interpose and give him momentary disquiet. He was not quite content about Isabella, who, through the air of gaiety she assumed did not seem to be really so well pleased as she affected to appear. The fulsome fondness of her ancient military lover sometimes raised her ridicule, but oftener disgust, which Orlando saw with concern. But on these occasions he reflected that nothing in this world is without its alloy; and that so many advantages would accrue to his family by the marriage of Isabella, that as she did not seem herself averse to it, it was folly in him to think of it with concern.

On the morning of the fourth day after his arrival, he had just walked over from the Hall, where Mrs. Rayland had detained him to breakfast, and was engaged in conversation in the parlour with his father and the General, when a dark-coloured chariot, drawn by four sleek dock-tailed horses that might have matched the set at Rayland Hall, was seen to approach the house, followed by three servants in purple liveries.

Mr. Somerive expressed some surprise at this, as he had not the least recollection of the equipage: their inquiry, however, who it would be, was immediately answered by the appearance of Doctor Hollybourn; who, waddling out, inquired for Mr. Somerive, and was shewn into the room where he was sitting.

Mr. Somerive was so little accustomed to receive visits of civility from Doctor Hollybourn, or indeed any visits at all, that he was as much surprised at this as he could be at a matter of so little consequence. The very great condescension of the good Doctor, who bowed as low as his prominent

stomach would let him, and whose speeches were interlarded by all kinds of flattery, Mr. Somerive accounted for by recollecting that the Doctor was extremely fond of the company of persons of title, and never so happy as when he could introduce some anecdote which related to his brother the Bishop, or some Right Honourable or Right Reverend Friend. He had, on the occasion of their meeting at Rayland Hall the preceding November, paid his court most assiduously to the General; and enlarged upon the beauty of his brother the Lord Barhaven's seats; all of which, he said, he had visited. Somerive now therefore concluded that it was to the report of his honourable guest, and of his intended alliance with the family, that he owed this very obliging visit; which, however, he began to think very tedious, and dreaded its lasting till the evening: when, at length, the good Doctor, after a pompous preface, said that he had an affair of some consequence to communicate to Mr. Somerive, on whose time he begged to trespass alone for ten minutes.

Somerive, who could not imagine what a man with whom he had so slight an acquaintance could have to say to him, immediately applied this unexpected circumstance to the idea always present to his mind. He fancied some ill had befallen his eldest son, and that one of his friends had commissioned this man of the church to break to him the horrid tidings; and then to pour into his wounded mind the consolation his profession enabled him to bestow.

In an agony not to be described, therefore, Somerive led the way into his study; where the Doctor, after another flourishing preface, which Somerive in the confusion of his mind took for a preparatory discourse, offered to him for Orlando

his daughter, the fair and accomplished heiress, to whom he declared he would give twenty thousand pounds down, with an engagement that at his death that sum should be trebled.

Though the proposal gave no great pleasure to Somerive, because he disliked Doctor Hollybourn, and was almost sure Orlando disliked his daughter; yet this conversation, so different from what he expected to hear, gave, while it relieved him from the most dreadful apprehensions, the appearance of joy to his countenance; he thanked the consequential Doctor for the honour he did his family, promised to communicate to Orlando the purport of their conference, and to wait upon him with an answer, or send Orlando on the following day. They then returned to the General and Orlando—the conversation turned on common topics; and the Doctor, though asked to stay dinner, withdrew with his usual dignity.

The General was now considered as part of the family; and before him Somerive, who had hardly yet recovered from his surprise, related to Orlando, as soon as he was gone, the purport of his visit.

Mr. Somerive seemed at first but little disposed to listen to proposals of such a nature from a man whom he had always rather disliked, and who now seemed to have made them, only because it was generally understood that Orlando was acknowledged as the intended heir to the great estates of the Rayland family.

Orlando very plainly declared his disinclination to hear of them; while the General, by no means accustomed to consider pecuniary advantages as matters to be slightly thought of, or hastily rejected, asked such questions as led Somerive to explain the particulars of Miss Hollybourn's fortune and expectations; after which he contrived to turn the

conversation to indifferent matters for a few moments, and then walked away with Somerive, whom he very seriously advised to reconsider the matter before he suffered Orlando to throw from him this opportunity of becoming a man of fortune and independence.

The Doctor's proposal, however flattering it would have been to many young men, even though they declined accepting it, gave to Orlando no other pleasure than what for a moment arose in reflecting, that, in thus refusing an affluent fortune, he gave to Monimia an additional proof of his affection. His father, however, after his late conversation with the General, and some reflection alone, began to see this offer in a more favourable light than it had at first appeared to him; and notwithstanding the little inclination he felt for the family of Hollybourn, he was now of an age and under circumstances which gave to such a fortune as Orlando was now offered its full value in his opinion. His mind, already accustomed to contemplate the marriage of General Tracy with Isabella as a desirable event, more easily accommodated itself to think with approbation of another match equally dazzling, when opposed to the present uncertain situation of Orlando. After taking, therefore, some turns in his study alone, he sent for his son, and entreated of him to forbear giving the Doctor an answer at least for two or three days.

Orlando, who had never hesitated himself what answer to give, imagined it impossible to give it too soon—Surely, Sir, said he, as I cannot accept this good Doctor's very obliging proposals, it will be useless and uncivil to delay a moment saying so, which I will say in a letter in the least displeasing manner I can; but which, however, I must beg leave to do this evening.

I beg then that you will *not*, said Somerive in a more peremptory tone than he was accustomed to use—In such an affair I will not act without consulting Mrs. Rayland.

Mrs. Rayland, Sir, answered Orlando, will, I am very sure, either not interfere, or, if she does, it will not be to recommend Miss Hollybourn.

We will inquire that, replied his father coldly; in the mean time you have my directions not to write to Dr. Hollybourn.

Till when, Sir?

At least not till after I know Mrs. Rayland's opinion.

All the opinions upon earth, Sir, cried Orlando, will not make me change my resolutions.

I thank you, however, Orlando, said Somerive, for avowing how little deference you pay to mine.

Dear Sir, it was only half an hour since you seemed as little disposed to listen to this unexpected overture as I am.

I had not then thought of it properly. You are young and rash enough to determine on the most important matters in ten minutes—I am not; and therefore I again desire you will not write to Dr. Hollybourn this afternoon.

Orlando, a good deal hurt at this change in his father's sentiments, and dreading importunity on an affair of such a nature, then inquired if he might himself wait upon Mrs. Rayland?—Somerive answered, You may, if you will at the same time deliver a letter from me in explanation, and say dothing yourself till that letter shall be read.

This Orlando promised, being pretty certain that Mrs. Rayland would be much less anxious for this connection than Mr. Somerive supposed, who now desired him to send his mother into the study.—

He obeyed; and left them to consult together on this unexpected offer, and to write to Mrs. Rayland, with whom he proposed dining, and had engaged to return to his father with her answer early in the evening.

Orlando now saw only persecution and trouble preparing for him at home during his short stay, for the tears and tenderness of his mother were infinitely more formidable to him than any other mode of interference.—To Selina, whom he called out to walk with him in the shrubbery, while this conference was holding, and this letter writing, he communicated all he felt. She had only tears to give him; for, to resist her father's commands, or even his wishes, seemed to her impossible. She trembled at the idea of Orlando's withstanding those wishes, yet knew enough of his invincible attachment to Monimia to be assured that he could never yield to them.

A servant at length brought to Orlando the letter to Mrs. Rayland for which he had waited, and he took his way to the Hall.

As he had promised his father not to speak upon it before Mrs. Rayland had read the contents, he sent it up by one of the footmen with a message importing that he waited her commands.

In this uneasy interval he dared not go in search of Monimia, nor could he detach his thoughts a moment from the subject of a proposal which threatened to empoison the few days of delight which he had promised himself. Restless and anxious, he walked backwards and forwards in the study with uncertain steps, now listening to every noise in hopes of receiving a summons to attend Mrs. Rayland; and now believing, from the delay, that she saw the proposal of Dr. Hollybourn in a favourable light, and was writing to his father to enforce its acceptance.

At length he was desired to walk up stairs; and, with a fluttering heart, he entered the apartment of Mrs. Rayland, who began by saying—You know, I suppose, the contents of the letter my kinsman Mr. Somerive has taken the trouble to send me?

Orlando answered, that he certainly did.

And pray, Sir, have you any wish to accept this offer? An offer!—The world methinks is strangely changed!—For a man to *offer* his daughter—is such an indecorum—in *my* time such a proceeding was unheard of—But however we live and learn! I have heard that the way of these days is to send young women to market like cattle: but there is something perfectly shocking in it to me.—However, I suppose, to people of the world it is nothing new or extraordinary—Pray, Sir, what are your intentions?

Orlando immediately saw, and saw with inexpressible pleasure, that Mrs. Rayland was averse to the alliance with Dr. Hollybourn. He answered therefore—My intentions, Madam, are to decline an offer which certainly lays me under great obligations to Dr. Hollybourn, but which the profession I have chosen, and my inability to offer Miss Hollybourn an heart such as her fortune and merit give her a right to expect, render it impossible for me to accept.

Mrs. Rayland, pleased to see that Orlando had no desire to become independent of her, or to force her to a positive declaration of her future intentions in regard to him, which she fancied his father wished to do by engaging her to give her sentiments on his proposal, now smiled very graciously upon him, and said, I think you right, cousin Orlando.—Dr. Hollybourn is to be sure a very worthy man:—his daughter, they say, is a young person well brought up, and the fortune is very

large, which first and last he can give her, besides what he is always telling me he is to expect from his brother the bishop.—But, you are yet a very young man, cousin; and in truth it seems to me to be time enough to think of marrying—The *fortune* of this young woman is certainly very considerable: but, perhaps, not greater than at some time or other———(she hesitated as if afraid of saying too much)—I say, by the time your settling in life is advisable, perhaps you may not have occasion to make fortune an object in marrying, so much as a good family.—Dr. Hollybourn talks of *his* indeed, which is not well judged; for there *are* people who recollect both the Doctor and his brother, the bishop, in very humble stations compared to what they are now. God forbid, though, that I should despise them therefore! not at all; that is not my meaning—And to be sure *your* family, my cousin, has not of *itself* much pretensions to match with ancient blood———(and again she hesitated as fearing to betray her intentions too far)—I say if ever you are in a situation to marry, I would advise that you think of a woman of a good family at least.

Orlando waited with impatience for the conclusion of this speech; and then falteringly and eagerly asked of Mrs. Rayland, if she would have the goodness to put into writing her opinion on this subject?

This, however, she refused, as she said *she* would not appear to interfere in it upon any account.—Will you then, Madam, take the trouble to see my father?—Will you allow him to wait upon you?—for he is so anxious for me, and, I believe, thinks this affair likely to be so agreeable to *you*, that he will be hardly easy unless he hears your sentiments.

Mrs. Rayland, drawing herself up, as was her way, said—I shall be glad to see Mr. Somerive on any matter that relates to you, cousin, though on this occasion I own it seems very needless. However, you have my leave to say, that I shall be ready to talk over this business with my kinsman, provided, as I said before, I am not supposed by Dr. Hollybourn or his family to interfere.

Orlando, impatient to have this affair concluded at once and for ever, now asked if his father might wait upon her that afternoon?—When he pleased, was the answer;—and Orlando, fearing that if she was left long to consider of it she might change her mind as his father had done before, now ran to West-Wolverton with the utmost speed, quite forgetting that he was to have dined with Mrs. Rayland, or that dining at all was necessary.

When he arrived there, he hastened to relate to his father and his mother, whom he found together, the purport of his conference with Mrs. Rayland; to whom Mr. Somerive agreed to go immediately after dinner, though he seemed visibly disappointed, while Mrs. Somerive, who had for a moment indulged herself with the hopes that her Orlando, instead of continuing in dependence on the caprice of Mrs. Rayland, and of being separated from her by an hazardous profession, might be placed at once in great affluence, and in the immediate neighbourhood, relinquished those hopes, with a deep sigh, but said nothing to her son on a point where it would now be useless.

Mr. Somerive, finding the General was gone on a visit to Stockton's, from whence it was probable he would not return till half an hour after four, determined to hasten to Mrs. Rayland before dinner. He got on horseback, therefore; and, attended by Orlando, on their arrival at the Hall he

expressed to his son some apprehensions that the lady of the house might be at dinner: but Orlando, whose impatience could brook no delay, declared, without a very strict inquiry into the hour, that it was not yet time, and that he was sure they might go to the parlour where she usually sat, as she had so positively said they might come at any time.

Somerive, almost as anxious for the conference as his son, though from very different motives, agreed then to proceed. Orlando would have sent up a servant, had he met one; but none happened to appear, and he walked before his father up the stairs, and, opening the door of Mrs. Rayland's sitting room, he saw her at table, with Mrs. Lennard on one side of it, and Monimia on the other. He would have retreated; but it was too late. He was already in the room—his father already at the table, apologising to Mrs. Rayland for his unseasonable intrusion. She received him with civility, but without any degree of kindness or warmth—desired he would take a chair and sit down, and then said to Monimia, who stood blushing and trembling, and not daring to look up—Mary, you will withdraw, I have business with my kinsman.

I beg I may not disturb any body, cried Mr. Somerive turning his eyes towards Monimia, and immediately comprehending who she was—I beg I may be allowed to retire till dinner is over.—No, Sir, answered Mrs. Rayland; I shall be glad to hear your business now, and I will dismiss my people.

Mr. Somerive again looked at Monimia as she left the room, and he saw that Orlando was lost, if his being so depended upon his attachment; for the extreme beauty, sweetness and grace of Monimia, so unlike the cherry-cheeked coarse rustic

which his fancy had represented her, amazed and grieved him. He felt at once, that a young man whose heart was devoted to her, could never think of Miss Hollybourn, and that he himself could not blame an attachment to an object so lovely, however imprudent, or however ruinous.

Mrs. Lennard now offered to withdraw; but her lady bade her finish her dinner, while poor Orlando cast a melancholy look after Monimia, and then on the seat she had left, which Mrs. Rayland desired him to take. The dinner was soon removed; and then Mr. Somerive, in a few words, repeated the purport of his letter. Mrs. Rayland, even more strongly than she had done to Orlando, expressed her wish that the offer of Dr. Hollybourn might be politely declined; and though she evaded giving her reasons for it, Somerive thought he saw them unequivocally, and that, though she studiously avoided declaring it, she had determined to put Orlando into a situation in which it would be not at all necessary that he should marry, for money, a woman to whom he was indifferent.

Mrs. Rayland had very little art; yet she fancied herself a profound politician, and never considered that, while she forebore positively or even remotely to give Orlando assurances of possessing her estate, her insisting upon the propriety of his marrying, whenever he did marry, a woman of *family*, was in effect declaring that she meant he should be the person who was to perpetuate hers, on which she put so high a value, and thus to efface, in the illustrious blood of his posterity, that alloy which the inferiority of the Somerives had mingled with that of the Raylands.

Somerive, convinced of this even from the pains she took to conceal it, yielded at once to her wishes, and assured her he would permit Orlando with

great politeness to decline Dr. Hollybourn's proposal; yet as he continued to listen to her harangues upon *family*, he could not help looking significantly at Orlando—looks which his son perfectly understood to say, How will this accord with your attachment to the young person who was this moment dismissed by Mrs. Rayland as one of her people.

The old lady, however, was hardly ever in so good a humour with her relations as she became after this affair was discussed; and Mr. Somerive never left the house so full of hopes that his family would be its possessors as he did after this interview, when he returned home in good spirits, though entirely relinquishing the idea of Orlando's becoming the nephew of a bishop.

Orlando himself, though impatient to write and dispatch the letter to Dr. Hollybourn, yet staid at the Hall to drink tea, by the desire of Mrs. Rayland, who gently chid him for deserting her at dinner. It was with more pain than pleasure that he heard Monimia sent for to make the tea, which had hardly happened twice within the last three years when he was in the house. Mrs. Lennard cast a look at him when her lady ordered her niece to be called: but she could make no objection without raising those suspicions which she ever appeared so solicitous to prevent. Monimia then attended. Orlando treated her as a stranger, whom he was slightly acquainted with; and Mrs. Rayland did not appear to have the remotest suspicion that he had any particular regard for her: so friendly to him, as it happened, had been the mistakes and interpretations which the jealousy of Pattenson had put upon those circumstances that had so frequently threatened to betray him.

He had settled with Monimia the preceding night, to stay supper with his father, and return to their

usual rendezvous; and their stolen glances during the half hour that they were together, in the presence of the two old ladies, confirmed this appointment.

Early in the evening, then, Orlando took leave of Mrs. Rayland, and went back to the house of his father, whose uncommon good spirits had diffused more than usual gaiety among his family. Mrs. Somerive and Selina were particularly cheerful—the mother, because she saw her husband for a moment happy, and forgetting the concern he continually felt about Philip, in looking forward to the prosperity of his brother—while Selina, who had trembled for the teasing persecution she apprehended for Orlando, was delighted to find that her father would forbear to urge him on such a subject, and had acquired new confidence in the future intentions of Mrs. Rayland.

Isabella, whose marriage was now within a week to take place, and who had just received from London some of those elegant clothes which her father had ordered for her, as well as some magnificent presents from the General, was the least gay of the party: amidst all her endeavours to persuade herself that she was happy, she had of late, and particularly since she had possessed these fineries, often inquired of herself whether they had really any power to bestow happiness. She had tried on her diamond ear-rings, and a valuable pearl necklace; but she could not discover that she looked at all handsomer in them than when she wore nothing but a simple ribband. The General's valet de chambre had dressed her hair: but she thought the mode unbecoming to her face, and the beautiful dark auburn hue, which had been so much admired, was no longer distinguishable. As for her intended husband, he was so far from having made any pro-

gress in her affections since he had been received as such, that her contempt was converted into disgust. His servants had been talking among those of Somerive, of his gallantries, and, above all, of the sudden desertion of the lady who lived with him; of all which Isabella had heard from her maid, and the longer she listened to, or thought of the anecdotes thus collected, the greater became her repugnance; and yet she knew not how to retract, and was not always sure that she wished it.

Her gravity was easily accounted for, as the day approached that was to divide her from her family; and she was suffered, after some gentle raillery, to be silent and pensive amidst the cheerful conversation of the rest.

It was a lovely evening in early May. Orlando having dispatched his letter, dismissed Dr. Hollybourn and the disagreeable heiress from his mind, and gave it up only to pleasurable impressions and flattering hopes. In a happier frame of mind than he almost ever was in before, he joined his family in their evening walk. When they reached the house, they stopped in the court before it, to admire the beauty of the moon, and to listen to the nightingale, who seemed to be addressing to that beautiful planet her plaintive orisons. Orlando wished himself with Monimia: and thought with delight that within two hours he should be so, and should relate the unpleasant alarm of the day, only to tell her it was over, and had eventually been fortunate in drawing from Mrs. Rayland declarations more than ever favourable to his future hopes.

The whole party sat down to supper in this cheerful disposition. The General, like a happy lover, was particularly animated; and the younger girls were much amused by some anecdotes he was relating, when a servant entered hastily, and said that

a gentleman who was just come post from London desired to speak to General Tracy.

To me! cried the General, changing countenance: Impossible! I know no business any one can have with me that should give him that trouble. Pray, inquire his name, or send my servants to inquire.

I will go myself, General, said Orlando. I thank you, cried Tracy, affecting great unconcern; but I dare say it is nothing worth your troubling yourself to go out for.

Orlando, however, went out, and instantly returned, bringing with him Captain Warwick.

Surprise was visible on the faces of all the party, but that of General Tracy expressed consternation —*Why* Warwick came he could not conjecture; but he felt it to be extremely disagreeable to him that he came at all. Warwick was covered with dust, and had that wild and fatigued look that announces tumult of spirit from an hot and rapid journey. The person, however, that nature had given him, was such as no disadvantageous circumstance could obscure. He looked like a young hero just returned unhurt from the field to recount its triumphs.

After addressing his uncle, and being introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Somerive, he turned gaily to Orlando, and, shaking him by the hand, said, I don't know, my friend, how you can ever forgive the man whose fortune it is to announce to you that you must quit immediately such a circle of friends as I now find you in!

Quit them! exclaimed Mrs. Somerive. Quit us! leave us! cried her husband. Yes, indeed! answered Warwick with less vivacity: That part of our regiment which is in England, consisting of two companies, is ordered to join the troops that are going thither, and are to sail from Portsmouth next

week. The moment I was sure of this, which was not till late last night, I thought it best to come down myself; because the time is so short that my friend here, the young ancient*, had better proceed immediately from hence to Portsmouth.

Never was a greater, a more sudden change, than these few words made in the dispositions of all present—except Tracy, whose only distress was the appearance of Warwick, where he so little wished to see him. Mrs. Somerive, struck to the heart by the cruel idea of losing Orlando, retired in silent tears; and her daughters, little less affected, followed her. Somerive bore this painful intelligence with more apparent fortitude; but he felt it with even greater severity, and with something like a prepossession that he should never see Orlando again if he left England. He stifled, however, his emotions, and endeavoured to do the honours of his house to his unexpected visitor; but the effort was too painful to be long supported, and in a few moments he left the room, saying to Orlando, that as the General and Captain Warwick might perhaps have some business, they would leave them together.

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Somerive threw himself into a chair, and, clasping his hands eagerly together, exclaimed, Good God; what is to be done now?

Nothing, my dear Sir, replied Orlando, can or ought to be done, but for me to obey the orders I have received; and, I beseech you, do not suffer a

* Ensign.

matter so much in course, or which might have been so easily foreseen, to make you unhappy!

What will become of me, cried Somerive wildly, when you, Orlando, are gone? And your brother, your unhappy brother! is a misery rather than a protection to your sisters, to your mother . . . . !

They will want no protector, Sir, said Orlando, much affected by his father's distress, while you live —and . . . . . !

That will be but a very little while, my son! the cruelty of your brother has broken my heart!— While you were all that could make me amends, the wound, however incurable, was not immediately mortal: but now———!

He put his hands to his heart, as if he really felt there the incurable wound he described bleed afresh, Orlando, concealing his own concern as well as he could, endeavoured to sooth his father, by representing to him that this was always likely to happen, and that probably a few months would restore him to his family. Somerive listened to nothing but his own overwhelming apprehensions, and cast his thoughts around to every remedy that might be applied to so great an evil. The assurance General Tracy had given him that there was no likelihood Orlando should be sent abroad, now appeared a cruel deception, which had betrayed him into such folly and rashness as sending into the army that son on whom rested all the dependence of his family. Bitterly repenting what he could not now recall, he caught at the hope that Mrs. Rayland might interpose to prevent her favourite's being exposed to the dangers of an American campaign—You cannot go, cried Somerive, after a moment's pause; Mrs. Rayland will never suffer it—it will be renouncing all the advantages she offers you.

I must then renounce them, Sir, said Orlando; because I must otherwise renounce my honour. What figure, I beseech you, would a man make, who having in December accepted a commission, should resign it in May because he is ordered abroad? My dear Sir, could you wish such an instance should happen in the person of your Orlando?

The unhappy father could not but acknowledge the truth of what Orlando said; but his heart, still unable to resist the pain inflicted by the idea of losing him, clung involuntarily to the hope that the attachment of Mrs. Rayland might furnish him with an excuse for withdrawing from the army, and the greatness of the object for which he staid, justify his doing so to the world. Orlando in vain contended that this could not be, and besought his father not to give to his mother any expectations that it could—Consider, Sir, said he, that my mother will suffer enough; and let us try rather to soften those sufferings than to aggravate them by suspense, and by those fallacious hopes which will serve only to irritate her concern: when my going to whither my duty calls me is known to be inevitable, my mother, with all her tenderness of heart, is too reasonable either fruitlessly to oppose or immeasurably to lament it—she would despise a young man who shrunk from his profession because there was danger in it; and I am sure, affectionate as she is, would rather see her son dead with honour, than living under the stigma of cowardice!

I believe you are right, Orlando, replied Somerive: and I will endeavour, my son, to conquer this selfish weakness. But Mrs. Rayland, it is necessary you immediately see her. I shall go thither to-night, Sir, said Orlando, that I may wait upon her early in the morning; but do not, I entreat you,

harbour an idea that Mrs. Rayland will even *wish* to prevent my departure.

Somerive now at the earnest entreaty of Orlando, promised to compose himself before he went to his wife and daughters, and not to encourage their want of fortitude, by shewing himself wholly deficient in it. He then wished him good night, saying that he would speak a few words to Captain Warwick, and then go to the Hall.

Somerive retired with an oppressed heart; and Orlando entreated Warwick to walk with him part of the way. He then heard that he must go to Portsmouth within two days; and Warwick, who spoke of it with all the indifference of a soldier long used to these sudden orders, proceeded to talk of other matters. Do you know, said he, that I am in love with all your sisters, my friend; but particularly with my future aunt? Orlando, I shall be a very *loving* nephew. What eyes the rogue has! Egad I shall be always commending the Portuguese fashion of marrying one's aunt—that is, if our old boy should have the conscience to make an honourable retreat.

You are a happy man, Warwick, answered Orlando: How lightly you can talk of what would depress half the young fellows in England—the chance of losing such a fortune as the General's marriage may deprive you of!

Oh, hang it! replied Warwick, 'tis not the fortune I mind, for I suppose I shall have some of it at last, unless some little cousins should have the ill-nature to appear against me; but I hate that such a lovely girl as this Isabella of yours should be sacrificed to my poor old uncle, whom, if you could see him in the morning, before he is, like Lord Ogleby, wound up for the day, you would vote to be much fitter for flannels and a good old nurse,

than for a husband to a girl of nineteen—and such a girl! upon my soul, she is a little divinity.

Not half so interesting in my mind, said Orlando, as the soft, sensible Selina.

You are no judge of your sisters—Selina, that is I suppose the second, is a beautiful Madonna; but Isabella, my most respectable aunt, is a Thalia, a Euphrosyne.—I have a great notion, Somerive, that she would prefer the nephew to the uncle—I have half a mind to try.

There is hardly time for the experiment, I fear, answered Orlando; who made an effort to be as unconcerned as his friend.

Not time! cried Warwick. Yes, there is time enough for a soldier accustomed to carry every point by a *coup de main*—I own, indeed, for an approach by sap I should be too much limited. Orlando, shall I try my military skill? have I your leave?—Or should you object to exchange the intended grave Governor for the Soldier of fortune?

Not I, indeed, answered Orlando; you have my permission, Warwick—and so now I will wish you good night; for, if I take you any farther, you will not find your way back.

Trust that to me, Orlando, answered his friend; I am used to reconnoiture in all lights, from the golden rays of Phœbus to the accommodating beams of the paper lantern of an apple-woman at the corner of a street in a country town.—But whither art going, my friend? for that is a question which I set forth without asking.

To the Hall, replied Orlando.

To the Hall!—and to the turret of that Hall!—Oh! you happy dog!—

> "Monimia—my angel!—It was not kind
> To leave me like a turtle here alone!"

Hah, my friend! has your sweet nymph of the enchanted tower no paranymph that you could introduce me to? It will be horribly flat for me to go back, to go to my solitary couch, and envy you here, and my prosperous uncle there—I shall hang myself before morning.

Orlando, hurt at this light way of naming Monimia, answered rather coldly, Your spirits are really enviable, Warwick! but do not let them hurry you into a persuasion that I am happy enough now to be amused with them, pleasant as they are!

Why, what the devil's the matter with you? answered Warwick; you are not going to turn parson, I trow? But really so dolorous a tone is fit only for the pulpit of a methodist.—Why, what makes you *unhappy*, when such a girl as you describe Monimia——

Orlando interrupted him warmly—You are determined to mistake me, Captain Warwick! Whatever confidence I have reposed in you in regard to Monimia, surely I have never said any thing that should authorise you to speak thus lightly of her. It is true that I love her passionately, that her heart is mine! but if you suppose——

Pooh, pooh! I suppose nothing—Pr'ythee do not be so grave about you little Hero, my dear Leander!—Then assuming a more serious tone, he added: But, upon my soul, I mean nothing offensive, my friend; and rattled as much to disguise my own heaviness as to divert yours, for I have left people with whom I should much rather have remained a little longer, and that without having time to attempt consoling the gentle heart that is breaking for me. He then communicated to Orlando an intrigue in which he had engaged after he left him. Orlando represented to him all the cruelty and folly of his conduct.—Oh! yes, cried

Warwick; all that you say is very wise and very true, and it must be owned that it comes with peculiar propriety from you, my most sage friend!—Now that we are within sight of the Hall, for, if I mistake not, that great building which is before us is the abode of the sybil whose rent-roll exceeds in value the famous leaves of antiquity, and of the fair vestal, who——

Nay, nay! cried Orlando, you are beginning again; I will not stay to hear you.

Only let me go with you to the next rise, answered Warwick; only shew me the light from the turret, and I will be content:

"It is the East—and Juliet is the Sun!"

And then I will go back like a miserable wretch as I am, and try to dream of my future aunt.

Rather try not to dream of her said Orlando; upon my honour, Warwick, this *gaieté de cœur* of yours excites at once my envy and my fear.

Oh! a soldier, and afraid!—What, do you think I shall release the General's fair prisoner, and, like an undutiful nephew, escape from the garrison with the old boy's prize?

No, no, Warwick, I have no such apprehensions; but—But what? Egad, my friend, considered in a political light, it is clear to me that this is the very best thing I could do.—But behold the venerable towers of Rayland Hall!

"Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the woody glade,
Where fond Orlando still adores
The sweet imprison'd maid."

Give me a moment's time, added Warwick, pausing—but a moment, and I will make for you a parody on the whole*.

* Gray's Ode on a distant prospect of Eton College.

You are intolerable, Warwick, cried Orlando, and I positively will endure you no longer—Yes, a little longer, said Warwick; let me finish my parody; I tell you I am in a fortunate vein.—You, Orlando, who are yourself a poet, would you be tasteless enough to check a man inspired?—Listen, I am going on——

Nay, but this is sad trifling, my dear Warwick! and what is worse, you will really be heard from the house, which will not be a trifling inconvenience. Besides, upon my honour, your returning so late across the park is unsafe; for, when the old butler has no reasons of his own to have them kept up, there are three fierce blood hounds let loose to range over it all night, and they would not fail to seize any stranger.

D—n your blood-hounds!—Pr'ythee, Orlando, do you think I am not accustomed to guards of all sorts, and have encountered the mastiff dog, and the dragon aunt, in twenty scrambling adventures?

I do not doubt your prowess, replied Orlando; but here, as there is no reward, why should you exert it?

Mais seulement pour me tenir en haleine, mon ami, et pour passer le tems—But, however, if it is seriously inconvenient to you, I will go.—Come, now, to be serious—at what time to-morrow shall you be at your father's?

Long before you are awake probably, for you know you never are very alert in a morning.

Not when I have nothing to do; but, pray, are your family early risers? At what hour may I ask, by anticipation, the blessing of my blooming aunt?

That you must discover, for it is very uncertain—and now, Warwick, once more good night!

Good night! O most fortunate and valorous Orlando of the enchanted castle!

Orlando then gave his light-hearted friend directions to find his way back, and when he left him, advanced slowly towards the house, from which he was not above three hundred yards distant.

His mind, which had been at first distracted by the distress of his father, and since harassed by the ill-timed raillery of his friend, now returned to those bitter reflections which arose from the certainty of his being immediately to take a long leave of Monimia, and under the cruel necessity of telling her so. But a few hours since he looked forward to the pleasure of meeting Monimia with only tidings of satisfaction and hope; now, he was to meet her, only to tell her that they were to part so soon, never perhaps to meet again!

He now entered his study (for one of the servants sat up to let him in,) and endeavoured to collect himself enough to communicate what he had to say to Monimia, without too much shocking her. But when he thought that their next meeting might be the last they should ever have, his own courage forsook him, and he dreaded lest he should be quite unable to sustain hers.

The hour soon came when he knew she expected him; and he trembled as he led her down the stairs. At length, since it was impossible to disguise from her those emotions which agitated his mind, he related to her all the occurrences of the eventful day, and the necessity there was for his preparing himself the next day, and taking leave of this part of the country the day following.

Monimia could not shed tears; her heart seemed petrified by the greatness and suddenness of the blow, which fell with more force, because their last interview had been so little embittered by fears or broken by alarms. When, however, Orlando explained to her, that his honour would be irre-

parably injured if he even expressed any reluctance to enter on the active parts of the profession he had engaged in, and that to attempt disengaging himself now would be a blemish on his character from which he could never recover, her good sense, and her true tenderness for him, gave her some degree of composure, and even of resolution. As he declared that he felt nothing so severely as leaving her—leaving her unprotected, and almost alone in the world, she nobly struggled to conceal her own anguish, that she might not aggravate his; and, since his going was inevitable, endeavoured not to depress, by her fears, that spirit with which it was necessary for him to go.

Orlando, as much charmed by her sense as her affection, became ashamed of betraying less tender resolution than a timid uninformed girl. She taught him how to repress his concern: and this interview, instead of increasing his regret, fortified his mind against it. Monimia remained with him a less time than usual—with faltering lips he entreated her to meet him again the next night, because it would be the last. Monimia, unable to articulate, assented only by a broken sigh! and Orlando retired to his bed, where sleep absolutely refused to indulge him with a few hours of forgetfulness till towards morning.

When he had told Warwick that he should be at his father's house early in the morning, he forgot that he should be detained by the necessity he was under to attend Mrs. Rayland. He sent up for permission to wait upon her at breakfast, which was immediately granted; and he opened to her as soon as he was admitted, the reason of this early visit, and the necessity he was under to take leave of her the next day to join his regiment in America.

Mrs. Rayland expressed more surprise than concern at this information: accustomed, from early impressions, to high ideas of the military glory of her ancestors, and considering the Americans as rebels and round-heads, to conquer them seemed to her to be not only a national cause, but one in which her family were particularly bound to engage.—She had contemplated only the honours, and thought little of the dangers of war. The trophies that surrounded the picture of her warlike grandfather Sir Orlando, and the honourable mention that was made of his prowess in the family annals, seemed to her ample compensation for a wound in his leg, which had made him a little lame for the rest of his life. Of Orlando's personal danger, therefore, she had, as he expected, no apprehensions, and was rather desirous he should justify her partiality to him, by emulating the fame of the heroes of her family, than afraid of what might happen in the experiment.

Mrs. Rayland parted from him in high good humour, desired he would give her as much time as he could the next day, and set out from the Hall rather than from West Wolverton, when he went to Portsmouth; all which Orlando readily promised, and then, with a heavy heart, went to the house of his father.

That capricious fate which seemed to be weary of the favours she had long been accumulating on the head of General Tracy, appeared now determined to discard him, as she is often said to do her ancient favourites. A more malicious trick than that she now meditated, could hardly befal any of them—The General had long kept off, by art, an attack of the gout, a disease to which he did not allow himself to be supposed liable; but whether it was the long walk of the preceding evening, or the

tumult of his spirits on his appoaching nuptials, or the sudden sight of his nephew, that occasioned an unlucky revolution, certain it is that, in the middle of the night, he was awakened by this most inexorable disease peremptorily telling him, in more than one of his joints, that the visit would be more oppressive by having been so long delayed. His valet de chambre was hastily summoned, with such applications as, however dangerous, had sometimes repelled its attacks; but it was to no purpose the unfortunate General would have risked his life to preserve his activity; the morning found him a cripple, compelled to yield, with whatever reluctance, to the old remedies of patience and flannel.

This circumstance, so very mal-apropos, appeared yet more terrible to the General, when he reflected that Warwick, the formidable handsome Warwick, had now an opportunity of entertaining Isabella: and the pain of his mind irritating and increasing his bodily sufferings, Mr. Somerive, instead of a man of the church, who was within three days to have attended on his guest, thought it more expedient to send for a physician.

Tracy, however, considered of nothing so earnestly as getting Warwick away—It was true, indeed, that he was to go the next day, or at farthest the day after that, which depended upon the letters he received from Portsmouth; but, that he should be almost four-and-twenty hours longer under the same roof with Isabella was not to be endured. After many plans, therefore, adopted and rejected, the General at last determined that he would make some pretence to send Warwick to London which he could not evade, and imagined that he should then be able to say,

"Being gone—I am myself again!"

For this purpose he ordered his nephew to be called to his bed-side; and when Orlando arrived at the house, they were in close conference.

The three girls were at work in the parlour when their brother entered it. He observed something very unusual in the manner of Isabella, who spoke little: while all his questions were answered by one of his youngest sisters. He inquired for Warwick: and, in a moment, heard him come down stairs. He went to him in the hall, and Warwick hastily said—Orlando, will you come out with me? I have something to say to you.

They went together into the avenue: Warwick walked fast, but appeared lost in thought; and Orlando, oppressed with his own sorrows, had no inclination to speak first.

At length Warwick, as if he had found the expedient he wanted, exclaimed suddenly—By Heaven it will do!—it must do!—it shall do!

Indeed! said Orlando; may I know what?

Tell me, my friend, cried Warwick, with vehement warmth—tell me if you love Monimia—if it is not death to part with her?

To what purpose is such a question? You know I exist but for her—you know I should prefer death to this separation, because my mind will be torn to pieces by anxiety for what may befal her in my absence!

Well, then, I may trust you—I may ask what you would do for *that* friend who should not only prevent your parting with her, but give you your Monimia for ever!

Do not trifle with me, Warwick, said Orlando mournfully, I cannot bear it!

By all that is sacred! replied Warwick, I never was more in earnest in my life; and, if you do not trifle with yourself, Monimia may be yours imme-

diately, and it will be beyond the power of fortune to divide you.

Explain yourself then—but it is impossible, and your wild imagination only—

Say rather, retorted Warwick, that your cold prudence will destroy what my *imagination* would realize.—I tell you, it is in your own power to be happy; but before I reveal how, swear to me, upon the honour of a soldier and a gentleman, that if you do not *approve* my plan you will not betray it.

Surely, there is little need, said Orlando, more and more amazed, of my giving you an oath that I will not betray my friend, especially when he meditates how to serve me.

Pardon me, cried Warwick; I desire, Orlando, to serve you, but I am not quite so disinterested as not to think a little of myself at the same time—

I may venture to swear, Warwick, that I will never betray you, said Orlando gravely; but put an end to these riddles.

You swear then, upon the honour of a soldier and a gentleman, that you will not mar my plan if you will not make yourself a party in it—you have sworn.

I have, answered Orlando, sworn; but if it relates ——At that moment an idea of the truth occurred to him.

If it relates to your sisters, you were going to say, the oath is not binding—Well it *does* relate to Isabella!

To Isabella?

Yes, to Isabella. It matters not, nor have I time to relate, how I have contrived, even in this short interval, to persuade your lovely sister that a young fellow of three-and-twenty, with only *one* thousand pounds in the world, and his commission,

is more to her taste than an old one of three-and sixty, who is a General, and worth about an hundred and fifty times that sum—I told you, I always carried my object by a *coup de main*.—To be brief, I am madly in love with Isabella, and she is as much in love with me as she dares own on so short an acquaintance.—My uncle is in love with her too; but she is not at all in love with him; and as she prefers the nephew with his knap-sack to the uncle with his money-sack, she shall not be sacrificed to him; but I will marry her, and take her with me to America.

Marry her! cried Orlando in extreme surprise.

Why you may well wonder, to be sure, because I believe she is the only girl in the world that could have made me take so extraordinary a resolution.

But how is it possible? How is there time to execute it?

Oh, my friend! it is a matter that takes up very little time when the parties are agreed.

But Isabella is not of age; she cannot be married here.

She may in Jersey, though.

In Jersey?

Yes; and it is very possible to go from Portsmouth to Jersey, and be back again time enough for the sailing of the squadron we must proceed with to America.

And has Isabella consented to all this?

No, because I have not directly proposed it to her; nor did I, till since the conversation I have had with my uncle, know that I should have the means of performing it, which (I thank him) his anticipating jealousy has put into my hands. Warwick then took out of his pocket-book a draft of the General's to him for a thousand pounds,

payable at sight in London.—My grave old uncle, cried he, for whom I think fortune has interfered, to prevent his being ridiculous in his old age, is just now more miserable because *I* am in the house, than because the gout is in his toe; and he has found out, that instead of staying till to-morrow or next day to go to Portsmouth with you, it will be better for me to set out as soon as I can, to do some business for him in London, which though he never thought of it before, he now says admits of no delay; and that I may have no excuse to stay afterwards on my own business, or to return hither, he has given me a bank-note of an hundred for my immediate expenses, and this draft for a thousand —the douceur he promised me on his marriage.

Well!

Well! and so we shall not want money, which would have been an almost invincible impediment. I shall now, as soon as I have settled our proceedings with my angelic Isabel, which I have not the least doubt of doing, make the best of my way to London, execute the imaginary business which my most profoundly politic uncle has given me, and then———

I do not yet understand you, said Orlando; how is my sister to be of this party, or how.....

Nothing so easy, answered Warwick; I thought my friend, you were enough in love yourself to suppose every thing possible, and not to hesitate between quitting your mistress, perhaps for ever, and taking her with you as your wife.—I go from London to Portsmouth—Is there any difficulty in your meeting me there with my Isabella and your Monimia? You know there is not; and whatever scruples your sister may have, or as you perhaps think ought to have, to taking such a journey to me on the acquaintance of the day, will be obvi-

ated by your going with her, and by her having a female companion.—My purse is yours, and its present condition will enable us to do well enough till something or other happens in our favour—*I am determined*, if Isabella consents, which I am now going to try; and so I leave you, Orlando, to consider of my proposal: you must, however, resolve quickly; for I shall set out almost as soon as dinner is over for London, as I have promised my uncle.

Warwick then walked away towards the house, leaving Orlando in a state of mind difficult to be conceived or described. To have the power of taking with him his adored Monimia, secure of a present support for her, and certain that with him she would be happy in any country, was a temptation it was almost impossible to resist: when he considered on the other hand, the pain of being separated from her, for a long, perhaps an eternal absence, and of leaving her to the mercy of such a woman as Mrs. Lennard, who might, either by withdrawing her protection, or rendering it an intolerable bondage, drive the lovely orphan alone and friendless into a cruel world; other means of saving her he had none, and neither the laws of God or man were against those which were now so unexpectedly offered him.

But his father, already broken-hearted by the desertion of one of his children, would be hurried to the grave by thus being deceived by two others. His mother would be rendered wretched, and he should perhaps accuse himself of being accessary to the death of both his parents:—the thought was not to be borne. He determined for a moment to renounce every happiness which must be purchased by their misery, and not only to fly himself from this almost irresistible temptation, but to prevent Isabella from yielding to it. But this resolution

was hardly formed, before the image of Monimia weeping in solitude her desolate fate, complaining to him, who was too far off to hear—ill-treated or abandoned by her aunt—exposed to the insults of the profligate, and the contempt of the fortunate —came with all its pathetic interest to win him from his duty; and then, the happiness of calling her his—of knowing that only death could divide them! the contest was dreadful; and he knew that when he saw Monimia it would be worse.—Once or twice he determined to put an end to it, by telling his father; but to this desperate expedient was opposed the honour he had given to Warwick not to betray, if he could not participate, the intended flight of his sister; nor did he imagine that her going off with Warwick would be a very distressing circumstance to his father.—However enraged the General might at first be, his pride would not suffer him finally to abandon his nephew. In every point but that of present fortune, Warwick must have the preference: and Orlando thought that he had often seen, by his father's countenance as he looked at Isabella, that he regretted the sacrifice he was induced by his own circumstances to promote.—But with himself it was quite otherwise; and the rash step he was thus strongly tempted to take, would blast at once all those hopes his father now so fondly cherished in regard to the Rayland estate (for it was certain Mrs. Rayland would never forgive him;) and, by acceding to Warwick's proposal, he must deeply aggravate every pang of that separation which his father seemed already unable to endure.

CHAPTER VII.

Torn by these distracting contests between love and duty, Orlando continued for some moments to traverse the place where Warwick had left him. His two younger sisters appeared to interrupt without relieving this painful debate. He learned from them that Captain Warwick and Isabella were gone together for a walk, and that the former had sent them to him, as he wanted to speak with them. A new doubt now arose in the mind of Orlando—Ought he to communicate to Selina what was going forward, of which she appeared to be ignorant? or conceal within his own bosom what he could not prevent, or entirely disapprove? After a little consideration he thought it would be best not to make Selina a party: and he endeavoured to dissemble as well as he could the conflict of passions which were preying on his heart. His father, pale and dejected, with a slow and languid step, soon after joined them: he bade the two girls go to their mother, and then taking Orlando's arm, they walked together to a greater distance from the house.

You go then to-morrow, Orlando? said Somerive: there are no hopes of any favourable reverse to this cruel sentence? Mrs. Rayland, I find,—he hesitated—does not wish to interfere, Sir, replied Orlando. On the contrary, she seems to think that a young man of my age and profession cannot be so well employed as in the actual service of his country.

Somerive answered only with a deep sigh; and after a short pause Orlando went on:

I beseech you, my dearest Sir, not to make yourself thus unhappy. Consider that, notwithstanding

this temporary parting, my prospects are infinitely better than I had any right to expect, and—

They might, however, have been better, said his father in his turn interrupting him—at least they might have been more permanently assured, if you had listened to the proposals we heard yesterday: instead of quitting your family, you might then have been settled near it in affluence.

Let us not, my dear father, answered Orlando, discuss that any more; I would not marry Miss Hollybourn, if she could give me a kingdom.

Nor give up your boyish fancy for that girl at the Hall to save your family, to save your father!

Orlando started as if he trod on a serpent: this was a string that jarred too much, it threatened to destroy all the virtuous resolutions which he had been labouring to adopt; for it seemed to be cruelty and injustice in his father to reproach him; and, conscious of the sacrifice he hoped to have fortitude enough to make, it appeared too hard that he was at that moment blamed for not making more.

No, Sir, said he, I will not give up my fancy for the girl at the Hall, as you are pleased to term her; but I see not how my affection for her can injure my family, nor how my resigning her could save them—For God's sake, do not imbitter the few hours we are to pass together, either by the reproaches which indeed I do not deserve, or by concern which the occasion does not demand. Believe me, your son suffers enough, without the additional misery of seeing you either displeased with him or grieving for him.

Orlando, then fearful that any farther conversation with his father, in the humour he seemed to be in, would serve only to give pain to them both, and wishing to be alone for a few minutes before he again saw Warwick, went another way; and on his

return to the house he found an official letter directing him to repair immediately for Portsmouth, where the captain of his company was assembling his men in order to embark immediately for America.

Thus certain that he must set out the next day, and that he had only a few moments before he must meet Warwick and give his answer, he had himself in the least frequented part of the shrubbery that adjoined to the house, and again considered of the tempting offer that was made him. Fascinating as it was, and though his excessive affection for Monimia was often on the point of overbalancing every other consideration whatever; his pride and his duty, his affection for his father, and his respect for himself, united at length to conquer his inclination.

How could he bear to plunge a dagger into the heart of his father, who had little other hope on earth but in him? or, if he could determine on that, and fortify himself against the reproaches his conscience might make him, how could he submit to be obliged for his support, for the support of Monimia, to Warwick? There was something repugnant to the generous feelings of Orlando, in Warwick's using the very money his uncle had given him, as the means of disappointing his benefactor. But, whatever apology Warwick might make to himself for this, Orlando thought there could be none for him if he were to participate in money thus acquired. He knew that, accustomed to expence and indulgences, as his friend was, a thousand pounds would be no very permanent resource when Isabella was to share it; and he could not bear that, *he* should be supposed to connive at her flight, only to become with Monimia a burthen to her and Warwick. On the slender pay of an ensign it were madness to think he could support a wife, however humble might be her wishes; and his marriage

would cut him off for ever from all hopes of that assistance from Mrs. Rayland, which his father, even though he should forgive, had not the power to afford him. Could he then endure to expose his beloved Monimia to the inconveniences of following a camp, without having the means of procuring her such alleviations as it allowed? He might die in the field, and leave her exposed to hazards infinitely greater than those which could befall her in England. This last consideration determined him—It decided his wavering virtue, and he resolved to give Warwick a positive refusal immediately before he should relapse, and to conceal the almost invincible temptation he had been under from his Monimia, lest her weaker, softer heart yielding to it, he should again find himself unable to resist it.

He now hastened to find Warwick; and fortunately met him at the entrance of the house, whither they were summoned to dinner. Warwick inquired with great eagerness on what he had resolved. To be miserable, answered Orlando, in abstaining from what is wrong. I shall be miserable, if I agreed, Warwick, to your proposal; and I have determined, since either way I must be unhappy, to be so with integrity rather than self-reproach.

What the devil! said Warwick, you won't go then my way?

No, I will not.

But you will not, I hope, Sir, cried Warwick half angry—you will not think it necessary to prevent your sister?

Orlando, who did not greatly relish the peremptory manner in which this was said, answered coldly,—You have my honour, Captain Warwick, and any other question is an affront.

Forgive me, my friend, replied Warwick, resuming his usual good humour—forgive me for doubt-

ing you. I cannot live without Isabella, nor do I intend to try at it—I have prevailed upon her, not without difficulty I assure you, to consent to meet me at Portsmouth. You know how much happiness your going with Monimia would have given to us all! But I have not a moment to argue the matter with you. You say you are determined—So am I; and all I ask of you is, that you will not rob me of my happiness, upon the same false, cold sort of reasoning system to which you are sacrificing your own.

A servant now coming out to say that dinner waited, they went into the house. A melancholy and silent meal was soon concluded. The General's horse was brought to the door, on which Warwick was to go to the next post town: and he rose to take leave of the family, which he did with a composure that amazed Orlando, who had no idea how a man could so conceal the feelings which must on such an occasion naturally arise. Isabella was far from appearing so tranquil; but all the rest were too much engaged with their own sensations to remark those which her countenance betrayed, though to Orlando her confusion was evident.

Warwick went up to receive the last orders of his uncle, and then prepared to mount his horse; when Orlando took his arm, and begged he would send the servant on with the horses, and give him a few moment's attention as they walked on after them.

Warwick readily agreed, in hopes that he had changed his mind; but Orlando soon put an end to such expectations by asking him in what way Isabella was to meet him. I have given you my honour, Warwick, said he, not to betray you; but I must have yours in return that my sister shall be exposed to no improper adventures. How is she who never was from home in her life, but for a few

days with her mother in London, to find her way to Portsmouth?

Ridiculous! exclaimed Warwick, to find her way to Portsmouth! One would really think she was to take a flight to the extreme parts of the earth, instead of hardly five-and-thirty miles. My poor friend, thou hast not been used, I see, to these little adventures—I have an aid-de-camp, who, in the absence of his commander, can secure a little deserter for him. Isabella is determined to trust me; and it may suffice you to know that I love her too well not to take every possible precaution for her safety.

No, said Orlando, it may *not* suffice—Though I have promised not to interfere, it is only on condition that I am sure my sister will not suffer either in her person or her reputation. Give me therefore the particulars.

Warwick then related, that his servant, on whom he could depend, was on the evening they should appoint to be ready with a post-chaise and four at some place they could fix upon; where after supper Isabella, instead of retiring to her room, should meet it—Nothing is more easy, I suppose, said Warwick, or less dangerous, than for your sister to do this; and, when she is once off in the chaise, relays of horses being ordered at the two stages between this and Portsmouth, my servant following on horseback, will escort her thither in less than four hours; there I shall have a vessel ready to carry us to Jersey—Money, my dear boy! Money, my dear boy! Money, contrivance and courage are all that are necessary. I have found the two first, and have given the last to the only person that wanted it. I have convinced Isabella that, if she follows my directions, she may be at Portsmouth before she is missed, and married before any one can guess

where to look for her. Well, Orlando, you now have my whole plan; and I trust to your honour not to render it abortive.

And I, replied Orlando, trust my sister to yours, not without reluctance and remorse—We shall probably meet at Portsmouth?

Probably, answered Warwick; for the two companies are to embark at the same time; and I only trust to some private interest, which I have prevailed upon my uncle to make for me, to procure leave to embark in whatever vessel is most convenient.—The captain of one of the frigates is my particular friend, and I shall probably get a birth with him instead of going in a transport. Orlando, to whom the whole scheme appeared easily practicable, now again felt all the disposition to join in it which he had before combated: but again his reason came to his aid, and he saw Warwick depart without betraying any symptoms of that struggle which still tore his heart.

Once more, however, he subdued it; and recalled his resolution to go through the trying scene which was to wait him on his return to the house, where he was early in the evening to bid adieu to all his family, in order to sup with Mrs. Rayland as she had desired; and then! the last cruel parting with Monimia, more dreadful than any of his former sufferings, was to embitter his last moments at Rayland-Hall.

The last adieu between a father so affectionate and unhappy and a son so beloved, need not be described—it would indeed be difficult to do it justice. As his mother and his sisters hung weeping about him he could not help addressing some words to Isabella, however unfavourable the time, which she seemed perfectly to understand—though she shrunk from them, and had carefully avoided giv-

ing him any opportunity of speaking to her alone. At length Orlando tore himself away; and not daring to look behind him, yet hardly feeling the ground beneath him, he hurried to the Hall.

Mrs. Rayland received him with as much calmness as if he only came on a usual visit. Of the violent emotions which agitated him she had no idea. Time and uninterrupted prosperity had so blunted the little sensibility nature had given her, that she was utterly incapable of participating or comprehending the acute feelings of her young favourite: yet in her way she was extremely kind to him; and, after giving him another course of excellent advice, which lasted near two hours, she told him, that as his first equipment might have taken a good part of her former present, she had another note of fifty pounds at his service. This present was extremely acceptable to Orlando, who had not above sixty left of her preceding bounty. Mrs. Rayland, detaining Orlando an hour longer than he expected, at length dismissed him with her blessing; and Orlando shed tears of gratitude on her hand, which he kissed, and, without being able to speak, left her.

He then took leave of the servants; but gave to Mrs. Lennard, with whom he desired to speak in her own room, more time than to the rest; and desirous of doing what he could to soften the situation of his Monimia, he determined to speak to her aunt on her behalf.

You know, Madam, said he, that on my last departure you spoke to me of your niece: let me now speak to you of her. My absence may satisfy you as to those suspicions, that I know not why you entertained of me—but let me entreat you to be kind to my lovely young friend, for whom I scruple not to avow to you a very great regard.

What! cried Mrs. Lennard, has she ever then been such an ungrateful girl as to say I was unkind to her?

Never, said Orlando:—in the conversations we have accidentally had, your niece has always spoken of you with gratitude and respect: but, after what you once said to me about her, I should be remiss were I to quit the house without trying to obviate any little lurking prejudice which may at some future time be remembered to her disadvantage: allow me therefore to intercede with you, not only to forget any of these circumstances which may prejudice your mind against her, but to increase that tenderness for her, which does so much honour to your heart.

Thank you, Sir, said Mrs. Lennard, but I hope I do not want your advice, nor any body's, to do my duty to the girl, since she is left upon my hands.

Orlando never felt so great an inclination as at that moment, to take Monimia off her hands; and, as he found little was to be hoped for from his solicitations in her favour, he took leave of Mrs. Lennard, and endeavoured, when alone, to collect all his resolution for this final adieu with Monimia; to drive from his recollection the offer of Warwick, which still recurred to tantalize and torment him; to conceal from her that it ever had been made, and to fortify her mind for their long separation while he felt his own sinking under it.

Among other things it occurred to him, that if death or caprice deprived Monimia of the cold and reluctant protection her aunt now afforded her, she might be not only desolate but pennyless. He determined, therefore, to leave with her one of the banker's notes he had just received, of five-and-twenty pounds, and to pass these last moments in arming her against every possible contingency

which might happen during his absence, and, as far as he could, instructing her how to act if they occurred.

Monimia, with swollen eyes, from which the tears slowly fell notwithstanding her endeavours to restrain them, listened in silence, as with a faultering tone and in disjointed sentences he went through this mournful task. She promised in a voice hardly articulate to attend to all he desired, and to keep a journal of her life; though what will it be, said she, but a journal of sufferings and of sorrow?

But when that sorrow, those sufferings are over, my Monimia, cried Orlando, trying to speak cheerfully, with what transport shall we look back on this journal, and compare our past anxieties with our actual happiness!—Let that idea encourage you amidst the heavy days that are to intervene before we meet again. Whatever you suffer, remember that your Orlando will return to dry your tears! And take care of your precious health, my Monimia, preserve it for him.

She could only answer by a deep drawn sigh; while Orlando, cruel as the scene was, could not determine to put an end to it. Day already dawned; and as he did not mean to go to bed, but had ordered the under-keeper to attend him with the horses as soon as it was light, he knew that he should soon be called by Jacob: yet could he not determine to lead Monimia back to her turret till he heard the man at the door, who, tapping at it, informed him the horses were ready, and the hour passed at which he ordered himself to be called.

Monimia then arose and said—Farewell then, Orlando! He had no power to answer her; but led her silently through the chapel, round the court, and to her turret. The moment that tore him from her could not be delayed; he took the last embrace,

and hastily bade her shut the door, lest he should fall into such a paroxysm of anguish as might render him unable to leave her at all. Monimia, who could not have supported the pain she endured much longer, with feeble and trembling hands obeyed him; but as slowly he descended the stairs, he heard her loud sobs, and was on the point of returning again to snatch her to his bosom, and declare it impossible to part with her.

The loud noise of a whip, which Jacob, impatient of his long delay, now sounded around the house, roused him once more.

He started from the dangerous reflection he was indulging, that it was yet in his own power to take Monimia with him, or at least to secure her following him with his sister; and again recovering his courage, he descended the stairs, left for the last time the beloved turret, and in a few moments mounted his horse, and rode almost at full speed through the park. He was soon on the high road to the first post-town towards Portsmouth; and having ascended an high down that afforded him the last view he could have of Rayland Hall, he stopped on the top of it, and, turning his horse's head, fixed his eyes on the seat of all his past happiness, of all his future hopes, and thought how much he probably had to suffer before he should revisit it again, how probable it was that he should never see it more!

Jacob, who had but little notion of all this, yet supposed the captain, as he was now called at the Hall, was sorry to leave all his friends and Miss Monimmy, and hunting and shooting, and such like, to go to the wars, now thought it might be kind to console him: but Orlando heeded not the very eloquent harangue, which had lasted near a quarter of an hour, but suddenly turned his horse, and set out as speedily as before.

He took a post horse at the town, and put his portmanteau into a Portsmouth diligence that was passing; then dismissing his favourite horse, which he would take no farther, and recommending him particularly to Jacob, who promised to attend to him while he fed at liberty in the park, he made the servant a handsome present, and on the hack which was ready he proceeded as if he was pursued; for the speed with which he rode seemed to give him something like relief. A very short time brought him to Portsmouth; where he found his baggage from London just arrived; and learned that some of the soldiers were already embarked, that the wind was fair, and that new orders for the greatest expedition were arrived that day to the commander of the reinforcement going to America.

CHAPTER VIII.

Exhausted by the fatigue of body and mind, Orlando would probably have lost the painful recollection of what had passed within the last eight-and-forty hours by transient forgetfulness; but even this was not permitted him: the orders for immediate embarkation were so strict, and the commander of the squadron which was to convoy the transports so impatient to execute the directions of Government, that every thing was hurry and confusion; and Orlando, far from being allowed time to think of what he had left, found the care of the company devolve almost entirely upon him: the men were for the most part raw recruits; the captain, the younger son of an illustrious house already raised to that rank (though not so old as Orlando), was not come down; and the lieutenant, a man near

fifty, was almost incapacitated from attending his duty by the agonies of his wife and a family of several children, who, as they had been in lodgings in a neighbouring town ever since his return from America the preceding year, now assembled around him to bid to their only protector and support a last farewell.

The short notice he had received of his departure had prevented his settling many things for them which were now indispensable; the moment therefore Orlando arrived, this officer (whom he had not before seen) related to him his situation; and Orlando, in generously endeavouring to alleviate his troubles by taking as much business from him as he could, found his additional fatigue well repaid by the necessity it laid him under to detach his mind from his own regret and anxiety. At the first dawn of day he was at the Point—embarking the men and baggage; and the scene of distracting hurry that now presented itself, the quarrels and blasphemy with which the beach resounded, the confusion among the soldiers and sailors, the rage of the commanders and the murmurs of the commanded, the eager impatience of those who had articles to buy for their voyage, and the unfeeling avarice of others who had them to sell, formed altogether a seen as extraordinary as it was new to Orlando, who had never been from the neighbourhood of the Hall except for a few weeks, which were either passed in pleasure in London, or in a quiet country town; he heard therefore, with a mixture of wonder and disgust, the human tempest roar in which he was now engaged, and for the first time enquired of himself what all this was for?

This was not a place or hour when such a question, however naturally it occurred, could be answered—He was to act, not to speculate; and hard-

ly had he a moment to reflect that, hurried as he was to be, he should not have the satisfaction (if satisfaction it might be called) of seeing Isabella and Warwick before he went himself on board; after which it would be impossible to know what became of them, at least not till his arrival in America. Amid the tumult that surrounded him, this gave him infinite disquiet. A thousand fears for his sister crowded on his mind; he apprehended she might by some accident be prevented in such a place meeting Warwick; he trembled lest, if she did, his conduct towards her, when she was entirely in his power, might be dishonourable. Such were the distressing reflections of Orlando in every momentary pause the confusion of the scene allowed him. But whatever uneasiness he felt, the time permitted him to have no mitigation; and, in the evening of the day after his arrival at Portsmouth, he found himself on board a transport with the greater part of that company to which he belonged, and about an equal number of dragoons with their horses. The wind though violent, blew down the channel; and at night-fall, all previous orders being given, they obeyed the signal for getting to sea. It was not till they were many miles at sea that Orlando had time to consider his situation: then, the tumult having a little subsided, he saw himself in a little crowded vessel, where nothing could equal the inconvenience to which his soldiers were subjected, but that which the miserable negroes endure in their passage to slavery*. Indifferent to this so far as it merely related to himself, he could not see the sufferings to which the men were likely to be exposed without

* It has lately been alledged in defence of the Slave Trade, that Negroes on board Guineamen are allowed *almost* as much room as a soldier in a Transport:—Excellent reasoning!

concern. All of them were young and new to the service; and the captain was two attentive to his own delicacy to have time to give the poor fellows all the alleviation their condition allowed them; and, on the second day of their voyage, he found his own situation so unpleasant, that he went in a boat on board one of the frigates, the commander of which was distantly related to him, and obtained of him for the rest of the voyage a birth more suitable to a man of fashion than a crowded transport could afford him.

Orlando, the lieutenant (who was half broken-hearted), and a cornet of horse, were left in charge of the men; and it was perhaps fortunate for the former, that he was so incessantly called upon to attend to his duty that he had hardly a moment to command but for repose, and, occupied about others, could think but little of himself.

They had now been so long at sea, that the fresh-water sailors had conquered the first uneasy sensations given by that element, except the young cornet, who was the only son of a very opulent family, and heir to an immense fortune: during a very long minority his mother had so humoured him, that even his request to enter the army, though extremely opposite to her wishes, could neither be evaded nor denied. The smart uniform of a light horseman appeared to him extremely desirable; and the possibility of danger in such a service never occurred to him, nor would he listen to it when it was represented by others. He had hardly put on this seducing attire, and provided himself with a very beautiful horse, before he was ordered abroad; and now sick and desponding, this unhappy child of foolish affluence wanted a nurse much more than a broad sword—No puling girl just out of the nursery was ever more helpless; and

Orlando at once despised and pitied him; but found that, having been friendly enough to offer him his assistance, his new acquaintance soon leaned entirely upon him; and that, having been used to have every one around him at his command, he received every friendly attention which compassion extorted from others, as matters of course.

The fleet had now passed Madeira, without however touching at it, and were launched into the great Atlantic Ocean. Hitherto their voyage had been prosperous and quick; and a short time promised to terminate it; but the heat of the weather operating on the crowds of men and of horses stowed in such a vessel, now began to be severely felt. A fever of the malignant kind broke out; and within a week five men sickened of it, of whom three died; and the other two, more like spectres than living creatures, seemed by their partial recovery only to be reserved for more lingering sufferings.

Nor was that the worst; for the disease, after a cessation of a few days, broke out afresh, and Orlando saw his men depressed and dispirited, sinking around him its easy victims. Contrary winds, or sullen calms which allowed them to make very little way, added to the hopelessness of their situation, and the other transports could afford them little assistance; for in some the same cruel distemper had begun its ravages, and those who were yet free from it dreaded the infection. It was now that Orlando felt the justice of that pathetic description, given by Thomson, of the mortality at sea before Carthagena, where he addresses the admiral, as witnessing

"The deeply racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale quivering, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright—
————————the groans
Of agonizing ships————"

and as having then heard

"Nightly plunged amid the sullen waves,
The frequent corse."

From such a scene, whenever the distresses of his men (whom in despite of the danger of infection he attended with paternal kindness) or the terrors of the little effeminate cornet would allow him a moment's respite, he escaped as much as he could by passing the evenings on deck; for the heat below was more dreadful to him than even the want of sleep or any other inconvenience. He frequently took the night watch; and at other times wrapped himself in a great coat, and lay down where he might at least have air. On these occasions sleep would not always befriend him; and then all he had left, his Monimia, his family, the Hall, the rural happiness he had enjoyed in his native country, forcibly presented themselves in contrast to the wretchedness around him; and when he considered a number of men thus packed together in a little vessel perishing by disease; such of them as survived going to another hemisphere to avenge on a branch of their own nation a quarrel, of the justice of which they knew little, and were never suffered to inquire; he felt disposed to wonder at the folly of mankind, and to enquire again *what all this was for?*

He sometimes, however, endeavoured to persuade himself that it was for glory: he had been taught to love glory—What so sacred as the glory of his country? To purchase it no exertion could be too great—to revenge any insult on it, no sacrifice should be regretted. If, for a moment, his good sense arose in despite of this prejudice, and induced him to enquire if it was not from a mistaken point of honour, from the wickedness of go-